

editorial opinion

Experience in self-government

Many of the country's future leaders first participate in the process of politics at the Boys' and Girls' State programs sponsored by the American Legion. The Farmington-area was lucky to be represented this year by a governor—Mary Jewell. She was elected governor at Girls' State, held at Olivet College. Girls' State and Boys' State are citizenship training programs. The programs give high school students an opportunity to learn about self-government and the rights and responsibilities of American government. The problems of self-government are dramatized for the students by the formation of a mythical 51st state. Students are elected to office, form platforms and pass legislation. Besides Miss Jewell, another area resident won an honor at this year's Girls' State. Diane Kim was chosen to attend Girls' Nation in Washington, D.C. It is the same program on the national level.

The Kim family thought so much of Diane's opportunity to attend Girls' Nation that they postponed a trip to Europe so that she could attend. As Miss Jewell commented, it's too bad everyone can't take such training. It would make citizenship more meaningful. Changes can be made, Miss Jewell found, if only the people really want them. It works the same way in local government. If changes really are desired, the people will find a way to make them. The best way is to have a slow evolution caused by many residents participating in government. That avoids big changes sometimes required when local government problems are ignored too long. The rights and responsibilities of citizenship will be clear to Miss Jewell and others who attend the American Legion's program. Others can receive the same education by participating in their local government.

Positively 'no smoking'

No smoking signs are posted everywhere—in classrooms, in airplanes, in stores, in doctors' offices. Signs do little to curb smoking in places where it might disturb nonsmokers. That's why the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College's positive approach is refreshing. The campus development committee wants to make smoking areas attractive so smokers will want to use them—thereby sparing nonsmokers' eyes, nose and lungs. That approach avoids the finger-wagging "no no" signs which seem to make

smokers even more intent on practicing the habit. As one smoker says: "I know it's a dirty, filthy habit. I just happen to like dirty, filthy habits." The rebellious aspect of smoking behavior is minimized by approaches such as Orchard Ridge's. At a time when nonsmokers are becoming militant, almost to the point of proposing a Volstead Act on cigarettes, a positive, workable approach is as welcome as fresh air in a smoke-filled room.

'Lawn job' fad is harmful

Fads are fine—as long as they are harmless fun. The fad among young drivers of tearing up people's lawns with car tires is not fun—especially for the typical suburbanite who spends a lot of money and a lot of effort manuring the lawn. A "lawn job" may be a bit of status for a young adult among members of his peer group. But it's a bit of status the rest of society really shouldn't allow.

Residents of one subdivision in Farmington, Chatham Hills, have been hit three times by such wanton vandalism. They suspect it has been the same car and driver each time. Nine lawns have been damaged. Catching the drivers is difficult since they strike at night and speed away. However, if a driver is spotted, we have a suggestion to the judge who hears the case—take away his car and give him a Hula-Hoop.

Eccentricities



The annual 'Pabst' smear

Yellow janders, flea-bits and a toncectomy are not rare tropical diseases or new surgical procedures, but common ailments with uncommon spellings which occasionally show up on health insurance forms in the Prudential Insurance Co's North Central home office. While no one wants to poke fun at poor health, misspellings of illnesses and operations can be interesting and frequently challenge the deductive skills of the insurance company's claims and underwriting employees. For example, how many medical texts have recorded a case of "defective nasal septum?" Or, how about a damaged "knoe?" Or, just a plain old case of "very coarse veins?" SURGERY HAS been performed to remove "plops, hemrooks, molds, a sis" and one poor soul even went under the surgeon's knife to have a "moodle removed from his arm." On the thousands of health insurance claims and applications which the insurance company receives each year, pneumonia has produced the most varied spellings—"kneumonia, pneumonic, arimonia, phenomonia, pronia and pinewmonia." Determining the nature of many female problems can be a challenge. For instance, women

have been reported as "pregnate, pragment, pregnet and pregnit." ONE WOMAN had a "misconception" and another "an infection in virgina." Hysterectomy, by far, has been the most frequently misspelled—"hystreectomy, hystarctomy, hystericomy, hystremectomy and hystarect-tomey." A claim was even filed for a "hystarectomy on Frank" which was later determined to be a hemorrhoidectomy on Frank. "PLATTERS" AND "blutters" appear to cause quite a few difficulties, as do "goalstones" and "arthuritis." One individual must have really felt like the devil when he had "duodemon" trouble. Another person had a problem with getting rid of "Bruce on his arm." Claims which might come from businessmen include "fiscal checkup," "high pretension" and "influence" (flu). There have been claims for "lump glands, schull fractor, soar throat, boyles, a broken color bone and a sprained spleen." People have had "titus" shots and problems with "tonicals and addressee" as well as "falls teeth." But, the blue ribbon winner for misspelled claims came from a woman who had her annual "Pabst" smear.

55 mph drivers finish last

"Nice Guys Finish Last" is what baseball's famed Leo (The Lip) Durocher calls his book-form memoirs, to which I would like to append: So do those who drive only 55 on Michigan's holiday highways. As you know, 55 miles per hour is the maximum allowed by law. You also know it is ignored by literally thousands upon thousands of motorists in the realization they can hedge an extra five miles per hour without being ticketed. But then comes a holiday weekend, when traffic is just too massive to contain, and even 60 becomes an imaginative limit, abused far more often than it is observed. The lead car in each lane sets the pace, and if it's somewhere in the mid-40s everyone following behind follows suit. Sure, slowdowns and jams often occur, but as long as there is smooth sailing the heavy foot is the order of the day. Under those conditions it would take the entire state militia to enforce a 55- or even 60-mph speed limit uniformly. What our 55-mph limit has done, however, is reduce the speed of the overall flow. Only rarely any more do we find a driver zinging along between 70 and 80, and he who does is writing his own invitation for trouble. If you want an opinion, I think we all get where we're going almost as quickly as before—and undoubtedly with more of us still in one piece. With typical derring-do, I sallied out on an east-west cross-state journey from Plymouth during the July Fourth weekend and, with Mother Goose handling the stopwatch, covered 282 miles in 310

minutes of actual driving time. That's five hours and 10 minutes. Without a slide rule or calculator, I figure that to be moving forward 54.6 miles every 60 minutes against all sorts of traffic conditions. In an eight-hour day, plus time out for the necessities, it's a pace that would have carried me more than 430 miles, and that's quite far enough. I'm also opting for the speed limit slowdown from the dizzying 80-and-better pace not only for proven safety reasons but for the fact that at this more leisurely jog one has a chance to revel in the verandah of the glorious Michigan countryside. Sweet corn knee-high by the Fourth of July? Why, man, in some of Michigan's lush acreage the corn already is thigh-high; and the waters of the Kalamazoo and the St. Joseph and our other rivers are sweet to glumpse, too, there is a remembered serenity to the villages when one leaves the highways in favor of the by-ways that take one through town as of yore. One detail I can't explain. In all that exposure to highway roulette, we saw only six police cars. Four bore the fine, familiar markings of the Michigan State Police, out on patrol and just by their presence contributing to driver caution. But the other two were brown, unmarked cars of no readily apparent jurisdiction whose officers had caught their victims on the sly a la the old speed trap caper. That stinks.

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From our readers

Advanced classes

Editor:
I would like to address myself to the Farmington school board. First of all, I believe a school system should have a primary goal of offering all children the most complete education possible. Up to now, our system has failed to meet this objective. Millages are defeated and important "low appeal" classes such as Latin are cut from the already limited curriculum. Recently, the millage was passed, and these classes have been reinstituted once again. The board must be commended for this action. However, the curriculum is presently geared to the average and low-average student in most programs. My contention is that the board should approve funding for more advanced programs, especially in the areas of math and science. Basic math and general science are currently taught in secondary institutions, yet calculus, computer math and advanced sciences are virtually nonexistent in Farmington schools. This void is not the fault of teachers, who must gear the class to the average student. Rather, this inexcusable void is the responsibility of the Farmington school board, whose lack of concern and failure to allocate capital for advanced programs has resulted in frustration and unmet potential for many students and faculty members. As a 1974 graduate of this mediocre

school system, I urge the board and all Farmington citizens to support a program for the institution of a complete, quality curriculum in all Farmington schools.
DONNA FINKBINER
Farmington
Cried my eyes out
Editor:
It was tee off time at 6:45 a.m. July 8 on the Evergreen Hills Golf Course at the Southfield Civic Center. I have to practice early because it's so hot these days and I want to be good for the ladies' golf tournament in two weeks. I got to the second green at 7:15 a.m. I was horrified to see the green torn up and carved with wood and plastic sticks were two words casting aspersions on the Jewish race. Those words were similar to those seen on the streets of Amsterdam and

in the home of Anne Frank we visited in August 1974. The words were scrawled in 1938. I cried my eyes out when I saw them. I can't ignore what happened on the golf course in Southfield. One golfer in the foursome ahead of us said, "Oh, don't make such a fuss over this. Just overlook it." But I said, "Oh, no. Let's not ignore this again. I will be counted now!"
DIANA BERMAN
Southfield
Boo Gorgon familiar
Editor:
About Tim Richard's column, "Broadcasting the Revolution: Right on, brother! But who is Boo Gorgon?" Name sounds slightly familiar.
RICHARD E. OSBODD,
Farmington Hills

my golf course rather than in a concentration camp." I spoke to someone from the Southfield Parks and Recreation Department, and he said it would cost about \$2,000 to repair the green. The cost for a new one would be an estimated \$10,000. But the damage and the hurt have been far in excess of any figure you could mention.
DIANA BERMAN
Southfield
READERS' FORUM
Letters must be original copies and contain the signature and address of the sender. Limit letters to 300 words.

The city commission grows weary Monday evening and the commissioners welcome your letters, and when there is a matter of great importance expect to see a large responsive audience. On July 14 a vote will be taken on the proposed new housing ordinance. The writing of which was prompted by exorcises in the community, especially among rental housing. The ordinance is thorough. It covers electrical—such as the proper grounding receptacles for the kitchen, handrails—where there are more than three rises, a handrail is necessary, square footage for sleeping rooms, space around doors, plumbing, heating, ventilation, maintenance. Inspections may be made of all structures which are occupied. Vacant boarded up houses are not covered by this law, but single family owner occupied houses may be inspected if there is reasonable cause to believe an inspection is necessary to safeguard the safety, health and welfare of the public. Attached to this ordinance is a landlord leasing ordinance which will require permits to rent property and the inspection of these properties. The creators of these laws have good intent, but what repercussions could result from the law on the future? Investigate! Copies may be read at the building department, the clerk's office and the Library. Copies may be purchased for \$1.50 at the building department.
IRENE P. BERNHARD
Birmingham

Urging book readers.
Editor:
To Beverly Hills Residents: Hey, wake up! All of you book readers who are home enjoying a good book from the Birmingham Public Library instead of paying attention to the village council may not get any more books. The council, like everyone else, is beset by money problems, and they are paying attention to the squabblers who're... For instance, the police have a good lawyer who mastered a group of irate citizens to go hassle the council not to eliminate two police jobs. Fine. That sort of civic involvement makes a good community. But the council has to cut funds somewhere, and they are suggesting eliminating library service to save \$29,000. Denying our citizens the chance to share in the pooled cultural accomplishments embodied in books, records and the many other services of the library is a step back into the dark ages. How many of us can afford the \$1,000 or more we would have to pay for the books we can now borrow and share with each other through the library? You probably didn't think anybody could possibly consider doing away with our library privileges... but they are! They are. Let the commissioners know how you feel.
CAROLYN VOSSBURG HALL
Birmingham

Oakland County parks brochure now ready

The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission is currently distributing a 22-page, four-color brochure containing detailed information about the six Oakland County parks open to public use. Along with this all-inclusive look at the parks, the commission has issued

a pamphlet illustrating the county's mobile recreation program now in its second year of operation. The public can obtain copies of these guides by writing to: General Brochure and Mobile Pamphlet, Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission, 2880 Watkins Lake Road, Pontiac, 48064.

A call to citizens

Editor:
Awake, citizens! We are privileged to live in a wonderful country when we have freedom of speech and have a voice in the formulation of our laws. We are fortunate to live in a town whose government is responsive to those who care enough to express their opinions.