

A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press is Democracy's First Line of Defense

Regarding the City Election When the voting booths closed after last week's annual city election, a total of 1,980 persons had cast a ballot. This was only 177 less than appeared in the 1947 city election, and the drop might be blamed on the drizzle that fell that afternoon and evening, preventing more persons from coming out.

But this year's results were much more encouraging than those of 1946 or 1945, when 1,171 and 1,426 ballots were counted, respectively. Had another 63 persons favored the bond issue for parks and recreation, the measure would have passed—it was that close to passing. Fifty-five per cent of the voters favored it, five per cent less than the number needed.

Up to Parents and Churches A few weeks ago, the Supreme Court decided that the Constitution prohibits the compulsory public school system from cooperating in the religious instruction of school children.

Since that time a number of educators and church leaders have figuratively jumped over the moon in their denunciation of the decision, asserting that it is "anti-god."

We are unable to agree with the worried brethren. The average school session utilizes less than thirty hours of the one hundred sixty-eight hours that make up a week.

Certainly, it would seem possible for parents and church leaders to arrange a system of religious instruction not dependent upon the release of pupils from their regular classes. To intimate otherwise is to suggest that parents and church organizations are impotent.

There is no reason for the excitement of the "moral leaders" unless they are willing to admit that, without the compulsory process of the schools, the homes and the churches of this country are utterly unable to reach the rising generation. If this, unfortunately, is a fact, it behooves parents and religious leaders to get busy doing something else besides criticizing the decision of the Supreme Court.

It appears that those Pleasant street residents, who several weeks ago petitioned the city for the oiling of their street under the charter amendment which was on the April 5 ballot, have a crystal ball which works.

As you look about you these spring days and see the budding trees, flowers and shrubs, you will realize that the person who doesn't see these things and appreciate their beauty certainly is missing an annual thrill.

'Tis Washington By The Duches

Who owns the moon? Two guys from Pennsylvania tried to stake out a claim, but the Interior Department decrees it is not possible to take official action at this time.

With a shrug he said "no law has yet been enacted by Congress." He must be a Republican. In the days of Ickes, the department would have grabbed the moon for a national park.

The Germans wonder if they will get their art treasures back. The first German newsmen to visit the United States since the war admitted anxiety existed. We were promised to return the exhibit on April 18.

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Time for Reason At first glance, the statement by safety authorities that speed is the Number 1 cause of highway deaths and injuries has a far-away sound of no particular immediate significance.

The picture of an America gone speed-crazy has been exaggerated by alarmists ever since the "flapper" days following World War I, and a good many people will find it hard to believe that our highways are a teeming chaos of careening speed-demons. As a matter of fact most of us, in the course of a day's driving, have encountered one or two insanely reckless speeders, seldom more. Certainly the proportion is nothing like one out of ten. What, then, is all the shouting about?

A careful analysis of what safety experts mean by "speed" clears up the mystery, although it affords us little cause for complacency. Far from relieving us of personal responsibility in the matter, we find the finger of accusation pointed directly at Mr. and Mrs. Average Motorist.

For if speed means, as we learn, not only such clearly dangerous speeds as 60, 70 and 80 miles an hour, but also speeds of 40, 30 or even 20 miles an hour under adverse conditions, then in effect the tragic toll of highway accidents means that a substantial proportion of us are lacking in good judgment.

That is a harsh indictment. It hits us in a very tender spot—pride in our native American commonsense.

As a nation, we are individualists and proud of it. We are proud of our freedom of initiative, freedom to make our own decisions. Let us hope that the Number 1 highway killer is not due to our inability to exercise good judgment, but rather to our ignorance of the conditions affecting safe driving speeds. Let us set about correcting this ignorance and thus halt the killing.

The Birmingham Eccentric

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Some are in Washington say "no" and would keep them from participating in political films. But Eric Johnson says they have a right to use any right they possess in the interest of their chosen candidate.

Four Bham Teachers Attend Conference Held in Chicago. Four Birmingham teachers attended the recent convention of the Council of Guidance and Personnel Associations at the Stevens hotel in Chicago.

General theme of the convention was "Personnel work as a profession" and it featured many outstanding speakers from all over the country. The requirement of those who they belong to one of four national organizations: Alliance for the Rural Youth, American College Personnel Association, National Association of Vocational Guidance Association.

Those who attended from Birmingham were Mrs. Carroll Darling and Larned Goodrich from Buell, and Miss Marjorie Bruste and Malcolm Vindall, Barrum.

Happenings of Long Ago

FIFTY YEARS AGO April 15, 1898

Birmingham is full of visions. Visions of a large brickyard which is supposed to be started here at once on the E. E. Daniels farm. A huge bed of brick clay has been discovered here, and will be put to immediate commercial use according to Mr. Daniels.

The Cuban Relief Committee, named a week ago last Saturday, reports that already \$45.51 has been turned in to them.

We can hardly realize that it is time to tap the fountain again, but we know that Ellenwood is a well place to start. We always like to see the fountain open again because they are such good signs that the people have decided spring is here.

The Village Improvement society is taken matters into its own hands to "pretty up the most beautiful village on the plains." They have hired two men who will remove all the advertising cards and bills, tin signs, tags, etc., from telephones and telegraph poles. Now they ask that everybody help enforce the village ordinance that these things cannot be posted here.

A number of U. P. ladies had a cleaning bee at the parsonage last week.

F. W. Cartright was drawn as a juror from Warren.

Sam Cromie reports a son. It being the first, Sam feels proud.

TWENTY YEARS AGO April 12, 1928

George Bailey of Flint was badly burned about the face and arms last Sunday when his car caught fire as he was filling the gas tank at a Bloomfield Hills station. He was taken to a Pontiac hospital for treatment.

Work has been started on the new stores on East Maple adjoining the Parks block by the Levinson Realty company. A block of three stores, 60 feet deep, will be ready for occupancy about June 1, according to David Levinson.

Miss Magdalene Frederick has been offered the office of principal of Quanton School. She has been teaching in Birmingham for the past year, and her work has been spent as principal of Adams School. Before coming to Birmingham she taught in Owosso, Mich.

"Hefty's Best", an English bulldog owned by Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Baumgartner of Woodward avenue, has been awarded additional judge honors. The dog was judged the best bulldog in the world at the Birmingham dog show the 21st consecutive time he has been given that show title.

Police are, today, seeking to apprehend the persons who broke 11 windows in Baldwin Park on Saturday night. The men were seen around the school and their conversations on the exact car they have one in your special.

FIVE YEARS AGO April 15, 1943

A 17-year-old Pacific youth drank too freely to the wine that runs red one evening last week, and he is now in the hospital in his car that try to drive it. He pulled into a driveway and settled himself for his only to find that he had decided to park in the drive leading to the Bloomfield Hills Police station. He provided him with a place to sleep.

Mrs. Harold J. Lauer of the Blood Donor Service, has announced that an additional hundred units are needed if Birmingham is to meet its quota. The mobile Red Cross unit will be here today, and it is hoped that many new donors may be listed at this time.

A total of 4,000 letters have been mailed to local residents to announce the opening of the annual Roll Call for the Community House. The budget for the coming year has been set at \$14,500.

All members of the Birmingham Public Schools teaching and maintenance staff have been notified that their new contracts will call for an additional \$50 wage increase.

The City Commissioners said Monday night that the work of May 17-22 had been designated as Clean Up Week for the City of Birmingham. A special city-wide drive is being made to clear vacant lots and people's yards of all accumulated rubbish.

A total of 77 bicycles were impounded by police Tuesday and Wednesday, as they checked schools for those not carrying the 1948 license. This may be obtained at police headquarters for 25 cents.

Have You Met . . . Mr. and Mrs. Charles Breedlove, who are retiring from the roll call at 555 Pleasant? They came to Birmingham from Romeo, Mich.

Notice is hereby given that the Plum Hotel, located at Birmingham, Michigan, has been sold to the Birmingham Hotel Co. for a club house to sell. The hotel is being sold to the Birmingham Hotel Co. for a club house to sell. The hotel is being sold to the Birmingham Hotel Co. for a club house to sell.

'Gangway!'



People's Column

April 10, 1948

To the Editor: I have delivered to the Greyhound Bus Co. and to the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce today a petition signed by 175 residents of the Walnut Lake area appealing for bus service to our community. If this petition is not sufficient, would you kindly please to state our problem to them in person if necessary.

Since I was elected chairman of the transportation committee of the Walnut Lake Ladies' Club, I am appealing to the businessmen of Birmingham to come to our support. We will appreciate all the help The Eccentric can give us. MRS. GEORGE McDOUGALL, Walnut Lake

April 6, 1948

To the Editor: The Executive Board of the Parent-Teachers Association of Adams School wish to extend to your organization an expression of appreciation for the splendid presentation of an instruction ballot, the propositions, amendments and questions to come before the voters, together with the various candidates' questionnaire replies for the April 5 election.

The members of Adams PTA feel that your paper has rendered a service to the community which is both needed and highly esteemed. MRS. THEO. T. FRIELING, Secretary, Adams PTA Executive Board

April 9, 1948

To the Editor: Rich or poor, young or old, here's something to be bought or sold—Eccentric Classified Ads.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner

A swell shot—the kind of shot which only comes from having your camera loaded and ready to shoot at all times. Johnnys-on-the-Spot A NEWSPAPER photographer who lives nearby was talking of amateur picture-takers. "You know," he said, "it is surprising the number of on-the-spot news pictures each year that are made by amateurs. They're not always technically perfect, of course, but they have one great virtue—someone with a camera happened to be in the right place at the right time to shoot. No amount of planning can guarantee that kind of good luck every time."

He went on to add that news photography—by its very nature—places a premium on being on the spot when something is happening. "Advantage," the best newsman in the world," he said, "can't know in advance when an accident will happen, when a fire is going to break out, or when a headline news item, known, have been made when stumbled upon a picture while on the way to another assignment."

After he left, the thought came to my mind that most of the shots to which he referred involved—rather than picture-making—mere standpoint—something more than luck. Not only did the people who made these shots happen to be Johnnys-on-the-spot; they also had their cameras with them, ready for any picture opportunity, I thought of a few times when I myself had been at a fire—and my camera was home. Or one time when I happened to cross a bridge as a rescue party was seeking to pull two boys from an ice floe in a river—and again no camera with me. It was after this second experience that I started to make a habit of carrying my camera in my car. Not in the glove compartment to be sure—that gets too hot in warm weather. But I make a point of keeping my camera loaded and ready to shoot, on the seat of the car where it is handy if wanted. And I've found it gets them off a dozen or so fire scenes in my albums, several accident pictures, and other good shots which never would have been made if I carried a camera with me only when I planned picture making. For numerous picture chances occur only once and then for a moment—so get them then, or never. And no one has yet suggested out how to get them with a camera that's peacefully resting at home in a drawer. —John van Gulder

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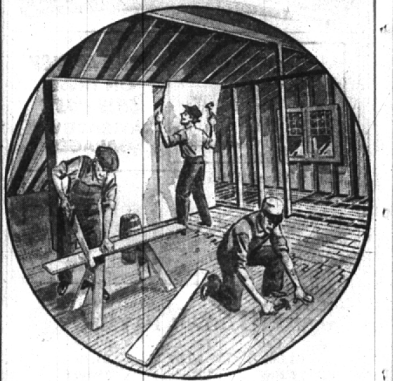
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