

from our readers

Mercy not a public school

To the editor:

Re: The Nov. 7 editorial, "Ah, election! Council races were fun despite stupidity at the end."

You complain that Farmington public high schools held a mock election and didn't release information on the results until after the real elections. You said the candidates were afraid the parents might be swayed by their kids.

Whether or not this was the public high schools' reason really does not matter. They do need a local paper telling them how to win their elections which are a worthwhile exercise in civics.

What bothered me about the section on the schools was not that the public high schools delayed announcing their election results but that the Observer noted that "... once again Mercy High, the all-girl Catholic school, wasn't included in the mock election."

Don't you realize Mercy is not a public high school? Mercy is free to hold mock elections any time they choose. However, how relevant would the Farmington/Farmington Hills issues be to girls who commute in from the larger metropolitan area?

What is important is that you, as editor of a paper, recognize private schools (whether church related or not) are not part of the public school system.

Carol Godwin,
Farmington

cil. I also pledge that my continued efforts and future goals will have the community in its best interest.

Andrew Rackowski,
Farmington Hills

A winner says thanks

To the editor:

As the campaign signs, campaign literature, local coverage of issues on cable and the articles in the local newspaper (made into the past, I look optimistically at our future).

First, I would like to thank my many supporters and campaign helpers during this past election process. Elections are not won by individuals but rather by the belief and commitment of those people who believe in their candidate's ability and qualifications.

It has proved to be a rewarding experience for my wife and family and offered us an opportunity to meet and discuss concerns with residents in the various neighborhoods.

The past two months of intensive local campaigning has reinforced my belief that Farmington is a great place to live and that throughout our community there is a great pride in the belief that Farmington is a special place. To all the residents who had the faith to vote for this candidate, I owe you my thanks, and to those who may have considered me, I pledge to you my commitment to do the best job for you, my employees.

As a council member, I will strive to win your respect and continue to have an open ear to your concerns and issues of importance.

THESE COMING years will truly prove to be a challenge as hopefully our economy picks up and faith in our economic health improves. The city of Farmington has made, I believe, great progress in the past decade and the coming decade offers the same bright promises and improvements to our quality of life.

Your city council can not operate in a vacuum with little participation from the residents. Council must hear your concerns and complaints, if so deserving, so I would extend an open invitation to you, the residents, to attend even one council meeting in the coming year and see your local government in operation.

In closing, I would like to reflect on the fact that in any race there are winners and losers and I have experienced both sides. I am truly sorry that Ralph Yoder (Mr. Farmington) had to lose.

My dearest congratulations to the elected and continued friendship and support for those that aren't on council.

His commitment and devotion to the city and residents of Farmington were immeasurable. I hope that as time goes on, his loss will actually turn into his gain of a rewarding and fulfilling retirement with his wife Margaret.

In my view, Ralph will always be Farmington's number one citizen and I thank him for the almost 30 years of dedicated service to the community and the thousands of decisions that he made to make our community what it is today. As a friend, Betty, my sons, and I wish him all the best in years to come.

Arnold Campbell,
Farmington

their pledge that there be "no child or senior without a Christmas."

By giving a little bit of themselves to sell Goodfellows papers on the street and in the shopping centers, they make their dream a reality.

And so, each year, they make Christmas even more meaningful. That's why they care.

I would like to give special thanks to all of you caring people who sell papers and provide support services during this community effort.

And to those who have contributed to Goodfellows paper sales. Thank you because this is what Christmas is all about.

Bob Rock,
paper sales chairman

All about the Goodfellows

To the editor:

Who are those men and women that brave the cold, rain and snow (or sunshine) to see that we get our Christmas Edition Goodfellows paper?

What kind of people would stand in the middle of the street and dodge traffic for hours so we can get our copy?

Why do they care so much about getting it to us?

I can tell you that the real backbone of the Goodfellows paper sales includes the Farmington Hills fire fighters and police and the Farmington Public Safety Department.

It also includes members of the Exchange Club and Rotary Club; the Kiwanis and Lions Clubs; Farmington Area Jaycees, Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce, Elks, Optimists, Salvation Army and the Farmington Public Schools.

They are everyone around you. That's who they are.

THEY ARE the kind of people that are your next door neighbors and the people that live down the street. You shop at some of their stores or count on them to be there when you have a crisis.

Some you know well, others you've never met.

Even if they don't know you, they still care. That's what kind of people they are.

Only they can tell you for sure, but one thing they all have in common is

Waste vote 'a sham'

To the editor:

The Nov. 5 referendum on the Oakland County Solid Waste Plan was a sham. Incinerator proponents used dishonest advertising and forced an unacceptable choice on the voter in order to get a "yes" vote on the solid waste bond, and it worked.

By manipulating the voter, the county is now authorized to build an incinerator that has not been shown to be needed and that will add pollutants to the air and water of Oakland County.

Despite EMEAC's position opposing incineration, the so-called "Committee For Responsible Solid Waste Management," a group of incinerator devotees, listed EMEAC as a supporter in campaign brochures that were mailed out all over the county. There was no accident here.

Deceived voters went to the polls where they were faced with an unacceptable choice: support the combination of recycling and incineration or nothing at all.

The mercury showing up in nearby lakes is reason enough to put off burning trash until a way is found to deal with heavy metals in the waste stream.

Oakland County should rectify the wrong that was done to Oakland County voters by launching a full scale waste reduction, reuse, recycling and composting program. Disposal technology may be necessary, but first we need to have reason to trust the claims that incineration will be safe for human health and the environment.

Elizabeth Harris,
executive director
East Michigan Environmental
Action Council

Roepers become leaders to gifted

I KNEW I WAS IN Roeper Country when the two cars with bumpers most adjacent hosted stickers saying "Now that's gifted" and "Think globally, act locally."

And, of course, I was. It was the second day of a two-day "Sharing the Leadership" conference held at Somerset Inn in Troy last week celebrating the 50th anniversary of the national gifted children based in Bloomfield Hills and founded by George and Annetta Roeper in 1941.

I can't remember when I first heard of Roeper, sometime I guess in my childhood. So when we moved back to the Detroit area, specifically to West Bloomfield nearly 20 years ago, and both families directly across the street — the Benays' and the Friedmans — sent their children there, I had a certain familiarity with it.

Coincidentally, three of those four kids turned out to be attorneys, with the fourth still an undergraduate at UCLA with an opportunity to make it four for four, although she appears headed for business school.

It is no secret in the local academic community that tiny Roeper (last year's graduating class numbered 19) has had a tough time since the Roepers retired — in the head-to-head competition for students, particularly against the financially well-endowed Cranbrook Educational Community, Detroit Country Day, which has become a giant in sports as well as in academics, and against gifted programs in the more financially secure public schools.

STILL, THE FOUNDATION that the Roepers laid, which has generally been carried on by their educational descendants, has kept the school in the forefront of gifted education and well-regarded by even its direct competitors, the private and public schools in Birmingham and the Bloomfields.

Its Journal, the "Roeper Review," a Journal on Gifted Education," includes an editorial advisory board and contributing editors from across the country.

The conference drew 200 educators from more than 25 school districts, including from this area: Bloomfield Hills, West Bloomfield, Troy, Rochester, Garden City and Livonia. Private schools such as Cranbrook attended, as well as representatives from the Oakland, Ma-



Judith Doner
Berne

comb and Washburn Intermediate districts, the Detroit Public Schools and Miami University of Ohio.

Keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. Earnest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in Princeton, N.J., and senior fellow of the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University, only the tip of his iceberg of posts and honors. And, as he jokingly chided conference chairman and middle school director Ernestine Sanders — "You forgot to mention I was president of my eighth grade class."

As might be expected, Boyer's educational scheme is in sync with Roeper's, which he called "a model for the nation — a truly splendid institution which has completed 50 years in an atmosphere that's global."

A PROponent of global education, Boyer proposes that "We are so preoccupied with our separations and divisions, we are tending toward tribalism."

Boyer reminds that the purposes of education are to affirm the uniqueness of every individual ("Many students drop out because no one noticed they dropped in") and create a climate in our schools where students realize they are deeply dependent on each other ("Community service programs in every school").

It was heartwarming that the Roepers, who now live in Oakland, Calif., could be part of the conference. She, at 75, radiates a beauty both outer and inner, while her husband shows the signs of recent illness.

It is ironic that exactly 50 years ago, George Roeper led his wife out of Germany to the United States, escaping the Nazis. Last month, Annetta Roeper led her husband out of their Oakland home, escaping the brush fires that later destroyed it.

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

Write-in says thanks

To the editor:

We now have a full council, elected by the citizens on Nov. 5. I was not one of those chosen to serve the community, but had an outstanding outpouring of support as a write-in candidate.

I also think it's my responsibility and sincere pleasure to thank all of the individuals who helped, advised and prayed for my success. All of this ended in success, meaning we came out of this election with a better feeling for the city and the election process.

My dearest congratulations to the elected and continued friendship and support for those that aren't on council.

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