

Some Data About 'Outer Space'

Now that we are moving into the space age, it is good to ask ourselves how much we know about outer space.

Beginning at the beginning, the earth is one of nine planets which revolve (in an elliptical orbit) around the sun.

SEVERAL OF THESE nine planets have a moon (or moons) circling them. We call our sun and everything revolving around it (planets, satellites (moons), comets, meteors, stars, etc.) our solar system.

The sun and billions of other stars, and suns, form our galaxy. The universe con-

tains an undetermined but great number of galaxies. Thus, one can see how infinitesimal our solar system is—even though the sun is 93 million miles away.

There are probably millions of suns. But as yet we have not been able to verify the theory that other planets revolve around the other suns; we cannot see that far. The next nearest sun, after our sun, is Alpha Centauri.

STARS APPEAR to twinkle and planets do not; stars are globes of intensely heated gas, not solids. The sun, then, is our nearest star—and while it is but one of millions of suns, probably, a million earths would fit into it—it is that large.

Bowing to Labor Bosses for Votes

If you lived in Minneapolis, Minnesota (and we presume this condition exists in hundreds of other U.S. areas) and wanted to receive the support of labor unions as a candidate for political office, here is what you would be required to consent to:

"I hereby agree if I receive the endorsement of this Committee, I pledge to actively support the program and platform formulated by the labor movement on city, state and national issues; that I will join in a caucus of all

labor-endorsed candidates which is pledged to abide by unit rule on all matters of organization or on all basic labor issues; that I will clear all campaign literature through the Committee and will cause to be distributed only that which is approved."

In this a relinquishment of personal independent political freedom on the part of those who agree to it?

You bet your sweet Constitutional liberty it is!

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

It is axiomatic that if one seeks the enjoyment of a certain condition, he necessarily should play whatever role is required to gain such enjoyment. Liberty and freedom, being conditions desired by most of us, must be gained by our actions; actions that include the defense of both.

U. S. Defense Dept. informs U. S. Bureau of Public Roads that 8,000 bridges on interstate highways are two feet too low to allow transportation of modern military hardware, chiefly missiles.

The Amish people, you may have read, refuse to accept all of this modern world. They still reject motor cars, preferring

Old Dobbin for transportation as well as a source of agricultural "mechanical power." Over in Pennsylvania, recently, an entire community of Amish have refused to send their offspring to a public school. Instead herding them in a farmhouse to be taught. But the state and local school folks have gone to court on this question... thus will the majority thought dominate.

President Eisenhower has declared that our nation is strong in military defenses; many Democratic U.S. Senators are equally strong in their declarations that we are behind Soviet Russia in certain phases of our defense system. May we add that 1950 is an election year?

If Vice-President Richard M. Nixon becomes our next President, will his wife be the first "Pat" ever to preside over its domestic environments?

"Generally speaking..." began the speaker—and from somewhere in the audience a voice loudly whispered: "Well, ain't he generally speaking most of the time?"

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ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

Birmingham City Commissioner William H. Burgum recalls the day when the First Presbyterian church's "parking committee" did its most efficient work.

You know how these things work: you get in line to park, and are waved into the church driveways in an almost unending stream.

Burgum says on Palm Sunday four years ago, the First Presbyterian parking crew was hard at work.

Relates Burgum: "One particular motorist pulled into a parking space behind the church, rolled down his car window, and called to the nearest 'committee' member. 'What the Sam Hill am I doing here? I'm on my way to Pt. Huron!'"

A sure method for waking up with success is not to go to sleep.

You can fool some women all the time, all women some of the time, but not all women all the time.

Take those two women crossing a down-

town street the other day. They almost didn't see the car which turned the corner from their blind side, almost cutting them off.

"That must have been a woman driver!" one remarked to the other. (It was.)

"They're, not very polite, are they?" rejoined her friend.

There are many things we haven't the slightest idea of improving on. We merely want to get in on them.

Two women met on a downtown sidewalk. From their conversation it was apparent they hadn't seen one another for some years. One was dressed in slacks, flats and sweater. The other was wearing a suit and high heels.

Following the usual woman talk, the casually dressed woman noticed the costume of the other, and questioned in amazement:

"What are you doing walking in Birmingham in HEELS?"

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NATURE NOW

Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Light Essential to Life Of Plants, Animals

March 21 at 9:43 a.m. marks the moment of the spring equinox. On this day the sun is exactly on the plane of the equator and all points on the earth's surface have 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness.

Most of us see light, not as a scientific phenomenon, but in relation to our every day life. Its presence or its absence (darkness) marks not only our activities and our accomplishments but life itself.

OF PARAMOUNT importance is the ability of visible light to accomplish photosynthesis, which takes place when sunlight strikes the chlorophyll-bearing cells in the leaf. Here are made the starches and sugars which are the basic food for all plants and animals.

Without this most important action of light, life as we know it could not exist. Recently we saw illustrated the effect of light rays, demonstrated by spreading four cloths on a snow bank. The white square reflected the light so that no melting was visible. The remaining squares showed progressive absorption of light as the color darkened until the black square was sufficiently warmed to sink into the snow bank. This is the effect of reflected light demonstrated.

When we visited the Egyptian desert, we soon learned to copy the Arab, who swaths himself in white cloth. This attire reflects the sun's rays with a resulting coolness. Here we take advantage of the same principle when we wear light colors in summer and dark ones in winter.

IT IS KNOWN that the greatest number of native plants are in bloom June 21, the longest day of the year when there is a continuous light for some 15 1/2 hours. The number of species of both spring and autumn flowers show this in figure.

Plants grown in greenhouses can live without light. Seaweeds lose their greenness progressively as they grow nearer the ocean's bottom. The presence or absence of light are of great importance in shaping the life of any organism. Since the sun's rays travel at the rate of 186,000 miles per second their effect upon us is practically instantaneous. Yet in astronomical figures this is but a fragment of time in a universe whose distances are calculated in "light years." This measuring stick is used to determine the distance to the farthest stars and spans a space which for want of a better word we call "infinity."

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

March 19, 1910 "The new school will not be erected, right way, at least by last week's vote. The vote was light, interest lagging. 78 noded no; 57 voted yes. Lost by 21 votes. We think that the people should be called together for a meeting at the school house to discuss the needs of the pupils; ways and means, where the new building is to be located, and all about it. If this is done, then we are sure the vote will be a 'yes' with a big Y and with no trouble at all. Try it if Honorable School Board this way for the next trial. The voters have never yet failed you."

George E. Daines was elected village president in a "quiet" and "peaceful" election Monday.

"At the depth of 70 feet up at Wednesday, Feb. 23, 1910. Carter struck a flowing stream of water for George G. Booth that Harvey said beats any well ever struck before. It raises 20 feet above the surface of the ground very easily."

30 YEARS AGO

March 20, 1920 "Half of Birmingham's population attended the Community House housewarming Monday afternoon."

"First grass fire of 1930 in the village occurred Friday, at 2:45 p.m. when a grass bonfire at East Maple road and Edinborough avenue got out of control and began spreading. It was extinguished by the Birmingham Fire department."

"Experiments in police radio are being conducted in Birmingham, this week. Chief Orl J. Tuttle last night continued experiments with a receiving set installed in one of the police depart-

ment automobiles, cruising the village."

15 YEARS AGO

March 15, 1935 "John T. Brennan, for some years manager of the Secor hotel in Toledo, Ohio, has been named manager at the Oakland Hills country club."

Thousands of people read The Eccentric Classified Ads. So, remember if you want to sell that hard-to-get-rid-of article, advertise it in the Want Ad section of The Birmingham Eccentric.

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