

The Birmingham Eccentric

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School District Report Helps to Inform Public

The Eccentric congratulates the Birmingham Board of Education for its Report of Progress, a supplement distributed with our issue of Sept. 14.

This report illustrates the modern enlightenment of this school board in recognizing the governmental problem of communication.

Too often controversy arises because the public is ill-informed or misinformed. Cooperation between the citizenry and government, between residents of a school district and the school administration starts when each knows what the other is doing. An informed public will act wisely when it comes to ballot propositions.

THE REPORT of Progress, we feel, is an objective attempt to share with the public the goals and problems of the local school system.

It is not, we are pleased to note, a propaganda piece—as it so easily could have been. Rather, it is an honest portrayal of the services and needs of the system.

The report discusses factually and frankly what the district has done and, more important, what it plans to do in the future with the facilities the people have given them.

It recognizes the work of the Citizens Curriculum Study Committee.

In many cases, citizen committees func-

tion only to whitewash administrative weaknesses; their reports are buried with the hopes of parents for better education. Such was not the case in this instance.

RECOGNIZING its responsibility in communication, The Eccentric in the near future will publish a series of articles on a recent survey of the school district by Community Research Associates.

It is hoped that this service will assist the board's efforts to let the public know what is going on in the complex network that converts our children from the unlearned to the learned.

We hope the parents of the district will re-read the material in this supplement and make known to the board their thoughts and observations.

By knowing the citizen's views, the board will represent them better.

YES, WE BELIEVE this Report of Progress was an excellent idea. We think other school boards might well follow Birmingham's example and give their people an up-to-date report on their accomplishments, needs and services.

Our point is, that effective communication helps to avoid unnecessary clashes, especially when requests for money are involved.

Saarinen's Passing Recalls The Great Values of Art

Recent passing of Eero Saarinen, local and internationally famous architect, is a distinct loss to the world of architecture.

Though only 51 years of age, he gave eloquent proof of his inherent right to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious architect-father, Eliel Saarinen, for many years resident architect here at Cranbrook, where he designed most of the buildings.

Born in Finland, Eero was brought up under his father's guidance, and with him planned many famous public and privately owned edifices, some of them winning prizes.

For his inspired plans in the construction of the famous General Motors Technical Center in nearby city of Warren, Eero was named the outstanding U.S. architect in 1953.

He also designed the U.S. Embassy in London, Eng.

ONE COULD ADD many more verbal accolades to the memory of this distinguished architect, who for many years had his offices in Bloomfield Hills.

Whether he was designing a public building, be it a city hall or an art museum, or a great industrial building project, Eero Saarinen exemplified what Tolstoy said: "Art is a human activity having for its purpose the transmission to others of the highest and best feelings to which men have risen."

We cannot close this editorial tribute without paying repeated homage to the founders of the Cranbrook-Kingswood edu-

cational facility, George Gough and Ellen Scripps Booth, whose vision of the part that art can and should play in the affairs of mankind inspired them to develop and endow this great facility.

The cultural impact for good that their resources have created reach far beyond this State of Michigan, this U.S. Nation . . . indeed, in and on many places on this earth.

A GREAT SCULPTOR, the late Carl Milles, Swedish genius, also was a resident teacher at Cranbrook. Others have taught there who have majored in other forms of art.

Yes, art reaches far—because it originates in the deep and inspired hungers and yearnings of people.

Another, and current, evidence of the impact of art hereabouts is the Bloomfield Art Association, composed mostly of people who engage, professionally or amateurishly, in some form of art, but inclusive also of hundreds of people who appreciate such cultural expression.

Current efforts to transform Birmingham's old sewage disposal plant into an art center is further proof of an utterance by the late Havelock Ellis, who believed: "A nation's art-products . . . are international possessions, for the joy and service of the whole world."

Eero Saarinen, great architect, knew these truths and devoted his great talents to make them visible and useful to others.

Time Now to Build a Temple

"The Time Is Now for Building the Temple."

This is the theme for the \$250,000 fundraising drive of the Birmingham Masonic Association.

It is appropriate.

Since 1923, local Masons have conducted their meetings in a stately old home at Woodward and Forest. Today, the lodge has 600 members.

Indeed, the time HAS come to build a new temple.

BETWEEN NOW and Dec. 16, workers will be soliciting 1,500 area Masons for funds to erect a tri-level building. To ob-

tain enough money to enable them to break ground, they will seek \$170,000 in pledges.

Besides serving the Masonic membership, the new temple will be available for rental to other Birmingham organizations. In this sense it will be a community building.

AND IT WILL demonstrate once again the progressive nature of Birmingham. The new temple will well complement the numerous other modern structures arising in our city in recent years.

The Masons have a long, proud record of achievement in Birmingham and area.

We wish them success in their new venture.

"Shucks! At Least They Could Have Planned to Let Me Get Back to the Barn First!"



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Student Calls Moral Degeneration 'Greatest Threat' in World Today

To the Editor: The greatest threat to human existence today is not the various bombs, diseases and accidents, but the degeneration of the moral fortitude found in the world as a whole. Far too many people are concerned only with the material things which are to be found in our present day society and give little or no thought to the supernatural part of their life. They fill their days with schemes to make the most money with the least effort and then spend the remaining time worrying about whether it's going to be taken from

them, and who is going to get it. Thus, their greed and avaricious taste possession of them and, consequently, principles are lowered and character is weakened.

ACCOMPANYING this materialistic attitude is a plain disregard for the spiritual life and the moral laws. This attitude is plainly seen in the rising divorce rate, the increase in juvenile delinquency and other types of crimes. Many people either deny that there is a supernatural Being or their actions completely ignore this Being. By ignoring this part of

themselves they are ignoring the reason for which they were created. This lowering of morals and weakening of character is the greatest threat to human existence because people will be willing to let tyrants have their way as long as they are not directly affected.

In the end they will find themselves prisoners of their own weaknesses. They will be destroyed by the people and circumstances which they have ignored. DOUG HEISLER, (age 14) 10th Grade Brother Rice High School

Qualifications Determined for Social Workers

To the Editor: Acting on recommendation of the Commission on Practice, the National Association of Social Workers Board of Directors at its August meeting stated desirable minimum qualifications for social workers engaged in private practice. Increased concern of chapters and other association units for establishing adequate standards for the rapidly developing area of practice supported the action.

- WE THOUGHT you would want to know that the board recommended as minimum qualifications: 1. Graduation from a school of social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or its predecessor organization. 2. Membership in NASW. 3. Membership in the Academy of Certified Social Workers. 4. Five years of acceptable full-

time experience in agencies providing supervision by professionally trained social workers, of which two years were in one agency consecutively under such supervision, while giving direct service and using the method or methods to be used in private practice.

THE BOARD also endorsed a definition of private practice for which these standards would be applicable.

"A private practitioner is a social worker who, wholly, or in part, practices his profession outside the agency of a governmental or duly incorporated voluntary agency, who has responsibility for his own practice and sets up his own conditions of exchange with his clients and identifies himself as a social work practitioner in offering his services." The Commission on Practice has

been exploring means of identifying persons who meet these criteria and methods of designating them. JOHN TABER Executive Committee Oakland County Chapter Nat. Assn. of Social Workers



Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

Sept. 29, 1911 A poll made to learn how many women there are who are superintendents of public schools shows that Rhoda M. Starr, now superintendent of the local school, is one of only two women in like positions in Michigan. She was born on a farm near Royal Oak just 26 years ago. Not only is she the superintendent of Birmingham's high school but instructor of English in the three upper classes.

One of nature's truest pets is owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Lamb. Early in June, Mrs. Lamb found a very young bluejay in her yard minus most of his feathers and unable to fly. He has his own cage in the yard now, coming and going as he pleases. He comes when his "mother" is called and never fails to come at his regular feeding hours.

Considerable interest has centered around the Daines and Bell stores, now being a year and then make way for a modern double store. We have found that it is the second building erected in our village. In 1833, Mr. Clock occupied it as a merchant. It was owned by a Mr. Hoffman and later was the residence of R. J. Mitchell. Orrin Poppington occupied the store in 1860 for a year and then built across the road. The Eccentric was printed in the store almost a generation ago.

30 YEARS AGO

Sept. 24, 1891 Hitch-hikers in Birmingham are enjoying another week of free rides but the privilege seems doomed to abrupt termination within a few days. At the meeting of the Village Commission Monday night, Clare H. Odgen,

village attorney, who has been instructed to draft an ordinance prohibiting the practice, reported that he was awaiting information before putting the document into its final form.

With the scarlet coats of the stewards adding a gay note to the grass landscape of a cloudy day, the stage was set at Oakland

Farms Saturday for the running of the annual Bloomfield Open Hunt races, the third in a series of four sponsored by the Central Racing Commission.

Gov. William M. Brucker, Dr. Bruce Kinney, director of Indian Missions for the U.S. and Dr. F. H. J. Lettingo, home secretary of the Baptist Foreign Mission Society, will be the chief speakers at the annual state Baptist convention to be held in Birmingham Oct. 19-22, according to program chairman Leland J. Boyan, 567 Oak St.

15 YEARS AGO

Sept. 26, 1946 Selection of the occupants for a new group of apartments should be completed by November, according to City Manager Donald C. Eberhart, member of the committee for selection of occupants. The committee met Friday to review the progress of reactivating selection. Tentative rules have been approved by committee meeting and sent to the P.H.A. office for approval, Eberhart said.

A meeting of the Birmingham chapter of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States for the purpose of reactivating the local chapter and electing temporary officers will be held Oct. 11, Wellesley Drive, who made the announcement this week.

The Birmingham Society of Women Painters will present an exhibition of current paintings at the Community House Oct. 9-26. The exhibition will open with a tea on Oct. 9. Asked to pour are Mrs. Dwight B. Ireland, Mrs. Paul Carter, Mrs. S. S. Carter, Mrs. Mrs. Alice Thurber and Lillian Clawson.

Suburban Sidelights

By HANK HOGAN

I now know why everyone goes out on a Saturday night. Last Saturday, we decided to spend a quiet evening at home and catch up on our television viewing. We were fortunate enough to catch two re-runs we had already seen. Part II of a very exciting drama and a brand new show entitled "The Defenders".

It was the consensus of the family at the conclusion of the show that it was misnamed. It should have been called "The Offenders". It started off with a fast moving mercy killing of an infant, which left us weak-kneed and weak stomached. From that point on it became a Perry Mason drama without Perry, or a lawyer's exercise by someone who had neither attended law school nor struck his head in a courtroom.

The one saving grace is that it must get better in the future.

THERE IS much criticism of the usurpation of power by the Federal Government where local governments formerly functioned.

While a large part of this movement is fostered by so called "liberal" politicians, we as apathetic citizens are probably contributing as much to the end result.

Take education for example.

We naturally wish that our children receive the best education possible. But fine education does cost money. If we are not willing at the local level to pay additional taxes on our property, then school systems must either cut the quality of education or seek funds from some other source, which can only be the state or national government.

Those who feel that the funds from state or national government are free, are just kidding themselves.

If we save money by not voting locally for more money, we end up paying more federal taxes, because the same amount of money is needed; plus, the fact that they must add the cost of getting it to Washington and back.

Also, if we collect and spend the money locally, we make policy locally and a local citizen's voice is heard loud and clear before, say, the Birmingham Board of Education, than before the Congress of the United States. Using education as an example does not mean that it is not just as applicable to welfare or any other governmental service. By encouraging our cities, townships and county to seek more federal dollars, we are encouraging them to sacrifice a little more of their independence, which can only result in the passage of power from the local scene.

OVERHEARD AROUND TOWN:

Mayor Florence H. Willett when asked how much time it takes to be mayor of a community the size of Birmingham replied, "Should I count the time I spend in the grocery stores and on street corners discussing Birmingham's problems?"

Sgt. Dick Brown of the Birmingham Police Dept. commented as he was releasing a sobered gentleman well over six feet from the City bullpen, "We don't have trouble with this type of person when he's had too much to drink, it's the little guy who has to prove how tough he is."

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

I'm frightened. Driving north on Woodward in Highland Park a couple months ago, I became engulfed in a traffic bottleneck that erupted with a tremendous rain and windstorm.

I tried a side street to the left, went a block or two, was forced to turn—and traffic was just as jammed as on Woodward.

So, back to Woodward. First chance, try a side street to the right.

Same situation.

I couldn't make headway on Woodward, and I couldn't get enough out of my west of it to find a less-traveled north-south thoroughfare.

WHAT I'M frightened about is, what would happen if I were driving along and we were blasted with an A-bomb? That storm-created traffic jam was troublesome—but it was four hours getting home—but think of the complications that would arise with the devastation and panic that would result from a bombing.

If drivers were impatient, and careless, in that bottleneck, what would be like if their lives and the lives of their families were at stake?

I AM REMINDED of the recent flight of residents from the hurricane-stricken area in Texas. Warned and prepared. (See CITY BEAT, 4-B)

Talk of the Towns

By DENI SCANLON

When this column was opened to local opinions on today's youth, "Cornelia" came through with a letter on her thoughts.

Here is another taker on the topic.

"The letter from 'Cornelia' stuck way in the last corner of the last page of a section of your last week's issue (in Deni Scanlon's column) made this reader put down the paper and do a bit of soul thinking.

"Do you hand over your children to pair baby sitters a great deal of the time while you, dear Momma, partake of bridge clubs, bowling leagues, golf, swimming, ski resorts and out of town vacations? Cornelia asked. She insisted many did with the excuse that this active diet of recreation makes for a more relaxed and more charming companion to have around the house when the spouse and kids are home.

"True or false? "Do we, who live in this push-ash area—where the average wage is more than twice the national level—place too much emphasis on 'getting away' from the humdrum of pushing electrical buttons in our homes?"

"Or, should Cornelia be called over to a quiet corner and told: "My dear, don't let yourself be fooled or become dis-

(See TALK OF THE TOWNS, 4-B)