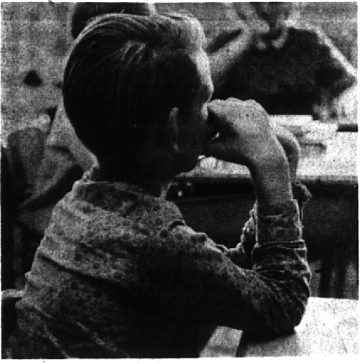


Birmingham Trying to Educate Mentally Retarded

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the last in a series of six articles, by DENI SCANLON, the Birmingham School System's Department of Special Education.

Most people fail to think about having a normal brain. A mentally retarded individual...



The mentally retarded children are taught the basics. Some learn more than others. Some eventually gain enough knowledge to get a job. Some don't.

can be produced in several ways—by a birth injury, by a high fever disease, by an accident before or after birth. Many of the retarded cases give no physical hint as to the reason for the handicap.

They range from totally helpless to educable.

THE BIRMINGHAM SCHOOLS Special Service Department, charged with the academic training of all children, has a program for the mentally retarded who are educable.

Birmingham's program is for about 60 children who are mentally retarded but who are socially competent and who may with proper training become self-supporting.

Those who are not educable but are capable of being trained to live under family supervision are sent to other classes in Oakland County.

FOR THOSE who fit the Type A description, there are four levels of instruction in Birmingham.

Classes are held at the lower elementary, upper elementary, Junior and senior high levels. Housed in special rooms, these children are taught reading, arithmetic, and basic crafts. Some learn more than others. Some eventually gain enough knowledge to get a job. Some don't.

According to Bernard Maslanik, head of the Special Services Department, "the object of the program is to eventually get these children into some type of occupation so that they are reasonably self-sufficient."

BEFORE A retarded child can be placed in one of the local programs, he must be recommended to it by the decision of a screening committee.

Then begins the teacher's job of constant repetition, tutoring—and understanding. She uses specialized approaches and material.

The mentally retarded do grow up like other children. They face emotional and physical changes and some of them eventually marry. It is the goal of the program to educate them as much as possible to meet the challenges they will face in the future.

IN ADDITION to educating the children, the teachers and staff of the Special Services Department work with parents and attempt to build an understanding with the community.

"Many of these children," Maslanik explained, "will be able to work as domestic help or do assorted jobs that provide adequate supervision."

"We stress," he continued, "that they learn to do what's asked by an employer. We want them to know how to ride a bus, how to manage money, how to get to work on time, how to shop—all those things normal people take for granted in their everyday life. We are trying to be realistic in this program."

ONE OF the most difficult things for Maslanik and his staff to get across is the fact that these children are retarded. "Many parents refuse to believe this or simply have not been told their children are retarded. Many times we cannot provide for a child because he is just not capable."

Another difficult factor that the families of the children face is the lack of understanding on the part of neighbors and members of the community.

"PARENTS OF THE retarded are often isolated," Maslanik stated. "Others find out about the retarded case and the family is shunned."

"However, churches, PTA's and other organizations are beginning to help these parents to accept and be accepted."

THE SUCCESS OF Birmingham's program for the mentally retarded will be evident next year when the first group of students graduate.

"We'll know then just how well they have been prepared," Maslanik said. "We'll find out if we have hit on the best possible education for them."

The Birmingham Eccentric Features

JANUARY 4, 1962 PAGE 3

DOWN TO EARTH

Back to the Attic Go Christmas Ornaments

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

The Christmas decorations are finding their way back to the attic, and each one of us has ideas on how he will decorate for 1962. The Westchester Community had its lighting competition which included over four hundred homes. They were judged in three categories: religious, juvenile, and general decorations.

First and second prizes were given in cash. As one person said: "If we win, it will take care of our extra electrical bill." This competition was sponsored by the Westchester Branch of National Farm and Garden.

THIS IS AN excellent way to arouse a community pride. The judging is done by three outside "souls."

Your columnist is "busting out all over" to tell you what a pleasure it is to have a greenhouse. To slip out into the room early in the morning before the household wakes up, and check up on the new planted seeds, the forming buds, the flowers, and growth of foliage plants, sets the tempo for the day.

At noon, if the sun is out, you can take a chair and table to the greenhouse to enjoy your lunch. Florida, you have competition.

THE WHOLE SECRET of owning a greenhouse is to avoid too large a place which might become a burden in time expenditure (our greenhouse is 6'10" X 8'7" and only takes five minutes to care for per day). This is an ideal size for a busy working person.

In recent anybody in the area who had a greenhouse was invited to meet at Bell's Greenhouse and exchange ideas "for fun." Over 25 people appeared from Flint, Monroe, Ann Arbor, and Plymouth, as well as greenhouse gardening fans from our immediate area.

As the days begin to lengthen, the days begin to strengthen, according to the old tale. The garden catalogues are beginning to arrive regularly, and many new introductions are being noted. So with the assurance of cold weather ahead, this is the time of year to study the introductions and plan ahead, for indoor and outdoor gardening.

ONE OF the deans of fine seed development is the George Park Co. of Greenwood, S. C. Its catalogue has pages of rare plants you can plant and enjoy now in your windows.

This is the date to begin growing calla lilies in a pot for the Easter season. White, yellow or pink. Their leaves are handsome. The flowers will be large, like trumpet trumpets. Each bulb should go in a 6" pot.

This is the time of year to start caladium bulbs which will give you large elephant-like ears of leaves which will be handily eaten by red, pink, green, etc.

HAVE THE FUN of starting a large packet of colous seeds which will produce pots of brilliantly colored leaves as gifts. Later, they will provide a good accent in front of the shrubbery. Why don't you grow your geraniums from seeds? You can grow gladiolus from seed.

WEEKLY VISIT

Boy 'Scientist' Finds Fossils

By IRMA N. DAVIS
Staff Writer

David Eick is only 11 years old but an educated guess would be that some 325 million years separate him from a magnificent group of fossils which he has donated to the Cranbrook Institute of Science.

The specimen, which David found on a field trip made with other Junior members of the Institute, was the Feature of the Month during December at the Cranbrook museum.

Walter P. Nickell, associate naturalist and associate in science education at the Institute, who escorted the group of youngsters to the Silica, Ohio quarry where David found the fossils, says he has seen nothing in 50 years in the quarry to compare with David's discovery.

IN FACT, SAYS Nickell, "the only comparable group of which I know is now exhibited in the United States National Museum. That cluster came from Ontario."

The Institute's specimens contain an aggregation of 18 trilobites. The latter term is one that David uses with almost disconcerting ease, along with other scientific tongue-trippers common to seasoned—and much older—fossil hunters.

"Trilobites," David will tell you, "are in a class with the crustaceans—those are joint-legged creatures such as lobsters, shrimp, spiders, scorpions and insects."

CLOSEST LIVING relatives of the trilobites are thought to be the horseshoe or king crabs, whose larvae resemble the phacops rana or "frog trilobite." In this group are the fossils which were embedded four hundred million years before David came along.

Nickell speculates that the David trilobites may have been huddled together for protection, or perhaps by some disaster.

Or a sudden inflow of thick sludge may have trapped them in a common feeding place, but whatever it was, the group owed its release to David Eick's sharp eyes.

Eleven-year-old David Eick, 2092 Pembroke, Birmingham, holds the group of trilobite fossils which he presented recently to the Cranbrook Institute of Science. David found the trilobites while on a field trip with other Junior Members of the Institute.

NATURE NOW

Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Changes in Earth, Life Evident in Each Season

Most of us view life in mere bits and pieces, from time to time, enter the orbit of our daily experience. We hear birds chirping in the snow, we see hares trotting about against a winter sky, or one squirrel chasing another up a tree trunk.

But he who probes deeper into nature's ways soon finds his interest reaching beyond incident, beyond facts and names to those overall principles which control life's changing patterns.

LIKEWISE WE are so accustomed to the familiar topography of our daily lives that it is difficult to realize that the earth itself has presented quite a different face to each succeeding age.

These changes are evident even in a single season.

We find a Mrs. Frehoe on the beach that has receded or plants that have escaped the confines of a garden fence. In a short half life-time streams have

changed their courses, forests have disappeared, marshes have dried with cat-tails and rushes, once fertile fields have been eroded into useless deserts.

These obvious changes are a result of the shifting land masses that have occurred to mold the earth's contours during the several billions of years of its evolution from an incandescent ball of molten rock to its present outlines.

IN THE EONS of time which were involved in the cooling process, great torrential rains fell on the earth.

Finally, the oceans were established and the first one-celled life stirred in their warm shallows. Eventually the atmosphere cleared and the sun shone through.

During the millennia which have followed, the shifting land masses of the continents have been repeatedly submerged and freed from the covering seas. Mountain ranges have been built up in response to volcanic action and the upheaval and folding of the earth's crust.

NOW, AS THEN, the earth's topography is being constantly changed by the erosive action of wind and water.

(See NATURE NOW, 5-D)

Clearance Sale

SAVE UP TO 30% ON ALL FLOOR MODEL PIANOS & ORGANS

Many styles to choose from
Easy Terms Available
Open every night 'til 9 p.m.

Lew Betterly Music Co.

MI 6-8002 Across from Birmingham Theatre
Parking in the Rear

Boys Girls

STORE-WIDE

WINTER CLOTHING SALE

Save up to 40%

Girls to Size 14 — Boys to Size 6X

Alice's WONDERLAND

595 E. Maple MI 6-1113

Higgins and Frank

of Birmingham, Michigan

Semi - Annual - Sale

In Keeping With Our Policy Of Not Buying Merchandise Of Non-Standard Quality For Special Sales—All Merchandise Offered In This Sale Is From Our Regular Stock.

Selected Groups Of Men's Clothing

- SUITS
- COATS
- SPORT COATS

20% OFF

Selected Groups Of Furnishings

- PAJAMAS
- NECKWEAR
- GLOVES
- SWEATERS
- ROBES
- MUFFLERS

20% OFF

Boy's Department

- OUTERWEAR
- SPORT COATS
- ROBES
- SWEATERS
- SPORT SHIRTS
- SUITS

20% to 33 1/3% OFF

Scientific Kits and Models

ALL REDUCED 33 1/3%

Higgins and Frank

of Birmingham, Michigan

Open Friday Even 7:00

268 W. Maple Rd. Parking in Rear of Store