

Farmington Observer

OPINION

33411 GRAND RIVER, FARMINGTON, MI 48355

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1995

20A(F)

Bits 'n' pieces

On money, Indians and more

Odds and ends, bits and pieces of life in the Farmington area. On this Thursday we have a little bit to say about several things.

Wonder why some people don't love — or even respect — their government? Well, reread the top story in Monday's Farmington Observer about the computer snafu that resulted in something like \$400,000 in traffic fines being erroneously paid to the state, instead of the cities, because that's where a now-defunct computer company sent the money.

The locals are licking their wounds over this mis-allocated dough. The state, of course, is licking its chops.

"We raised the issue with the state," said John Donohue, city attorney for both Farmington and Farmington Hills. "They said the money's been spent. They said things like, 'It's all the taxpayers' money.'"

That's a little like you getting a co-worker's paycheck in addition to your own by mistake. You spend the extra cash and say, "Oh, it's all the employer's money."

Oh well, guess the lesson here is: He (or she) who governs nearest the people governs best. Except, we're wondering who in Farmington, Farmington Hills or the 47th District Court hired that bungling computer firm in the first place.

Anybody want to talk about that? Didn't think so.

Some politically correct Farmington-area folks (you know who you are) are on the warpath over sports teams that have — oh, perish the thought! — Indian nicknames.

They said so at a multi-cultural/multi-racial forum on Indian stereotypes Tuesday morning in Farmington. The two American Indians who spoke at the forum seemed to agree with these misguided sentiments.

Oh, people, please stop slicing the baloney thicker than anybody can swallow. This politically correct business is downright dumb and getting dumber. PC reaches the absolute nadir of nonsense when it preaches that sports teams should not be named after Indians.

It's been explained before, but we'll go over it again, hopefully in a way that even the most progressive professor of politically correct speech at Pointyhead U. will be able to understand.

OK, pay attention. Here's how it is: We name our sports teams after people and things that we respect and revere and are comfortable with.

Thus we don't have the Cleveland Crack Heads, the Washington Welfare Cheats or the Atlanta Alkies. Why? Because we don't respect and revere dope addicts, crooks and drunks.

We're happy with our Cleveland Indians, Washington Redskins and Atlanta Braves. Indians, after all, are an important part of our American heritage. They are remembered as being brave, daring and resourceful. They were battlers and survivors like we'd want our sports heroes to be, just like we ourselves want to be.

And that's the way it is, honest Injun! Naming a team for Indians shows respect for them. Ah, do we see the light of understanding beginning to shine in certain Farmington-area eyes? We hope so.

Still wondering why the Farmington Observer couldn't endorse the plan for direct election of a Farmington Hills mayor last November? Hills residents should check their mailboxes just about any day and they'll know.

Sure, voters passed the proposal. Now the Hills mayor, to be elected by the people for the first time this Nov. 7, is an office of its own, separate from the council. Now the Hills mayor is a big, big deal. It'll be a power base and a springboard to Lansing, perhaps?

Now, even though the filing deadline is just a speck on the horizon (Aug. 22), the mayoral politics are getting steamy and stinky. Now mailboxes are full of campaign throwaways.

Certain mayoral candidates (you know who you are) are angling and dangling for an official endorsement from U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg, but we're betting old Joe gives this one a bye. He knows an alley when he sees one.

Ah, just what Farmington Hills needs, more politics. Maybe the city needs a new name: Warren Hills just might fit the image.

Here we go again, hair of the dog that bit us. We just might have to stagger through — gasp! — another Timbercrest.

The Timbercrest debate, you'll remember with distaste, raged in the Farmington Hills City Council chambers for much of last year. A developer wanted a commercial and residential project for a wooded area at 12 Mile and Mid-dlebelt. No way, said nearby residents.

Well, the developer, as developers usually do, prevailed. Now, in this community are still rubbed raw after the months of acrimony was debate and a failed council recall effort.

Now comes another developer who wants to build a 41-house development in one of the prettiest places in this or any other suburb — Power Road between 11 Mile and the Orchard Ridge campus of OCC.

We can understand why the folks who live there are uneasy about the project. You stroll this stretch of Natural Beauty Road and you might almost think you're in the last century with all the fine old homes in the deep woods.

Sometimes we wish the developers would take their greenbacks and blueprints to places like Detroit and other older urban areas, where development (or redevelopment) is sorely needed.

Wow, another Timbercrest how much can one poor community take?

A SMART move it wasn't. So Novi, the next city west of Farmington Hills, was one of towns whose council voted not to participate in a special election to pay for suburban bus service, known as SMART.

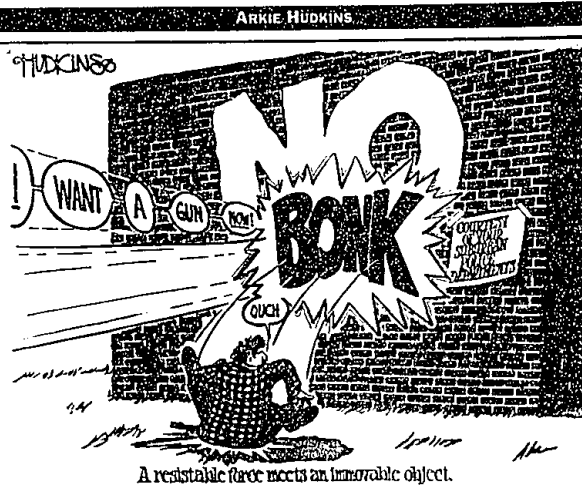
Now bus service has ended in that city, which is known for its shopping malls, and it'll likely stay ended despite what happens in the special SMART election next month.

But a town with all those malls is bound to have a lot of low-paying jobs to be filled. There are shop clerks, fast-food workers, that sort of thing. How do a lot of those workers travel from their humble dwellings to the south and east to their jobs in suburbs like Novi? Right, a lot of them ride SMART buses.

A tip of the old fedora, by the way, to the city councils of Farmington and Farmington Hills. They both decided to let the voters decide the bus funding issue. When in doubt, let the people decide.

Most American flags in the Farmington area are at half staff because of the bombing in Oklahoma City. But the flag in front of the Masonic Temple at Farmington Road and Grand River soon will be leaving its staff altogether if somebody doesn't do something.

Old Glory, as seen from the Observer office across Grand River, seems to be hanging on by just a thread. The next stiff breeze could send it flying over the rooftops.



A resistable force meets an immovable object.

LETTERS

Council yes, mayor no

Unfortunately, time is not infinite. It requires choices and management. As many of you know, I work in Lansing as a legislative assistant to Rep. Jan Dolan as well as being a member of Farmington Hills City Council. Time with my family is also very important to me.

Another very dear commitment is to the newest commission in Farmington Hills. As your mayor in 1993, I initiated the Commission on Children, Youth and Families. Since then these commissioners have opened a volunteer center, sponsored family activities, conducted a community youth needs assessment and developed a juvenile justice grant to help fund future programming.

Still there is much to be done, and I would like to continue to be involved by volunteering any additional hours I have to the Commission on Children, Youth and Families.

Because of these various time commitments, after serious consideration, I have decided not to seek the office of mayor. At this time, I believe I can best serve the community in the role of council member.

This letter is to thank residents for their support in the past and to announce I will be a candidate for re-election to the Farmington Hills Council in November.

Councilwoman Nancy Bates,
Farmington Hills

Help the victims

In the wake of the Oklahoma bombing, the planned execution of hundreds of federal workers and children, the words, "how awful" and "those poor innocent people" have resounded from the lips of each of us.

We have watched the horror and the miracles unfold before our eyes. We have asked for the blood of the bombers. We have felt a fury of injustice.

Each of us has driven past a flag flying at half-staff honoring the victims who have been murdered, the survivors whose lives have changed forever, and the families who are forced to carry on without their loved ones.

As we pass the flags at half-staff, we feel honor and respect for the Americans who were brutally murdered. As we pass the flags that fly oblivious to our nation's tragedy, we feel the indignation of disrespect.

On April 24, 1995, Common Ground held a noon commemoration at the Oakland County Commissioners' Auditorium for victims of violent crime in honor of National Crime Victims'

Rights Week.

The Oakland Press, the Detroit News and Free Press, the Metro Times and the Reminder were not in attendance. The television stations who have broadcast the vivid stories of victims and stated their support were not there.

The Republicans and Democrats who built their campaigns on crime, were not there to honor crime victims in Oakland County. The voices who had uttered "how awful" or "those poor innocent people" were nowhere to be seen.

Citizens of Oakland County are being traumatized by crime every day. Innocent people in our neighborhoods, our neighbors, our friends, and our family members are forced to endure the violence of sexual assault, domestic violence, homicide, drunk driving, robbery and other violent crimes every day.

It's time for Oakland County to stop talking about crime and help to do something about it.

The individuals and agencies who came in strong support to honor crime victims in Oakland County include: The Honorable Edward Sosnick; Prosecutor Thompson; Oakland County Victim Witness Unit Coordinator Emily Zube; Reverend-Minister Nancy Doughty; and representatives from Parents of Murdered Children; Mothers Against Drunk Driving; HAVEN; Women's Survival Center; Triangle Foundation; and Common Ground's Victim Assistance Program.

In addition to saying "how awful" or "those poor innocent people," the next time you hear about violent crime on the television or the radio, also ask yourself what you can do to help victims of violent crime in Oakland County.

Lara Lynne MacQuarrie, victim assistance coordinator,
Common Ground Crisis Center

Thanks to all

Thank you to all of those who gave both verbal and written testimony to the state Senate Education Committee May 1.

The committee members stated several times how impressed they were with both the quantity and the quality of the testimony presented to them.

I am confident that Farmington and its neighboring communities made an impact.

It is both an honor and a pleasure to be a public representative of the fine communities of Farmington, Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield.

David L. York, trustee,
Farmington Board of Education

COMMUNITY VOICE

QUESTION:

How has the Farmington area changed since you first came here?

We asked this question at the Farmington Hills Senior Center.



Fay Rosenberg
Farmington Hills



Gay Winchell
Redford Township



Bob Easton
Farmington Hills



Dan Potter
Hazel Park

"Big changes. It's more crowded now, but I like that."

"The needs of the elderly are really growing here."

"Obviously the vast development in the community. But people here have really tried to accommodate changes."

"The growth of the city. It's improved now."

The Farmington Observer

Tom Baer, Community Editor, 477-5450

Sarah Rosen, Managing Editor, Observer Newspapers, 953-2149

Pat Koppert, Advertising Manager, Observer Newspapers, 953-2177

Larry Goshen, Manager of Circulation, Observer Newspapers, 953-2234

Diana M. Dinkins, Jr., Publisher, Observer Newspapers, 953-2100

Steven M. Pope, General Manager, Observer & Eclectic Newspapers, 953-2252

Suburban Communications Corporation

Philip Power, Chairman of the Board

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— Philip Power