

Editorial Page of The Birmingham Eccentric

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

PAGE 2, PART 3 Thursday, August 4, 1949 THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC

Rural vs. City Fire Protection

Birmingham residents, unless they are very wealthy, are not as well protected as those in the city. The reason for this is that the city fire department is better equipped and has more fire trucks and firemen than the rural fire departments. The city fire department is also better organized and has a more efficient system of fire protection.

Birmingham folks are used to seeing, in the event of a local residential fire, Birmingham firemen spread to the scene, stretch several large hoses and begin attacking the blaze with steady, powerful streams of water.

The situation regarding fires in unincorporated areas is much different. There are no water mains which would provide a constant source of water. In most instances the township department has relatively few permanent firemen, relying mainly on volunteer service.

It is recognized that such limited fire-fighting measures will only be effective to halt a blaze that has just started, that has gained little headway. Relying on tank trucks for their water supply, these firemen know it won't last long on a bigger fire. If the water they have available is not enough and they know it, about all they can do is stand by and protect out-buildings or nearby residences.

Bloomfield Hills, without water mains (except the Cranbrook property itself), and with only a few paid firemen, is in the same position as the unincorporated areas in fire-fighting: Its fire insurance rates confirm this.

The residents, by choice, still protect this comparatively little fire protection. They knew the problem when they moved into or built in the area, and they knew there would be tax savings as a result. They probably have—or should have—their real and personal property insured to the hilt in case of any fire.

It has been generally agreed that the Bird fire was beyond control before it was detected and firemen arrived, and that there was little they could do to halt the blaze. But it did demonstrate one thing: all available firefighting water sources have not been determined by the Hills fire department. It was considerable time before a fairly large pond was discovered a little distance behind the Bird house. When it was finally used, it did not help a bit.

Had the Bird fire been fairly small when firemen arrived, and had the location of the pond been known immediately, a fire might have been out, whereas water from only the tank truck would have been insufficient to do so.

We hope the Hills department will survey every square foot of the Hills for similar ponds and post the list on the fire truck for immediate reference in future fires. We believe, too, that firefighting procedure should be planned so that cooperating fire departments will be told, on arrival, just what to do to assist.

Meanwhile, Birmingham pays taxes

for its fire and water services, and thus enjoys a lower fire insurance rate, as well as the knowledge that their homes and contents are reasonably safe from major destruction.

Residents of unincorporated areas, on the other hand, will save tax money because they don't have to buy water mains and pay very many firemen, but they pay considerably higher fire insurance rates. Until they provide water and adequate fire protection personnel and equipment, they know they must keep everything fully insured and never let the policies lapse.

Science Promises Easier Living

A college professor recently estimated that the modern industrial civilization of the United States presents to each American family the mechanical equivalent of four hundred human slaves. The professor maintains that science promises us an even finer kind of living than the wealthiest potates of the past ever dreamed of!

While we have no means of checking the doctor's estimate, there is at least enough truth in his assertion to astound many of us. The utilization of the mechanical power available promises greater ease and comfort to the people of the United States.

We would remind everyone, however, that with this utilization will come new dangers to the moral fiber of individuals with some persons degenerating in flabby indolence and sordid stupification.

This does not mean that we should slow down industrial progress because of the dangers that attend its development. A people, blessed with such benefits along material lines, must keep their spiritual natures ahead of gross materialization if the nation is to live and be powerful.

A more handful of selfish, power-grasping men control Soviet Russia. A mere handful of men, in most countries, really control them, but some groups are less selfish and power-grasping than others.

No garden ever came to the fine and full bloom pictured in the flower and seed catalogues. The trouble with the latter is that their pictures fail to show the weeds.

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 225-227 North Woodward Avenue. Telephone 11, 12, 13 and 14.
GEORGE R. AYER, Editor and Publisher
PAUL NEAL AVERILL, Business Manager
HAROLD P. BURGER, Advertising Manager
One Dollar Matter to the Editor's Post Office at Birmingham, Michigan, under the Act of March 3, 1919.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES
(In Oklahoma and Oklahoma Territory)
One Year \$2.50 One Year \$3.50
Six Months \$1.75 Six Months \$2.25
Three Months \$1.00 Three Months \$1.50
The Eccentric is a member of National Industrial Association, National Press Association, and University Press Club.
NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish brief contributions of news, editorial, and suggestions. Contributions are usually edited, and are returned to the contributor. No responsibility is assumed for the return of unsolicited material. The Eccentric is not responsible for the return of unsolicited material. The Eccentric is not responsible for the return of unsolicited material.

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

50 YEARS AGO
August 4, 1899
About 30 members from Detroit Chapter, U.S.S. of Detroit, held a surprise visit to Birmingham Chapter Wednesday evening. Two new members were received into the local chapter, after which all adjourned to the banquet hall where the Masonic brothers had prepared a delightful lunch as a second surprise of the evening.

The Village Improvement Society, which has made the residents of the city near the city to keep their grounds and streets near clean and neat this summer. This includes the merchants and businessmen who have joined the whole heartily in the campaign.

Did you see our street sprinkler Monday? It did either.
R. C. Cummings of Franklin, a notable bicycle racer and cyclist, was told of a champion meeting with E. S. Edwards, champion cyclist of Wales is said to be going away on a tour of 250 consecutive days, four or five hours on any other century ride.

Our streak for changes shows the way of the T. Thru Birmingham to Will Benedict. Will tells us that Jack VanEvery is going away with him, and a pair department as well as the Smith shop. Business drive, we call it.

20 YEARS AGO
August 5, 1929
Harry Grayson, the music department in the Pontiac

with awe, its astronomical splendors.

5 YEARS AGO
August 19, 1944
The matter of the renewal of the 30-year franchise to the Consumers' Power company which supplies gas for cooking and heating to homes and business places in this area is up for a decision by the vote of the people. Residents of Birmingham are to decide, on August 15, whether or not this franchise is to be renewed.

A big circus Friday evening at Pierce school will bring to a close the 1944 recreational program for Birmingham. The evening's program will be under the direction of Miss Gertrude Rogerson with music supplied by Arthur Serdick's orchestra and band. A big affair is promised everyone.

The Birmingham Rifle club has completed the first course in precision training, graduating a class of 22 young men from the outdoor range on Cranbrook road. Class will resume next Thursday

with awe, its astronomical splendors.

Penchant

By Beatrice McDonald

I want a pair of candlesticks.
Fashioned of hammered brass
To glisten in the candlelight
With two tall candles gleaming bright
Shedding their lambent rays each night
Across my table top to me.
I want some cups and saucers
And some plates of amber glass,
An emerald bowl for apples red,
A silver tureen to hold my bread,
And I have yearned since first I was
For one gold spoon to stir my tea.

MICHIGAN in WASHINGTON

By Esther Van Wageningen Tuffy

Four issues in the Six Congress have called forth as many letters from Michigan voters as federal aid to education.

And probably the flow will increase with Cardinal Spellman's criticism of Mrs. Roosevelt for writing the public health bill not to be used for support of sectarian schools. Most of the mail is "opinion" and the pressure is such that certainly if the bill passes at all (which is doubtful) some compromise would be found.

On that the author of the bill, Congressman Graham Barden of North Carolina says: "I can compromise words, figures, phrases, even money, but on the principle of federal tax money going to private schools I don't believe the government, the Supreme Court or I can compromise."

It is the author's intent to draw the line in the use of federal funds for schools.

The Congress would permit the use of federal funds for non-sectarian text-books and bus service for children attending parochial schools. This policy is sanctioned by state law.

The Congressman opposes this but not the other compromise which calls for \$5 million dollars health-aid for children in both parochial and public schools before the education bill is brought to a vote.

One Michigan letter (which doesn't want to be quoted) said as he scanned thru a pile of "Agnostic" letters: "Women's and non-sectarian textbooks are a little closer to education than health-aid for children in both parochial and public schools before the education bill is brought to a vote."

Meanwhile the mail keeps pouring in. Congressman Charles Potter, introduced by Republicans in the 80th Congress, when he refused to hold hearings on two similar bills introduced by Republicans. To the Royal Oak Republican, this is the kind of legislation that "promises something for nothing," noting that no interest is charged.

207 Projects Ready
Requests for such "advanced planning" thru federal financial aid for schools, museums, city halls, sewers "have not come from municipalities but from the architects and engineers seeking business," he said.

One long range objective of the proposal now in hearings is to prevent another slow start that the FWA experienced in the last depression for lack of advance construction planning.

There are 207 projects ready for the green light in Michigan. Congressman Gerald Ford disagrees with his colleague.

The Grand Rapids Republican calls the proposal "a good investment." Calls it safeguarded from the results of the passage

An Appreciative Audience

ARMS TO EUROPE DISPUTE

WASHINGTON—The two Michigan members on the House Public Works Committee differ widely in their reactions to the \$100 million dollar bill for "advanced planning" projects.

Former chairman Congressman George A. Dondero said his opinion had not changed since the 80th Congress, when he refused to hold hearings on two similar bills introduced by Republicans.

To the Royal Oak Republican, this is the kind of legislation that "promises something for nothing," noting that no interest is charged.

Requests for such "advanced planning" thru federal financial aid for schools, museums, city halls, sewers "have not come from municipalities but from the architects and engineers seeking business," he said.

One long range objective of the proposal now in hearings is to prevent another slow start that the FWA experienced in the last depression for lack of advance construction planning.

There are 207 projects ready for the green light in Michigan. Congressman Gerald Ford disagrees with his colleague.

The Grand Rapids Republican calls the proposal "a good investment." Calls it safeguarded from the results of the passage

of a similar bill in 1945-1946 providing 65 million dollars for advanced planning.

"Already on this new program, 25 per cent has been repaid," he said.

To Ford, it's a good safeguard to have "these plans on the shelf; otherwise it would take 1 to 18 months to get a public works program rolling, and meanwhile the old WPA make-work jobs might again happen to cure an acute unemployment situation."

He sees encouragement to a city to undertake a needed improvement when plans can be drawn with such federal assistance.

The chances of passage are considered good, although a possible amendment providing a 2 per cent interest charge may set favorable action.

Ford would probably go along on such a compromise.

"Any Way You Slice It"

BY HAL P. BURGER

A number of months ago the Michigan Bell Telephone Company announced that the new Birmingham telephone exchange which was to be put into use when our city is switched over to the dial system next year would be called Pinehurst.

My personal reaction was one of much pleasure. The name had class... it seemed snazzy and I thought someone had certainly come up with a name that fit the community to perfection. Not every name could be used inasmuch as it called for a certain combination of letters. I was highly pleased with the sound of my prospective telephone number and my neighbors and friends seemed to like it, too.

I don't remember when I experienced a more cared in feeling than I did last week when I read the news that the city commission had passed a resolution to request the telephone company to change the name of the new exchange to "Piety Hill." In the succeeding paragraphs I will try to explain the reason, although I may have trouble explaining it to myself.

In my home town there was a complete cross section of all types of folks. I look back at it today. The poor people, most of them anyway, were poor mainly because there is so little opportunity for folks in a small town to progress. It certainly wasn't due to lack of ambition because they seemed to have an overabundance of that.

These people lived in a section of the village called "Irish-town." It was separated from the rest of the population by the proverbial railroad tracks of which they, naturally, lived on the wrong side.

Then there was the rest of the incorporated area, inhabited mainly by middle class families. This portion was affectionately referred to by the Irish towners as "Dogtown."

Now, the rich people, except for one or two families, were not very wealthy by today's standards, and some of them were not rich at all, but the small section of town in which the factory owners, the bankers and a few retired lumbermen lived, was called... you guessed it... "Piety Hill." It had been called that for many years before I was born and I speak of the old times still use the term when they speak of their snootier neighbors.

The town next to that one also had a Piety Hill section in which the swells dwelled. So did the town next to that, etc. etc. When I came to Birmingham a number of years ago, I was told that of all the cities in the state, Birmingham was the only one that had a Piety Hill. "What," I thought, "so every other town and we're lucky to have escaped."

No, I wouldn't be in favor of calling the new exchange Piety Hill. It looms before me as a ghost out of an era that is nice to remember once in a while, but not dotted upon. There is absolutely no originality in the name inasmuch as it seems to have been standard colloquialism which made the rounds of every hamlet in the country that was big enough to have a few fine homes set apart from the others.

Compared to the smooth and pleasant sound of Pinehurst, I think Piety Hill seems a bit coarse to Boston, upon Birmingham, a city that likes to set the pace, because there is so little originality in the name inasmuch as it seems to have been standard colloquialism which made the rounds of every hamlet in the country that was big enough to have a few fine homes set apart from the others.

I'm positive that to every small town person who has migrated to our midst, and that must be many, the term Piety Hill had the distasteful memory of the part of town in which the "holier than thou" portion of the population built their homes to escape having to mingle with the trash in Irish town and Dogtown.

Michigan Mirror

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

By Gene Aleman

Every Michigan incorporated municipality—city or village—reported by a federal report to get a share of federal rent subsidies and federal housing grants. Michigan municipalities are living on a BE-LOW COST basis. When the federal housing tax credit increases pay more to the U.S. treasury than they ever get back in federal housing subsidies. Michigan municipalities which does not "get its share" of public housing dollars is in a losing position for something it does not receive.

Governor Williams told newspaper editors at the Associated Press meeting that the Higgins Lake conservation training school that Michigan holds in the U.S.S. at \$500,000—about half BILLION dollars.

This startling announcement—so it seemed to the Michigan Mirror factfinder—prompted an inquiry into what it was all about. In brief, here is what we learned at the governor's office:

A 1928 session act of the legislature permits any incorporated municipality to set up a housing authority. If the voters approve, the authority may issue bonds, build homes and rent them. The authority may also issue bonds, build homes and rent them. The authority may also issue bonds, build homes and rent them.

Governor Williams in March asked the state legislature to vote a \$3,000,000 bond issue as a possible total, with \$10,000,000 in city housing projects.

Because the state constitution forbids the state from borrowing money for internal improvements, except in the case of highways, airports and waterways, the idea was abandoned.

The governor would like to help housing in 1950 to remove this prohibition for state aid to public housing. He also would like to help housing in 1950 to remove this prohibition for state aid to public housing. He also would like to help housing in 1950 to remove this prohibition for state aid to public housing.

THE ECCENTRIC'S Camera Corner

Some of the best animal pictures are made when pets are being fed.

You'll find that most animals are alert when it's feeding time.

Use Ingenuity in Picturing Pets

SEVERAL weeks ago I happened to see a fine color picture of an affection scene that had been made by one of the country's outdoor photographic studios. A line of people waiting to step into the young subject and the picture was full of homely touches which made it real: the picture of George Washington on the wall, the commiserator with newspaper under his arm, small kitten arching his back as one of the waiting viewers scratched his neck.

Knowing that shots such as this involve a good deal of careful preparation, I asked the man who made it how he managed to pose the kitten and get it to stay still until he had the picture just right, and was ready to shoot. "Easy," he told me. "I just rubbed a bit of catnip on the fingers of the man scratching his neck."

The point of this story is that tricks like this are often necessary if you're going to get successful shots of animals. And they are easy to bring about with a bit of ingenuity. When you plan your animal pictures, arrange some means of making certain that the animal's attention will be focused where you want it.

Experience proves that one of the best times to picture any animal—whether around the house or at the zoo—is feeding time. They're naturally alert then. It's easy to get good pictures when an animal is eating and you're little worry that the subject will move suddenly.

A second good point to keep in mind in picturing animals and pets is that young animals always lend themselves to charming pictures. Like children, kittens, puppies, and bear cubs have their own appeal. While it takes patience to catch them in just the pose you want, the snaps are worth the effort.

And third, be sure to make close-up pictures when shooting animals. Like people, a pet has personality and it can't be captured easily when you're 30 feet away from your picture subject. So move close in—say six to ten feet—where you can get a "big" image of the animal. You'll find that this helps a lot.

In fact, you'll find that most of the rules which hold for shots of people also hold for pictures of your pets or other animals. If you're seeking new camera subjects, try them. You'll find one snapshoot material at the zoo, on a farm, or at the pet store around your household.

John van Outlander