

Experience Counts Much in Winning 'Boxtop Contests'

By HELEN BRUNSON
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Every once in a while you hear that the woman next door or the man down the street has won an electric toaster, \$1000, or a new car, just for writing "25 words or less."

"They're no smarter than I am," you reason. So you note the next contest that is advertised, and you go out and buy the product to get the required boxtop. You dash off an entry, put it in the mail and wait. Usually you have a very long wait. For months later you remember the contest and that no prize was forthcoming.

The reason is, that you are competing against experienced contesters who are willing to go to a lot of trouble to win. True, the amateur wins occasionally, but thereafter he often becomes an experienced contender.



Helen Brunson

What does the top-notch do to win? Sam Summers, a Contest STAR who has won over \$40,000 in prizes, says: "First, he observes the rules about lately to the letter. He reads the contest on to say that 25 words or less are eliminated. He reads the contest and falls to win the prize. He reads the contest and forgets to start the contest."

JUDGES IN NATIONAL CONTESTS, Summers says, are unimpressed by "decorated" entries and are actually antagonized by contestants who insist on pasting colorful pictures on an entry, enclosing it in a law paper, or even writing it in icing on a cake. However, he thinks that a decorated entry might win in a local contest.

The consistent winner finds a number of valuable reference books on contesting, a notebook in which to jot down catch phrases that come to mind, and a clipping file of ideas cut from ads and articles. He has entered dozens of contests. And he works. W. S. Shepherd, contest mentor, whose 15,000 students have won over \$3 million in prizes, advises: "Actually use the product. Get down to it. Write down a list of adjectives that describe the product and add to these a list of picture words. What's the product like?—a list of action verbs. (What's the product do?) The student fills pages and pages with these words, then selects those to be "mixed" into an entry.

THAT THE CONSISTENT WINNER has writing talent cannot be denied. He has a way with words and is especially adept at alliteration and at coining such words as "Jonquillovely" (a lemon pie). He uses puns and is happy with rhymes. And he tosses out all clichés such as "as good as gold," "Best by test." These old bits were good 30 years ago, but judges have now tired of them.

Are contests on the up and up? "Yes," say experts at the game. For two reasons: First, no big game sponsor can afford to have his contests run dishonestly lest he lose the confidence of the millions who buy his goods. Second, the U. S. Post Office inspectors are constantly on the alert to investigate dishonest sponsors or judges and protect the contesting public.

These watchdogs of the mails are empowered to enter the premises of any sponsor, see where entries are stored, how they are handled and the manner of judging them.

IN BIG CONTESTS sponsors have nothing to do with judging, turning it over to such professional judges as Prof. Lloyd Harold of Northwestern University, the Reuben Donnelly Corp., R. L. Polk of Detroit and Helen King. They do a good job of seeing that ghost-written entries are eliminated, and that originality, cleverness and hard work win.

Contesting is a great national pastime and it's a rare individual who has never entered a contest, even if it was only judging how many beans there were in a bottle. But the big contests are hard to win.

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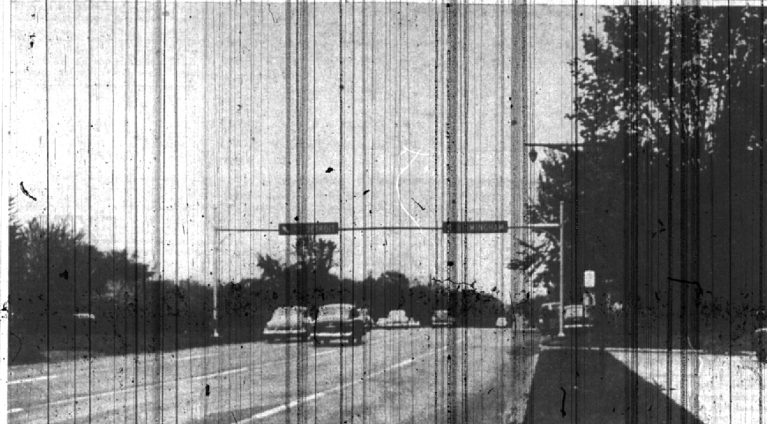
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There is nothing wrong in feeling a sense of personal pride because of some accomplishment; justifiable pride is merely admission of such achievement. Many inventors and men of undervalued pride in a late sense of strength of no value.

The Birmingham Eccentric



THE STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT has installed a newly designed tubular steel structure to support signs directly over the roadway for south-bound traffic on US-10 north of Birmingham where Hunter Boulevard and Woodward Avenue intersect. These signs will separate traffic destined for Detroit and Birmingham. This structure is one of the new types to be used by the State Highway Department in the future on highways which carry large volumes of traffic and where ordinary signs at the side of the roadway do not perform a satisfactory service to the motoring public.

This new structure consists of two tapered monotonous poles which support a tubular beam to which the overhead signs are attached. An adjustable clamp permits the signs to be tilted to any desired angle for easier reading by the motorists. This type of assembly also prevents swaying due to high winds, as well as presenting a more pleasing appearance. Michigan is one of the first states to use this type of sign which also features the legend and background of re-processed material in color.

DOWN TO EARTH

Consider All Seasons In Planning Gardens

By ALICE WESELS, BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

It was a pleasure on a recent "perfect" day to visit the garden of Mrs. H. D. MacGregor at 900 Brookwood. This garden was designed for the present interest cycle of this garden lover.

The MacGregor young people are away from home and out the sunroom picture window is the "show garden," while the rest of the property can be easily maintained with its well selected trees for their beauty and the honorary planting of shrubs.

As Mrs. MacGregor is a blonde and surrounded herself with soft pastel colors, this taste is also reflected in this perennial garden. A row in the lawn has been cut and an area dry wall about two feet high was built, with the "U" shaped garden opening a view from the sunroom window.

These are the colors which were out: pale blue, pink, and white. The blue and white are in a bed and a border, and the pink is in a border. The garden plan, easy to maintain and suited to the hobby hours of our hostess. She will have a continuous succession of colorful annuals and perennials to arrest the eye, always providing the best type of aerial accent at the doorway, 1953 style.

The visit to the MacGregor home was reported to point out an exciting garden plan, easy to maintain and suited to the hobby hours of our hostess. She will have a continuous succession of colorful annuals and perennials to arrest the eye, always providing the best type of aerial accent at the doorway, 1953 style.

So let's divide the program into three parts: early spring, summer and autumn.

Early spring can begin with a small blue bell which can be planted in the fall and multiplies rapidly. It is inexpensive and provides a grand array of purple-blue bells eight inches from the ground. You will like always saxatile which is golden candy-stuff and will be one foot high. It will be good for the spring garden.

Beedingheart will be good for shady places, along with Virginia bluebell which is a must for me. The cluster of bells are eye catchers.

SPRING bulbs are important for color. Think especially before you put too many tulips in, due to the period needed in an important location to season off the old leaves as the flowers are formed within the bulbs for the next season.

Forget-me-nots are important for shady locations and give a good interest when planted among plants of ivy used as a ground cover.

Early dwarf iris gives good interest in a rock garden or along stepping stones in the garden. Don't forget iris, make your selection while they are in flower and you will find many levels as an orchid. If you have extra ones to share our library always can use some plants on the bill for erosion control behind the building. Blues are preferred.

Primroses give early interest and their leaf texture, as well as their flowers often find a pleasing location around the base of a flowering tree.

DWARF PHLOX with its low growing habits and the white, pink or blue coloring is well placed for erosion paths, erosion control and rock gardens.

Viola are a better investment than tulips as they are sturdy and give fine results each year.

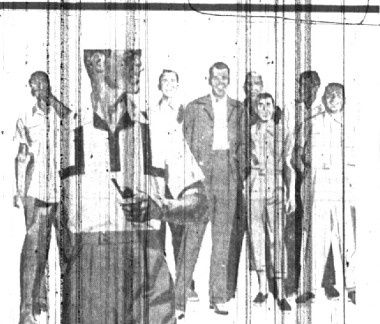
They are most effective when only one color is used.

Summer bloom in the perennial category you will find in purple, artemisia and sedum fine for low effects. The Michaelmas daisy will give a ray effecting the fall.

Rudbeckia is a sturdy daisy and will grow three feet high. Be sure and have several clumps of chrysanthemums. Select only the double forms of chrysanthemum, try the varieties for a maximum effect. Remember while giving your garden that extra dividend of beauty and especially put disk on summer nights.

DAY LILIES have a place in the middle of the border. Delphinium should be in the back row, circulation of air is necessary around them and be prepared to stake them.

Mallows are lovely and not used enough. Plan on four feet for this plant. Pinks and lilies should not be forgotten. A real challenge is presented for a gardener to be a collector of all varieties of lilies. Painted lilies make three bou-



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Approve Capital Costs At Dump

Birmingham city commissioners have approved the appropriation of \$3,048 to the Southeastern Oakland County Garbage and Rubbish Disposal Authority for capital costs in operating the land-fill dump in Troy township.

Each member of the authority is being assessed 20 cents per capita to finance the operation of the dump until the Authority's income can be put in operation. Only Birmingham will escape additional charges for amount refused dumped and the city will receive \$5,000 for the use of the city-owned dump.

Capital costs at the dump are expected to be \$36,988.

Want ads cannot be accepted after 5 p.m. each Tuesday.

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