

The Birmingham Eccentric



Bits of Birmingham

Last Friday was the opening day for sale of 1951 license plates. Charles Mortensen, manager of the local chamber of commerce said that when he arrived at the office 15 minutes early that morning, a man was waiting at the door. The man said he had already been there for half an hour so he could acquire his plates. As it was very cold outside, Mortensen let the man inside. But the gentleman didn't become the first in town to receive his license plates because he had forgotten the title to his car.

Snow and ice on the city streets last week made "getting push" quite a common sight. This Wanderer came across one such event that had added a different touch. On East Maple a small truck was pushing a car while two young men pushed the truck.

Sgt. Henry Timm, safety advisor for the Birmingham police department, has an additional bit of "insurance" for our local youngsters in view of the slippery streets the traffic hazard at school crossings increases sharply. Timm is aware of the fact that many of the persons passing schools are strangers in the area, and equally aware that the rest of us are sometimes a bit careless about children, he is placing large cloth signs at all school crossings. The bright yellow canvas will carry large black letters warning the motorist that he is in a school zone and to use extra caution as he drives.

Among the hundreds of persons from Michigan who were stranded in Ohio following the Michigan

Ohio State football game, Nov. 25, were Mr. and Mrs. Murray D. Van Wagener, 176 Abbey. The former Michigan governor said that they managed to stay in the stands for the first half. After hitting a traffic jam in getting out of Columbus, they had to detour to Troy, Ohio, but snow packed roads forced them to stop 14 miles from their destination. The Van Wageners stayed in a farm house outside Vandalia, Ohio, that night. Fourteen other stranded persons stayed at the same place, but Van Wagener said the accommodations seemed just as good as a first hotel. They came back to Birmingham without their car and the ex-governor returned to Ohio last week to pick it up.

William Rentrow, 319 Henley drive, received a minor letter for his participation on this year's Ferris Institute football squad, according to an announcement made this week by Robert Sherman, athletic director.

Unless a local group comes to the rescue, it appears that Birmingham will not see its annual home lighting contest this year. Last year, the project was co-sponsored by the Kiwanis club and Detroit Edison Co. Because the Kiwanis club will be selling Christmas trees this year, the members felt they couldn't take on the sponsorship for the contest.

All around the city evidence of Christmas is taking shape in the form of home, store and street decorations. Little boys and girls are becoming Santa Claus and act as and parents are traveling

around with mysterious or dazed looks on their faces. Although every scrap of snow vanished over the weekend, this Wanderer was heartened by the sight of several trucks loaded with Christmas trees making stops in Birmingham.

A Beverly Hills banker joins the ranks of those who were successful on the opening day of the deer season. Harold Van Horn of 18880 Wilcrest, who spent the first two weeks of the season near Lewiston with Oney Bloom, Grandfield Terrace, shot his buck the very first day of the season.

A little boy who lives near this Wanderer looked mournfully out over green lawns Monday morning and remarked sadly, "Winter's all gone and Santa Claus never got here!"

Birmingham's young editor, David Lougee, was the subject of an extensive photo-story in Sunday's Detroit Free Press. David, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Lougee, 524 Greenwood, is a writer, printer, artist and mailing room clerk. He started more than a year ago. Since a feature story appeared in The Eccentric soon after his weekly started publication, David has added several correspondents and even enjoying a few foreign subscribers. The editor is only nine years old.

With his Nov. 30 initiation as a professional member of the Michigan State chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, national journalism honorary fraternity, The Eccentric's Managing Editor George H. Baile, became the third member of his family to receive the honor. His father, George H. Baile, editor and publisher of The Eccentric, is a professional member in the Northwestern University chapter, while his brother John is an associate member of the University of Michigan chapter.

While most of the persons we talked to who visited the Christmas Preview in the local stores Monday evening, were impressed with the affair, some were annoyed at the conduct of many youngsters who persisted in blowing whistles in the stores and on the sidewalks. The loud noise of those whistles proved very nerve racking to many. One adult was heard to remark, "What is this—a 4-H convention?"

It's already Christmas over at the Birmingham postoffice. Two extra trucks are already hauling mail to and from the depot. To help speed things along this year, and to keep more working space available for local delivery, the local staff has converted the post-office basement into temporary working quarters. All outgoing packages are handled in this new "department," making it easier for all workers and assuring mailers a faster, better service on their Christmas packages.

Birmingham's community Christmas tree, located in the municipal park, was decorated Monday by the city parks and forestry crew. The Nativity scene, which the owners again was erected beneath the towering pine.

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

Survey Housing Emergency Use

State Police Commissioner Donald S. Leonard, who is also state civil defense director, said arrangements have been completed with the American Red Cross to conduct a state-wide emergency housing and feeding survey. The 31 counties have been selected for the initial phase.

The survey started this week and will soon be under way in all of these counties. It will be extended to other counties after the first group has been completed.

Although the Red Cross chapter in each county will conduct the survey, it will be a civil defense project operating under the supervision of local civil defense directors.

Such data as type and condition, maximum sleeping capacity, heating system, and kitchen provisions, and kitchen equipment, if any, will be collected and compiled in an inventory, copies of which will be kept by the local and state offices of civil defense.

Rural areas as well as cities will be covered, and a summary compiled for each city and a total for each county.

Den IX, winners of the recent paper drive, were treated to a trip to Detroit and a hockey game at the Stadium Saturday. Dens I and II, runners-up, received special treats at their den meeting.

Dens III and IV presented skits recently. Appearing in "The Pilgrims" were Den III wags Hugh Baile, George House, Philip Ehrhardt, Robert McKenzie, Mike Miller, Earl Roberts and John Ross.

Den IV's quiz show was conducted by John Barclay, Skipper Caldwell, Bobby Cummings, Bobby Haack, Tommy Maron, Jack Miller and Tony Salisbury.

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Rotarians Hear Young Jet Pilot

How it feels and what it takes to be a U. S. Air Force jet pilot was described to Birmingham Rotarians at their Monday noon luncheon by 2nd Lt. Charles Spah of the 61st Fighter Squadron, 56th Fighter Group, at Selfridge Field.

The job of his group is to protect this part of the nation's northern perimeter, he explained. To show what a F-56 "Sabre" pilot wears while aloft, Lt. Spah

showed Rotarians the plastic flight helmet, oxygen mask, practical post apparatus flying suit, Mae West life preserver and parachute. Average age of a jet pilot is between 21 and 25 years," he said.

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