Prayer, I have found, is that gift to mankind which enables it, at least for the moment, to free its thoughts from basic materialism. It allows man to satisfy an inner hunger at the feast table of God . . . giving him the victuals of courage, kindliness, love, charity, idealism.

The Birmingham Eccentric

PART ONE

72ND YEAR—NO. 49 | BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1950 | 22 PAGES | FIVE CENTS

THIS and THAT

By G. R. A.

(GRA returned Sunday from his Florida vacation and will resume his writing of this column next week. However, again this week, as for the past two Thursdays, his son, George Wm. Averill, managing editor of The Eccentric, is writing it.)

We Grass-Rooters Are Being Out-Confused

The federal government, composed of those hirelings of ours in Washington, was supposedly created to serve the people of the nation. Our founding fathers created it to do for us what we would have a hard time doing for ourselves.

But for some years things have been getting out of hand, particularly regarding confusion. We little people back home—in the grass roots, they say—don't seem to need help when it comes to confusion. We can muddle our lives pretty well on our own hook.

Our business, social and cultural lives show this. Look at the problems we've created for ourselves in these three fields. Now the federal government, the one segment of our society originally designed to provide some light in our lives, has probably taken its cue from us little folks and is trying to outdo us confusion-wise in the realm of federal government.

Complications Increase

Looking back over the past 18 years, it appears that the federal administration has been getting more and more complicated, more and more confused. Before this time, we had our federal problems, to be sure. But I don't think they were as complicated, as confused as they are today. There certainly weren't as many of these complex problems.

But with expanding budgets, increasing deficits, more and more government employees, we also have been getting more and more confusion.

During the past two decades under the present administration, along came Henry Wallace and his "plow-it-under, kill-it-off" policy for the farmers of the nation.

Washington bureaucrats will pay you for not growing wheat, corn, pigs, cattle, etc. Just buy enough potential farming or grazing land and the government was at your door to pay you to keep out of the fields or the pasture, to sit in your front porch rocker and do nothing.

Only Slightly Different Today

Today the picture is slightly different, but along the same order.

You grow the potatoes, get the chickens to lay the eggs, but the government buys them. You sell some to the consumer at a high price, but the surplus (which would bring down prices) is stored by the government.

If you grow enough potatoes, or talk the hens into laying too many eggs, the government storehouses get so full these Washington bureaucrats sell the stuff back to you for a fraction of what you should have to pay for them. The city consumer pays for it through taxes and higher prices.

Now look what these Washington geniuses have figured out:

They're going to reclaim land from the Atlantic Ocean so the farmers can grow more potatoes and raise more hens to lay more eggs. I suppose just so they can give subsidies to more farmers.

That's right, the government is now undertaking a scientific study which is expected to promote the reclamation of six million acres of some of the country's richest soil for agricultural purposes.

For Pasture and Vegetables

Some 30 miles south of Savannah, Georgia, government experts are studying the fresh water tidal marsh lands and marine terraces. They want to determine the feasibility of converting these millions of acres now under water into suitable land for pasture grasses and vegetable crops.

The project, if approved would extend from Virginia to Florida.

The idea, according to reports, is to follow the famous reclamation pattern of the Netherlands. The proposal would include a system of canals, dykes, drainage ditches, tide gates and water pumps to free the soil from its excess water.

The mainland was a fertile area in the nation's early days. The colonists utilized the rich soil of

(See THIS & THAT, Page 2)

WHY STAY HOME FRIDAY NIGHT?

. . . when there are plenty of capable baby sitters awaiting your command. That's what one lady discovered after placing an Eccentric Want Ad.

50 CALLS FROM ONE AD

Yes, 50 calls resulted from one ad . . . an ad which cost only 40c.

RESULTS SUCH AS THIS

. . . are not at all unusual. You, too, can get such results from the Eccentric's Classified Section.

WHAT HAVE YOU TO SELL, BUY, RENT or TRADE?

PHONE 11

ask for the Want Ad Desk

Cafeteria At Pierce School Provides Pleasant Noon-Hour Conditions

By Alice E. Morgan

In marked contrast to the over-crowded conditions of Barnum junior high school, especially during the lunch hour, Dr. Dwight B. Ireland, superintendent of schools, cites conditions at Pierce elementary school.

Here the building program has had a greater chance to keep up with the school enrollment. The cafeteria, at noon, is described by Ireland as one of the most delightful places in the public school system.

Approximately 160 children are served here every day, with little or no trouble. The children eat in pleasant, quiet surroundings, with plenty of room for comfort.

"A visit to the cafeteria any noon hour," Ireland said, "by a parent would convince them not only that the lunch is adequate but also that this building facility is a need.

"A well balanced hot lunch program is in operation whereby children obtain a hot plate lunch for 25 cents. The meal is planned to give growing children all the food value they need. It can be served attractively with a direct appeal to young appetites in this spacious room."

Aware of Need

Ireland pointed out that such facilities are not available in all elementary schools, but the awareness of this need on the part of the school administrative staff will make such a service available as soon as facilities can be provided in other schools.

He also reminded that Pierce, unlike Barnum, is not faced with a noon-hour problem involving equipment. The cafeteria is the cafeteria, and that is that. There is no need for hurriedly erecting tables and bringing out benches to set up a dining hall in what was a few minutes before, a gymnasium. There is no need to reverse this process to restore the room as a gymnasium when the last plate has been cleaned.

Scenes like this at Pierce will be common to nearly every school once the expansion program reaches fulfillment and the crowded conditions no longer exist.

It will give children greater pleasure during their mid-day meal, and inspire greater order. With plenty of room the urge to push and shove and otherwise indulge in rough horse play will be greatly reduced.

ONE OF THE MOST DELIGHTFUL PLACES IN THE BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL SYSTEM

Youngsters enjoy hot lunch in a pleasing, comfortable room

Lack of Coal Cuts Schools' Night Activity

Extremely Short Supplies for 4 City Schools

A carload of coal is on its way to Birmingham from Toledo and should be here some time today, enabling the schools to continue operations at least through next week, Norman Wolfe said at noon yesterday.

Yesterday Superintendent of Schools Dwight B. Ireland sent telegrams to Congressman George A. Dondero, Senators Vandenberg and Ferguson, one to the White House and another to Governor Williams at Lansing, emphasizing the lack of coal to assure continued operation of Birmingham schools.

Birmingham school officials are having a difficult time locating coal supplies to keep classes operating in four city schools, they said yesterday.

To conserve what small supplies there are, all night activities have been cancelled indefinitely. The policy took effect Tuesday.

"The fires are banked at 3 p.m., and the doors locked at 6 p.m.," stated Norman Wolfe, assistant school superintendent.

Seriously affected by the coal shortage are Baldwin high, Barnum junior high, and Adams and Pierce elementary schools. The school board has coal on hand to last over the weekend, with the prospect of a 50 to 60-ton carload arriving today.

Carloads Being Traced

Each new carload will permit these four schools to operate one week longer in this severe cold weather, Wolfe explained.

"I am trying to trace down several possible carloads supposedly on their way to us," he said.

One carload was seized by the railroad when it arrived in Toledo Saturday, he pointed out.

Walnut Lake and Franklin schools are heated by oil, so classes will continue uninterrupted there and night activities will still be permitted. Bloomfield Village and Quarton schools also are in no immediate danger of running short of coal, Wolfe stated.

He said pupils will be notified tomorrow before leaving the four seriously affected schools whether there will be classes on Monday.

Keep House Temperature Down

Birmingham residential coal users are in no immediate danger of going without heat, a survey of the city's two coal yards revealed yesterday.

One dealer said he had about a 10-day supply. He suggested that coal users cut down their thermostats and keep temperatures as low as possible.

"Birmingham is probably as well off, if not better off, than any other place in the country," this dealer said. "If the miners return to the pits tomorrow, the situation here should be eased in the next few days."

The second dealer said his yard contained about a two-week supply.

"I'm holding a little back for extreme rationing, if necessary. Customers are not getting all they request, but enough to keep them going," he explained.

Gas Explosion Inquest Date Still Indefinite

Prosecutor Awaits An Interview With Woman Survivor

Oakland County Prosecutor Clyde D. Underwood said yesterday he is taking the preliminary steps leading up to an inquest of the Dec. 11 gas explosion which killed five persons and seriously injured another, at the Mother & Son Antique shop on N. Woodward.

Underwood said the date of the inquest depends upon how soon he can be permitted to interview Mrs. Arthur Wilson of Dearborn, still in St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Pontiac, recovering from burns and injuries suffered in the blast.

Purpose of the inquest is to determine if the blast can be attributed to criminal negligence, the prosecutor stated.

Mrs. Wilson's husband, Mrs. Edith Jones and her son, Wilson, proprietors of the shop, Birmingham Fireman Lee Carroll, and Mrs. Roy T. Bramson of Bloomfield Hills were killed.

Arranging for Interview

"Mrs. Wilson, the only surviving witness, still cannot be moved from the hospital, and I'm trying to arrange with her doctors to interview her," Underwood explained. "We may even have to conduct the inquest at the hospital."

He said he was lining up witnesses, some of whom still have to be contacted. Det. Sgt. Fred E. Davids, of the State Fire Marshal's district office in Detroit, is working with Underwood to obtain the information necessary for the inquest.

"Davis is completing some reports I must have before the inquest can be held," Underwood added. He said he has talked to County Coroner Dr. John D. Monroe about the inquest, but that the date is still indefinite.

The inquest arises out of a request by Birmingham Fire Chief Vern W. Griffith, made to Governor Williams, that the state conduct an investigation into the cause of the explosion.

Williams, pointing out that he believes the state does not have the authority to conduct such an inquiry, instructed Attorney General Stephen J. Roth to ask Underwood for such an investigation.

Study Committee Named

"The explosion here", Williams said, "has brought to my mind the necessity of providing some legal means whereby safety regulations with respect to the physical properties of public utilities may be enforced by some agency of the state government."

The governor said he has named a committee to study the possibility of standards for regulating gas distribution systems. On the committee are Atty. Gen. Roth as chairman, State Fire Marshal Arnold C. Renner, Public Service Chairman John H. McCarthy, and Glenn Thom, chairman of the governor's fire prevention commission.

Williams has instructed this committee to report to him by March 10 so that any possible recommendations can be submitted to the legislature at its special session March 15.

The governor last month said he would ask the legislature to appoint a study committee to attempt to work out regulations governing gas distribution systems.

All makes of inner spring mattresses repaired. ROYAL MATTRESS COMPANY. PHONE B'HAM 1-0788.

Lincoln-Purdy Sewer Requires Reassessment

Final costs of the Lincoln-Purdy interceptor sewer proved to be almost double the original city engineer's estimates and the amount which was originally obtained through special assessments, City Manager Donald C. Egbert reported to the city commission this week.

Since some commissioners did not have his report in their agenda, the commission postponed official action on Egbert's recommendation for reassessment until next Monday night.

Egbert said the original estimate, prepared in May 1947, set the cost of the project at $42,000. Since the basement flooding problem in this area was critical and the need for the relief urgent, the commission spread the assessment roll on this figure.

Now that the project has been completed, final figures show the cost was $82,557.53, or $40,490.53 over the original assessment.

Recognized at the Time

"It was recognized at the time the commission approved the contract for construction that a reassessment in this amount would occur," Egbert reminded the commission.

(See REASSESSMENT, Page 2)

Thieves Lose Safe While Towing It to Unknown Spot

Some honest citizens, from time to time, complain that now and then a day comes along when "you can't make a nickel". This same sentiment may be voiced by some not-so-honest citizens who had a run of hard luck here over the weekend.

Early Sunday morning unknown persons broke open a door at the Standard Oil company's Eton road bulk station.

According to police, the men apparently pulled the 700-pound safe, made more awkward by being set in a block of concrete, from the building. Outside, they loaded it on skids, tied it to the rear of their car, and left.

At the turn from Eton to East Maple, near the Grand Trunk viaduct, the safe fell off the skids. Before the men could re-load it, Harold Thomas, 2428 Buckingham, drove past.

Thomas immediately reported the incident to the police who found the unpened safe abandoned near the scene. It was reported to have contained a large sum of money.

Police Chief Ralph W. Moxley said an adding machine and typewriter had been taken from the office and several wrenches were missing.

Ice Carnival Will Be Run This Week —If There Is Ice!

Birmingham's $64 question is: How will the Quarton Lake ice be Saturday?

With the sudden plunge in temperature over the weekend, the ice carnival committee hopes the event can be run off this week. It has been postponed on two successive weekends due to no ice at all or a surface too rough for skaters.

Preliminary competition will start at 9 a.m., with the youngest competitors getting off their events. Intermediates will compete at 11, with the seniors at 12 o'clock. These races will be the ??

First four winners in each event will compete in the finals to start between 1:30 and 2 p.m.

The committee has arranged a special novice class competition, open only to those who failed to place in the preliminary events.

Mrs. Kenneth Whitlock asks parents to instruct their children to check at their schools for the time in which their events will take place. The notices will be posted where all may obtain full information.

In order to avoid accidents, the competitive area will be patrolled frequently by a patrolman to keep non-contestants off the ice.

Prizes to be awarded at the carnival are being displayed by local merchants.

Women's Finance Forum Series Starts Wednesday

First session of the Women's Finance Forum will be held next Wednesday, March 1, to 10 a.m. in the Baldwin public library auditorium.

This series of six meetings, sponsored by the Birmingham National Bank, will start with a talk on "Financial Planning" by C. Stewart Baxter vice-president of the National Bank of Detroit.

A 30-minute question and answer period will follow his remarks.

Baxter, a University of Michigan and Detroit College of Law graduate, joined the Detroit bank in 1942 where he supervises personal trusts.

Registrations, up to 150, for this series are being accepted at the Birmingham National bank. The weekly meetings will extend through April 5. There is no admission fee.

An Editorial

A Civic Call to Duty

Birmingham, along with the remainder of the nation, is suffering possible distress because of the current coal shortage. Our schools face possible closing; other public buildings are feeling the coal shortage; many homes, too, face lack of fuel.

What can you do about it?

Under our form of government, we can, and should, contact our public officials.

They make our laws; they are supposed to enforce our laws, all in the public interest.

We all know that President Truman's early failure to grasp the danger of a coal shortage due to the miners' strike, has brought this coal shortage to the nation.

While we shall not attempt to go into the details of this problem, we do remind our readers that they, as citizens, still have a duty and responsibility to perform in meeting the coal shortage problem.

It is suggested, therefore, that you wire or write the following public officials, revealing your own firm convictions, requesting that proper action be taken to restore the nation's coal supply.

Certainly, the government of the United States, and of the several States, is supposed to represent the whole people, and should be more powerful than any group within it.

What we need now is the mining of coal!

Here are the names:

President Harry S. Truman, The White House, Washington, D. C.

Senator Homer Ferguson, Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Congressman George A. Dondero, House Office Bldg., Washington, D. C.

Governor G. Mennen Williams, Lansing, Michigan

B of E Checks Bids, May Award Contract at Meeting Tonight

A contract for the New Torry school and an addition to Walnut Lake school is expected to be awarded tonight by the Birmingham board of education.

The board met in regular session Tuesday night but adjourned the meeting until tonight so the two low bids can be examined more thoroughly.

These two low bidders have quoted prices of $255,000 and $255,209 for the combined contract, assistant Superintendent Norman Wolfe said yesterday.

$3½ Million More Reported Ready for New Hospital

Contributions that will equal or exceed the original $3,500,000 pledged by the Greater Detroit Hospital Fund, for the proposed Oakland Hospital, to be located in Birmingham, are awaiting more formal action on the hospital's construction here before being announced; The Eccentric learned from reliable sources this week.

New Insect Found On Hills Estate

Named in Honor of Gustavus D. Pope, Cranbrook Trustee

A new species of insect, a flightless wasp, has just been described and named **"Phaenopria Popei,"** honoring Gustavus D. Pope of Bloomfield Hills.

The new species was discovered by Dr. Clifford O. Berg who spent last summer making biological studies at Sodon Lake on the Pope property on Franklin road, as part of the Institute of Science program in the investigation of the conditions and biology of water-dwelling plants and animals.

Dr. Berg reared flies of the new species, which are parasitic, on the pupae of another fly. Realizing they were of a strange type, he forwarded them to Dr. Muesebeck of the United States national museum, a specialist in such forms of life.

Interested in Research

The name of a previously unknown form of life becomes a part of the permanent working data of natural science when a formal description of the new entity, has been published. In this connection, Dr. Muesebeck, writing in the Canadian Entomologist for January, 1950, gives his reasons for naming the fly after Pope:

"I am naming it in honor of Gustavus D. Pope, the owner of Sodon Lake which he has made available for research to the Cranbrook Institute of Science. Pope, who is a trustee of the Cranbrook Institute, has a serious interest in the research sponsored by that organization and has done a great deal to make it possible. It is, therefore, with particular pleasure that I dedicate this new species for him."

Deadline Near for Securing '50 Automobile Plates

Charles Mortensen, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce manager, reminds local car owners only a few more days remain before 1950 plates must be in use.

The C of C office at 350 E. Maple will close at 5 o'clock this evening, but will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. tomorrow. Saturday the office will be open until 5 p.m., with an 8 p.m. closing Monday and Tuesday.

He said that at present they are issuing about 500 plates a day here.

Truck owners are asked to bring 1949 registration cards or official weight slips when they apply for new plates. Persons wanting to license trailers must also furnish proof of weight.

Mortensen said he expected the peak load to hit this week, but that he felt sure a large number would be served on the two final days. The 1949 plates expire at midnight Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Firemen to Honor Former Members at Party Tonight

All former members, paid or volunteer, of the Birmingham fire department will be guests of honor at a department party at the fire station tonight. City officials also have been invited to attend.

The department's new 1,000-gallon pumper, received three weeks ago, is expected to be the center of attention this evening.

Various PTA, YMCA Meetings Cancelled

The PTA's annual meeting at Baldwin high school next Monday night has been indefinitely postponed until the school cual situation has eased. Evening activities of the various school PTAs also are being called off.

Ed Kirbert, local YMCA secretary, said the Y has cancelled all evening groups which meet at Birmingham schools. Groups will be notified when club meetings can be resumed, he said.

No New Candidates for City Commission File During Week

With the filing deadline only two days away, three persons have filed petitions for election to the city commission April 3. No new petitions have been received since last week, said City Clerk Irene Hanley.

Candidates are Dean G. Beier, 1727 Washington blvd., Donald Parry, 975 Madison, and Chad M. Ritchie, 1150 Puritan.

Petitions must be filed by Saturday at 4 p.m., Miss Hanley said.

Nominating petitions for the re-election Mrs. Hascall and Dwight B. Ireland for the library board were filed this week.

Young Zurich Engraver Is Interviewed

Swiss Officers Come from Ranks

By Robert Ball

Special Correspondent for The Eccentric

ZURICH, Switzerland—Switzerland, as everyone knows, is the land of the militant citizenry.

In the thundering "Ja Wohl, Herr Hauptmann" with which a Swiss recruit acknowledges an officer's command, reverberates the warlike spirit that has become as important an export article as watches and cheese.

From the days when Swiss farmers rolled stones down on the Austrians to the present forts and provisions in the mountains and rifle and uniform in the hall closet, the fame of the Swiss army stretches in one unbroken line, hardly broken even by battles.

The fact that the Swiss army

(See SWISS, Page 2)

BRUNO HUBER CLEANS HIS RIFLE

He's taking his compulsory military training