

BITS OF BIRMINGHAM

AH, PEOPLE—THEY'RE WONDERFUL! Like, for instance, the elderly gentleman who walked into The Eccentric's office Monday morning to say he had just received his 1952 Birmingham school district tax bill. He launched into a bitter attack against the school board. The Eccentric, and the recently-arrived residents who had just raised his school taxes. He charged that everyone but he and a diminishing group of "real oldtime Birmingham residents" didn't seem to care about saving money, but merely in spending it. The recently approved \$5,500,000 bond issue for school expansion he cited as the prime reason his school taxes had gone up this week. Just to put the record straight (in the event other persons also may feel the new bond issue was the reason school taxes went up over what they were last year), this Wanderer would like to point out that the school district won't begin paying back that bond issue UNTIL NEXT DECEMBER. It must have been something else that caused the boost this year—perhaps increased assessed valuation, increased equalized valuation ratio, greater operating budget, or a combination of any two or all three of these factors. But it wasn't the new bond issue. That argument will have to be saved until next year.

THIS WANDERER, being a softy, set up a bird feeder the other afternoon. For a few hours it was avoided, while from nearby bushes shivering sparrows cussed and discussed the new yard addition. As time wore on, and the contraption didn't leap at any, they became bolder and finally ventured to land on it. From then on it was very bird for himself and conversation and kaffir corn filled the air and the sparrows. We wait patiently, now, for the other varieties of bird which will surely visit the stand before winter is too old.

WESTBOUND MAPLE AVE. MOTORISTS Monday morning about 8:30 were confronted with maneuvering around a pile of lumber which had slipped off a small truck right in the middle of the island crossover on Hunter Blvd. It took the truck driver about a half hour reloading his vehicle.

HOW MANY DEER did you count coming down US-10 Sunday? R. G. Nordstrom tells about a friend of his who started out that last day of the 1952 deer season on a drive from Birmingham to a point north of Yassar. A passenger in the car, this friend decided to keep count. When he reached Yassar, he stopped keeping track. He had just reached 1,400 in his totalling.

BIRMINGHAM ROTARY CLUB'S 74th member, inducted Monday by Club President Clarence Vith, is Frank Mulholland, son of the late founder of Birmingham's largest and oldest department store, and who also was a charter member of the local club. Young Frank, since his discharge from the Army several months ago, has been associated with his older brother, Charles, in operating the store. Charles also is a B'ham Rotarian.

THE FIRST REAL snow of the season brought out small boys and handsets in large numbers. All over town the youngsters rolled out of bed early and eagerly, to get in a few flocks before school time.

RELOCATION OF the two taxicab stands at the Maple-Woodward intersection is being held up until the telephone company can install new phone lines at the new cab stands. Birmingham Police Chief Ralph W. Moxley reports. City commissioners several weeks ago ordered this move in an attempt to relieve some of the traffic congestion at the city's main intersection.

WITH THE SUDDEN vanishing last week of our "spring weather," Birmingham shoppers seemed to become aware of the fact that Christmas really was coming. Our business district was thronged Friday and Saturday as residents entered into the spirit of buying and flocked to the stores. Youngsters were pretty broad hints as to what would make them especially happy, come Dec. 25, while mothers tried to look as though they hadn't heard a word.

HOW'S THIS FOR COURTESY and consideration? A local area resident called this Wanderer to report a situation which in today's business world is rare. The resident's oil burner stopped functioning about 10:30 Monday evening. The 25-degree temperature outside, began dropping to meet the service man. No answer. He tried several more times. Still no answer. He drove to the service man's home. No regular there. At 12:30 he called another serviceman listed in the phone book. Sorry, but he didn't answer calls except from old customers. A third service man was called. He had just returned from a fire where three of his men had been working for several hours, finally got that furnace going again. "I'd appreciate it if you could either get your regular serviceman, or get through the night without requiring the oil burner," he suggested. "You see, we're all dead tired and would like to get some sleep if you don't need us right now. However, if you still think you do, I'll come out and see what the trouble is." But the resident said, no, he thought the family could get along till morning and perhaps could contact his regular repair man. Tuesday morning, at 7:45, the resident's phone rang. "This is Mr. —. I have one of my men here and I am not sending him out on any other call until I checked with you to see if you still want any service. Has your burner been fixed?" The resident, after picking himself off the floor where he had fallen in surprise and disbelief at this almost unheard of courtesy and consideration, said his regular repair man, was on the way right then. "Can you top this?" he asked this Wanderer. We had to admit we couldn't easily recall a similar showing of consideration and courtesy from the business world.

B'HAM'S MUNICIPAL CHRISTMAS TREE, located in the middle of Shain Memorial Park, is all dressed up for the holiday season. Monday afternoon city forestry crews put up the colored lights, which were turned on for that evening's annual "Christmas Prevue" in the downtown shopping center.

B'HAM DPW SUPT. Norman Knapp apparently spoke too soon Monday night. Just before the city commission's meeting, Knapp mentioned to this Wanderer, "You know, we've been pretty lucky this year."

No real snowfall yet this year. As I recall, last year the city trucks and snowplows went out the first time on Nov. 6 and had to remove snow from the downtown shopping area. About three hours later Monday evening, the first snowfall of this season had begun. Early Tuesday morning the DPW's plows and salt spreaders were busy getting rid of it.

Now and then, for a few hours or a few days, I am blessed with the presence of little grandchildren; to watch them run so quickly, the names of various things, to respond to affection, etc., is a most wonderful exhibition to behold.

The Birmingham Eccentric



MR. and MRS. R. P. KRAUS and JIMMY CLAUDE KIDD
B'ham family looks over Yule suggestions with aid of store clerk (Eccentric Staff Photo)

Open House 'Successful'

Several thousand persons swarmed through the downtown area Monday evening as merchants for the fourth year held open house for Christmas shoppers. Strolling carolers and musicians, vocal and instrumental broadcasts from St. James Episcopal church, and recordings broadcast from stores added to the festive air.

Charles Mortensen, Chamber of Commerce secretary, said Tuesday that the crowd was estimated to be as large as in former years, but that several merchants had reported larger numbers in their stores. "It's difficult to tell about a thing of this sort," Mortensen said, "but as far as anyone can tell, it was a success. There were some sales made, but no particular rush to buy was noted by any one store."

"THE CROWD" moved faster than it has in other years. There were few places that reported any periods of jamming, probably due to the discontinuing of give-away items and refreshments. Several merchants gave credit

were noted from the crowds on the street, particularly the members of the Birmingham high school chorus and band who strolled about singing and playing Christmas music.

Comments also were favorable concerning the quality and quantity of merchandise displayed and the availability of clerks when purchases were made. The remark of a sleepy little miss being hoisted to dad's shoulder for the trip back to the car may sum up the whole event.

Struggling to keep her eyes open—it was nearly 9 p.m., and she was very little—the youngster snuggled against her father's neck and said, "This is the nicest party I ever came to. Let's come back tomorrow!"

MANY FAVORABLE comments

'Y' Cagers Open Season Tonight

Many new faces will greet followers of the Birmingham YMCA Men's Varsity basketball team when it takes the floor on December 4 against Northern YMCA in Highland Park.

Led by Bob Folin, the dark green cagers find only Earl Mudge and Al Larsen, veterans of three seasons among the squad that includes Don Halpin, Gerald Pike, Nelson Brown, Sandy Gruber, Henry Parks, Don Kaeeler, Tom McKibey, and Joe O'Connor.

Other players are needed and urged to contact the local 'Y' either in person or by telephone. The localities play Downtown Branch 'Y' at Baldwin on December 11 and journey to Hannon Memorial 'Y' for their December 18 game.

Commemorative Program Will Honor da Vinci

A commemorative program celebrating the 500th anniversary of the birth of Leonardo da Vinci will be presented Dec. 12 at 8 p.m. in the lecture hall, Detroit Institute of Art.

Among the speakers will be Frank Davis, 584 Townsend, who will speak on "Leonardo as Engineer." Davis is curator of mechanical arts at the Henry Ford museum and Greenfield Village. Other speakers are scheduled to discuss other phases of da Vinci's amazing career in many fields.

Among the several sponsors of the celebration are the Cranbrook Institute of Science and the Cranbrook Academy of Art.

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Famous Organist Plays Here Dec. 7

Marilyn Mason, nationally known organist, will be featured at the Christ Church Cranbrook presentation of Handel's "Messiah" to be given at 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 7, by the Cranbrook Festival Chorus and Christ Church choir under the direction of Maurice Garabrant.

Miss Mason, a faculty member of the University of Michigan music school, is ranked as one of the two leading women organ recitalists in the country. She will give a short recital before the choral performance, which she will accompany.

Vocal soloists will be Mary Louise Lindquist and Mary Jane Walker, sopranos; Marion Jewell, alto; Carl Christensen, tenor and Syver Thingstad, bass. The public is invited to attend.



MARILYN MASON

Detroit Studying Water Authority For SOC Cities

Detroit city officials now are checking over the final drafts of the articles of incorporation of the proposed South Oakland County Water Authority, Birmingham City Manager D. C. Egbert told city commissioners this week.

The authority, created by several SOC municipalities including Birmingham, Royal Oak, Berkeley and Southfield township, would purchase water from the city of Detroit and supply it to their respective communities.

'Y' Table Tennis Team Is Defeated

Members of the Birmingham YMCA table tennis team fell 4 to 2 before Gresham Cleaners, second-ranking Oakland County league team, Thursday night, Nov. 27, at Pontiac.

Birmingham's playing in the No. 2 singles and men's doubles matches was impressive. Bob Frantz won the former without difficulty and Ken Lindsay and Frantz teamed together to win easily in the latter.

Fred Lowe and Bob Kenning played well in mixed doubles and in No. 3 singles, respectively, but the team was handicapped without the services of Allen Hamilton and Al Jenkie.

The team expects to be at full strength on December 4th for its toughest opponent in the league. At that time it will play the highly recognized Oak Oak team which boasts a roster of several players of top-ranking Michigan caliber. Additional men and women players are welcome to attend practice sessions with the team, beginning again on Thursday, December 4 at 7 p.m. at the Birmingham YMCA.

General news deadline is 4:30 p.m. each Tuesday.

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