

## Our Pretty Assistant Mayor

Despite the traditional rivalry between men and women—especially in the political world—had we a Birmingham city commissioner last week we would have unhesitatingly voted for Florence Willett as mayor pro tem.

However, we do understand and do not criticize reasoning behind the negative votes of two unknown male commissioners that night.

Mrs. Willett has served on the Birmingham commission for four years. During those years she has shown the community what a woman can contribute directly to municipal activities and remain a perfect lady.

**THAT HER ACTIONS** and judgments have won the confidence and respect of her fellow commissioners is visibly demonstrated in their making her the assistant mayor for the coming year.

The other women in the community can be proud that one of their sex has done so well in local municipal government.

We can't conclude this editorial without also expressing our congratulations to both our new and our past mayors.

Harry M. Denyes, Jr. has just taken his place at the head of the city commission table. Twice mayor pro tem, Denyes succeeds Carl F. Ingraham, who now returns to a chair along the side of the table after a most creditable year as mayor.

## Freedom Must Not Fall Asleep

A recent convention of churchmen, purporting to represent millions of Protestant church members, resolved that we come to terms with the Kremlin, recognize Red China, and admit her to the United Nations.

As an antidote for this poison, we commend the words of Rev. Frederick Brown Harris, Chaplain of the United States Senate:

"Some church leaders are more concerned about the faults of democracy than they are about the ominous plottings of the sinister system constantly growing in strength, fanatically dedicated to the destruction of democracy, faults and all."

"The results of the sleeping tablets concocted by doctors of divinity to lull the church to slumber in this fearful day of destiny are plainly indicated in the recent report of certain churchmen meeting in Cleveland.

**"THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS** regarding communism are like lifting an umbrella with a cyclone headed toward those singing complacently, 'WHAT CAN SHAKE OUR SURE REPOSE?'"

"History repeats itself. There were religious leaders during our American Revolution who . . . were morally asleep to the implications of the Revolution and agitated for appeasement with the British forces."

"There are some in the present global conflict who might profit by reading the correspondence of George Washington with preachers who wanted nothing but peace, even if it was based on supine surrender to tyranny."

"Will Rogers once said that what Americans needed most was to have their speedometers taken away and exchanged for alarm clocks."

## From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

Why does so much of the American Press play up affairs such as is involved in the Eddie Fisher, Debbie Reynolds, Elizabeth Taylor episode? The answer, of course, is quite simple; the great majority of newspaper readers are interested in such stories. Actually it is not that they are interested only in the specific personalities of Fisher, Reynolds and Taylor. This trio of Hollywood stars merely exists as a pattern in the ever-present romanticism that exist wherever human beings live. Just as people love to worship a hero, whether it be on the battlefield or in the area of sports, some of them appear to find pleasure in any evidence in others of a departure from the "straight and narrow path". As individuals, Fisher, Reynolds and Taylor are but grains of sand on the wide shores of the seven seas, of humanity—but as symbols of the strength or the frailties of human beings, they loom as high as mountains.

Now and then you will hear some person who is loudly critical of the American press. Said criticism holds forth that the average American newspaper fails to provide the type of civic leadership that will help to make self-government in a democracy more successful. There is but one answer man can make on this subject and it goes something like this: The art of

self government, to be successful, depends upon an informed and interested and a responsible citizenry—a citizenry that will respond to the self-implied civic duties that lie in the words—"Freedom, duty". Newspapers may gather the news; they may report it to their readers; they may use their editorial columns to advise, to interpret, to advocate in behalf of a proposition or a person, after which it is up to the citizens themselves to do things, to think the thoughts that will allow their freedom to carve out for themselves a happier and more peaceful and a more secure nation. Yes, newspapers and other communications media are very important in a democracy—but the most important factor is collective good citizenship.

When he retires from the White House two years hence, if Dwight D. Eisenhower should write a book about his experiences as President of the United States, he should be able to sell a lot of copies of same. On the other hand, if Ike's Press Secretary, Jim Haggerty, should write into a book his observations of the national scene, that book could prove mighty interesting too. Indeed, both books would become best sellers if each author would write the whole story and tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth!

### The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday, at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 220-224 North Woodward Avenue Telephone Midwest 4-1100

GEORGE R. AVERILL  
Editor and Publisher  
GEORGE WM. AVERILL  
Managing Editor  
PAUL NEAL AVERILL  
Business Manager  
HAL P. BURGE  
Advertising Manager

## ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

Few people will deny that the teaching profession is underpaid. But these same people wouldn't have to go out of their own school district to find that some of their teachers are overpaid for the job for which they are responsible, while others are greatly underpaid for the way they carry out their educational responsibility.

The accepted method today to meet this financial problem is no different with teachers than it is with steelworkers, auto assembly women, or draftsmen:

Overpay the poor and mediocre and underpay the intelligent and industrious and excellent.

In other words, the same pay for the same job with no recognition of individual ability or application.

**TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS** are plugging away steadily to obtain higher minimum salaries and a tenure system built on minimum behavior.

Like so many others of us, these teachers are calcifying their intelligence in return for security.

Not too many years ago we Americans sought out our opportunities and from them carved our future.

Today we sit and expect opportunities to find us and mold themselves to our desires!

Foresters love elm trees more than birches, and ornithologists love birds more than trees. And DDT shall permanently be between them!

## The Roof Won't Stay On



NATURE NOW by Lydia King Frehe  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

## Woolly Bear Can't Prophecy Weather

An April wind stirs the empty seed pods in the old orchard on the hill. Meadowlark, mourning dove, cardinal and red wing vie with the frog chorus sounding from the nearby swamp.

But one spring caller goes silently on its way as it creeps across a sun-warmed stone at my feet. It is none other than the familiar woolly bear caterpillar, the larval stage of the Isabella moth (Isa. isabellae).

Unlike others of its kind, it has spent the winter hibernating under a stone or a pile of leaves. Most moths sleep out the cold months, their life substance quiescent in a cocoon particularly formed to the individual species.

The woolly bear is well named. Its body is made of 13 segments, is protected by a thick covering of bristly hairs. Its color is black, broken in the middle with a reddish-brown band of varying width. The head is polished black; the eyes are too small to be effective. Newly released from its long sleep, it feels its way, extending its fork-body in a tentative gesture of exploration.

**WHEN WE** pick it up ever so gently, it rolls into a small furry ball. This is a protective measure, for few birds or predators are interested in eating a looking of bristles. A skunk before sampling this jury-moel will tease it about, back and forth on the ground, until the hairs are removed. As April's sun warms the earth, the woolly bear feeds briefly on any early greenery it can find. It then makes its cocoon. This it does by spinning silk about itself which is interwoven with body hairs. The finished oval signature is attached

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50 YEARS AGO  
April 23, 1909  
"Seven happy couples are in line for near weddings in our midst. Can't you feel it in the spring like air we are having?"

"A strange find was uncovered at Ed Miller's one day last week and Ed has nothing to say. The pair of rubber boots stolen from George Randall's buggy one Saturday night a few weeks ago was found by Mr. Miller under some cornstalks on his premises. How they came there is a great mystery to all, but George is a happy man over his good luck."

"L. Corey is visiting his mother and Ida for a few days and entertains himself by slogging in the house, the wood house and the premises in general."

30 YEARS AGO  
April 18, 1929  
"Telephone operators in general are an unsung group of hard working people, whose efforts slip past the attention of those with whom they talk daily, but this week one Birmingham operator, in performing her duties, brought forth commendation from the entire village police department. She is Mrs. Amelia Renwick, night operator. Sgt. Richard Lavelle was on duty at the police station Monday night when Patrolman Henry Milbrandt was shot by thugs who escaped in an automobile. It was necessary for him to communicate by means of the telephone with neighboring police departments immediately. This is what he said: 'Mrs. Renwick saw the need for quick action and she certainly gave it. She had taken the trouble to learn the numbers of all neighboring departments and she had them connected with our office as fast as I could talk to them. Within a short time every law enforcement

official within miles of here had been notified and were on the look out for the men.'"

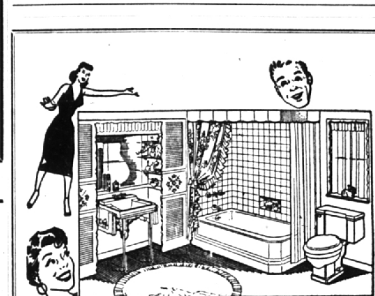
15 YEARS AGO  
April 20, 1911  
"Postmaster Joseph Byrne, who has been vacationing in Florida, is home looking 'fit as a fiddle' and has been busy receiving welcome from his many friends. Joe's looking great!" is what people are saying about the postmaster these days. And Mrs. Byrne was with her husband on the trip and says she enjoyed every minute of the vacation."

"On April 2 a baby girl, Shirley Irene, came to brighten the home of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice H. Smith of Benaville avenue."

"The Wanderer was asked this question: 'Who is the mail man who was seen last week wearing the air-conditioned trousers?' It may be a feasible story during the balmy spring days."

Best way to argue with the boss is seldom.  
A child psychologist is most any kid who can outwit his parents.  
The difference between false teeth and personalized dentures is about \$100 per copy.  
A pessimist is an optimist who has wised up.  
An efficient housekeeper is one who has found all the dropped jelly beans so soon after Easter.

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