

points of view

Smart fans wait for fair weather

By Ralph R. Echinaw
staff writer

NOW THAT THE Auburn Hills Lions have extracted themselves from the gooey morass of ineptitude, casual football fans are once again the subject of contempt from the "true" fans who claim to have worshipped the pussycats through embarrassing loss after embarrassing loss.

It happens every time. A team that's been down longer than Jacques Cousteau turns into Norman Schwartzkopf before you can say Bobby Layne and every Tom, Dick and Harry who devoted half his life to fruitless fandom complains about all the "fair weather fans."

The idea seems to be to place oneself on a higher moral plane. If that's possible where football is concerned, and make pretentious statements concerning the allegedly duplicitous nature of the handwagons's most recent passengers.

Somehow, the "true" fans feel vindicated when their team starts en-

joying success after eons in the primordial slime. But why on earth is it fashionable to be proud of waiting your time, hope and federal reserve notes on a gang of goons who couldn't tackle their own grandmothers?

IMAGINE THE LIONS of a few years ago playing their last home game. Both Detroit and its opponent, perhaps Tampa Bay, have enough losses between them to make General Motors look like a well-run company.

And there are 40,000 people in the Silverdome, most of whom paid \$20 to get in, \$5 on parking and \$25 on beer, nachos and hot dogs. Then the Lions lose again. I don't know about you, but I can think of better ways to spend \$50.

Now that the Lions have "restored the roar," all the people who faithfully watched them lose for so many years are bragging about it, using phrases like "thick and thin" and "the lean years" and "dedication." Isn't that like:

Ralph Echinaw

- Putting yourself up and boasting that you were buying Ford cars when quality was job 2?
- Seeing "Hudson Hawk" 15 times, thinking it might turn out differently?
- Drinking Blatz beer because you hope the taste will get better?
- Refusing to divorce your malevolent spouse because he or she has never actually put you in the hospital?
- Banging your head against a wall because it feels so good when you stop?
- I'd bet sound money, if there were such a thing in this country, that the majority of sports fans are "fair weather fans," and for good reason. It makes no sense to jog for your health if it's ruining your knees. Even that handle, "fair weather fans," although it's universally used in derogatory fashion, connotes good sense. Fair weather fans at least have the sense to get inside when it's raining. Lions and dogs.
- And who were the people, as recently as a year ago, who booted the Lions' every interception, every fumble, every blown coverage and every stalled drive?
- Could they have been the group of stalwart disciples who are now reminding you of how "faithful" they've been?
- So if you're a "fair weather fan," don't let the "true" fans make you feel guilty about your reborn ardor. Tell 'em you have enough sense not to back a loser.
- Ralph Echinaw is a reporter for the West Bloomfield Eccentric.

Bright blue bins cause red face

TUESDAY IS TRASH DAY in our West Bloomfield neighborhood. Now that's not normally a major event requiring a whole lot of advance planning or reason to be nervous.



Judith Doner Berne

But I was. You see West Bloomfield was about to begin its voluntary curbside recycling program. And I wasn't ready despite the fact that: a. I am an announced advocate of recycling.

b. I had signed up for the program.

c. I had, sitting in the garage, the regulation 18-gallon bright blue bin which one day over the holidays showed up on my driveway like an orphan waiting to be taken in.

The truth was I had misplaced the information mailed out several weeks before by the township, and: a. I wasn't quite sure when the recycling actually started.

b. I wasn't quite sure what to do.

AT OUR HOUSE, I have always been the one to put out the trash. You know how, over the years, you divvy up chores? Well, early on in our marriage, somehow the trash became one of mine.

Dog on the leash from the right arm, trash bag dragged from the left arm, I took out the garbage the night before our first pickup in January with an uneasy feeling.

It was dark, so I didn't really notice what my neighbors had put out. Maybe I didn't want to know.

But Tuesday morning, as I drove out of my driveway and down the street, I cringed in embarrassment. About a third of the houses had THAT BRIGHT BLUE BIN outside, and some of those had bundles of newspapers next to them, either neatly tied or bagged.

My neighbors knew, and they: a. Hadn't come out in print as an advocate.

b. Didn't work for a newspaper, which keeps up with those things.

NEXT WEEK, I silently vowed, it's going to be different. I called the township to ask for instructions. I also happened upon the printed information which I had put aside, but couldn't remember where it was.

Sunday, I got down to serious recycling.

I combed the kitchen trash can, scouting up empty plastic and glass containers — absolutely no metal was to be found.

The first two plastic containers, after much scrutiny, turned out to be No. 6's. Oh dear, you can only use Nos. 1 and 2. "Are you sure?" I asked my husband. Yep.

I finally had one clear glass jar (acceptable), one green glass bottle (acceptable), and one plastic container which had the right number on it. (We don't eat at home a lot.)

"They're going to laugh at you when they open the bin and find only three things in it," he laughed. "Why not wait until next week?"

"No way. I'll just put the newspapers right in there too."

WHY? WE HAVE MORE than our share of newspapers. We get the Free Press, the Wall Street Journal and since part of my job is to read every newspaper in our twice-a-week, 12-paper chain, a lot of those come home as nighttime reading.

My husband, late last year, had purchased a wooden crate complete with string made especially for recycling newspapers. I had every intention of using it, then carting the newspapers to the recycling center, but had not followed through.

But now, it was there, ready and waiting for our new lifestyle.

"I feel really good about putting out my garbage," my sister-in-law assured me. She lives in Birmingham which, like a number of our communities, began curbside recycling last year.

I know I'll feel good too, as soon as I can overcome my curbside anxieties.

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

TV Channel 2 did the right thing

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT'S due. I commend WJDR-TV Channel 2 for refusing, despite great pressure from several powerful sources, to run "The Little Drummer Boy" this past holiday season.



John Telford

An animated cartoon adaptation of the timeless Christmas story scheduled to run on Channel 2 as part of a national hookup, this version featured a Jewish character as the little drummer boy whose parents had been killed by evil Arab bandits.

It was a heavy-handed, unintelligent, poorly rendered, insensitive program that tried to trade on a well-loved song but had very little else going for it in terms of artistic merit.

The program depicted Arab-Americans in an inaccurate and brutally unfair light. All the negative Arab stereotypes were there in full evidence — the noses, the garb, the thievery, the violence.

It's almost inconceivable to me that in this day and age of increasing cultural diversity and cultural divisiveness, the top executives of a major American network could be ignorant or uncaring enough to consider

running such a program on national television.

THE AMERICAN people represent a great, wonderful, vibrant mosaic of races and religions and ethnic cultures.

If this country's television networks don't become sensitized enough to assume a leadership role in portraying each group in a respectful and dignified light, they will be guilty of contributing to a dangerous and growing divisiveness that's spreading across the land. All this, in an era when Americans all need to pull together — not apart.

The alarming successes of David Duke and other vicious demagogues like him make it abundantly clear that there is a vast and growing wave of resentment and prejudice among an as-yet-unknown but substantial number of Americans.

Programs like "The Little Drummer Boy" fan the flames of those prejudices and play right into the demagogues' hand.

Programs like "The Little Drummer Boy" fan the flames of those prejudices and play right into the demagogues' hand. I presume this was far from the network's intention. But we should all be proud that its affiliate station here recognized the danger and injustice in running the program and resisted pressure to do so.

I TAKE PARTICULAR pleasure in offering Channel 2 this praise, because in the recent past I didn't feel they were so deserving. During the 1989 Christmas season, the station ran a pious editorial condemning the new fair-to-all holiday policy I had initiated as assistant superintendent of Rochester Schools. The station also came out and filmed some stories on me when I and the Rochester

Board of Education were under heavy siege by parents who wanted me fired because of that policy and for other similar reasons.

The station gave the angry parents plenty of air time, but they edited out nearly all of my explanatory comments and made it almost appear that I was some kind of bigot. What I was doing was fighting bigotry.

To give the TV people the benefit of the doubt, I don't believe they had taken the time to research the situation sufficiently to quit grasp which direction I was coming from on all of the issues.

I relish their recent stand on "Drummer Boy." Channel 2's square again with me.

Credit where credit's due: John Telford, a Rochester Hills resident, recently was assistant superintendent in the Rochester School District. He previously was executive director for secondary education in the Plymouth Canton district.

Board of Education were under heavy siege by parents who wanted me fired because of that policy and for other similar reasons.

The station gave the angry parents plenty of air time, but they edited out nearly all of my explanatory comments and made it almost appear that I was some kind of bigot. What I was doing was fighting bigotry.

To give the TV people the benefit of the doubt, I don't believe they had taken the time to research the situation sufficiently to quit grasp which direction I was coming from on all of the issues.

I relish their recent stand on "Drummer Boy." Channel 2's square again with me.

Credit where credit's due: John Telford, a Rochester Hills resident, recently was assistant superintendent in the Rochester School District. He previously was executive director for secondary education in the Plymouth Canton district.

Dairy Mart

PRICES EFFECTIVE THRU FEBRUARY 1, 1992 AT PARTICIPATING STORES

JANUARY SPECIALS!

CONTINENTAL DELI

GLAZED HAM

AND WATER PRODUCT

\$2.19

LB.

CONTINENTAL DELI PICKLE LOAF...LB.....\$2.59

DAIRY MART * FLAVOR OF THE MONTH

PREMIUM LIGHT ICE MILK

ALL FLAVORS

\$1.99

HALF GALLON

<p>BREWSTER</p> <h3 style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">EDEL LACE SWISS CHEESE</h3> <h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">\$3.49</h2> <p>LB.</p> <p>HOFFMAN HOT PEPPER CHEESE...LB.....\$3.89</p>	<p>TROPICANA PURE</p> <h3 style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">PREMIUM ORANGE JUICE</h3> <h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">\$2.19</h2> <p>HALF GALLON</p> <p>FRITO LAY RUFFLES POTATO CHIPS, 6.5 Oz., \$1.49</p>	<p>SANDRIDGE GOURMET</p> <h3 style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;">POTATO SALAD</h3> <h2 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">99¢</h2> <p>LB.</p> <p>SANDRIDGE GOURMET CHICKEN SALAD...\$4.59</p>
---	---	--

DAIRY MART * FARM FRESH

1% MILK

\$1.99

GALLON

TRABCO WINDSHIELD WASHER FLUID 2 LITER

FILL N' TOSS.....89¢

RETIRE IN STYLE

Spindle Bed Now Only	\$696
60" Dresser Now Only	\$932
Verticle Mirror Now Only	\$271
Chest on Chest Now Only	\$957

Process our business cards, contracts, check papers, using our weight watcher, techniques so you can enjoy a lifetime of pleasant dreams.

PA PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE
It's what you've wanted all along.

Stewart-Glenn

2600 N. Woodward Ave. 332-8348
Just South of Square Lake Rd. of Bloomfield Hills Open Mon., Thurs., Fri., 10-9 p.m.
Fine Furniture Since 1917 Tues., Wed., Sat. 10-5:30 p.m.

Sale Ends January 22