

## This Era of "The Goof-Off"

The following editorial is reprinted from *The Beacon*, Lambertville, New Jersey: "Charles H. Brower, president of one of the large advertising firms, spoke recently of a trend that is causing many people to wonder whether we have lost the great driving force that gave us all the benefits we enjoy today.

"Brower said, 'This is the era of the goof-off; the age of the half-done job. The land from coast-to-coast has been enjoying a stampede away from responsibility. It is populated by waiters who won't serve, carpenters who come around, some day ...

maybe, executives whose minds are on the golf course, students who take cinch courses, and salesmen who won't sell.

"These are pretty strong words, but in too many cases they are true.

"Too many people look upon their work as a means to an end ... a pay check. How much they lose in not learning how to work, how to develop pride in a job well done. Mr. Brower calls it ... 'the thrill of achievement'.

"Perhaps our schools might develop a course on 'how to work'."

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

Oakland County's Republican State Senator, L. Harvey Lodge, chairman of a Special Senate committee investigating waste in State government, recently suggested a new economy emphasis in the oath taken by every elected Legislator, as follows: "I take this Oath before God to support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Michigan and to abide by all laws thereunder, and that I will do and perform my duties in the best interests of the people I serve looking unto their welfare and conserving and preserving their tax dollars, to the end of honest and efficient performance of my duties, so help me God."

President Eisenhower recently released information regarding the size of the budget he will present to the next Congress. The total amount in dollars is 77 billion. Most Democratic members of Congress, plus some of the leftist inclined Republicans, scoffed at the comparative frugality represented by these figures. Thus it is reasonable to forecast that the next session of Congress may apply the famous slogan of the late Harry Hopkins who, during the long years of FDR in the White House said, "Tax and tax, spend and spend."

Quite a number of American businessmen, upon their return from Europe and the Middle East, tell us that they see a tremendous upsurge in the industrial and agricultural areas of these foreign lands. They point out that more and more Europe and the Middle East and even parts of Asia will depend less and less upon the industrial and agricultural production of the United States. This, no doubt, will create many domestic problems for the U.S. economy but, after all, isn't this condition exactly what our social, political and economic leaders have wanted? Haven't they worked to raise the production and living standards of other nations less fortunately situated than the United States?

Because some people are more intelligent than others, more capable in their

respective professions or vocations, reason would argue that they should be paid more than persons of less competence. Take the teaching profession for example. Some educators would like to pay the members of their faculties on a merit basis; other educators, who may not differ with the underlying logic, have asserted, however, that the administration of a merit system brings with it so many complex problems and situations that its application would do more harm in the long run than paying teachers on the basis of their degrees and seniority in a school system. So here is a case, one of countless thousands in our human society, where logic and reason argue one way, yet are stymied by the perversities of human nature.

Vice-President, Richard M. Nixon, continues his serious efforts to weld together the splintered segments of the Republican party. As you know, he would like to be the Republican party's candidate for president in 1960. Nixon is a pretty well-informed participant in American politics. It can be expected that, during the next two years, he will do more to rebuild his party than President Eisenhower himself has done. Indeed, political observers assert that the President has unwittingly, mostly through errors of omission, done more to hurt his party than any other top official wearing the label of the GOP.

Former Teamster Union boss Dave Beck admits that he needs \$250,000 to pay the taxes which are defending him in his Tacoma, Wash., income tax trial. So he wrote many of his old pals and friends for the money ... his letters practically cringingly pleading, it seems to us, for the cash. How the mighty are fallen!

FBI director J. Edgar Hoover is much worried about the current tendency of women to become bank robbers, either as accomplices to men, or just working by themselves. Now, fellows, don't make any nasty remarks about women for years going through the masculine trousers while their wearers are asleep.

### The Birmingham Eccentric

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## ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

Three weeks ago, in this column, I reprinted letters I'd received from two women who had reacted to our town.

In essence, one woman said she thought our local residents' driving habits were erratic, hurried, uncourteous, careless and unfriendly.

The woman said she "had never been so lonely" in her life as in the five years she lived in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area. She called it the "coldest, saddest, loneliest place of all the areas in which (her) family had dwelled."

A FEW DAYS AGO in my mail arrived another letter. It's from a woman resident who only nine months ago moved into Birmingham's northeast section.

She's also reacted to our town, but quite differently.

Her letter's quite long, but you'll find it stimulating, even refreshing:

DEAR MR. AVERILL:

As a resident of Birmingham for the past nine months, and referred to as a newcomer, I read with interest the two letters to the editor in the Jan. 8 Eccentric.

I am a lady from Ohio as was the writer of the first letter. In regard to drivers here, I have this criticism. Many are guilty of failing to keep an assured distance and "tail-gating" is a hazard.

THERE HAVE BEEN INSTANCES when I had to run a yellow light though I could have stopped, or be run through from behind.

In posted speed zones, I have had this same experience and been forced to increase my speed beyond the limit because of the impatience and honking of the driver behind me.

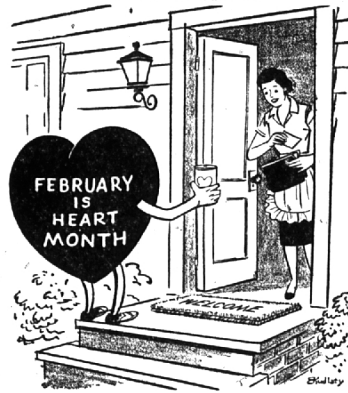
However, I do find drivers and people courteous, particularly to the pedestrian. The taxi drivers are considerate and good drivers, which is not always the case in most cities.

I PARTICULARLY COMMENT your police force for the efficient patrolling of the streets. When I see a police car parked on a side street observing traffic on a main thoroughfare, I have a feeling of security, for I know the law is alert for my protection.

Birmingham, or any Detroit area, is the last place where I expected to learn to drive. I have learned to drive here.

(Continued on Page 3-B)

## Be His Valentine



### NATURE NOW

by Lydia King Frehse  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

## Country Lane Gets Visit in January

It is a late January afternoon in the old orchard on the hill. The brittle boughs of the apple trees gleam like crystal in the waning sunlight. The moment is cold and windless without a sound to remind one that after all, our winter-wrapt world has not died.

Standing thus, my eyes dwell on the marsh below. Tall cat-tails and grass stand guard at the edge of the frozen pond which marks its center. But the air is emptied of last summer's chatter of red-winged blackbirds and no frog chorus sounds to proclaim life's resurrection.

Beyond the marsh, a woodlot makes a dark blot against the blue winter sky. Old willows follow the meanderings of a small stream within its margins.

A short walk down hill and across the marsh leads to a little-used country lane which skirts the woodlot. Where autumn made a glory of red maple and yellow poplar, there is left only a silent arch of snowy boughs.

STANDING so, my green-hungry eyes rest on a small clump of cedar in a neighboring hollow. In the grey of the year the deciduous trees look cold and shelterless, but even in a snow-filled world, the evergreens create a sense of comforting warmth.

Now within the shelter of the woodlot, clumps of evergreen wood and Christmas fern make little snowy tents beside stumps and along fallen logs. A field mouse's dainty tracks, identified by a thin line made by the dragging tail, disappears under a snowy bank. Beneath its protecting warmth concealed many interlacing runways which only a mouse could unravel.

Around the holes of trees, squirrel tracks begin and end. "Jumping" spaces left between the foot-



Mrs. Frehse

marks in the snow represent the long leaps of these agile and playful rodents.

BECAUSE rabbits find shelter in the shrubby ground cover of a swampy woodlot, their tracks are ever-present. Here they crisscross the snowy crust like village lanes. We never see the footprints of the harmless little cottontail without a sense of regret that it is he who must be the staple diet for the numerous carnivores of the woodlot. However, his fertility counterbalances his defenselessness, thus insuring the future of his kind.

On the edge of the woods we picked up a dead mouse, its small grey body frozen into a kind of immobility which belied its sprightly ways. Usually it is not the cold which kills our winter birds, nor yet their lack of food. The greatest number of fatalities come when cruel sleet storms follow alternate thaws. For this bit of death in my hands there lies concealed under the snow many another of the small-winged ones. Here they will make a delicate tidbit for some prying hawk or weasel.

It may be an inherited trait for the human mind to look for the "why" and "where" of life's events. But for the present year scribbles is content to pull up her favorite rocker to meet the well-coming warmth of the old hearth. Flight-dishes on the door faces in the familiar room. The west window frames a picture of interlacing boughs of box elder and willow silhouetted against a burnished sky where the sun sinks like a golden plate.

In this warm glow at day's end a potent of things to come. After all, January is named for Janus, a two-faced Roman deity who looks in both directions at the same time.

## Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

January 29, 1909

"Don't fail to read Madame Stryker's professional card. If you are a sufferer from any of these trials that mortals are afflicted with which she names, then call at once on the lady and be relieved."

"An article in the Pontiac Press (Gazette) in which it relates that 1200 empty whiskey bottles were picked up and sold to Birmingham druggists, is a fairly story of huge dimension. Not a word of truth in the article."

30 YEARS AGO

January 21, 1929

"Dorothy Williams remarks, after looking over the items and costs for a debutante's bowing party, that it equals the price of one year in college. This, also, is merely for your contemplation."

"A skating rink replaced the riding ring at the Bloomfield Open Hunt club Sunday. Weather conditions have again delayed the opening of the new rink ring. The sky-lights are now in and the roof on so that other officers look for riding early next week."

"Reckless drivers worry other folk as well as the police, according to Mrs. Walter Hayden, who reports she has noted many instances of reckless driving and near accidents at and near the intersection of Ridgegate and Poppleton streets."

15 YEARS AGO

January 27, 1914

"Mrs. Edward Bryant, who lived here for years was Mrs. 'Strap Hanger' over WJR's Public feature last week—while this Wanderer doesn't hear her, it is told that she did a bang-up good job."

## Suburban Sentiment

TOWN TALK

They tell me her home is the finest around,  
That her cuisine's delightful to savor,  
That her name opens doors, her clothes are Dior's  
And society vies for her favor;  
They speak of her cars, her furs, her jewels  
And declare that nothing's denied her;  
But the words I like best are the ones that attest  
To the heart that is ticking inside her.

— Dorothy Rockwell McWood

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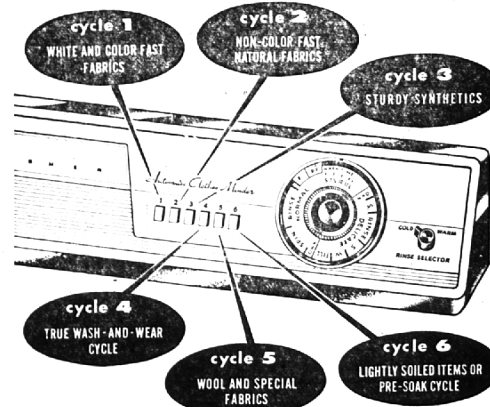
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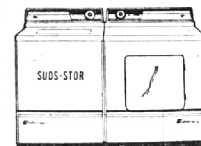
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