



**PAUL THOMPSON HAS TRACKED MANY ANIMALS, BIRDS**  
Some are displayed in Chicago's Museum of History. (Eccentric Staff) Photo

## Collects Bird, Animal Tracks

By RUTH ANNE SILBAR  
Special Writer for The Eccentric

Collecting animal tracks is the unusual hobby of Paul W. Thompson of 17503 Kirkshire. While searching the countryside for botanical specimens (for Thompson is also a botanist, and a very good one too, when he isn't working as a research chemist for Ethyl Corporation), he sometimes comes across tracks of various animals who have passed that way before him.

These tracks at first excited his curiosity and started him out on another hobby which he has enjoyed for over 15 years. Tracks of animals and birds preserved in molds of plaster of paris are labeled and mounted on two large display boards in the Thompson home. They include tracks of moose, bear, beaver, otter, mink, woodchuck, badger, blue heron, raccoon and other birds and animals more commonly seen and known.

**HARDEST PART** of his hobby, Thompson maintains, is finding the tracks; the rest is easy. Making plaster casts of the tracks is not at all difficult. On his expeditions, he always carries a small knapsack which contains the necessary materials for preparing a cast. It contains plaster, spoon, knife, mixing pan, a bottle of water and strips of cardboard to frame the cast. In the winter a small atomizer is included so he can spray water upon tracks found in snow during freezing weather to produce a firm imprint.

Thompson says excellent reproductions of tracks are found in mud, wet sand, or in wet or frozen snow. The track is first framed in a strip of cardboard or metal. Plaster thoroughly mixed in a pan of water to a mushy, "thick molasses" consistency is poured into the track imprint to a depth of one-half inch.

During this Presidential campaign you have observed how heated election statements can become. Respected before the campaign starts, how covered with the mud of opponents many candidates become, as surely by far and furious, from irresponsible tongues.

able to find a track suitable for casting.

It is difficult, Thompson explained, to obtain tracks of some of the common animals such as a chipmunk (although he does have one in his collection) because the animal seldom travels on ground that will give an imprint.

**TRACKS CAN TELL** a variety of things about the animal, Thompson says.

The type of track which an animal makes depends on the part of the foot on which it walks. If it walks on the toenail, that part of the foot is well developed to form a hoof, as in the deer.

"Animals which travel primarily on their toes have well developed toe pads, such as the fox, wolf, bobcat. Then, there is the sole walk, such as the bear, skunk, raccoon. (possum). These animals have large hind feet quite different in shape from the fore feet.

"The grouping of the four feet in an animal trail," Thompson explained, "depends upon the relationship of the body length to the legs. The spacing between groups of tracks depends not only on the size of the animal, but also on the speed or gait at which the animal is traveling.

**"THE FINGER-LIKE** toes of the raccoon, the webbed hind feet of the muskrat, the prehensile thumb of the possum, and the tracks in-line of a walking fox, are all clues to their owner's identity," he says.

Thompson's interest in nature began many years ago when he was a boy scout. In 1935 he was an active boy scout worker in the Chicago area and was the nature study counselor at the boy scout summer camp at Whitehall, Mich.

Among his various scout merit badges is one in "stalking" which is a merit badge few scouts ever obtain. While he was the merit badge counselor for stalking, he says, only one scout in five years ever came to him to pass the test.

**THOMPSON HAS JUST** completed the collection and identification of the flora of Leelanau county which contains thousands of specimens. These are being kept at the herbarium at Cranbrook Institute and which will eventually be published.

He is president of the Michigan Botanist Club and a vice-president of the Detroit Audubon Society.

He has served as chairman of the policies and standards committee for the Michigan Natural Areas Council, and was chairman of the committee who laid out the Haven Hill ecology trail and nature reserve near Highland, Michigan.

Because of his work at Haven Hill, he has recently been appointed to a similar post working on federal projects.

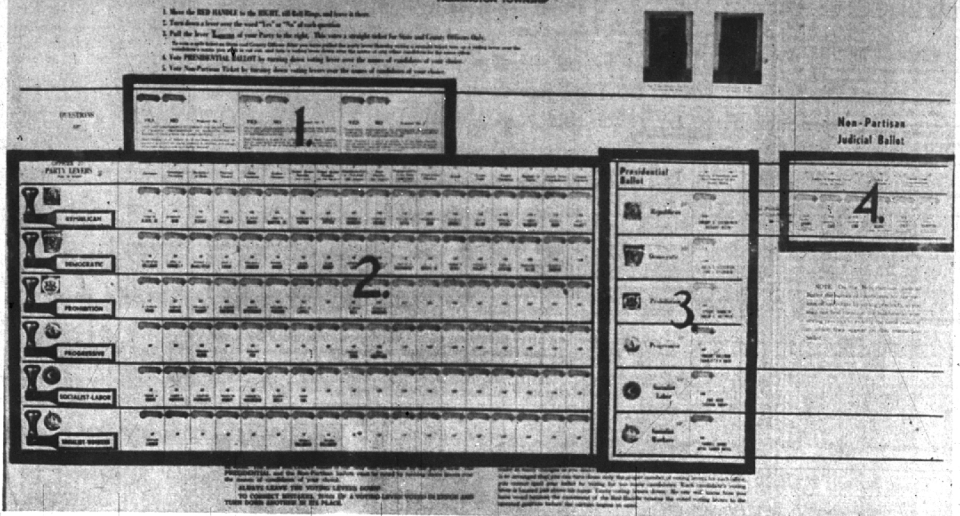
Duplicates of his plaster casts of animal tracks are in Cranbrook Institute of Science and in Chicago's Museum of Natural History.

### Discussion Forum Head

Newman T. Halvorson, 627 Waddington, led the fifth discussion forum of the Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Cost Accountants at the Park Shelton Hotel Monday night, Oct. 27. Theme of the meeting was "Applying Inventory Costs Against Income."

## Here's How The Voting Machines Will Be Set Up

**VOTING MACHINE INSTRUCTION BALLOT - General Election, Oakland County, Michigan, November 4, 1952**



**FOR THOSE WHO WILL BE USING A VOTING MACHINE** for the first time in the November 4 presidential election, The Eccentric publishes this photo of how the ballot will appear on the machines.

There are four separate sections of the ballot. As indicated above, area number one includes the three state amendments (one on narcotics legislation and two concerning state reapportionment). Area number two covers the state officers and also U. S. Senator and Representative. A straight party ticket can be cast by simply pulling the large lever at the far left of the machine indicated by the preferred party's name. Split voting is possible by pulling down the small levers over

the names of the candidates straight across the board in section two. Area number three is not operated by the party lever and must be voted on separately. This is the vote for president and vice-president. Area number four contains the names of the state Judicial officers, supreme court justice, judge of probate and circuit court commissioner. To make your vote count for each proposal and each candidate, make sure you have registered your preference in each instance before pulling the lever to open the curtain of the voting machine. Before this lever is operated you may change your votes at any time by pushing up the lever over the candidate first selected and pulling down the lever over your corrected choice.

### Plan Board Joins Group Opposing Business Center

The Birmingham Plan Board has added its note of protest to the growing opposition to this Cranbrook Development company's proposed shopping center at the corner of Lincoln and Cranbrook in Bloomfield township.

The board instructed Planning Technician Robert Boatman to write a letter to the city commission containing the recommendations of the planners.

Reasons given against the center were increased traffic on Birmingham streets, lack of evidence that a commercial center is demanded in this area with 70 per cent of business-owned property in the city yet undeveloped, a natural buffer exists between this project and the city's sewage disposal plant, and for lack of full knowledge of what the center will include.

**ACTUALLY**, the city can have little to do with the rezoning question of the 30 acres of land from residential to business. This is a township problem. But planners hope that the commission will actively oppose the project and attempt to gain some cooperation from township officials.

The plan board has received a number of communications from city residents who protest a commercial development directly across from the new high school. Members of the Northlawn

### Wilson Family Cranbrook Grads

Attendance of 14 members of the family of Charles E. Wilson, president of the General Motors Corp., in Cranbrook schools eminently qualified him to speak as a friend and neighbor of the Cranbrook Institutions on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebration held for the Cranbrook Foundation, Tuesday, Oct. 21.

Two of Mr. Wilson's daughters and three daughters-in-law have attended Kingswood School Cranbrook, and three granddaughters are now enrolled there. Two sons went to Cranbrook School for boys. One son-in-law also attended Cranbrook.

Five grandchildren, sons and daughters of Edward E. Wilson, are now going to Brookside School Cranbrook for young children.

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### Birmingham Troy High School Join Forensic Program

Birmingham and Troy High schools are among 81 high schools participating in the annual discussion program of the Michigan High School Forensic Association, sponsored by the University of Michigan, Bureau of School Services.

Student representatives from several schools in the same area are meeting at various times to discuss, "What type of international organization should the United States support?"

Continuing from the middle of November, the project was established as an opportunity for an informal, friendly meeting to teach cooperation and stimulate ideas.

### Speaks in Kansas

G. A. Florez, Birmingham resident and president of Florez Incorporated, audio-visual communications firm in Detroit, was the featured speaker Friday night, Oct. 24, in Wichita, Kan., at the kick-off dinner of a two-day Audio Visual Equipment fair sponsored by the Kansas Sales Executive Club.

Over 1,000 advertising, sales promotion and publicity directors of Kansas and northern Oklahoma industry were expected to attend. Florez's subject was "Visual Dynamics."

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