

Welcome To Our Community House, Director Ouradnik

Selection of F. Ward Ouradnik as director of the Birmingham Community House promises to bring to that voluntary-supported facility a man with considerable community-service experience.

"His talents and skills uniquely fit the progressive plans of the Community House for sharply increased vitality and greater service to the entire Birmingham-Bloomfield area," stated Thoburn H. Wiant, president of the House.

Thirty-eight years is a long time for a facility such as the Community House to maintain the voluntary support that it has. We well recall those days when the then quite small "village of Birmingham" launched the idea of providing such a service. Almost \$150,000 was raised that first year to build and equip the House, the land for which was given by a half dozen local business and professional men.

EVERY YEAR SINCE, the annual budgets funds have been raised by voluntary subscription. As the years advanced, however, other service and recreational organizations came into being, thus lessening dependence upon the House for a few certain conveniences.

Essentially, though, there remains great need for the definite values accruing to the House. These, no doubt, will be strengthened, even added to, by director Ouradnik and the C. H. Board.

Yes, the Birmingham Community House is an established, needed Birmingham facility. That it may continue is the expectancy and hope of thousands of its loyal supporters.

English — She Ain't Spoken Good — Eh?

It is not particularly surprising, anymore, when a college professor sounds off on how poorly incoming freshmen handle the English language. But lack of novelty does not lessen the importance of such strictures.

The latest blast on the subject has come from Prof. Harrison Wilson, head of the freshman English department at the University of Illinois. A third of all college freshmen, he says, are poorly trained in English. He blames this on the poor preparation of many English teachers, with "too many school administrations thinking anyone can teach English," and on the fact that teaching loads are too heavy.

Wilson makes the usual points that a theme a week is desirable for high school seniors, but that a teacher with 150 students lacks the time to read and grade that many themes. He also declares that "young people today just don't read enough, and they must read to learn the love of reading." They must indeed. Literacy is a tool that sharpens with use. And, happily, there is one good way for parents to stimulate reading among children: Dad and Mother can do it by reading themselves.

'Malarkey' Used By Many People

We all are acquainted with the various claims made by some advertisers with regard to the excellence of their products. In numerous commodity lines on today's market you read or listen to the superlative claims made by their manufacturers. Of course, the average purchaser of these products is aware that some of the statements made contain various portions of "malarkey," and he mentally discounts them.

In quite the same way some of the candidates of all political parties make even greater exaggerations; they shout superlative claims as to the value of their particular programs, panaceas, and solutions for the problems that confront society.

ONE PARTY GETS elected on the basis of its claims, enacts certain types of legislation, levies certain amounts of taxes, fails on many of its promises, and finally is supplanted by another party that got in office pretty much on the same claims and whose candidates, in the course of time, again will be supplanted by opponents from the opposition party.

And so it goes—but, aware of the prog-



"The Air . . . Appears No Other Thing to Me Than a Foul and Pestilent Congregation of Vapors."
—Hamlet, Act II, Scene 2

Editorial Page

Thursday, July 20, 1961

A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press Is Democracy's First Line of Defense

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ress that we have made in a country like the United States, who would have it, any different? In another 500 or 1000 years, if people continue to live on earth, some nations will have evolved to an environment closer to some of the promises made by current politicians.

This type of evolutionary progress is, after all, the best and the most enduring pattern to follow to reach a higher state of civilization. This evolutionary pattern of progress is obtainable only under the banners of freedom and liberty—is this not worth defending? That is the challenge to all of us!

TV Rejects Truman History Program

With television being called everything from a "vast wasteland" to "a gigantic comic strip" and a contributor to juvenile

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

As you all know, the Kennedy administration has launched a variety of new programs, all of them depending on funds from Washington, D. C.—these funds, of course, previously having been taken from the pocketbooks of the wage earners of the 50 states. We all know that the federal government, as is the case in state governments, always depends upon the levying of taxes to get every penny they spend. If of this type of program continues, you may rest assured that inflation will continue to cheapen your dollars. It is said that the 1959 dollar is now worth only about 45 1/2 cents in purchasing power; if you are around 4 years from now you'll certainly find that your 45 1/2 cent-dollar is worth considerably less—such is the inevitable result of higher and higher tax levies made by government.

Why is it that so many married couples, once they have ordered their dinner in a public dining room, remain silent? We have noted, over the years, this seeming inability of them to carry on a conversation while waiting for the food. Isn't there something to talk about?



One Thing or Another

By GEORGE WM. AVERILL

George William Averill is on vacation. His column will resume with the Aug. 17 edition.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Proposed Hike In Commuter Fare Protested

To the Editor:

Following is a copy of a letter I sent to the Michigan Public Service Commission in Lansing:

"I want to take this opportunity to express the surprise and disappointment of many commuters regarding the 15 per cent fare increase which the Grand Trunk Western Railroad has announced will become effective Aug. 1, 1961.

"The operating loss of the commuter service totaling \$2,500 last year, as reported by The Detroit News, is as you well know, a matter of cost allocation. Were there no commuter service, would the Michigan Public Service Commission permit freight rates to be raised to recoup this difference?"

"The statement was made by Harry A. Sanders that this is the first fare increase in four years. Unfortunately, I will have to trust myself, but every individual with whom I checked seems to recall that there was another rate increase within the past four years.

MR. SANDERS, again according to The Detroit News, stated that the proposed new rates would be no higher than those of other large cities.

"While this may be true, the service provided commuters is far below the service afforded by commuters in other large cities. For example, while commuter fares are

perhaps no lower in Chicago, non-stop service is provided to virtually every suburban community, an equipment, consisting primarily of modern, air-conditioned, double-deck coaches.

"Contrast this with the time schedule of the Grand Trunk Western where 45 minutes are required to make the run from Detroit to Birmingham, a distance of approximately 23 miles.

"This is an average of roughly 30 miles an hour, a speed with which commuters of 40 or 50 years ago would have been very pleased but hardly the kind of service that is deserving of continual rate increases.

"FOR EXAMPLE, the three main commuters leaving Detroit each evening, in order to negotiate this distance to Birmingham, make six stops before reaching Birmingham. There is no such thing as non-stop service to any community along this route.

"Isn't it about time the Grand Trunk Western was asked to provide service which measures up to the commuting service of other cities since they insist on comparing their proposed fare structure with that of other cities?"

WARREN L. CARLSON
Hesper-Paper, Inc.
Incorporated
Detroit

Trash Matter Draws Comment From Resident

To the Editor:

Three loud cheers for Mrs. Dean Coffin!

My experience with the trash pick-uppers while not exactly the same as Mrs. Coffin's nevertheless was just as disturbing.

We placed our two regulation-size trash cans out in front loaded with trash from backyard cleanup and having more than two cans would have placed the overflow in two smaller cans. I was sitting on the front porch enjoying the snug feeling that comes when everything is neat and tidy when along came the trash truck.

THE GENTLEMEN picked up the two large cans—gruntingly and gruntingly-making smacking marks about the cans being full of rocks, etc., etc.—when they spied the two little cans sitting on the side—more mumbling—then looking around saw me sitting on the porch.

SEZ one of them: "Lady, we can't take little ones—against regulations."

"Why," wonder I—outloud.

"WELL," HE SEZ, "you see, it takes twice as long to lift two little cans as it does to lift one big can and we don't have no time to waste. You see," he sez, "if every-

body put out two little cans in place of one big can, it would take us twice as long to get our work done."

"Well," I sez, "everybody doesn't put out two little cans in place of one big can and if you had picked up the two little cans and kept your mouth shut you would be half way down the street by now."

Logical!
LEONA LIGHTON
1760 Webster
Birmingham

'Recessional' Is Good Reminder of Cause of Liberty

To the Editor:

Reading the newspapers this past week, with all their expostulations of the state of this troubled world, I wondered if it might not be the right time to publish in our paper a couple stanzas of Kipling's "Recessional."

At church services this morning, the subject of the sermon was "Liberty"—its meaning and responsibility.

IT SEEMS—as if an awakening—as a free people, we have forgotten.

We need to re-evaluate and glorify our love and devotion to Liberty—the sacred heritage of our forefathers, and ours to guard and keep.

A READER

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

July 21, 1911

In answer to the call of president Daines for a citizens meeting to vote for the entertainment of the Boys in Blue, who will gather here the last of August, a number of our people met last Monday at library hall to arrange ways and means to provide for these old vets. President George E. Daines named F. Blakeslee, John Heth and George H. Mitchell a committee with executive powers to make the needed call and make arrangements for a successful reunion of these brave boys.

A cheerful lunch camping out at Union Lake are H. G. Spencer and wife, Amos Howland and wife and Samuel Cross and wife, out for a two weeks vacation. They pitched their tents during the heaviest rainstorm of the season and all wore smiles throughout the entire act.

Capt. M. O. Bigelow of the Eighth U. S. Cavalry is home for a few days from Fort Leavenworth, Kan. He is enjoying his annual vacation, and before his return will take a run down to New York City.

30 YEARS AGO

July 23, 1931

A meeting was called Tuesday evening in the Board of High School auditorium by directors of the First State Savings Bank to discuss the committee of three depositors to work with similar committees from the stockholders and directors and with the permanent receivers to formulate a plan for re-opening and continuance of the bank.

Barnum School swimming pool will remain open until at least August 17. It was decided by the school board at its meeting Monday night. The board will hold its next meeting on that date when it will determine from a report of revenue and expenditures whether or not it will keep the pool open for the remainder of the summer. The attendance at the pool steadily increasing, it was reported by the business manager of the Birmingham Schools, Louis M. Randall.

15 YEARS AGO

July 18, 1946

Birmingham housewives and other buyers were contacted this week in a survey by The Eccentric to discover their reactions to the price situation, now that O.P.A. controls have been off for a three-week period. In almost every case, a rise in prices was reported and almost all the comment had one point in common. Buyers felt the only way to combat rising prices was by buying the article which they considered exorbitant in price to buy as little of it as possible.

Walnut Lake district became the third outlying school district within three months to vote favorably on annexation to the Birmingham school district. It was officially at the July meeting of the Board of Education Tuesday. It will eventually become part of the Birmingham district on July 1, 1947 and operate independently for the 1946-47 year. Last April 27, Southfield No. 1 school district voted on annexation. Bloomfield Village district followed with a favorable decision on June 17.

STRICTLY FRESH

After reading a gardening report in a New England newspaper, a woman called the editor to announce that she had positive her husband had all the symptoms of Dutch elm disease.



During an Irish funeral a white one of the bearers slipped and broke his leg. This was the single gloomy note of the entire day.

Things we would like to see: A tooth paste containing tiny pieces of food—for those who can't eat between brushings.

By KEN WEAVER

City Beat

Mrs. Elise Good, 604 Hanna, Birmingham, authors two publications—the Sunday Bulletin for Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Church and the Spotlight for Holy Name.

Over the years she has handled all kinds of publicity. She has a newspaper background—she's a former Birmingham Eccentric proof-reader, a former managing editor of the Highland Park.

Consequently, she has developed an awareness of and a concern for newspaper publicity.

A couple of weeks ago Mrs. Good read in this column that some people have misconceptions about newspapers, that they fail to distinguish between fact and opinion, that they don't know the difference between news and advertising.

THIS WEEK, she called to say that beginning this fall she will teach a class that may help publicity writers to better understand what kind of news releases newspapers want.

The class, "The Basics of Publicity," will meet at Birmingham Community House from 8 to 10 p.m. Mondays. It will begin Sept. 18 and run six weeks. Size will be limited to 16 in a class.

"We will do some practice writing, too," Mrs. Good explained.

Anyone interested in how to handle publicity may enroll, she stated.

SPEAKING OF publicity, a man walked into The Eccentric news room the other day to say that he didn't have a score to report on a Little League game but to tell us "about a fight—between two parents."

AND SPEAKING of writing, during the Birmingham Arts Festival somebody came up with the type of attention-getting phrase that newsmen are always looking for:

"Laid a geodesic-shaped egg."

Unfortunately (or, fortunately?), we deal with truth, so the phrase couldn't be used.

A WRITER of humor should make a point of collecting all the jokes about crime-does-not-pay now circulating in Birmingham-Bloomfield Hills.

And the jokes about the husbands who "don't dare" stop off at that favorite pub on the way home from work now.

By DENI SCANLON

Talk of the Towns

"Don't be sad that your cup is half empty, be thankful it's half full."

"Each word stands out on either side no wider than the heart is wide."

"Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself."

Those words? It really doesn't matter. What counts is what they say.

To Florence H. Willett, Birmingham wife and mother, who has spent recent years as a city commissioner and mayor, these sentiments mean a great deal.

Mrs. Willett is very very human. In her search for answers to her moods, thoughts, ideas and feelings, she has compiled two small books of compilations.

Her "Book of Self Discipline" speaks for itself:

"That man is a success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who leaves the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who looked for the best in others and gave the best he had."

"Those who are ashamed to expose their ignorance on any given matter ought to remember the pungent line from one of Disraeli's novels: 'The fool wonders, but the wise man asks.'"

"Take a piece of wax, a piece of meat, some sand, some clay and some shavings and put them on the fire.

"Each is acted upon by the same agent, yet the wax melts, the meat fries, the sand dries up, the clay hardens and the shavings blaze.

Just so, under the influence of identical circumstances and environment, one man becomes stronger, another weaker, and another withers away."

"An opportunist sees an opportunity in every calamity; a pessimist sees a calamity in every opportunity."

From Ruth Krauss' collection of definitions by children:

"Mashed potatoes are to give everybody enough.

"A lap is so you don't get crumbs on the floor.

"A dream is to look at the night and see things.

"Dishes are to do.

"Cats are so you can have kittens.

"A nose is to blow.

"A hole is to dig.

"Buttons are to keep people warm.

"A rock is when you trip on it you should have watched where you were going."

"You know what the witty and eloquent old Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, 'You needn't fear to handle the truth roughly; she is no invalid.'"

"The truth is the most robust and indestructible and formidable thing in the world."