

OBSERVER POINT

Another Big Boom, But No One's Debating

By Philip H. Power

Don't look now, folks, but here it comes again. In this case, "it" happens to be another flood of people headed directly for the communities in this area.

city and the more expensive the services), or the furrowed brow of your local government leaders (the more people, the more problems).

something left over to get a car to commute to work. Then there was another wave in the early '60's, when the post-war baby boomers, having kids, and moving out into the suburbs.

tion dates in the early 1970's. WHAT DOES ALL this mean for this area? Better transportation, both into Detroit and to the west. A renewed flow of people from Detroit, who now will be able to use the expressway to get downtown to work. A rush for business and

commercial development along the new expressway routes. Any way you look at it, it means people—a lot of them. And people mean problems. Taxes. Schools. Opportunities. It seems odd, in this election year, that the candidates in this area aren't talking much about

the impact of these two expressways. Their construction could be the most important event in the development of this area in the past 15 years, but you won't hear much about it. Perhaps that's just another reason why the voters are frustrated with their politicians this year.

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editorial



TOGETHERNESS—People get out of the cities and suburbs in summer to enjoy the wide open spaces, but sometimes they find themselves more crowded than ever when they camp in a state park. Proposals 3 and 4 on your Nov. 5 ballot, if you approve, would permit

the state to issue \$435 million in bonds to improve recreation facilities and fight water pollution. The Observer Newspapers heartily endorse both proposals. Vote "yes" on Proposals 3 and 4.

This Is The Week That...

A Fighter Dies At 87,678

By Don Hoenschell

It is time, dear friends, in the softest and most reverent of tones, to inform the next of kin and discuss a suitable memorial in lieu of floral tributes, as we say.

The 1963 Chevrolet died poignantly in a burst of oil and water, as though blessing itself for an honorable life and heading in against life hereafter.

It died trying and gasping at the side of a freeway as a rescue crew worked feverishly to save it with water-to-radiator resuscitation.

Dearly beloved, it had been ailing in the steering mechanism, and the motor gasped like those anti-cigarett commercials. It had spent 1,387.6 milbs in a coma.

THERE ARE THOSE who would say this beautiful machine of wheels and wondrous things in its gizzard, was martyred. But sainthood takes time and more paperwork than we care to even contemplate now.

At the time of its death on the freeway, this car had traveled life's highway 87,678 miles. It is difficult even to say it was used when it came into my possession. Actually, it wasn't bought. It was adopted. Matter of fact, the first day, it blinked its headlights and said:

"Whither thou goes I will go." Later, when we got friendlier, and more familiar, it quipped: "I go where you go, amigo."

It didn't want to die, folks. When stricken with its final illness, this car had been rolling along at 85, the wind whistling defiantly through a rusted door. This car was a fighter.

It had shaken off the stalls, the vapor locks, the battery ailments and other childhood diseases. There was the universal joint

that went clunk at stop lights. The muffler was beginning to go, but this car was not a hypochondriac. It suffered terribly. It would only accept a tailpipe. Ah-h-h. There wasn't a dry eye in the Midas shop. Cars like this don't go into a long period of decline. They die with their boots on, as it were.

And so it was. THERE WERE premonitions that we'll discuss at the wake. There was a new noise a few hours before, a kind of braying, like a Volkswagen crying from the junkyard. A siren song, maybe. Somewhere toward the right rear, there was an occasional chim—perhaps a summons to vesper.

Mechanical people will scoff and say a rusted hole in the framiancast caused the howl and that a beer bottle in the trunk chimed against the jackhandle. But we who loved her know better.

She leaves friends and a great pride. She wore no man's bumper sticker. The state park fee decal and an outdated parking ramp sticker were her love beads and she wore them proudly, as a dowager might powder her hair.

There was no false pride or bravado in this car. When she fell badly, she sounded that way. An honest car.

Now it has gone to be with its honorable ancestors in that great automobile showroom in the sky, there to enjoy a serene eternity with the ghostly giants of the past.

Sleep well, friend. There'll never be another you, ever. Rust . . . er, rest in peace.

THAT'S BECAUSE OF

plans now virtually complete for two new expressways that will run right through this area. One will go east-west along Schoharf Road, running right into downtown Detroit on one end and hooking north of Plymouth and joining M-14 and then US-23 on the other end. The other freeway will link I-94 on the south, run north along Haggerty Road, take a slice out of Livonia above Six Mile Road, and then link with I-696 near Farmington.

Sources in the Highway Department say that money for these two roads is already available. Land acquisition along the rights of way is taking place now. Engineers are hoping for comple-

Bob Selwa Writes

The Horizon Gets Choked Off

Metropolitan Detroit is now an urban area of four million people. That's a one million gain in the past decade, and there is no sign of it slowing up. If anything, the growth of metropolitan—and we are in the nation's fifth largest metropolitan area—will accelerate with the re-birth of the central cities, the expansion of the suburbs, and the depopulation of the farms.

These are the great forces at work today in an America that has more urban dwellers now than it had total population two decades ago.

The farm boy has become the urbanite because of the attractions of the city and because of the shift of work opportunities. Thomas Jefferson's America of the free and independent rural dweller disappeared with Henry Ford's assembly line. Mass production became a reality, the people developed a taste for the goods of the affluent society, and only an urban society could keep up with the new economic demands.

TWO DECADES AGO Detroit was the urban area and the northwestern area represented today by Livonia and other communities was rural. Today some farms are still left in Livonia, but most of the city's 36 square miles have been transformed into new housing.

Two decades ago the outer limits of Detroit were 16 miles away from its downtown; today the metropolis stretches all the way to Wixom, double that distance. And the metropolis now stretches to Mount Clemens to the northeast, to Westland and Wayne to the west and to Flat Rock and Gibraltar to the south.

Transportation in a way has kept up with the expansion. A decade ago, traffic was clogged; and it took from 30 minutes to an hour to transverse the stretches of the metropolis. Today, traffic still is clogged, but now the urban area is more spread out and cut through with expressways—and it still takes 30 minutes to an hour to transverse the metropolis.

With each new expressway, the traffic is relieved, but with each

new Westland, Livonia and Warren, more traffic is added, so that it all balances out. Urban man's challenges never end. In New York City—the largest metropolitan area—a person could travel across Manhattan at an average speed of 15 miles per hour at the turn of the century. Today with all the progress of civilization the average speed has become 11 miles per hour.

From the central city to the older suburbs like Dearborn to the new suburbs like Livonia and Westland, and finally to exurbia, a person emerges out in the farmlands. That's near Ann Arbor these days—and in not too distant a future Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor will be interconnected parts of metropolitan Detroit, just as Royal Oak, Birmingham,

Troy and Bloomfield Hills have brought in Pontiac.

MAN'S NEED FOR recreation and for open space will continue and even grow, and fortunately we in Michigan have the Great Lakes and forests and farmlands of the north country. The Upper Peninsula remains a great wilderness area, and the northern Lower Peninsula is a recreational land.

Within the metropolis the remaining open spaces of Livonia, Westland and other communities stand as reminders of a human need. People need a horizon to look out to, need to feel and inhale the wind blowing over the fields, and need the thrill of viewing a sunset.

Even in a metropolis—and perhaps even more so.

Emory Daniels Writes...

Those Votes For Higher Taxes Are Cast At Bargaining Table

Tax increases are never decided by vote of the people on election day. The votes are cast months before tax proposals are even placed on the ballot.

A vote for higher taxes is cast the minute a laborer carries a picket sign demanding higher wages. From the moment the pay hike is negotiated, the events resulting in tax increases are economic, mechanical steps which are inevitable.

Management passes on the cost of the salary raises to the consumer by raising prices with cost of living booming upwards.

The average citizen seldom realizes that school districts are also consumers and must waver in the marketplace just as homeowners do. When the trades strike, the schools pay more for electricians, plumbers, contractors, etc. When auto workers strike, the price of buses and

school fleet cars rise.

EVERY TIME one man gets a pay raise that is greater than the cost of living and productivity, it shows up in increased operating and building costs for schools.

When operating costs rise faster than the tax base, then the tax rate must go up. So the school board places a millage question on the ballot.

And every time a millage increase is proposed, school boards must "explain" why the additional mills are needed. Why? The explanation should be self-evident.

Indeed, school boards should receive an "explanation" from labor and management on why increased wages were necessary beyond the cost of living and productivity. But, instead, they are asked to explain why more money is needed. Many school districts in Wayne

County have or are approaching the legal limit on how many mills can be levied. Schools are in a critical state because the inflationary trend is continuing and the day is very near when not enough revenue can be raised for operation.

THE CRITICAL financial problems facing school districts throughout the state must be met immediately. Delays will result in more "Inkaters" and more "Nankin Mills."

The entire school system needs restructuring, and a new means of financing schools must be devised.

Schools are living in the marketplace and, under the present structure, just can't survive. As consumers, their pocket-books are emptying and property taxes alone won't fill them. The State Legislature must act this year.

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