

POINTS OF VIEW

'Education election' fails to stir up politicians

Sorry, boss. I tried. You're right, but we're getting little help. The boss is Phil Power, chairman of this newspaper company and an elected regent of the University of Michigan. He is frustrated because the media paid scant attention to his 1990 race — or anyone else's.

Newspapers declined to interview. TV turned up its nose. The Michigan Press Association declined to host a debate. Personally, I tried to interest some civic luncheon clubs, but they yawned.

Yet the Constitution says Michigan voters must elect members of the State Board of Education and the boards of

the Big Three universities — U-M, Michigan State and Wayne State; 24 persons in all. Not only do they fail, like Rodney Dangerfield, to get any respect; they don't get any attention. We elect these worthies in November of even-numbered years, when we elect our state and U.S. representatives, governor or president, state and U.S. senators.

The boss' idea is to have a single Education Election — probably in spring — when we'd elect the state candidates along with our local K-12 school boards and our community college boards, too. There would be only one issue: education.



TIM RICHARD

Last week, I put Power's idea to Susy Heintz, the Republican state chairwoman from Novi, and Mark

Brewer, the Democratic state chairman from Macomb County, after our taping of the Channel 7 "Spotlight" show. Heintz: "I don't know if it'd make that much difference." Brewer: "Is it good for public education?"

I tried, boss. Sorry. Yes, it would be good for public education. Yes, it might make a difference. Certainly, we couldn't be any worse off.

When the state candidates are elected, everybody concentrates on the races for president, governor and U.S. Senate. There's a big falloff as voters move down the ballot. People treat the state education races as an afterthought. Local school boards are elected in

June each year. Twenty percent is a big turnout; 10-15 percent is more common; 3-5 percent isn't rare.

I bounced Power's question off some chiefs in the Michigan Association of School Boards last winter. They shook their heads. They didn't want nonpartisan local school board races to become "political" by being on the ballot with the state education races.

That's hokey, of course. We elect nonpartisan judges at the same time as the partisan president and governor. Tim Richard reports on the local implications of state and regional events. His Touch-Tone voice mail number is (313) 953-2047, Ext. 1881.

LETTERS

Hank 'n' Dick

I have been following and enjoying the Dick Landback/Hank Borgman geological debates concerning glacial melt weight.

I think a doctor of psychiatry should weigh the rocks in Hank's head and weigh the amount of water on Dick's brain.

Can't they utilize their time better by trying to get on "Jeopardy" or a PBS special?

Better yet, the Observer should immediately hire them for a syndicated column in your paper, "Ask Dick-n-Hank!"

They could answer readers' many geological questions and debate them until they turn as red as molten rock — kind of like a Siskel & Ebert of science.

To make room for this innovative new, tell all literary collaboration, please take out the pseudo-scientific "graphology profiles" column.

Some of us are tired of the many handwriting styles, which are analyzed to the point of knowing the penmanship's genetic code.

And a big thanks in closing to Ol' Hank and Dick. You make reading the Observer fun, plus I'm learning lots of new vocabulary words.

Mary Burck, Farmington Hills



Debating duo: Reader Mary Burck draws her vision of the Hank Borgman/Dick Landback debate waged in the Observer's Letters-to-the-Editor column.

Taxing proposal

This is an open letter to Michigan Sens. Carl Levin and Spencer Abraham and Rep. Joe Knollenberg.

Gentlemen: Senior citizens such as I are being mercilessly brutalized by our present tax system, particularly the obscene 85 percent rate computed on our Social Security monthly checks.

For every dollar I receive, I must return 85 cents leaving me 15 cents with which to live. This is my financial legacy after nearly half a century of working and faithfully paying my taxes. OK, so the U.S. Navy fed and clothed me during World War II.

But such taxation as devised by politically calloused representatives must receive Boston Tea Party treatment: citizens rising up in righteous wrath against a pernicious tax system that threatens our capitalistic way of life.

Adding insult to injury are the continual revelations about waste, pork, and graft emanating from Washington, D.C.

Senior citizens must no longer serve as sacrificial tax lambs. Confiscatory Social Security taxes must be eliminated now.

Albert Rosen, Farmington Hills

Favors service

This letter is concerning the article about the proposed community service requirement for graduation at North Farmington printed April 24.

I think it is a great idea to require service. It is very easy for people to take from a community, but one is not truly a member of that community until he or she gives back in one way or another. True, many students choose to volunteer.

However, there are others who are not motivated to do it on their own. These people never experience the positive feelings and accomplishments that volunteering offers.

At Mercy High School, the mandatory service hours have taught me the importance of hard work, cooperation, responsibility, leadership and gaining experience in the work world.

These are important lessons that some students do not realize they are missing out on until they are motivated in some way to do service.

I can understand the point that the students' petition makes, however, the program has worked out very well at Mercy, encouraging everyone to feel the benefits of volunteerism.

Heather Jonna, Farmington Hills

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GOLF CAN BE A REAL CHALLENGE.



Michelle McGann

See some of the greatest players in the game today from all three professional tours go head-to-head in an exciting Skins Game at the First of America Challenge on Memorial Day at the Golden Fox in Plymouth. In last year's Challenge, Michelle McGann sank a birdie putt on the final hole to win the Challenge. She returns this year to face the challenge of some of the best from the LPGA, PGA and Senior PGA Tours.



Nancy Lopez



Peter Jacobsen

From the Senior PGA tour, Dave Stockton, who has been the leading money winner for the past two seasons and won last year's

See the First of America Challenge. Memorial Day at the Golden Fox.

FIRST OF AMERICA
Challenge



Dave Stockton

Senior Players Championship in Dearborn, will lead the Challenge. Joining Dave from the Senior Tour will be Jim Colbert, who has compiled eight regular Tour championships and nine Senior Tour championships including the 1993 Senior Players Championship.

If you're looking for something special to do on Memorial Day, this is your chance to bring your entire family out to enjoy an entertaining day on the golf course watching the game's great players.



Jim Colbert

Advance tickets are available at all Detroit and Ann Arbor area First of America offices or at the Golden Fox for just \$5. Children 12 and under are free. Tickets at the gate will be \$10. A portion of the proceeds will go to support the Michigan Special Olympics.

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For more information, call TV2 In Touch at (810) 443-2200, then press FOA1 (3621) for the Challenge Information Line.



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