

Thanks for the Light You're Shedding

It may be our imagination, or wishful thinking, but it seems that the Birmingham area has more gaily Yuletide-decorated homes than ever before!

Two sections particularly noticeable to passing motorists are the Pembroke area in northeast Birmingham, and the Beverly area of northeast Southfield.

Perhaps those of you who have not

joined in the outdoor displays could find time to visit one or both of these sections to see what can be done with a little time, no special talent, and assorted Yule decorations.

To the 1955 decorators, we issue a resounding "Thank you!" We hope many more of your neighbors follow your enlightening example next year!"

Free President From Many Routine Tasks

President Eisenhower's illness has focused increasing attention on the question: Is the job of chief executive too much for one man?

Though the answers have been varied, there seems to be general agreement that the burden of the presidency is very close to being more than one man ought to be asked to bear.

One fact that all citizens should understand about the Presidency is that much of its demands relate to those duties that high officials in all large business enterprises face — which include performing many trivial tasks, at least trivial and mere routine when compared to the larger aspects of the job.

Certainly it is clear that the President is called upon to do many time-consuming things that distract his attention from the serious decisions that he alone can make. He has many ceremonial and social duties, political obligations as leader of his

party, non-essential functions imposed by Congress.

MANY OF HIS TASKS—such things, for example, as appointing foreign service officers of lesser rank, signing pardons of federal prisoners, approving blueprints for federal highway improvements and even for fish hatcheries—could be delegated. The question is, to whom should they be delegated?

Former President Herbert Hoover has proposed that Congress empower the chief executive to appoint an administrative vice president who could take over some of the burden. He believes that this would relieve the President of "a monumental amount of secondary duties."

This is an idea well worth mulling over, and then "doing something about." Any properly safeguarded means of freeing the chief executive for the most important tasks that only he can perform would be in the best interests of all the people.

One Way To Portray United States

For years the women of Hyderabad, a central Indian State, shunned the United States Information Agency library located in their midst. Officials did everything to attract them, but to no avail.

Then one day some copies of an American woman's magazine appeared. Soon the picture changed and Hyderabad women began to patronize the library.

In fact, they're flocking to the library, which now offers hundreds of back issues of American women's fashion and household magazines donated by friendly news agencies and a Los Angeles organization

called "Magazines for Friendship."

IN ADDITION TO READING the magazines, the women are becoming interested in the bookshelves of the library where they find books on the United States translated into their own Urdu, Telugu, Marathi and Hindi languages.

Certainly the women's magazines do portray a segment of the American way of life, and apparently in a manner which the women of Hyderabad, at least, find attractive.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

Birmingham's ice skating sales reportedly have been booming in anticipation of the city's artificial rink at Etowah Park. At contract-awarding time, back in October, the city was hoping for a Thanksgiving opening. Then Christmas. Then first of the year. Current estimate is Jan. 16. At this rate, there'll hardly be enough skating this season to take the edge off those new Christmas skates!

Michigan Turnpike Authority Chairman George N. Higgins says he will ask the next State Legislature to approve extending the proposed Rockwood-Saginaw turnpike to the Straits of Mackinac. If, to obtain needed traffic revenue to make it pay from Rockwood to Saginaw, then that turnpike must be so close to Detroit metropolitan areas that it invades some of them, how can Higgins expect to get sufficient revenue from that portion of the newly-proposed turnpike that will be located in little-populated sections of Michigan? Why not build turnpikes where traffic requires them?

Walter P. Reuther, aided by his brothers Roy and Victor, knows what he wants to accomplish during his life. It is, we believe, nothing more nor less than to sit

at the summit in the United States, from which vantage point he can preside over his notion of a Socialistic Utopia. Reuther, a deep student of ancient and modern history, is brilliant in his ability to play the part of a political chieftain. He knows that today the masses are taking over, via the ballot box. So he shouts to the masses and they follow—simply because he promises them more of life's material things for less of their efforts. It's easy to win by such tactics. As Al Smith once said: "Nobody shoots Santa Claus."

We still believe President Eisenhower to be a thoroughly-dedicated public servant. This is not to say, however, that we concur in everything he does. Perhaps it should be admitted that nobody, either in or out of public office, does all things to suit all people. But Mr. Eisenhower, naturally depending upon advice and counsel from many others, is bound to get some "poor advice." Personally, we agree with those who oppose federal dolos to public education; Ike is willing to go for "some dolos only." Yet, as politics reveals, how can a public official go for only "some dolos"? Santa Claus always is expected to climb down everybody's chimney and place gifts around the Christmas tree... isn't he?

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 229-232 North Woodward Avenue, Telephone MI 4-1100

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NATURE NOW

Ancient Man Marked Time By Years

By LYDIA KING FRENSE
Special Writer For The Birmingham Eccentric

Time is an important dimension of the universe in which we live. In its limitless reaches we locate objects and events past, present and future.

Man is time's servant, but somewhere in the distant past man alone of all the earth's creatures learned how to mark its passing. He may have counted the days by cutting a notch in a stick of wood. Perhaps he used a pebble or a shell to mark each day's dawn and sunset.

IT IS probable that by close observation he finally discerned the earth's rhythms, not only of light and darkness, but of the waxing and waning of the moon and the ebb and flow of the tides and their relation to the passing seasons and to his own well-being.

When history's certain rivers in the eastern lands of Mesopotamia and Egypt, man was already sufficiently advanced to have developed a calendar. Then, as now, it divided time into days and years, based on the earth's relationship to the sun.

The most ancient Egyptian calendar bears the date 4238 B.C. (According to our present calendar). Early calendars were made by various nations' faiths and rulers.

One of the best known of these was made at the order of Julius Caesar in the year 46 B.C. The Julian year consisted of 365 days, with each fourth or leap year consisting of 366 days. The months had their present names, order and length.

The year was about 11 minutes and 14 seconds longer than the solar year and led to a change in the date of the equinox.

THE GREGORIAN calendar was set up by Pope Gregory in 1582 to reform this error. It restored the vernal equinox to its rightful place

ONE THING OR ANOTHER

By George Wm. Averill
England has just bestowed upon Mr. and Mrs. Harold Thurgood, both 56, of Slough, the title of "England's Happiest Married Couple." They are publicized as never having had a single quarrel in their 34 married years.

That's quite a remarkable record. But I suspect they've at least had their share of disagreements

Good performance is the best caliber of public relations.

Air Force pilots have been ordered not to "traverse a circular area two nautical miles radius, the center of which is located on 77 degrees 15 minutes 48 seconds west longitude and 29 degrees 47 minutes 47.5 seconds north latitude."

In everyday language, that means the airmen must not fly over the Gettysburg farm of President Ike.

The American citizen is a peculiar individual. He has an innate curiosity which he expresses in many ways, one of them about his government on all levels. He is quick to point out his guaranteed constitutional rights to know just about everything that goes on down in city hall.

Like his voting privileges, he is quick to defend "privacy"—but not exercise it. Instead, he'd rather stay home before the fire and read about it. Instead, he hires for seven cents a day (twenty cents on Sundays) the ladies and gentlemen of the American press to be his champions—and satisfy that innate curiosity by getting him what he wants to know via ink and newspaper.

American newsmen realize this, and that's why they battle so hard to tear aside the blackout curtains of self-appointed government censors.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A successful leader does not criticize—he understands. And having understood, he helps. And by helping, he leads.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Never fear that just because you have big feet, you never can put them in your mouth.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A man and his wife recently had to stop along the highway, out of gas and miles from a service station. The man tried to signal to some of the passing cars in the hope that he might get a ride to the nearest gas station.

A car pulled up. The driver was returning from his night-shift job at a nearby plant. He asked what was "wrong" and then agreed to return with a can of gas. About fifteen minutes later he was back, not only with gasoline but with a container of hot coffee for the stranded couple who were beginning to feel the cold. When the stranger was certain that all was well he went on his way, hardly waiting for the thanks the couple were so anxious to express.

Here was a man who put his religion to work, who had read the story of the Good Samaritan and knew what it meant. He was tired from his night's work and anxious to get to some food and a bed. But he could not pass people in distress without lending a hand.

Such people are a credit to the faiths they profess.

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