

Amendment Approval Shows All They Needed Were Facts

On the surface, Birmingham's April 6 election would look almost like a normal spring election. Voters returned to the city commission Dean G. Beier and Charles Renfrew, James Allen, son and grandson of former village officials, went on the commission in place of Frank Rising who recently resigned. Mrs. Louis Haskell and Dwight B. Ireland were voted back in as public library board members, and John Emery, Jr., was confirmed as associate justice, all three without opposition.

AND THE CITY'S constable race was typical—no one had filed, so Hugh Loveland, coach-instructor at Barnum Junior high school, found himself elected with only eight votes in a free-for-all write-in. The two local charter amendments were carried by wide margins—one to permit the city to enter the Southeastern Oakland County Sewage Disposal District to relieve the city's present plan of having to take care of the east side of the city, and the other amendment streamlining Baldwin public library operations and allowing the city to commit more tax money to the support and maintenance of the library. State and county-wide, Republicans carried the city as usual.

HOWEVER, IT IS to be noted that motorists turned out on April 6 in unusual numbers. The reason was that it was far below the 90-plus percent of registered voters who turned out last November. But another, studied look at the vote statistics regarding the library and SOCSDD charter amendments—particularly the latter—seems to have substantiated what The Birmingham Eclectic pointed out editorially on Aug. 14, 1952, following the fall primary election. At that time Birmingham electors had just turned down the first proposal to join the SOCSDD.

WE SAID IN THAT editorial, the apparent reason for disapproval of this amendment was lack of . . . full and open discussion of the proposition—especially since the commission and the manager had failed to explain satisfactorily the possible eventual details of the subject. . . . (It) failed to carry simply because our city officials did not, prior to the balloting, provide the taxpayers with every possible bit of information . . . or at least more than enough data to give the picture in the proper perspective. We encouraged the city to place the matter on a subsequent ballot, and in the meantime to get as many facts regarding the SOCSDD and its benefits (also any disadvantages) to the electorate well in advance of the voting date.

AND IN THE ENSUING eight-month interval, the city did obtain all the data it could—and gave it to the people through the newspapers and public meetings. Our officials attempted to give as complete and full an answer to any citizen's reasonable question. The Eclectic, therefore, is glad to note that the SOCSDD proposal last week was approved overwhelmingly—by better than a 10 to 1 margin. We believe it proves that, given the most complete information possible and ample time to study it, the voters of Birmingham will make the wise and proper decision. That is as it should be.

Blind Vanity There is little question but that the late President Roosevelt and his valets—Harry L. Hopkins played leading roles in the war and postwar relations with Soviet Russia. The tragic agreements Roosevelt made with Stalin at Teheran and Yalta were presumably engineered by Hopkins, and others. Criticize Roosevelt and Hopkins as much as you wish—but the fact still remains that there also existed a craven U.S. Congress. . . . New Deal democrats (and some

A World Military Force Many honest and sincere people believe that, under a single world government, war can be done away with. "If a single military force is under one control, how can it be used to divide nations in their individual security?", they argue. That, of course, is being naive and, we think, unrealistic.

Why They Fight for Us A maneuvering overseas in the war area of Korea was asked what could be done for the fighting men in the way of gifts. He replied in no uncertain terms that "the finest things to be done is the maintenance of a politically and economically sound home front." He said further that, "With a reasonable degree of integrity on the

part of most people, that will be brought about." To do the things necessary to assure men on the war fronts that there will be such an America to return to is not too much to demand of every American on the home front.

From The Eclectic's Point of View . . .

In a recent brief talk to a group of Southern (Oakland County) business men, Rev. G. Paul Muessemmer, who has just left Detroit's Mariner's (Episcopal) Church to take up a new position in New York City, said: "I am glad that American industrialists are getting information to many preachers about the manner in which our free enterprise system really works. You would be surprised to learn how much of

The Birmingham Eclectic
Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eclectic Building, 320-222 North Woodward Avenue.
Telephone Midwest 4-1100

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The Eclectic is a member of the National Editorial Association, Michigan Association of Editors and Advertising Press Club.

National Advertising Representatives:
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The Eclectic will publish contributed material providing it has news value. Suggestions are welcomed. Any erroneous information, character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation, which may appear in the columns of The Eclectic will be gladly corrected if brought to the publisher's attention.

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ly less New Dealish democrats who lacked courage to speak out who stupidly and fearfully followed the administration's foreign policies. And so we emerge victorious from World War II to become entangled in the beginning of a possible World War III; and Soviet Russia, whom the U.S.A. saved, is now the free world's most deadly enemy. Ah, Friend, what disaster follows when powerful men succumb to blind vanity!

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So They Say . . .

Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., U. S. delegate to the United Nations:
"I don't think the Russians want to discontinue the Korean War."
Loretta Young, screen actress:
"We (movie people) are all sinners and the big difference among sinners is that some are sorry."



HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE

BY ALICE E. MORGAN

A bright April sun was more than we could stand the other day and we left our desk to do some gazing and dreaming via the office window. Golly! What a lot can be learned by looking through a window onto a busy street. The character of Birmingham was so apparent in the actions and ways of every person in sight. A perfect stranger standing there would have sensed at once that here was a town of residential character. A town where most of the menfolk were away for the whole day and most of the folks in it took pride in their homes and a deep pleasure in beauty.

THE SHOPPERS, under these circumstances, were mainly women, and what a variety of things they had been buying! One young woman, a small fry tagging along at her heels, had two or three sets of garden instruments clutched under one arm. Obviously there were more small citizens in the family and the garden was a joint affair. Under the other arm she had a sack of plant food and a watering can clutched tightly in her hand. From it protruded the currently dead-looking ends of a bush. A dignified looking lady behind her was pompachantly trying on a pair of "green thumb" gloves for her companion's approval. She, too, carried a couple of well wrapped shrubs under her arm.

A MAN strolled down the street swinging a landing net, gaff hook and a small metal box that, no doubt, contained or would contain a variety of bugs, plants and what have you. He had a grin from ear to ear and a pair of rubber boots—hip length—hung around his neck. In front of one store a man and woman hefted garden tools set out for display. He made digging motions with a spading fork and with a spade, shaking the implements as though to demonstrate the fork a more suitable buy for their needs. They went on to stand and stare at a display of bulbs and shrubs in another window. In front of the office, the handles of a lawn roller and seed spreader stuck out of the trunk of a sleek convertible. A truck, hood and spade reared jauntily from the back seat and the sun sparkled greenly from a big coil of garden hose.

TWO SMALL boys stopped at the curb while the one dragged out several packets of seeds and showed them off. He made a digging motion with his hands to demonstrate the height of the plants and the size of the fruit or blooms he expected to harvest. From the other pocket he hauled a string sack of marbles and again went through a series of motions. They indicated that his pal was in for a tough time as soon as they reached home. It was interesting to watch these shoppers and quite nice to know that this scene was duplicated many, many times here and in other sections of our town. It's nice, because it represents a lot of people working together, so to speak, to beautify their homes and consequently, their town.

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits Of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eclectic—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

50 YEARS AGO
April 17, 1903
The Birmingham Eclectic, our ordinary surgeon, took unto himself a bonnie bride in the person of Miss Maude Lee last evening last week. Congratulations are in order.

A leader wants to know where all the angle worms come from that creep out our walks. We don't know, but it is a sign of mighty good fishing.

These large maple trees recently removed from in front of Mrs. Ute's house will be replaced by smaller ones. Good idea.

Walter Bros. & Robertson of Pontiac made a unique Easter window—nice green and blue plants, large mirror and a little of little rabbits. It is worth going to see.

30 YEARS AGO
April 13, 1923
Miss Lulu Jackson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Jackson of Merrill, Mich., has returned from El Salvador, Central America, where she spent two years as a missionary in an American Presbyterian mission. The Eclectic, who has kindly consented to reveal her impressions of that country, its people and customs.

Thomas Edwards, son of the Rev. and Mrs. T. J. Edwards, was honored at the recent basketball tournament at the home of Mrs. W. D. Clibbe Tuesday afternoon. The meeting was spent in deep discussion and research and a great deal of diligent study on the subject.

The soap marks from last Halloween are gone and the old frame dwelling at the corner of Bates and West Maple has undergone many washings and improvements. As last it is open to the public and starting its career as Birmingham's Community House, center of many local activities.

15 YEARS AGO
April 21, 1938
A new art mail stamp of interest to local collectors, will go on sale May 14 at the Dayton, Ohio, home of the Wright Brothers, commemorating their first successful flight. Full particulars of special details may be obtained from Birmingham Postmaster Joseph A. Byrne.

A new patrolman, Ralph E. Bell, has been added to the Birmingham Police Department according to an announcement of Chief John P. Hackett. He was born in Birmingham 25 years ago and is a graduate of Baldwin high school.

Andrew Watson, Jr. and Arthur J. Underwood, Jr. have been selected by a committee from Charles Edwards Trust Company, Legation to represent Birmingham at the forthcoming World in the Boys' State on the campus of Michigan State college. Both are Eagle Scouts.

Scott A. Hersey and Daniel H. Swartz have been selected by city commissioners to serve on the Edwards board of review. The board will be available for taxpayers' discussions on May 12, 13 and 14 at the municipal building.

ONE THING OR ANOTHER

By George Wm. Averill

The Army engineers working on the Alcan highway were snug and warm despite the frigid weather. They had come upon an unexpected supply of wood and about three crates and reared as they fed it to them. It was a few hours of solid comfort for the engineers—followed by a three-year headache for the railroad industry. The men, it developed later, had ripped apart three wooden boxes that had brought in construction supplies and used the pieces for their firewood. The vanished freight car accounting system for 36 months before their movements were traced down and the cause of death established. This happened during World War II. Fortunately, it doesn't happen often, or the small army of bookkeepers who keep track of the nation's 2,800,000 freight cars would be living on aspirin.

THESE ARE the folks who know a string of Western Maryland freight cars is standing on a siding in Florida and why you see Chicago, Indianapolis & Louisville cars passing through Goochestrat. To them it all seems simple. To the layman it is sometimes incomprehensible. The answer lies in an intricate system of interchanging designed to allow the most direct freight from coast to coast without removing it from the car into which it was originally loaded. It was not always thus. In the early days of American railroading freight shipments had to be transferred from one car to another every time they moved from one railroad to another. With the adoption of a standard track size and width between rails near the end of the last century it became possible to switch cars between railroads—and the interchange system was born.

TODAY THE system has been worked out to the point where the owner of a freight car never sees it from one end of the year to the other. As a matter of fact, one railroad recently figured out that in the course of four years one of its cars had passed through the hands of 18 different railroads—some as many as 10 times—and had traveled through every state in the Union, plus Mexico, and Canada.

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One of the big intricacies of the system comes when a railroad has to pay for the use of a car belonging to another road. The charges are surprisingly nominal \$2 a day—far less than it costs the average citizen to rent an automobile. Here's where that small army of bookkeepers comes in. According to Davis Mackie, chairman of the Eastern Railroad Presidents' Conference, one of the largest Eastern roads keeps over 300 people busy on car records—even though they use the most modern book-keeping and sorting machines in their work.

AS A GLIMPSE of the complexity of this operation, Mackie points out that the conductor of every freight train must make out a "wheel report," listing all cars in his train. These reports go to a central office each day, where the complicated process of keeping track of the cars is a never-ending operation. When you consider that even a medium-sized Eastern railroad operates as many as 12,000 of its own cars operating on other roads and up to 10,000 "foreign" cars on its tracks, the efficiency of the railroaders who always know where their freight cars are; adjust staggering proportions. Sometimes they lose a couple, but seldom for longer than a day. If, of course, they get chopped up for firewood—which isn't likely to happen again.

It's not so difficult to practice what one preaches. But many people certainly would find it almost impossible to preach what they practice. Even though Frank Rising has just retired after serving two years on the city commission, his former

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