

# The Birmingham Eccentric

Many of us know how difficult it is to keep our own lives on an even keel, requiring constant effort and vigilance. How much more difficult, then, it is to bring reforms to whole masses of people. Different techniques are necessary for individuals and groups.

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## Bits of Birmingham

Whatever happens in the way of weather after 9:14 a.m. EST, Friday, Dec. 22, can be charged against Old Man Winter. That is the time he officially arrives here. This is still fall, as far as the seasons are concerned. But on Dec. 22nd it will be the shortest day of the year—daylight for only five hours, night for 15 hours. This is because the sun will be more than 23 degrees south of the equator. Then it starts north again, the days become longer and supposedly warmer.

A reference in last week's Bits of Birmingham to local youngsters blowing whistles at the Christmas Eve, Dec. 4, disturbed a boy who called the office last Thursday. He emphasized, "Why blame the kids for blowing the whistles? After all, it was a merchant who handed them out."

It looks as though the Junior Chamber of Commerce has changed its mind about wishing one and all a Merry Christmas, but this Wanderer assures you this is not the case. At the outset of our 1950 street decorating campaign, each lamp post bore a Christmas tree, made of composition board, which bore this message. Suddenly they all disappeared. It was not a change of heart on the part of the Jaycees, but simply because they found the trees constituted a hazard to pedestrians. Several persons bumped the trees while traveling on the crowded walks. It was to avoid personal injury, especially to children, that the "trees" were taken away. The trees were intended in wishing everyone the Merriest Christmas yet.

An appeal has been received from the Detroit Goodwill Industries for toys, clothing and other gifts for children between the ages of two and 15. Donations—new or in good condition—the Goodwill says, will assure a Merry Christmas for the children of the 325 handicapped men and women workers in Detroit. More than 200 youngsters will be feted at the annual Goodwill Christmas party, Tuesday evening, Dec. 19. Persons wishing to make contributions can call TR 3-3660, and a Goodwill truck will promptly pick up the gifts.

Keep your Christmas tree in water to keep it fresh, green, fire-resistant, and to prevent the needles from falling, advises the experts who ought to know. Cut trees, like cut flowers, must have water to stay moist and fresh. Foresters advise buying a tree that has been cut as recently as possible, putting it in water promptly, and keeping it in a cool place until put for decorating. As soon as you bring the tree home, cut off the end of the trunk diagonally at least an inch above the original cut. Stand it in a container of water and keep the water level above the cut surface as long as the tree is in use. A crosswise brace of wood across the water container can be attractively disguised by covering with the metal foil now sold for kitchen and florists' use. Buy a fresh cut tree and then keep them in water pails. If the tree stands upright, it will gradually lose its ability to draw up water. To tell whether the tree is dry, touch the needles with a small branch and see whether the wood under the bark is moist.

There are times when a really hard winter takes on the appearance of something rather big and grim. Such a thing happened in Birmingham last Wednesday when someone stole the bulbs from a local store's Christmas decorations through various loan agencies, these city notices go to the mortgagee—UNLESS the householder has informed the city assessor to put his name on the tax roll, too. Declares City Assessor James Hink: "If the new home owners will notify me of their new ownership, they also will receive notices of all city hearings regarding their property instead of having such notices end abruptly at the mortgage company."

A hungry young secretary, working in a local office, has asked this Wanderer to make an appeal to residents in behalf of all those men and women who work. "If the housewives, doing their Christmas shopping, could only arrange their lunches at some other hour, I'd be happy," she said. She went on to inform us that it is nearly impossible to get served at noon since many shoppers make a day of it and meet friends for lunch. "We only have an hour and it's pretty discouraging to start back to work without anything to eat," said the HYS.

How do you like the new telephone book which was distributed to local customers last week? Nice, big one, isn't it? According to Wait Fauser, local Michigan Bell manager, the new book combines in one all those exchanges which extended area customers can call. "It's the first time it has been done here," Fauser said.

Many local residents have been contacted by telephone during the past few days, reminding them of the special Red Cross blood bank unit which will be at the St. James Parish House Dec. 10. This is a special campaign to receive whole blood for immediate shipment to the battle areas of Korea. Mrs. Sheldon Noble said today that a Red Cross worker would be the Community House to receive calls for appointments on Dec. 14, 15, 16 and 18.

What with hundreds of thousands of people trying to figure out just what "The Thing" is, this Wanderer believes he has the answer: it is that last-minute Christmas gift you buy 11 because you put off shopping until the last possible moment, or 2) you haven't been able to decide just what to get and therefore have to get SOMETHING!

News copy submitted early necessarily is given preference over late items. So the "Early Bird" usually gets the space.

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## Main Says \$31,000 Can Be Chopped From DPW Project

Elimination of a two-story office addition, and better rearrangement of present facilities, will permit DPW ward improvements well within the \$105,000 bond issue approved for such purposes in April 1949, City Commissioner Ralph A. Main believes.

"The city can still build enough additional garage facilities to care for equipment now left outside in the weather, better lunchroom and locker room for workmen for between \$80,000 and \$85,000," Main suggested to fellow commissioners.

When the city estimates out the cost of the improvement (including more office space) at \$116,000, the commission turned the matter over to Main for his investigation.

Main's suggestions, which will also permit the city to pave considerable of the DPW yard as part of the bond issue, were sent to the original architects who had been asked to incorporate Main's ideas in the revised plans.

## Calls Deer Hunters Real 'Home Guard'

The nation's army of deer hunters is the real "home guard," believes Claude Parmley, Royal Oak businessman and firearms expert. "Michigan alone has 400,000 deer hunters, plus another 300,000 who have shotguns that he used to retail any trader," he told Birmingham Rotarians at their Monday noon luncheon.

Main problem in supplying this "army" with sufficient ammunition to make it effective, he declared.

NEXT MONDAY the Baldwin high school choir will give its 13th

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annual Christmas concert before the Rotarians and Rotaryans. Since Christmas and New Year's Day both fall on Monday, there will be no club meetings those days, said President Vic Ulrich.

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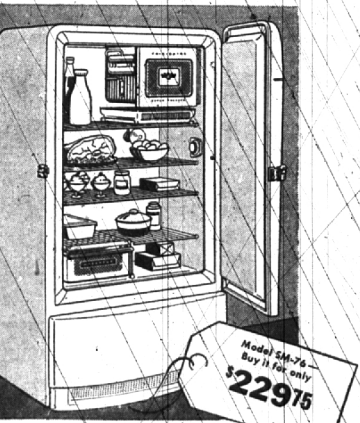
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