

By Philip H. Power
Publisher

OBSERVATION POINT

Congressional District Map Offers Voters New Choices

As political writer Kathy Moran reports in today's paper, congressional and state legislative districts in this area shortly will be re-drawn.

Reason is that the one-man, one-vote ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court requires periodic re-mapping of political districts to insure they are as nearly equal in population as possible.

Everybody has realized that in this area the suburbs were growing much faster than the City of Detroit. But until 1970 census data became available, no one knew just how explosive population growth had become in the suburbs. Canton Township, Southfield, Plymouth Township, Livonia, Farmington Township and Westland were among the most rapidly growing communities in the state, and political districts in these areas are in for big changes.

The state legislature has the job of re-drawing the congressional districts. Although no agreement has been reached in this most politically-charged of all legislative functions, it's possible to see the general outlines of what the districts in this area will be for the next 10 years.

NINETEENTH DISTRICT: Now represented by Rep. Jack McDonald (R-Farmington), this district includes Livonia, Redford Township, and Farmington.

Current betting is that the 19th will lose Livonia and Redford Township, and will be made into a district covering southern Oakland County, including Farmington, Bloomfield Hills, the Walled Lake area, and Pontiac.

In such a setup, McDonald would be a strong candidate, since he is fairly well known throughout the district. Seemingly anticipating re-districting, McDonald moved some time ago from Livonia to Farmington, and has been working hard in Oakland County since.

The biggest imponderable is whether or not the strongly Democratic city of Pontiac will be included in the 19th. With it, the district might be classified as "swing," and might set the stage for a comeback attempt by former Rep. Billie S. Farnum, now living in Drayton Plains.

SECOND DISTRICT: This district currently includes Plymouth, and is represented by Rep. Marvin Esch (R-Ann Arbor).

If present plans are any indication, the second will undergo the biggest change of any local district, picking up Livonia and the rest of Plymouth, to go with Ann Arbor and Monroe.

Esch is regarded even by local Democrats as a tough man to beat, although he is very little known in Livonia.

Potential challengers include State Rep. Marvin Stempien (D-Livonia), who is on record as being interested in looking at the congressional race, and Livonia's Democratic Mayor Edward McNamara.

Stempien appeared last week at a second district fund raising dinner in Ann Arbor, and chances are good that if the district picks up Livonia (where Stempien is well known and Esch almost never heard of) he will jump into the race.

EIGHTEENTH DISTRICT: Currently including Southfield in this area, the outlook for the 18th is confused. Some plans call for tacking onto the district added Democratic precincts in southeastern Oakland County, and other plans add Pontiac.

Rep. William Broomfield (R-Royal Oak), a veteran member of congress, has been regarded for years as virtually unbeatable, but if Pontiac is added to his district he could be in trouble.

State Senator Daniel Cooper (D-Oak Park) is also on record as being interested in making a run for congress. He could be a strong challenger.

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT: A

solidly Democratic district, currently represented by William Ford (D-Taylor), including Westland and Garden City, as well as Canton Township.

Although there may be some juggling of boundaries, the 15th district is surrounded by other Democratic areas and Ford should escape the re-districting process with little damage.

SEVENTEENTH DISTRICT: Congresswomen Martha Griffiths (D-Detroit) is known as one of Washington's most able legislators. Her district, primarily in Detroit, lost population over the past decade, and local betting is that the 17th will pick up Redford Township.

Running in Redford Town-



STUDENTS AND FACULTY get plenty of opportunity to be heard at meetings of the Schoolcraft College board of trustees. At left are three students presenting their views. At

right is Stuart Bloom, an officer of the Faculty Forum (teachers union) at the time the picture was shot. (Observer photos)

Tim Richard writes

College Faculty Proposal Has Many Angles

Schoolcraft College board members and the public are being subjected to a misleading campaign by certain faculty members.

The goal is an "advisory" seat on the college board of trustees itself.

What is misleading is a letter from one of the proponents, Dr. Larry VanderMolen that "we need a voice on the board to insure representation of faculty rights and to explore mutual problems of great concern."

VanderMolen attempts to leave the false impression that a seat is being sought for the faculty. The truth is that a seat is being sought for the Faculty Forum, the teachers' union.

THE FACULTY FORUM proposal is that the union president get the advisory seat. This fails to take into consideration that a number of Schoolcraft instructors are members of the rival Schoolcraft Professors Union, and some are members of neither.

If Observer Newspapers were similarly as selfish, we would ask, for example, the college's publicity man to send material only to us, and not to the Northville Record, the Daily Eagle, the Detroit News and Free Press.

If the Faculty Forum deserves a seat on the board, then so do the SPU members, the unaffiliated, the secretaries

union, the janitors and whatever others there are.

Actually, it's extremely bad public policy to have an employee of the college in any capacity serving on the board. The lawyers call it "conflict of interest." The fact that the Faculty Forum wants it to be only an "advisory" seat doesn't alter the case because board members get certain privileged communications.

THE FACULTY FORUM proposal contends that "professionals" (that is, members of that

union) need to be able to voice their concerns to the board. That impression is created that teachers present lack a voice.

The impression is false, and the Forum people know it.

The college has a committee structure on which the faculty has representation. If it doesn't work, then the committee structure ought to be revised so that it does work.

Faculty members may address the board at appropriate times during the meeting. They take advantage of that opportunity.

Moreover, this faculty voice isn't limited to the voice of one union president but also covers members of that union, of the SPU and the unaffiliated instructors.

And so, instead of the "faculty" seeking a "voice," what we actually have is the spectre of one particular union seeking power, inch by inch, to advance its own interests.

If ever a group did NOT deserve an advisory voice on a board, it's the leadership of the Schoolcraft Faculty Forum.

Safety? Who Cares?

By Marie McGee

The junior high years -- budding teens -- are year of rebellion, school psychologists tell us. It's normal and even mentally healthy for these teens to buck The Establishment at every turn, they add.

Parents are told to be patient and understanding and to allow these kids some leeway "to do their own thing." Within reason, of course.

It's logical. But sometimes it's hard to figure out where this current brand of rebellion should end and common sense should begin.

PONDER THIS, if you will. Late last spring -- just a few days before graduation -- a young Bentley High senior was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver as she walked home from a part-time job at a nearby junior high school. The driver of the death car has not been found to date.

The girl was walking in the road because there were no sidewalks. After the accident, the hue and cry raised by angry Livonians echoed and re-echoed from one end of the community to the other.

The city commission finally ordered a stretch of sidewalk to be installed so that kids walking to and from Riley Junior High School down Henry Ruff Rd. would no longer have to walk in the road.

Drivers silently applauded as the ribbon of sidewalk unfolded from Lyndon to Five Mile. No more would they have to avoid using the street when the junior high kids got out of school.

No more would they have to cope with shenanigans that forced them to drive as if they were on an obstacle course instead of a public thoroughfare.

So what happens? Drive down Henry Ruff any day of the week when Riley lets out. (rebellion seems to blossom after a hard day at school) and you STILL find a substantial number of kids walking in the road.

Kids -- I love 'em, but it's high time the police stepped in and ended this nonsensical onerousness with a few violation tickets.

Better their egos should suffer than another tragedy should occur.

Sense And Nonsense

A recent headline in one of the big city dailies said the police are hoping for a weapon that halts without killing.

"Smatter? Don't the cops watch 'Mission Impossible'?"

Just What Is 'Freedom Of Choice'?

By LEONARD POGER

"Freedom of Choice" is the rallying cry of a lot of people when they want to avoid compliance with any new law or guideline handed down by a court and governmental agency.

It's a popular slogan and hard to argue with in a 10 second debate. But once the argument goes beyond that length, the freedom of choice falls apart.

THE THREE-WORD motto is used frequently generally by political conservatives who use the slogan to defend that latest position on anything -- with the latest being a potential cross-district busing of public school students to integrate Detroit's schools.

But in a number of other areas which have had local impact, the conservatives seem to abandon their "Freedom of Choice," philosophy and follow the path of whose freedom is being gored at the moment.

There are some excellent examples which come to mind.

Several local school districts in recent years have experienced a raging public controversy involving a proposed sex education program in its system.

CONSERVATIVES and the John Birch Society have fought long and hard to keep any kind of sex education program out of the schools.

During the controversies it was patently pointed out by school officials and pro-sex education persons that any program would have parents able to remove their children from any classroom situation involving the new program.

But the "Freedom of Choice" people were successful in some cases in shutting the school door on sex education programs -- thereby depriving those parents who did want their children in the program that cherished freedom of choice.

ANOTHER recent controversy involving the same principle concerned the Book Nook store in Garden City, whose owner was convicted last month of selling obscene materials.

The conviction came about six months after a group of Westland and Garden City residents petitioned the county prosecutor's office to do something about the subject matter of the Book Nook's adult reading section and its alleged availability to teenagers.

Those people have every right to make their points but whatever happened to the "Freedom of Choice" to those persons who want to buy an occasional copy of Playboy magazine or something more substantial than the paperback version of Mary Poppins.

FREEDOM OF choice is the rallying cry for conservatives who opposed the state open housing law which became law three years ago.

But nothing was said about

the practice of urban and suburban homeowners who grouped to buy a neighbor's home when a Negro family tried to buy the home.

What happened to the Negro family's "freedom of choice" in deciding where he wants to live?

Many of the "freedom of choice" advocates are union members who are long-time members of the conservative "hard-hat" regiment.

BUT WHERE are they in the "Freedom of Choice" argument when it comes to debating agency shops, union shops, and other labor practices and policies which deny some employees that cherished "Freedom of Choice" when it comes to joining a union or deciding to not join the union.

The freedom of choice motto is usually forgotten and abandoned for those minorities who want to take advantage of the same freedom of choice the majority enjoys.

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Philip H. Power, Publisher

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