

from our readers

She's no fan of DeVries

To the editor:
I'd like to respond to the May 16 letter written about Richard DeVries' candidacy for the Farmington Hills School Board.

I attended a school board meeting May 21 and a meet-the-candidate May 22. I was not impressed with the way DeVries conducted himself.

First of all, he asked the school board a question. When Michael Flanagan, the superintendent, got up to explain, DeVries was extremely rude.

He didn't listen to an explanation at all. He was busy talking to the gentleman in front of him.

Sandra L. Brozovich,
Farmington Hills

He supports DeVries for school post

To the editor:

I suppose you could consider me one of the notorious "silent majority" voters. In other words, a concerned citizen who does not run off the mouth or write letters, or make phone calls, but simply complies face and votes accordingly.

Unfortunately, circumstances surrounding the Farmington School election has compelled me to write and voice an observation.

First let me briefly explain who I am. I have lived in Farmington Hills at the same address for 23 years. I have graduated six children from Farmington schools. I have been actively involved in athletics, academics, special education and arts and crafts — and I emphasize "actively."

I read your article (by Susan Buck) 5/23/91 edition. I attended the meeting and please allow me to compliment your regarding your journalistic objectivity.

This forum is the third such meeting I have attended. In each of the meetings I have been appalled at the subjectivity, inaccurate facts (a nice phrase for lying), and mud slinging by two of the candidates.

Regarding everything I have read, from everyone I have listened to, the only candidate who supports no tax increases, fiscal responsibility, non-instructional cost cuts, no teacher layoffs, curriculum improvement, accountability and ethics is Richard DeVries.

He has facts and figures to substantiate everything he says. He is obviously a person of which integrity is a part of his life.

Now we look at Susan Rennels who strongly supported the defeated tax increase and has privately (not publicly) said she would support another try at a tax increase. I differentiate between privately (not publicly) because there are several turnabouts she has made (such as not now supporting cablecasting school board meetings) which is an obvious play during her attempt for re-election.

Laura Myers seems to be just a wonderful lady who simply does not know what is happening — and wants to.

Finally, I agree with DeVries that two terms in office is enough. We do this with the presidency, we should do it with Congress, the Senate and above all the Farmington Hills School Board. Laura Meyers and Susan Rennels would have members serve into senility.

Let me assure you that all of the above is pure and absolute objectivity. I am in no way shape or form close to any of the candidates. This is what I have observed.

Frederick J. Wenzon,
Farmington Hills

Letter about DeVries was off base

To the editor:

In a letter to the editor published May 16 under the title "Be Honest," a Mrs. Shapiro and a Mrs. Price stated that I had "misrepresented" myself at the Farmington Democratic Club's School Board Candidates Night as an "active" PTA member.

Let's set the record straight. What I stated (as verified by a videotape of the debate) was "I've been a member of the PTA and I was on the bylaws committee at 'Hillside' (elementary school)."

This is an accurate statement made in good faith.

My wife and I have been PTA members at Longacre, Highmeadow and Hillside schools. At Hillside, on the bylaws committee, I did some of

the initial work last summer required to initiate a new PTA chapter.

The letter went on to imply that I had never attended a PTA function. Our family does attend PTA functions, especially those involving the children.

We support the wonderful things that the district's PTAs and PTOs do for the children of this district and plan to continue our membership.

Finally, as a candidate for school board on Monday, June 10, I'd like to thank the Farmington Democratic Club, The Farmington Area Republican Club and the League of Women Voters-AAUW for hosting the three candidate's forums.

I urge readers to view these forums to be cablecast on cable channel 12 on June 7 and examine each candidate's qualifications, philosophy and positions on important school issues.

Please vote on Monday, June 10.

Richard DeVries,
Farmington Hills

Article on ethics needs an addition

To the editor:

In the interests of accuracy in reporting, you may wish to add these facts to your lead article in the May 23 Observer.

"Concern over conduct of some council members last year prompted

talk about ethics and Larry Lichtman's report," the Observer reporter stated.

Wrong.

A rejuvenated Ethics Committee was prompted in November 1990 by then-Mayor Jean Fox, who had recently been a panelist on ethics at a Michigan Municipal League seminar, and followed a series of Detroit News articles on "Hidden Interests," which ran during October 1990, alleging ties between suburban officials and developers.

Aldo Vagporzi had, at a January study session, asked Larry Lichtman to look at procedural rules for the city council. His report submitted last month included summaries of procedures of Novi and Southfield councils, as well as various other bodies, without recommendations.

The city council, reluctant to take action last November, has now, six months later, decided to rejuvenate the Ethics Committee, along the lines submitted in November, with each councilman naming one member.

We surely wish the committee well and hope it can help resolve what over the years have been continuing conflicts, including massive campaign financing and financial disclosure.

Unless those elected to serve the people can show that public trust is held in the highest esteem — ahead of private gain while in office — then democracy, which rests on trust, cannot work successfully, but stumbles along amid scorn and cynicism.

Jean M. Fox,
councilwoman,
Farmington Hills

Watch for animals on the road

To the editor:

I hate seeing so many bodies of animals on our roads in Farmington Hills.

I have seen dead muskrats, ducks, raccoons, skunks, squirrels and even birds. I realize that house construction and paving roads on 13 and 14 Mile roads have cut across animal trails that have existed for thousands of years.

The only course I can see being taken is to place markers for slower speeds where these animals cross. On Grand River near Halsted they have a sign for ducks crossing. In these ways animals can cross with more safety.

Virginia M. Mitchell,
Farmington Hills

Opinions are to be shared

Opinions and ideas are best when shared with others.

That's why the Farmington Observer encourages its readers to share their views with others in the From Our Readers column.

Letters should be mailed to: the editor, Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336.

Ethnic intimidation rears its head in the suburbs

ONCE AGAIN BIRMINGHAM is in the news as a place where racist acts occur.

Despite valiant efforts by the Birmingham/Bloomfield Task Force on Race Relations, formed several years ago to open the area and people's minds to the advantages of a diverse community, problems continue to occur.

Over the past two weeks:

• A Birmingham doctor, who is white, was arraigned on a felonious assault charge in connection with an

incident involving a 14-year-old black youth from Rochester Hills who was waiting in a parking structure for his mother to finish shopping.

Police reports stated the physician pulled a shotgun on the boy after driving by three times questioning why he was there.

The final time, the youth asked him if the man was concerned because he was black. It was then, the teen told police, that the man pulled the shotgun.

The prosecutor's office did not issue a warrant for ethnic intimidation, saying "it would muddle the issue."

Then there was the racial epithet written on the garage door of Channel 2 newscaster Huel Perkins and his wife, who have lived in Birmingham for 14 years.

This was misspelled, but no mistaking in what it said: "No niggers in Birmingham."

To Perkins, it was unpleasant but not unexpected. "My wife and I grew up in Louisiana in a segregated society. I've dealt with it all my life."

"No matter where you live, what position you hold or how much mon-



Judith Doner Berne

ey you make, if you're black, you always have to deal with something like this."

• Last was Gordon Sparks' desperate campaign to gain victory in Wednesday's primary race among five Republicans to represent the area which includes Troy and Bir-

mingham in the state Senate.

Sparks conjured up racist images on last-minute handouts with his reference to "Cross District Schools of Choice — Sound like busing without the buses — Mike Bouchard likes the idea."

And, another handout proclaimed: "When you cross district lines, kids from Detroit can go to schools in Troy, Birmingham, Royal Oak . . . Or, kids from these suburbs could go to Detroit Schools."

SPARKS SHOULD BE ashamed at the overtones he deliberately provokes.

He should be censured by organizations like the Birmingham-

Bloomfield race relations group, the NAACP, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, school districts and city commissions, as he deserves to be by the voters at the polls.

Talk about ethnic intimidation. His phrasology may be more subtle than the dialogue between a white doctor and black teen or the words scrawled so blatantly on the Perkins' garage, but they are just as dangerous.

Judith Doner Berne is assistant managing editor for the Oakland County editions of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

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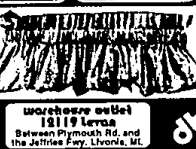
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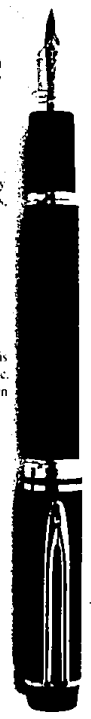
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