

Off-Street Parking For Shoppers

Recently Fred Pew, local real estate man, addressed an inquiry to the city commission regarding the fundamental reason why off-street parking areas were developed, and what segment of the motoring public the lots were designed for, essentially. Pew pointed out that, for example, the Merrill-Pierce-Brown parking lot fails to provide enough spaces for the short-period shopping public.

He held that too much of the area was set up for long periods of time, from four hours to all day. These spaces, of course, for the most part are used by motorists who work in down-town business concerns.

It will be remembered that these off-street parking lots were developed and paid for jointly by certain benefited business property owners, together with the city itself.

THE ENTIRE IDEA prompting such lots concerns itself with making available parking spaces for the **SHOPPING PUBLIC**. Quite definitely, of course, any other use of them does not contribute basically to the convenience of the shoppers, or to the businesses.

A conversation with City Manager Richard Gare confirmed the fact that the lots should always be controlled for the use of shoppers—but if there be any surplus of spaces, naturally they should be offered to longer-period parkers.

However, as more and more short-period shoppers' spaces may be required, Gare said the city would transfer the long-time meters to short-time periods.

Gare stated that the city police seek to be aware of parking change needs, and that the city also will welcome the suggestions of all citizens on the subject.

Vern Brown, Faithful Servant

For 30 years Vernon J. Brown, now 84, was associated with Michigan's state government. He was a Representative from his Mason, Ingham County, district; State Auditor-General, and Lieut-Governor.

He campaigned for the Republican Governorship in 1946, and was defeated in the primary election by the late Gov. Kim Sigler.

Since then, under part of the long regime of Gov. Williams, Vern has been a member of the State Civil Service Commission. He has just resigned from it because, he says: "the infirmities of age, failing hearing and sight, cause me to relinquish my official duties . . . to relax on my farm . . . I guess nobody in the Republican Party in Michigan really wants to fight any more."

WE WELL RECALL, back in the 1920's, when, as a member of the State House of Representatives, Vern wrote a

series of articles for his weekly newspaper, The Ingham County News, published in Mason. They revealed, constructively critical, some of the State's troubles and problems and "political solutions".

Schuyler L. Marshall, then publisher of The Clinton County Republican, at St. Johns, obtained Vern's consent to circulate the articles among other Michigan weeklies, for publication. The Eccentric was among them.

THE DIRECT RESULT of those articles was to attract state-wide attention to Vern Brown. At once he became a more influential member of his Party. He possessed a more than average quantity and quality of common sense, characteristics that were to place him among the top political leaders of Michigan.

Truly, he has been " . . . a good and faithful (public) servant!"

from an old friend who has business dealings with Uncle Sam. Adams admits he "goofed" on this relationship, though he vigorously avowed "no influence of my office was used wrongly." Ike publicly defended Adams, including the statement: "I need him." Ike certainly is naive in and on the subject of practical politics.

So long as labor organizations have a monopoly on any type of business, that business will suffer the abuses of such monopoly. The end results seldom bring about desired improvements to the workers. Why? Simply because wage increases rarely are accompanied by increased worker productivity. This is why the cost of things goes up with the rise in wages. Too many union leaders oppose productivity by the rank and file members. This gives increase union membership (which gives the leaders more dues to handle) but it fails to put more leaves of bread on the workers' tables.

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

WE SEE WHERE DETROIT MERCHANTS and city officials are going to try out penny parking meters. We predict any test program they try will show the penny-type meter will be well accepted by merchants and shoppers.

What they won't know until much later is just what it is costing in additional police enforcement, overtime parking violations, merchant reaction to "too tough enforcement", and deteriorating customer relations.

PEOPLE LIKE TO SAVE money—

Suburban Sentiment

SENTENCE-WISE

We bristle at Imperatives;
Questions make us mad;
But how we love Declaratives
Like I'll pick up the tab!

—Dorothy Rockwell McWood

particularly pennies. Too many shoppers will underestimate the time it takes to get back to their cars. The pennies they tried to save will become part of the dollars they spend to pay their parking violation tickets—if the parking meter times are properly enforced.

If there is poor enforcement (for any of several good reasons), then meters might be well removed and free parking substituted.

Several years ago when Birmingham first installed its street meters, motorists use pennies or nickels.

The situation outlined above prevailed:

ENFORCEMENT WAS GOOD, violation tickets were plentiful, and merchants hollared because their customers were turning purple.

Penny meters were outlawed, and the situation improved so much that city officials here expect to return to penny parking.

This is not to imply that nickel meters have solved the problem. It only is keeping it to a minimum.

Forget the Fifth!



NATURE NOW

by Lydia King Frehe
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Violet Hides Seeds Under Its Leaves

Among nature's most fascinating studies are its individually contrived adaptations in structure and habit. These must be made by every living thing in its adjustment to its environment, else it could not survive the threats which beset it.

Recently, while thinning a border of violets, your scribe observed one of the most interesting of nature's adaptive schemes—the development of the cleistogamous flower. As I pulled up a stalk of the common blue violet (*Viola papilionacea*) I found clustered at its base a circle of greenish buds, some of which were already developed into well-filled seed pods. These are cleistogamous flowers.

Cleistogamous flowers are borne on short, horizontal, stems concealed under the surface soil or leaf mold. When the seed pod is well formed, the flower stem lengthens to lift the seed above the surface. When fully ripe the pods split into three boat-shaped valves, each centered with a thick rigid keel to which the seeds are attached. Next the thin edges of the valve contract with such force that the contents are scattered as far as a foot from the parent plant. (This accounts for the number of unwanted violet plants you may find scattered throughout your lawn.)

THESE UNUSUAL cleistogamous flowers never open their buds. They remain hidden under the plant's leaves, are never seen by the casual observer and are self-fertilized. Their pollination does not depend upon the action of the wind or the uncertain visit of an insect. They are safely concealed from the vagrant hand, the scorching sun, the beating rain.

Cleistogamous flowers appear only on certain species of stemless violets. When these are present the commonly observed flowers are usually sterile.

MUCH of the charm of these latter blooms lies in their irregular structure. The lowest of the

five petals extends backward to form a spur of varying length into which the five nectar-bearing stamens project to discharge their sweet bait. The other four petals are arranged in two unlike pairs. The petals of the middle one oppose the central pistil, and are usually bearded to catch the pollen carried by the visiting bee.

Violets vary in color from white to yellow through many hues of blue, lavender and purple. Each is marked with darker lines converging toward the central reproductive organs thereby giving directions to the pollinating insect. There are some 250 species in the violet family. About 80 of these are low-growing herbaceous plants of temperate North America. The remainder are tropical, some of which are shrubs and forest trees.

VIOLETS hybridize so freely that species identification is a life study for the botanist. For convenience the family is usually divided into two groups: the "stemless" and the "leafy stemmed." The former arrange their leaves in a basal rosette growing directly from the root-stem. To this group belong our common blue violets and such unusual species as the blue-foot and painted violet with white, blue and white flowers.

Species of the leafy stemmed group produce larger, branching plants with leaves arranged alternately on the stem. Here belong most of our white and yellow violets and the beautiful *V. canadensis* with its purple buds which open into pale lavender or white flowers.

BY INVENTING the cleistogamous flower, Nature has insured the functioning of her primal instinct, the continuation of the species. Her thirst for variety is secondary but it is as insatiable as the myriads of life forms with which she has populated our exciting earth.

(Note: The cultivated African violet, together with its cousin the gloxinia are not violets but belong to the tropical family Gesneriaceae.)

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO
July 3, 1908

"The Farmington Enterprise says Grover Cleveland is 'the only president who ever went back to the white house the second time.' Either Calvin Goss or, the other historians are in error."

"An exchange says: It may not be generally known among the patrons of the telephone companies on rural lines that it is a crime to divulge any conversation overheard on the lines which is intended only for the parties talking. It has so been made known by the supreme court of the state of New York. So if you should happen to hear anything you'd better keep it to yourself."

30 YEARS AGO
July 5, 1928

"The ordinance governing peddlers in Birmingham was amended to exclude persons who sell goods manufactured out of the state and delivered direct from the factory when the village commission met Monday."

"This is the season for strange autos passing through Birmingham. One may see anything from a house on wheels to a movable signboard and all are housing tourists."

15 YEARS AGO
July 1, 1943

"Right across from our office, a certain lady whacked a parked car while backing out of a parking space on North Woodward, doing a neat job of denting up a fender on same. Then she quickly drove away thinking that would be the easiest way out of her predicament, but it probably will not be because a bystander thoughtfully

jotted down her license number and fastened it to the steering wheel of the damaged car."

WHY?



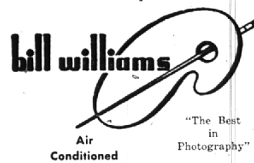
Did Sailors Call for Grog?

In early colonization days Governor Rogers of Granada, B.W.I., died suddenly and had to be sent some for burial.

Island authorities, lacking refrigeration and fearing superstitious seamen would rebel at sailing with a body aboard, secretly stowed the body in a hoghead of rum amid similar cargo. They identified the contents of that hoghead with the letters G.R.O.G for "Governor Rogers of Granada."

Broaching cargo, thirsty seamen snatched the contents of that hoghead, liked it, and ever after demanded liquor rations not in rum but G.R.O.G. (Copyright 1956, John Emery Ent.)

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