

The Birmingham Eccentric

Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich., in the Eccentric Building, 12255 Roberts Street, Telephone ML 6-5110

PUBLISHER: PAUL N. AVERILL, Associate Publisher: HENRY M. HOGAN, JR., Managing Editor: KENNETH R. WAIVER, Advertising Manager: ARTHUR SMITH, George R. Averill, Editor Emeritus

Chamber: Vital Community Force

Birmingham Chamber of Commerce has embarked upon an ambitious expansion program.

The chamber seeks to enroll 100 more member firms and to increase its annual budget, through member dues, to \$22,500 from its present \$11,200.

What is the chamber of commerce? What does it do? Why does it want more members and more money?

The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce is an organization of residents, businessmen and professional men attempting to coordinate and integrate their talents and resources to help make their community a better place in which to live.

They seek to do this not just for themselves but for all of the people of the community. Their interests and dedication transcend the dollar image.

TO PUT IT another way, the chamber is the business community at work as the central agency for community development for business, industry, the professions and all civic interests.

The chamber's programs—such as the Central Business District Development plan and the chamber's recommendations for parking facilities, derived through studies by its off-street parking committee—are dedicated to the improvement of local living standards.

They are designed to improve the economic condition of all our residents.

INITIATION AND support of projects in the public interest comprise the chamber's primary function. With its vigorous programs, the chamber epitomizes the free

enterprise system and the American idea of progress and growth.

Through their organized efforts, members of the chamber achieve many benefits, both direct and indirect. They come through increased community payrolls and total buying power; attraction of more customers from the local trade area; help in solving city zoning and parking problems.

In many instances, the chamber works to build public sentiment on civic problems in the community's interest and works closely with other organizations and public officials toward that end.

THROUGH ITS committees, the chamber helps to:

- Stimulate new business. Plan and implement community improvement projects. Promote the retail trade. Improve the quality of merchandise. Regulate selling methods, to avoid unethical practices.

WE HAD AN example just last week of the chamber's efforts to promote the local retail trade. Its Retail Merchants Division, with the cooperation of The Eccentric, sponsored Birmingham Bonus Days.

This three-day sale offered high quality merchandise at exceptionally attractive prices. Merchants thus benefited through volume sales, and shoppers benefited through quality goods at low cost.

With more members to serve on committees, with money to work with, the chamber can increase its vigorous, progressive programs. It can thus become even more of a vital force in the development of our high class community.

We wish the chamber success in its membership drive and expansion program—because we believe the community stands to benefit the most in the long run.

A Genuine Road to Friendship

How many true friends have you bought? This is a rather startling question, but our nation with its foreign aid program is trying to do just this. With money and other material aid we are trying to buy friends.

The effectiveness of the program can be questioned in light of daily headlines which pronounce that former friends were out-bought by those who do not share the same political philosophy as we. After all, if we can buy friends by bidding high, we can also lose friends in the same auction.

ON THE OTHER hand, friendships we earn are usually lasting.

Not half as publicized and at much less cost are programs where we can earn friends and learn from the experience ourselves. Such programs as the recent exchange of educators that brought Indonesia's Achmad Moechidi Almatris to Birmingham to observe our educational system, and the work of Dale Brubaker and Ralph Charbeneau, of our area, for Project Hope.

Almatris had the opportunity to observe America as it really is. Birmingham had the opportunity to learn about a far-off nation striving to improve its educational system by finding out how other nations do it.

The respected educator will probably be an important ally in years to come because

we have tried to help him.

BRUBAKER AND CHARBENEAU were aboard hospital ship S.S. Hope (which stands for Health Opportunities for People Everywhere). Brubaker filmed the event for other Americans to witness and Charbeneau's "ham" radio station was used to beam reports all over the world.

S.S. Hope, as you all know, was the former S.S. Constellation which was outfitted as a hospital ship and sent to less fortunate countries to help local doctors catch up on the most modern methods of medicine.

THE FOREIGN doctors who participated and the people in far-off lands who were cured by this work will never forget us. Yet it was and is entirely supported by voluntary contributions, not tax dollars.

There are many other projects such as these that are making friends for us. Projects that we put ourselves into, not just our money, that show we are interested in other peoples' welfare. Projects that show the type of people we are, that don't create the image that we only give money so that we can later force our ideas upon the people accepting it.

The friends we thus make are not apt to leave us when some other nation offers more money for a dam or for military weapons.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

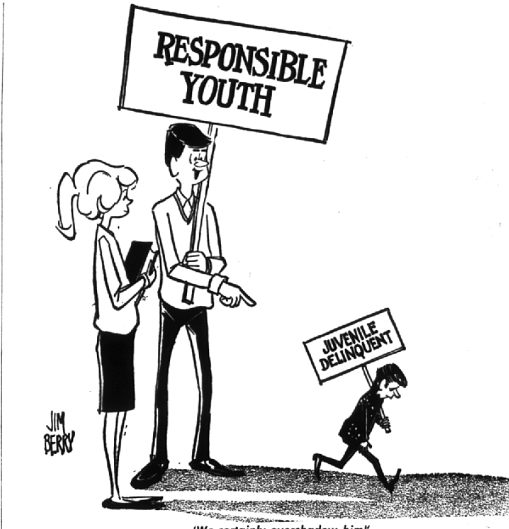
If Michigan does get an income tax in the near future, it ought to be uniform in rate. If the graduated method (as in the federal system) is used—and you may bet that labor leaders go for this—then watch out for further deterioration in Michigan's economy. The best way to gain citizen control of the tax take is to make EVERYBODY pay income taxes at the same rate. Then, when the politicians jack up the tax rates, the maximum number of voters will holler "Stop!"

And such wholesale, wide-spread and universal hollering is necessary to keep the government powers minimized. Politicians, it is proved, respond more to votes than they do to reason, logic and sanity in the art of governing.

Unless there is more non-partisanship, more unanimity in acting upon the various sections of the proposed document, it may be that the voters will not approve it, come next November. Ah, Statesmanship, Quo Vadis?

Here's a governmental fact overlooked by most people: Birmingham's supervisors are appointed by our city commission, TO REPRESENT BIRMINGHAM CITIZENS ON THE OAKLAND COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS! This Board has lots of power, including the right to levy taxes—which they do. But while the supervisors naturally are concerned with county-wide problems, improvements, etc. . . . yet they should not forget that they are Birmingham's representatives, too.

Yes, Sir & Ma'am, a lotta U.S. people are rushing to the support of George Romney, recently announced Republican candidate for Michigan governor. "Ramble on in and join a new model," is the cry being heard near and far . . . and often from Washington, D. C., too.



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

A Mayor Takes Stand On City Income Tax

To the Editor: I was very hopeful that the writing of a new State Constitution would be responsive to many needed improvements, such as streamlining state government (reducing departments and agencies from 120 to 20), recognizing the need for county home rule and the concept of metropolitan area government, and finally, fiscal reform to better cope with the fiscal needs of the state.

As the Constitutional Convention enters its final phase of floor debate on the various proposals, many people have been greatly disillusioned in that many needed revisions will not be realized except for the fact that the new Constitution will do away with various tax rate limitations and will open the door to many new forms of taxation—city, county and state income taxes.

If this is the case, we will soon be pursuing a policy of blank check government spending at all levels. Do the citizens of Michigan, Detroit and particularly the hundreds of smaller communities desire this kind of spending policy? No—I believe they are strongly opposed to these new forms of taxation.

ALTHOUGH DETROIT has a financial crisis, Mayor Cavanagh recently requested the City Council to establish a new Detroit office in Washington, D. C., at the initial cost of \$50,000 a year. Personally, I am getting increasingly disturbed by politicians screaming for the need of more and more money to make ends meet, while at the same time they are scheming up new ways to spend and seek more revenues.

Questions Statement In Romney Editorial

To the Editor: Your editorial "Citizen Level Leadership" of Feb. 15 in which you state "Romney is certainly not a politically indoctrinated or politically trained candidate" is most commendable.

Mr. Romney was an administrative aide to the late David I. Walsh, Democratic senator from Massachusetts, for many years in an elective position. He is not a senator because he is a starry-eyed innocent, but more because he is an obtuse individual.

Anyone who has lived in Washington and worked on Capitol Hill can hardly escape the political facts of life, unless he is an obtuse individual.

CERTAINLY, MR. Romney's use of the constitutional convention as the launching platform for his candidacy is an adroit political maneuver such as this state has not seen in a long time.

This is a politically untrained candidate? If so, then Machiavelli would be likened to Snow White.

MARILYN COCHRAN Birmingham

EDITOR'S NOTE: To date, Mr. Romney has not made politics his career. Rather, his career has been in the automotive field. With his candidacy for governor, he may now be embarking on a career in politics. With this in mind, we still believe Mr. Romney is not of this time a politically indoctrinated or politically trained candidate.

(MORE PEOPLE'S COLUMN LETTERS, 5-B)

Happenings of Long Ago

Hits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO March 1, 1912

The third term question and Roosevelt's (Theodore's) position will be thrashed out in a vigorous debate between the freshman and sophomore classes at the next meeting of the Literary Society March 5. There will be recitations and the class paper, besides music.

The Knights of Pythias gave a dancing party last Thursday evening in the Johnston-Shaw Hall. Francis Shattuck won a prize of \$5 as the best representative of Martha Washington. Other prizes were a center table decoration, laundry work, prize ham, a year's paid insurance policy and a hand-painted dish.

Wednesday many of our roads were opened up and cleaned away of snow drifts by energetic farmers shoveling themselves out and getting connected with the outside world. On the east road, 25 men armed with best forks worked all the afternoon.

30 YEARS AGO March 3, 1932

Having collected only \$47,420.35 during the entire month of February, Bloomfield Township officials turned their attention today to an intensive 15-day effort to swell the collections of 1931 winter taxes. Only \$437,354.49 has been collected to date out of a total bill of \$1,303,545.55, according to Mrs. M. F. A. F. Flunstead, township treasurer.

Litigation over the condemnation of property for the new Grand Trunk right-of-way from Bloomfield Hills to Normandy Road in Royal Oak came to the end of its 19-month-old life Monday. Begun on July 4, 1936, it is believed to be the longest single law suit ever tried in Oakland County.

Women aren't the only ones who are chary of letting their ages be ascertained. The men are equally of the same reticence, according to Township Clerk James V. Bayley, who says several males, in registering for elections this spring, have put down their ages as "21 plus."

15 YEARS AGO Feb. 27, 1947

Mrs. Carol Darling, for the past six years girls' counselor at Baldwin High School, this week was named director of high school club activities in a move to substitute school-approved clubs for fraternities and sororities. Ross A. Wagner, Baldwin principal, announced Tuesday. Mrs. Darling will be

(See HAPPENINGS, 7-B)

By DENI SCANLON

cal utterings heard recently: "Life is like a sewer. What you get out of it, depends on what you put into it."

Last summer, this reporter pointed out the glue sniffing fad that many local youngsters are involved in.

Police departments were having a time with young people who turned to it for a cheap drunk. The results of "sniffing" caused everything from forms of disturbing the peace to serious auto accidents.

Since the time this column was devoted to the topic, other communities have noticed unhappy results from the same situation. West Coast cities in particular have seen a definite increase in glue sniffing and the problems it brings.

A Birmingham reader brought attention last week to an article in the Feb. 16 issue of Time Magazine. Titled "The New Kick" it adds more information on a topic that isn't "next door." We've got it here.

Suburban Sidelights By HANK HOGAN

Well, here it is the first of March. A slow month that has nothing to say for itself but cold winds, a little snow and probably the most of water left by melting snow. If you are going south, the time has come (apologies to the tourist bureau).

Before you leave, however, I would like to live up the month with a campaign. It can't be much of a campaign unless we get grass-roots support. I checked with the treasurer and found that we have no funds for brass bands or huge posters.

THE REASON for the campaign is simply this. I overheard a discussion the other night between a native of our fair town (this means he has lived here over five years), a newcomer and a resident of that other community on the east side of Detroit.

Both the newcomer and the Eastsider said that our town was unfriendly to outsiders. This disturbed the native because a majority of Birminghamites were outsiders a very short time ago.

Hence the idea for my campaign. How can we show the outside world that we are not cold?

The first way, of course, is to see if we are cold. To find the answer to this we must ask ourselves if we are willing to say hello to complete strangers with a smile on our face.

To find this out I request each and everyone of you to start saying "Hi!" to everyone you pass on the street. This is the real test.

If everyone said "Hi!" to everyone else, no one could dispute that we were the friendliest community around.

TO FURTHER SHOW our friendliness we should all wave as we pass the Lone Ranger (the police officer on the silver three-wheeled horse, whose main responsibility is to see that no one steals any parking meters).

I will check Maple Ave. on Friday and Saturday. If the community is doing the two things I have suggested, I will have buttons made, similar to the "Ramble with Rommie" buttons, and pass them out to citizens I observe being friendly. (The cost of the buttons will come from my pocket if the treasury is still bare.)

The proposed buttons will be appropriately inscribed "Hi!"

IF MY CAMPAIGN works, we need not fear any further comment from outsiders.

If, however, the local citizens fail to support my campaign, we will have to admit that we are what they say we are.

If the latter is true, then you have waited too long to move south.

By KEN KEARER City Beat

What President Truman did to Gen. MacArthur and what President Kennedy is doing to Gary Francis Powers affects people in Birmingham and Bloomfield, the same as it affects all Americans.

Truman called MacArthur home from Korea because of the general's outspoken criticisms of Truman's administration's policies and for expressing his own views, which differed from those of the administration.

Kennedy's administration has kept U-2 pilot Powers incommunicado from the American press until the government ends its interrogation.

IT SEEMS TO me that both of these cases involve violation of the concept of free speech in this country.

I do not hold with the view that because they are military men they cannot speak out against policies of the government.

They are still American citizens. The right of free speech is guaranteed to all Americans by the constitution. That document does not say the right is reserved for civilians only.

I believe that the military establishments will be subject to civilian control—but it does not say civilians can deny military men the right to speak their minds.

IN THE CASE of Gen. MacArthur, I believe he was in a position of such great magnitude that his views on fighting the Korean War and battling the communists in East Asia were of the utmost importance and interest to the American people.

Further, I believe the people back home had the right to hear his views, whether or not they conflicted with those of his superiors.

We Americans have great faith and trust in our government, but we have never put our entire faith and trust in it alone.

Our very system of government is replete with checks and balances designed to prevent the government, or any agent of it, to deprive us of our rights.

IN THE CASE of Powers, assuming that he was innocent of any wrong-doing, I believe he had the right to express his views on his flight over Russia, his eventual capture and imprisonment as soon as he reached the safety of the free world.

And, conversely, the American people had a right to hear those views.

I believe Powers should feel free to speak his mind without fear of punishment or reprisal.

And I certainly would want to hear what he has to say in his own words without any governmental coloring.