POINTS OF VIEW

Why he supports Farmington library proposal

n average, more than 1,000 peo-ple daily use the current Farm-ington Hills Branch Library, making it one of the most heavily used public libraries in the metropolitan

In the fiscal year ended June 30, we had a total circulation of more than 715,000 items, double the circulation of

715,000 items, double the circulation of 20 years ago.
Our library service is well-respected, receiving both national and state accolades. However, our success, coupled with the population growth in Farmington Hills, has resulted in overcrowded shelves, lack of public seating and tight parking during the peak hours of use.
The library election of Aug. 10 offers our residents the opportunity to vote for improved library facilities with a larger, new main library to replace the current Hills Branch. The library tax would assure that we have stable fi-

GUEST COLUMN

nancing to operate the larger library fa-

nancing to operate the larger library fa-cility.

In a recent letter to the editor, M.L.
Evans raises some legitimate resident concerns about extra tax burdens, non-resident use and future expansion.
Sources of Money: Eighty-three per-cent of our \$2.5 million operating budge-et is appropriated by the two cities from local property taxes. This revenue source represents 0.77 mills. (Twenty years ago, the library had one mill for library operations, voted by residents in Farmington Township and matched by the city of Farmington.)

If our tax proposal passes, the cities have agreed to reduce their tax levy by 0.77 mills, which they normally appro-priate to the library; therefore, the tax increase to operate an expanded library will be 0.33 mills.

The property taxes in Farmington and Farmington Hills are from two sources: residents, 60 percent; business community, 40 percent. The library board established a policy that anyone who lives, works or goes to school in our area is eligible for a local library card.

card.

In addition to money from overdue fines, video rentals, gifts and memorials, the library receives federal, state and county money to support library services. The library board has been fiscally responsible, operating efficiently and effectively with all sources of revenue.

Non-Resident Use: Of our total 715,000 items circulated, 10 percent are checked out by non-residents. Many of these non-residents are employed by the 3,000-just Farmington area businesses and, therefore, fall with the library board policy.

Because our library accepts federal

Because our library accepts federal grants, state aid and county penal fine

money, we feel justified in opening our doors to other non-resident users, so long as such use is not excessive from any one community.

We have reciprocal borrowing agreements with other Detroit area public libraries.

libraries.

Each month, 3,600 items are checked out at other libraries by Farmington/Farmington Hills residents; our relidents using these other libraries represent 6 percent of our total circulation. Reciprocal borrowing is an excellent means of resource-sharing for all public libraries.

Denying non-residents use of our library would jeopardize our own residents use of other public libraries in the metro area.

the metro area.

the metro area.

Planning for Our Future: The proposed new main library will be designed to accommodate growth for the next 20-30 years. The library board must resolve the current fack of space and plan to meet future unexpected

In response to the need for more specific information, election issues were fully discussed in the Friends of the Library InfoExchange newsletter, sent to every household in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

Farmington Hills.
In addition, the Mayor's Viewpoint cable TV program is dedicated to the library shallot proposals. On Aug. 4, the library board will respond to viewers questions in a live broadcast at 7:30 p.m. on cable channel 8.

p.m. on cable channel 8.

The public library, once considered
"the poor man's university," is unique
in our society to meet reading and information needs for residents of all
ages and at all stages in the lifetime. I'
hope that all residents will support the?
two ballot proposals to ensure our library's future.

Robert L. Plummer is the president of the Farmington Community Library's ... Board of Trustees.

LETTERS

No games, please

y husband and I were opponents of Proposal A because property taxes are deductible while sales taxes are not.
We also opposed it because it gave no guarantees to our children that the adults they trust to take care of them will provide them with an education which will give them the exposure to the technology necessary for them to compete and be successful in the 21st century.

century.
Obviously, the majority of voters in Michigan agreed with us.

What political games are being played in Lansing? Our legislators went against voter will and decided amongst themselves to reduce property

taxes. We were born midway through this

century and were married during this country's bicentennial year. We have a love of our nation and the principles upon which it was founded. How dare our elected officials slap their constituents in the face by overturning their will.

our elected oricels sup their constituents in the face by overturning their
will.

How dare these people presume to
play a political game with our children's and grandchildren's futures. Financing reforms must be made, indeed,
but let's not cut off the money from one
source without specifying an alternative game plan.

The alternate sources of revenue proposed are all tax increases: sales tax
and income tax. These were inherent in
Proposal A, which the voters rejected.
We are not idiots. We know something has to be done, but for our children's sake, don't do it in this manner.

When they learn Lincoln's Gettysberg Address, how do we explain to our

children that government "of the peo-ple, by the people, for the people" has perished from the face of the earth? Patricla A. Faletti, Farmington Hills

More needed

aving gone through the father phase and being well into the grandfather phase and through a long association with the Farmington Historical Museum, I have to disagree with the group of parents that want nothing but a basic 3R education for the children of the Farmington Public Schools.

My opposition becomes want action.

My opposition becomes very evident when they specifically attack the intro-duction of local history into the ele-

I will agree that it is very important that the children have a good basis in the 3Rs, but in today's world there is more to an education than the basis. One has to know where he is coming

more to an education than the basics. One has to know where he is coming from, what has gone into that background and how the past effects the present and the future.

History is a topic that for most of us we need an introduction and exposure before we become interested enough to follow on our own.

We host many third-grade classes at the museum, and it is a joyful experience to see the enthusiasm and the longing to learn what life may have been like a hundred years ago.

It is always a joy and a bit amazing to read the letters that come from the children and learn what items on display impressed them.

Fersonally, I am glad that I had a good basic introduction to the 3Rs in a

small rural school, but my life would ... have been very dull if I had not been ... exposed to the arts, history and some of the so-called extras.

Dick Carvell, Farmington

Opinions are to be shared: We wel-Opinions are to be shared: We wel-come 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 Familington Observer, 21898 Fami-ington Road, Familington 48336.

Tinkering with education failed to solve its problems

ast week the Legislature abolished the local school property tax, thereby yanking at least \$5.6 billion out of funding for Michigan's kindergarten through 12th grade

Contemplating the wreckage yields two con-flicting feelings.

My head says at last we have a chance to break through 25 years of futile argument about school financing and get something serious

My heart asks if those clowns in Lansing are really going to screw my son, Nathan, who en-ters sixth grade this fall.

First, for the head.

First, for the head.
There is absolutely no doubt that education in Michigan is a mess. Not only is there a tremendous disparity in per student funding between rich districts and poor ones, but overall the system today is educating 25 percent fewer kids than it was 15 years ago, costing 25 percent more per student (after inflation) and yielding declining test scores. declining test scores.

Attempts to find a way out have all failed, in part because each merely tinkered at the mar-gins (thereby allowing the lobbyists to kill anyhing useful) and in part because each failed to nk reform in finance to serious improvement link reform in finance to in educational quality.

Precisely because what the Legislature did last week is so radical, the pressure is on to produce far reaching remedies. Or so they say.

Already two large positions are being staked out, both based on relating spending to what kids actually learn.

One calls for "voucherizing" the entire sys-One calls for "voucherizing" the entire sys-tem, giving parents vouchers for a certain amount of money and relying on market forces to drive improvements in educational quality. The other urges creating a state-wide assess-ment system and linking funding for schools with performance against this standard.

Both are based on widely available informa-: Both are based on widely available informa-tion about student learning. This newspaper regularly publishes results of the MEAP tests, district by district, building by building. Noth-ing we have over done has aroused such intense reader interest.



My head concludes that the basis now exists for serious reform of our kindergarten through 12th grade system.

My heart reacts with the deepest possible skepticism for a number of reasons.

First, it hardly inspires confidence that even the apologists for what the Legislature did last week admit that our system of representative democracy can only function when faced with a crisis. Holding 1.8 million kids hostage to the legislative process is, well, scary.

legislative process is, well, scary.

Second, this issue is so complicated, so ideological and so infested with lobbyists representing so many special interests that it's hard to believe state government will act in time to prevent disaster. A telling indication of the Legislature's reluctance to discipline itself came when attempts to impose a deadline to come up with a financing plan before school starts in 1904 were all defeated. 1994 were all defeated.

Third, I'm old and grumpy, but my memory is still pretty good. And I remember two things that feel a lot like what happened last week.

The enormous tax cuts at the beginning of the Reagan Administration, masquerading as a stimulus to the economy, in fact provoked the disastrous ballooning of the deficit that still

■ The U.S. Army officer said during war in Victnam something along the line that "We had to destroy the village in order to save it."

Philip Power is chairman of the company that owns this newspaper. His touchtone phone num-ber is 953-2047 Ext. 1880.

Your opinions count...

Tell us and your neighbors what you think about the opinions aen us ann your meigneors want you tamk noont the dynimost expressed by writing a letter to the editor at: The Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336. Or, if you have a Touch-Tone® phone, you can leave a voice mail message for our columnists. Their numbers are listed at the end of each column.

Detroit's Best Eyewear Values With The Quality You Deserve!

899 DAILY WEAR SOFT CONTACTS, i **INCLUDES EXAM 1**

One pair of clear, daily wear soft contacts and complete contact lens exam. Contact lens prescription required. Complimentary care kit included.

Offer salid only at participating locations. So other coupons, discounts or insurance program benefits apply. Offer salid through

\$99 COMPLETE PAIR 1 OF SINGLE VISION **GLASSES**

WITH ONE OF PEARLE'S BEST LEWSES

599 a complete pair (frame & ienses) when you purchase one of our best kroses. Lenses include Pearle Lens", Pearle Thin Lens", Pearle No Reflection Lens" or Pearle Utra Lens", Includes Seratch Resistant Lens with ultraviolet coating.

OUR BEST LENSES

Save 50% off our best lenses when you purchase any frame. Best lenses include Pearle Lens¹⁸, Pearle Thin Lens¹⁸, Pearle No Reflection Lens¹⁹ or Pearle Ultra Lens¹⁹ packages.

No other coupers, documes or insurance program documes apply. Offer valid at construction location through 8.8.93

SAVE 50-80%! OFF FRAMES

WITH ONE OF PEARLE'S BEST LEWSES

Save 50-80% off any frame when you purchase one of Pearle's best lenses. Lenses include Pearle
Lens^{tw}, Pearle Thin Lens^{tw}, Pearle
No Reflection Lens^{tw} or Pearle

ANY COMPETITOR'S COUPON

SENIORS SAVE 50% & UP

If you are 50 or over you can of a frame or lenses or second pair of glasses with the purchase of a complete

Pearle Vision"

No One Cares For Your Eves More Than Pearle

ALLEN PARK, MI
14595 SULMHEICU PID
284
ROCHESTER, MI
1240 ROCHESTER RO
1240 ROCHESTER RO
1240 ROCHESTER RO
1250 ROCHESTER RO
1313 GALLAN ROCHESTER RO
1313 GALLAN ROCHESTER ROCH

MADISON HEIGHTS, MI 28411 DEQUINORE (313) 545-97. LIVONIA, FAI 3490115, 1425-2400 STERLING HEIGHTS, MI 3784-VAN DIVE (313) 979-2450 CANTON, MI 4455-600 RD (313) 455-3190 ESEQUAL NI NEFESTREY.

TAYLOR, MI
11050 TELEGRAPH
(313) 945-9572
(313) 945-9572
(313) 945-9572
(313) 945-9572
(313) 945-9572
(313) 945-9572
(313) 945-9572
(313) 751-4430

GARDEN CITY, MI 29316 FORD CITY (131) 291-6868 MADISON HEIGHTS, MI 533 WEST 14 MILE RD (131) 588-5720 DEARBORN, MI 2050 MICHIGAN AVE (131) 274-8815 REDFORD, MI 9300 TELEGRAPH RD (131) 533-4600