

Is a Compromise Possible?

The City of Birmingham owns 66 acres of valuable property on the old sewage disposal plant site on S. Cranbrook in the southwestern corner of the city.

Part of this property (4 1/2 acres) including the plant itself, has been leased to the Bloomfield Art Association for its Birmingham Art Center.

Now, the city fathers are in the process of determining the use for the balance of this property.

To date, only one formal request has been made—to use it for a nine-hole golf course, keeping intact the winter sports facilities it now possesses.

Much to the City's credit, it is considering the possibility of selling part of the property, for residential purposes, to help defray expenses of development.

BUT THE QUESTION arises, would the golf course be the best possible use for the property, or could it better serve the people of Birmingham through some other use?

One such suggestion has been that it be used for passive recreation.

Passive recreation requires involvement in non-sporting type of activities—such as picnics, nature trails, an arboretum, horticulture, an outdoor theater, a children's wading or swimming pool, etc.

PASSIVE RECREATION lends itself to "total family" participation and enjoy-

ment. This is important to the people of Birmingham because this is a "living room" type of community—where people enjoy family life.

An outdoor theater, or some other such civic center-type of facility, would certainly be compatible with the art center.

There is a need for additional golfing facilities in the city, but we submit that there is as great need for useable recreational area that would be available for the entire family at a passive level.

We submit, further, that there would be greater useage in the family-type activity if emphasis and opportunity for such use were encouraged.

Birmingham has several parks, but all of them do not meet the qualifications for "total family" enjoyment—where people can congregate for pure beauty and for satisfaction of exposure to the wonders of nature.

RECOGNIZING, THEN, that there is a need for more golfing facilities and for more passive recreation areas—could there not be a compromise?

It has been reported that a par-three course could be built on approximately 20 acres of the sewage plant property.

Would it not be feasible to utilize this valuable property more fully by establishing both a new golf course and additional passive recreational facilities?

per cent. These are both well below the state and national average. Emphasizing this importance to our community are statistics that show that a large percentage of "drop-outs" become juvenile or welfare problems.

ON THIS occasion we are proud to say "well done" to the graduates and to the parents who encouraged them. It is also fitting at this time to encourage the college-bound group to "Keep up the good work." They have accepted a challenge, but the fight is still to come.

The value of college today can not be minimized. Materially, an average college graduate will earn over \$200,000 more in his lifetime than the average high school graduate.

The specialized training college offers can make the student more valuable to his community, state and nation.

WITH AMPLE scholarship funds available for a good student, college is no longer a country club for the children of the wealthy. College today, as a result of the large number of people applying for admission, is only available to the qualified rather than the privileged.

In four years we hope we are able to congratulate the same high percentage of students from this area upon their graduation from college.

And Now On to College!

Today is graduation day for our local public high schools. It is a day that can be viewed as the end of an era for some and merely a milestone for others.

For the majority of students throughout the country this would be the last day of formal education. A large minority of children in this country would not have even made this day of celebration because they decided or were forced to leave school before completion.

FORTUNATELY, IN our area this day is just a milestone for most of our children. Over 80 per cent of our Bloomfield graduates and over 70 per cent of our Birmingham graduates have decided to continue their formal education and have been accepted for college.

This tremendously high percentage of children continuing their education is a feather in the cap of the community. Colleges because of crowded conditions are accepting only the cream of the high school crop. This means that our local school systems have done their job well to produce that many first class students.

ANOTHER FEATHER for our community is the high percentage of students who reach this joyous day. Last year only 2 per cent of the Birmingham students "dropped out" before finishing high school. In Bloomfield, it was less than 1/4 of 1

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

The ways of the Galliano Governments, better known in some areas as the Roman Catholicism, are both inhuman and invidious. The sly, treacherous beast is liable to poke up its head in almost any public utterance. When it does so, it is at best a nuisance and at worst a downright bar to understanding. The habits of this wily creature were illustrated again the other day in a small but significant manner. The occasion was the public denial by Secretary of the Army Elvis J. Stahr, Jr., of any intention of leaving his post. The story that he was considering departure from government service, said he, was "without foundation in fact." What he meant was that it was not true to say yes to a very much larger tax on voters "without foundation in fact" would sound so much more important. Yet, that Roman Catholicism is forever getting in where he's not wanted.

If you were imbued with the desire to enter the field of politics, and you became convinced that one way to win votes is to levy enough taxes to get enough money so that you could vote for various aids and helps and subsidies to various individuals and groups of people, would you approve of such methods? Or, knowing that most voters "want their country to do things for them" that wanting to do what they can for their country would you defend governmental tariff, would you stand for "state's right" and against centralized federal government? Honestly, now, what would you do?

In a recent speech to a group of labor and management people, President Kennedy said, in part: "You must change your differences with each other and with this administration and concentrate on the major problem of how to make this free economy work." Well, Mr. Kennedy, since you never made and met a business payroll, and the same goes for most of your close advisors, why don't you quit your "foolin' around and let this free economy work? What you have done thus far is, quite definitely, to place the shackles of bureaucracy upon its own planned pattern for a socialist economy is very evident to the vanishing traditional American entrepreneur.

Michigan's Democratic Party, led by AFL-CIO union leaders, says it will oppose our State's proposed new Constitution, when it is submitted to the voters. On the other hand, most Republicans, plus quite a portion of "Jeffersonian Democrats," will support the new document. Some people are willing to accept the custom of "compromise" in matters of legislation, that's how the original U.S. Constitution finally was accepted by our Colonial Daddies.

"It is reported that Congressional Republicans expect to use any existing business decline as opposition utterances for criticizing the Democrats. Well, when such a condition exists, whatever political party is in office is criticized by the other one. However, most Americans want to live in reasonable security, both financially and civically. Basically, they are not "politicians."

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"What Is It?"

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Area Needed for Golf, Not for Nature Study

To the Editor:
Speaking for more than 1,000 Birmingham men, women and children (kids not included, as much as we like them), I believe a few things should be set straight on the subject of the proposed new nine-hole golf course and winter sports area on the old sewage plant property.

Someone said the property is needed for scout camping. To date, the City has not received any such requests. The existing scout cabin at Springdale has been used only 30 per cent of the time, and only one request for overnight camping

has been received in the past six years. Someone said the property should be left as a nature study area. Recently, the schools have curtailed their nature study program. For groups wishing to study nature, the City recommends Man or Park as the best area for this purpose.

THE ECCENTRIC'S complete listing of our recreation facilities (May 31) forgot to include Crestview Park, with its playground, hall damaged and nearly completed, tennis courts; Lincoln Park with its practice football field and near-one request for overnight camping

Yesteryear Happenings

From the Files of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO
June 11, 1912
J. C. McCreave of Harmon Street made a business trip to the north and on his return brought with him to A. Whitehead a plentiful of trout.

A good lady says, "ouch 'em up on the bicycle, express wagons and cart nuisance. 'My!', says she, "It certainly is not safe to walk on the sidewalks from the carelessness of the kids and the express wagon. It beats the bike for danger."

Miss Margaret Brown of Bates Street and Miss Edith Phillips of Woodward Avenue graduated from the Pontiac Normal Thursday.

Ask at the Library for "The Great Illusion," by Norman Angel. It is said to be the most powerful peace argument ever written. Every worker for peace should read it.

30 YEARS AGO
June 9, 1932
The autograph book, presented to Mr. Vliet (Clarence Vliet, superintendent of Birmingham schools) Friday night bore the following legend on the opening page, written by Charles S. Kinnison, 218 Hawthorne Drive:
"To you, Clarence Vliet, we offer for the proof of our appreciation of the value of your services to
(See HAPPENINGS, 5-B)

Does More Security Mean Less Freedom?

To the Editor:
I agree with your May 31 editorial that Americans will have more security under the New Frontier of President Kennedy. I seriously question that they will also lose much freedom.

Is a 70-year-old citizen who is sued part of the expense of a major illness less free because of health insurance under Social Security?

Is AN unemployed West Virginia coal miner who is retained for other employment less free because of Kennedy's recession legislation?

Is a child who is educated more fully because her school received federal funds less free because of the federal aid?

Is the consumer less free (from both inflation and price-fixing) because of the President's action against the large steel companies?

A FREE society is one where there is equal opportunity for each member to develop fully his abilities. The New Frontier aims to this type of free society.
JIM JOHNSON
75 La Salle St.
New York 21, N. Y.

Once Over Lightly

Graduation Day is solemn, portentous, heart-filing—a time for reflection, for looking back and looking ahead.

In our household, it was savored with the same joy and pride as in any other home.

We hope, however, that it was not surrounded elsewhere with the same confused activity that seems to attach itself to any major event in our realm.

Before we could even start out for our son's college commencement recently, we had to find a sitter for Miss Eight's zoffish. A neighbor was most obliging though she swore that every time she had ever sat for the occupants of an aquarium, they had expired. We agreed not to sue—just in case.

NEXT, there came the business of driving Mrs. Tang and her three kittens to the veterinarian. Mrs. Tang does not like cars and she quickly imparted a heavy load of enthusiasm to her brood.

By the time we had reached her temporary quarters, Mrs. Tang had dug in for the duration—on our shoulders. One kitten was on our lap, one on top of our foot and the other had entwined itself in our hairdo.

To top it off, their mama was shedding her winter coat and the atmosphere was fuzzy and sneezy.

room left on the return trip for our graduate's accumulation of four years' belongings. We repacked, loaded the car again.

We did arrive on campus by nightfall but our sister was a little vague about the location of the motel which he had booked for us. After Miss Eight had met everyone available in the girls' dormitory, we went hunting for the accommodations.

THE REST of the weekend was full of satisfactions and activity but no more full than the car when it was finally loaded to go home on Sunday afternoon. That, in itself, was a feat requiring hours of gymnastics. Our older daughter swore we would need a port-a-pot to turn a corner.

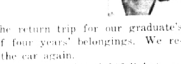
The doors on the car held until we pulled into the driveway back home. Miss Eight shot out of her seat to check the frogs she had stored in a shoebox on the front porch. They were gone. So were the toads in the garage.

BUT THE GOLDFISH were still thriving and present in their watery wonderland and Mrs. Tang was almost pitifully glad to see us. The lid of the washing machine was still wide open, as we had left it—ready to receive the first installment of college laundry.

Next week, we'll make the trip again to pick up our daughter and her gear, including her transistor radio and record player.

We can hardly wait to hear them playing, along with our son's wife and Miss Eight's favorite (loud) television programs.
The noise will be deafening—and welcome.

by IRMA N. DAVIS



Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN



My wife asked me to buy a loaf of French bread last Saturday morning. Without any forewarning I wandered into one of our many supermarkets to fulfill her wish.

When I stepped inside I was like a little boy in a big jungle. I was faced with many paths but there weren't any road maps available.

Before striking out into the unknown, I tested several carts and selected one in which all four wheels rolled in a straight direction. I then stepped out into traffic.

IN THE FIRST aisle there were three carts parked side by side, which is quite a feat, considering that it is usually hard for two carts to pass. The operators of the carts continued their conversation and didn't let me disturb them. I finally "excused" and pushed through.

As a result I have written my congressman requesting legislation to make it mandatory to paint white lines down the center of each aisle and to install "no parking" signs periodically between the cans of soup and baked beans.

I searched and searched for bread and finally asked a young gentleman for directions. Apparently his position with the organization was public relations director. His main job was to tell people where different items are hidden.

I FINALLY found the bread and re-made my way back to the check-out counter and waited patiently in line. There were two unattended carts in line ahead of me. Each of which was half-full of goodies. Every so often a woman with her arms full of groceries would run up to one of the carts and drop her cargo.

The check-out girl was waiting but number one cart was still being filled. I then understood why the wheels on the carts didn't need to work.

If you know your way around, you park your cart at the check-out stand and then proceed on foot to get your groceries. It saves the time of having to wait in line later.

The store provided a check-out counter if you had six items or less (I only had one small one) but it was unattended. Apparently this service is only offered when the manager's wife is in a hurry.

IT WAS FINALLY my turn and the checkout girl looked at me very oddly. She knew I was an outsider because I didn't have any of those little coupons you rip out of newspapers.

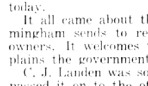
I paid for my little loaf of bread and she gave me one little change, but also some of those little stamps which the kids paste on the car windows before you get home. I got back to the car and my spouse said, "Only one loaf?"

With that I turned around and headed back into the jungle. As I entered, I saw women parking their carts in the lane for check-out counter but I was helpless. When you only buy one item, there is nothing to park at the counter.

By the time the experience was over a second time, I really appreciated the work my spouse has to do to get some food on the table. I also now know why she only shops once a week.

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER



There's a little bit of Birmingham in Harwich, Mass., today. It all came about through one of the brochures Birmingham sends to residents when they become home owners. It welcomes them as property owners and explains the governmental and tax structures.

C. J. Landen was so impressed with this idea that he passed it on to the officials of his city. Landen wrote this letter of explanation to Birmingham's mayor:

"MY DAUGHTER and her husband, H. R. Hammond, recently bought a home in your beautiful city at 615 Mahagan, and shortly thereafter received the literature that you send to new property owners.

"They were impressed, and showed it to me. I was impressed so much so that I asked to borrow it to show to the "Societymen" (a New England term for our Town Management of Harwich) with the suggestion that they do something along the same lines; for, as I told them, the only time new residents hear anything from our Town Fathers is when they increase the tax rate and the frequent and increasing tax bills.

"They are going to do something along these lines."

A WISE MAN once said to me: "Nobody ever gets anything for nothing, but a lot of people keep trying."