

John Schmolder

Bunny snow

G. Gordon Liddy (?) pokes fun at school's twist on Easter icon

EAST LANSING — East Lansing Schools' "Special Bunny" hopped all the way to the G. Gordon Liddy radio show.

Boy, I never thought I'd find myself in that company. Nonetheless, several readers told me the Richard Nixon-leon-leon-turned-fall-hon-leon-leon turned-a good five minutes last Tuesday discussing the column I wrote that same day about the school district's reluctance to leave the "Easter" in Easter Bunny.

I'm told that Liddy, an arch-enemy of political correctness, had a particularly good time with the "Special Bunny."

Here's what some readers had to say on the matter: ■ Martha Fujita of East Lansing: "Why don't we reverse the unhealthy, unrelenting trend toward know-it-allism? Pathetic euphemisms like the 'Special Bunny' reveal much about the temper of our times."

Public school officials are caught in the crossfire of conflicting paranoias — darned if they do and darned if they don't. As a result, children are sometimes presented with an insipid, distorted perspective.

"When children learn about Hanukkah customs, as they certainly do, are they told to refer to the Eight Days of Special Season?"

"If a presentation on Native American culture is given, do we teach children to refer to that tradition's Sacred Hoop as the Special Hoop?"

"If Japanese culture is taught, must we call the Peace Cranes, Special Birds?"

The heart and soul of cross-cultural education is respect. The heart and soul of good education is at minimum to transmit accurate knowledge. Thus, pilgrims are not merely people who like to take long trips.

"There is no more need to protect children from the knowledge that some people celebrate Easter and observe the custom of hiding decorated eggs than to protect them from the knowledge that in December some people light candles and give their children candy boxes."

"These are facts. Why must knowledge of these facts, conveyed with respect and accuracy, simulate such contentions?"

Laughing matter ■ Carolyn Kingsley of Eagle: "This whole thing makes me laugh. The Easter Bunny has nothing to do with the Christian celebration of Easter."

"The Christians adopted their belief from the pagan. The pagan adored fertility, what better symbol of fertility than a rabbit?"

Speech patterns Waverly Middle School preaches benefits of public oratory. In School, Page 4B



Practice pitch: Dan Everett participates in speech class at Waverly.

Legend lives on Many years after his death, Jackie Robinson becomes major marketing force. Business, Page 5B

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LOCAL & STATE

Campaign spending plan on way

Lawmaker will present use of public funds as way to finance system

Associated Press MIDLAND — A state representative says the only way to control campaign spending is with public funding, and plans to introduce three bills to put such a system in place in Michigan.

to provide public money, reduce the size of donations and reduce the influence of political action committees to sponsor candidates.

Under Wetters' plan, parties will not be able to set up committees to accept corporate donations.

public financing to races for attorney general, secretary of state and all 148 legislative seats.

that should not be limited. Voters generally react negatively to public financing proposals, Wetters admitted.



Cleanup crew: Jennifer Estill (left), Sherry Conarton (center) and Diane Simmons pick up trash near Potter Park. Crews will tidy up the Grand River and Red Cedar River on April 26, part of the Adopt-A-River event in the Lansing area.

Cleanup crew happy with progress

Adopt-A-River program volunteers say each year they turn up less trash

By Dee Drummond Lansing State Journal

to clean up the RiverWalk area, plant flowers and paint park benches.

'90s NEIGHBORHOODS: Tell us about your '90s neighborhood

How to help ■ To volunteer, call the Adopt-A-River office at 322-9388.

It may finally be uncool to litter in Lansing.

to past years, volunteers have filled more than 800 bags of trash ranging from a king-size bed to a traffic sign.

Center took the project over in the fall of 1993.

"This is the most well-sustained volunteer effort I've ever seen," said Kathleen McKee-Marlow, Wolburn's executive director.

Lansing students take out their spring break lists

Vacation plans? Try skating, swimming or even just sleeping in

By Dee Drummond Lansing State Journal



Greg Daulton/Lansing State Journal

"Sleeping in, that's what I'm planning on doing," Marshall said.

Danielle Richardson celebrated her first day of spring break at Burger King with two double cheeseburgers, large fries and then some in-line skating.

Skating into spring: Daniel Hogan, a second-grader at Our Savior Lutheran School of Lansing, enjoys spring break by skating with his father, Fred Hogan, at Apple SportsPlex in Lansing.

Watkins will spend much of the week with her cousin, Concha Marshall, who is also on break from Sexton.

Students should bring a school ID and an emergency waiver form to participate.

Political Notebook

Democrats rip Engler on roads

Democrats say Gov. John Engler is out of touch about the state's road problems because he's flying over them, rather than driving on them.

Boehner speaks April 7 in Fowler

U.S. Rep. John Boehner, chair of the Republican caucus, will speak next Monday at the Clinton County Lincoln Day Dinner in Fowler.

Former state rep becomes consultant

Former state Rep. Maxine Berman has started a consulting firm to help nonprofit and for-profit groups succeed in the legislative process.

Engler appoints DeGrow to board

Katherine DeGrow of East Rapids has been appointed by Gov. John Engler as executive director of the Michigan Women's Commission.

School leader gets MSU award

Michael Bonkus, executive director of the Middle Cities Education Association, has been named the recipient of a 1997 distinguished alumni award at Michigan State University.

Compiled by State Journal political writers.