

## Family Day Event defines community

**S**ure, everyone's busy. This is late summer in the suburbs, after all. If folks are not about to leave on vacation, they must have recently returned from one. The kids have soccer practice, and the parents get to drive them. There're rounds of golf to shoot, green lawns to manicure, back-to-school stuff to buy... and, of course, livings to be made.

But we're hoping that a goodly number of Farmington-area people will find time to check out Farmington's City Park. Shawassse and Power roads, this coming Saturday afternoon and evening. There's a special event coming up. It's Family Day in the Park and it's part of a year-long celebration of the 125th anniversary of Farmington's incorporation as a village.

Family Day is important to the many volunteers who have been working so hard these last few months to mine this rich vein of history that runs through the community we know as Farmington.

Farmington's special. They're just not making any more Farmingtons. It has this history, this sense of community, which is missing in so many of the subdivision communities that have popped up around the older core cities.

Family Day harkens back to a time when Farmington was more a small town unto itself than a suburb of Detroit. Life was lived at a slower pace then. There were fewer cars and TV

wasn't around to entertain.

People in places like Farmington entertained themselves close to home, and that seems to be the idea behind Family Day in the Park, sort of an old-time town picnic.

The day will start with an old-timers baseball game at 1:30 p.m. Then comes something called Meadow Muffin Mania — complete with live cow. If the cow plays on the square you've purchased, you win big bucks!

From 3-5 p.m. there'll be free events for children: games, crafts, a puppet show and a miniature boat race on the brook that runs through the park. Later, a historic dance demonstration, a chicken barbecue and square dancing will be held.

Muffin Mania and the barbecue need tickets purchased in advance, but there's still plenty of fun to be had at the event. So, come Saturday afternoon, switch off that TV, grab the kids and head for City Park. You might get a taste of what Farmington used to be like years ago.

Family Day in the Park highlights several projects staged this year to celebrate Farmington's 125th anniversary. Villagehood came in May 1867, in case anyone asks.

The next — and probably last — event will be a tour of historic homes Sept. 19-20. It'll close out the Summer of Farmington in 1992. Aren't we lucky to have so many fine people to lead the celebration for us?

## Appointment recognizes trend

**G**ov. John Engler has done the right thing by appointing the first black judge to the Oakland County Circuit bench.

The historic appointment of Denise Langford-Morris is testimony to the growing number of minority residents in Oakland County.

Langford-Morris, a West Bloomfield resident, took office Aug. 3. She is the third black judge appointed by Engler to courts throughout Michigan in the last few months.

Langford-Morris fills the unexpired term of

Alice Gilbert who resigned from the circuit bench after 16 years in her Congress.

Gilbert has made a little history of her own. She was the first woman judge on the Oakland court — back in 1976. She paved the way for Hilda Gags, Jessica Cooper and Deborah Tyner, and now for Langford-Morris — four women on the 16-member court.

Welcome, Langford-Morris. Justice in Oakland County should be better for having you on board.

## Suburbs need healthy core city

**S**uburban isolation. It's a concept western Wayne and Oakland County residents have honed to near perfection in the 25 years since "race riot" and "white flight" became part of our lexicon.

In fact, people out here wear it like a badge of honor. The more distance between suburban life and anything remotely connected to Detroit the better. We don't need them and they don't want us, the argument goes.

Sorry, but we do. The proof is in the numbers. A new study shows a distinct correlation between the economic health of cities and their suburbs.

Researchers at the University of Louisville looked at per capita income between 1979 and

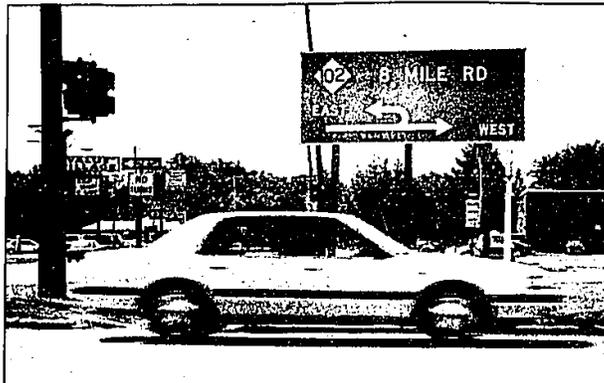
1987 in 59 major metropolitan areas across the U.S. They found that strong or revitalized core cities spun off suburban wealth in greater proportion than decaying central cities.

Metro Detroit income slipped from sixth to 11th during the eight years, with future projections putting Detroit in 15th place.

To put it bluntly: Birmingham and Livonia residents aren't making as much as their counterparts in suburban Baltimore and Milwaukee.

Restoring Detroit's economic health is a regional concern. While suburban residents may be hard put to force changes in Detroit's political leadership, a little more interest in what happens in the city isn't too much to ask for.

### Building bridges



Helping out: Successful suburbs can only be helped by a thriving core city, and only hurt by divisiveness and racism. For an explanation of what the suburbs and Detroit can do for one another, see today's editorial on the lower left portion of this page.

### LETTERS

#### Views on abortion

**P**hilip Power's comments are always pertinent and perceptive, but in his discussion of sorting out the individual trees from the overall pattern of the forest (Aug. 13), he missed the tree.

I really doubt that I was the only voter who voted for Joe Knollenberg in spite of (rather than because of) his position on abortion. There are other important issues.

After considering what each of the candidates had to say in the voter guides, the fact that Bill Broomfield gave Knollenberg his endorsement, and the mud-slinging the others engaged in turned me off to both of them, Knollenberg was the obvious choice.

One can only hope that should the abortion issue come to a vote again, our congressman would vote the desire of his electorate.

My views on the abortion issue are:

- The decision to abort is usually arrived at after much agonizing by the pregnant woman after considering the physical, emotional and fi-

nanacial health and well-being of herself, immediate family members and often the fetus.

- Not one of us has the right to make or influence that decision for someone else.
- The only part of this issue we have any right to decide is if and/or when public monies should pay for them. (And only because unfortunately some women seem to consider abortion a form of birth control).
- Roe vs Wade should be allowed to stand.
- The day men can bear babies is the day they should be allowed an opinion or control.

Bea Scaglione, Farmington Hills

**Opinions are to be shared:** We welcome your ideas, as do your neighbors. That's why we offer this space on a weekly basis for opinions in your own words. We will help by editing for clarity. To assure authenticity, we ask that you sign your letter and provide a contact telephone number. Letters should be mailed to: Editor, The Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336.

## State needs politicians' wisdom

**M**ARQUETTE COUNTY, MICH. — Up here, it's easy to feel mighty far away from things.

The wind does sing in the pines and the trout rises to the fly. The moon comes up, yet again, full and brilliant over the still lake. And the loon calls still float, haunting and shrill, on the quiet breeze.

Michigan, my Michigan. We so often get tangled up in the day to day aggravation of living in Michigan — especially "downstate" as the Yoopers say here — that we forget just how extraordinarily fortunate we are to live in this Pleasant Peninsula.

Consider.

Last week, the University of Michigan's Center for the Study of Youth Policy released a study showing that Detroit ranked number one and Flint number four for cities over 100,000 in the nation for the highest percentage of children growing up in poverty.

What a terrible place Michigan is, one wants to say.

True, but consider the same national rankings for lowest percentage of children growing up in poverty. Livonia ranked 11th. Sterling Heights came in eighth, while Ann Arbor was 16th.

What a fine state we live in, one wants to say. Or take economics.

It now seems clear the North American Free Trade Agreement, allowing companies to do business in the U.S., Canada and Mexico without customs duties on thousands of items and without masses of paperwork, will be completed by the trade negotiators. Congress will have to pass the final agreement before it goes into effect, which will likely take at least a year.

In the meantime, the Free Trade Agreement is either the greatest disaster to hit Michigan since Coleman Young or the best thing since the speckled trout.

"We see it as a prescription for massive job losses in auto and auto parts," says the UAW's Alan Reuther. "The United States is the only country left without any auto policy to keep any auto employment." He'll get a lot of agreement around the vicinity of the Willow Run plant.

In the face of a powerful economic competitor



PHILIP POWER

it the European Common Market, an American free trade zone could increase competition and new market economies and bring as many as 175,000 new jobs for U.S. exports, according to the Institute for International Economics, a Washington think tank advocating the pact.

So what do I make of all this from the peace and beauty of the U.P., where the air is clear and the water clean?

Just this, Michigan, like most places, only more so, has a remarkable mixture of the happy and the mad, of assets and deficits. Within our boundaries we go from the poverty of Detroit to the affluence of Livonia, from the fear of the auto industry to the opportunity of the entrepreneur and the visionary.

The trick is to make the most of the best while trying to fix the worst.

And what irks me is that, in the face of Michigan's mix of crisis and opportunity, our political leadership seems so inwardly turned and so fixated on gaining narrow partisan advantage.

Both Democratic and Republican state conventions take place this weekend. It would be nice to hear from both of them some sense of vision, some program describing how to take advantage of our assets and how to overcome our deficits, something higher than narrow posturing.

Maybe it's just the clear air up here. But I do wish somebody would cut through the fog.

Philip Power is chairman of the company that owns this newspaper.

### COMMUNITY VOICE

**QUESTION:**  
 What do you remember about your first car?

We asked this question at the Elias Big Boy restaurant on Farmington Road north of Eight Mile.



"It was a Pontiac Gran Prix and I drove it 10 years. It was a good, sturdy car."  
 June Lollar  
 Livonia



"I had a 1987 Plymouth Turismo. I liked everything about it."  
 Dewayne Finkles  
 Detroit



"A Pontiac Gran Prix, an '82, and I loved the way it handled."  
 Wendy Pennington  
 Dearborn Heights



"A 1933 Chevrolet four-door sedan. I loved it. Why? It was my first car."  
 Eljer Gotdreg  
 Farmington Hills

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