

Measuring Political Inches

On occasion we are criticized for the publicity we give one political party or the other. Now that the election is over, we have stepped back to evaluate ourselves in terms of news responsibility.

We checked the voting returns of Birmingham two years ago and found that 95 out of every 100 voters in Birmingham voted Republican.

If we were to write only what our readers wanted to hear we would devote, then, 95 per cent of our news coverage to Republican candidates.

IN THE PERIOD from Sept. 1 to the election, we devoted 291.75 inches to Democratic candidates and 302.25 to Republican candidates.

Obviously, then, we have been fair to candidates in both major political parties from the "equal space" standpoint. And we have also tried diligently to be fair in our presentation of the facts concerning their activities.

Some candidates got more coverage than others. George Romney led all the rest with 181.75 inches of the Republican total. This is understandable, we feel, inasmuch as Mr.

Romney is a local resident who was after the state's top office.

HIS OPPONENT, Democrat John Swainson, only received 27.25 inches of coverage in our paper; but the governor never appeared at a public rally in our community.

The candidate who got the second most publicity was Democrat George Fulkerson, also a local resident. Mr. Fulkerson received 91.25 inches as compared to his Republican opponent, Cong. William Broomfield, who received 3.5 inches.

Held in Washington, Broomfield apparently spent little time campaigning in our community.

Our reporting of Mr. Fulkerson's activities is justified as local news.

LET US POINT out here that we endorsed Mr. Broomfield for re-election. This, then, should be sufficient proof that we do not load our news columns in favor of those we endorse.

Proud of the integrity of our news pages, we will continue not to use them to boost any particular candidate.

However, we will continue to reserve the right to voice our opinion in our editorials and by-lined columns.

Did You Forget to Vote?



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Editorial Was Shocking To This Woman Reader

To the Editor:

I was shocked when I read the editorial (on township zoning) in the Oct. 25 Eccentric. I thought, can this be the newspaper of Mr. George Averill?

Is this the same paper we had learned to respect and depend on?

I AGREE with Mr. Robert W. Hague's rebuttal as printed in the Nov. 1 issue.

Speaking of dreams, I too, had my dreams when we built our home on Manor Road 38 years ago. We thought we were moving into a permanently quiet residential district, not into an atmosphere of deterioration.

THROUGH THE years we in the district have lived in harmony, peace and security to enjoy our friends and our cultural pleasures. Why then does everything have to be spoiled for the residents just to satisfy the few who consider only the mighty dollar?

We don't need or want a bar, tavern or apartments, swimming pool, in our front yard. Why bring undesirable transients to our district?

MRS. FRANK J. MAURICE
48 Manor Road
Birmingham, Mich.

Reader Objects To Editorial on Township Zoning

To the Editor:

"Advancing family and community life" is the dedicated motto of The Birmingham Eccentric.

Is there not a strange disparity between this avowed creed and the Oct. 25 Eccentric editorial recommending changes in a zoning law which was designed to maintain the essential character of the Birmingham area as a community of families?

The people of Birmingham and the township who have made serious investments to establish homes in this area have faith in democratic principles and they do not want to see their property values devalued by the zoning law proposed.

THE NEW ZONING law adopted by the township was the result of a long and careful study by responsible parties; it should not be undermined through selfish motives.

(See ZONING, 8-B)

Yesteryear Happenings

From the Files of The Eccentric

50 YEARS AGO

Nov. 8, 1912

Mrs. Grace Parks, widow of the late William Parks, passed away Sunday at her home on Maple avenue, after a long illness. She was 73 years of age. Before her marriage Mrs. Parks was Miss Grace Montgomery. She came from England when but nine years of age and made her home with her grandparents near Birmingham. She was married in 1860 to William Parks, who died three years ago.

Early closing is the proper thing. Very few towns nowadays keep their stores open later than six. Our dealers have agreed on seven, but hope to bring it down to six o'clock in the near future. We ought to keep up with our sister village. The dealers all close up there at six o'clock.

Bigelow says, that regardless of the way the politicians voted, that the new Barnum school building is the best building he ever inspected, it comes the nearest to being fire proof and perfect that could be built by human hands, and the best.

(See HAPPENINGS, 5-B)

Voter Needs Broader Outlook

Clearer public understanding of the nation's changing economic prospect is essential if we are to adjust properly to new challenges. It is important for us all to measure our prejudices and special interests against the broader national interest.

This must be done by labor and management, by those directing our foreign policy, by those who make our laws. Most important of all, this measuring process must be undertaken by each of us as a voter in elections which determine the course to be pursued. Our own various private interests must give way in some degree to the public interest and we must learn what the public interest implies.

THE BIG and vital issues have gotten beyond the realm of personal interest. Moreover, a vote against the national interest in the long run injures the personal, private interest of the voter himself. This is truer now than ever before.

For example, the nation's desperate need to increase its export revenues may require measures which may temporarily hurt individuals—the factory worker, the farmer, the little businessman, the stockholder. Yet if we fail to take the needed steps, if we fail to meet the challenges, all of us can be hurt far more.

THE CHALLENGING changes include the disappearance of jobs in the face of swift growth in the labor force; the stubborn deficit in our balance of payments; rising public and private debt; our racial abroad as reflected, for instance, in racial difficulties; our resistance to the influx of refugees from tyranny-ridden lands.

Some or all of these may seem matters beyond the purview of the ordinary citizen. They are not; they are our responsibility as citizens. It is no longer enough to vote. We must become informed on the issues and vote intelligently.

Fastest Trains Are in France

Americans are generally inclined to think their country leads in everything with the possible exception of moon rocketry. It may be salutary to remember that we are surpassed in at least one respect, the speed of express trains.

This is recalled by the announcement that one of Great Britain's most famous trains, the Flying Scotsman, has just celebrated its 100th anniversary. It covers the 393-mile run from London to Edinburgh in six hours. That is mighty good going for surface transportation in any country.

THE FASTEST trains, however, are not in Britain but in France. The Mistral, run-

ning between Paris and Dijon, does 195.2 miles in 143 minutes, a rate of 81.9 miles an hour. This is the world's fastest schedule for over 150 miles.

The Sud Express from Paris to Bordeaux has the world's longest and fastest non-stop run, covering 359.8 miles southbound in 283 minutes and northbound in 287.

In the United States the speediest trains are apparently the Western ones operated by the Santa Fe, Illinois Central, Burlington, Rock Island and Milwaukee. They cover long stretches at from 75 to 80 miles an hour. But when it comes to speed they don't quite measure up to the crack trains of France and Britain.

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

A curious flaw in the federal income tax code has been brought to attention by Sen. Eugene McCarthy. He says that there is discrimination against single women, and thinks the law ought to be revised. He is right on both points. That adjective "curious" applies because provisions designed to give women who are heads of households the benefit of special tax rates actually exclude many women who ought to qualify for this advantage. For example, a woman supporting an aged parent in a nursing home does not qualify for the head-of-household rate; the law says the rate applies only if the parent lives "in a home the daughter maintains." This is clearly unjust. Other provisions of the law seem equally so. A few sensible changes in the income tax code are indicated.

Victory is piling upon victory for those who adhere to the old-fashioned thesis that a ham is a ham. The courts have uttered their final word in support of this idea that no ham, however infused with moisture, can thereby be degraded to the status of "imitation ham." The first result was that the Department of Agriculture rescinded its order calling for "imitation ham" labels on

hams to which water had been added. It decreed that, instead, the label on such delicacies should bear the words, "water added." Now the thing has been carried a step further, the ham people can now say on the label that the added water does not exceed 10 per cent—they can if it is true, that is. Everyone wins. The meat packers don't have to bear the burden of selling something unjustly labeled "imitation." Consumers know what's what. Ham is ham.

First there was Fats Domino, widely known as a great exponent of jazz. One of his admirers is a man whose efforts to popularize that danced known as The Twist have brought him national fame. His name? Chubby Checker. Now consider the report that another musician whose offerings feature music to twist by has adopted the name Tubby Chess. This, we submit, constitutes a trend, though a purist might insist on "Chessman." The further possibilities are intriguing. A jazz player eager to continue the dynasty might, for example, call himself Corruptive Dice. Or how about Obese (perhaps Obie for short) Carda? Or Chunky (or Forky) Chips? Maybe ... maybe. But they don't have quite the ring of Fats Domino. That's still our favorite.

Once Over Lightly

by IRMA N. DAVIS



Did you ever look at the world through an elephant's eyes?

I did once for a whole afternoon. The elephant in question was in a costume parade and under his huge, paper mache head was hidden the very angry countenance of a very humiliated little girl.

Marching alongside me, cool and unfurried,

was my younger sister—all decked out in an old-fashioned dress and sporting a donkey mask.

IT WAS 1928 and my politically-minded father had entered us in a contest as "Miss" Democrat and "Mr." GOP. My sister was too young to mind the fact that this was a "baby" parade.

I wasn't. In fact, I was sure my entire future was ruined and even more certain than my friends would remember my shame far longer than any elephant ever could.

It was the year of the Herbert Hoover—Alfred Smith presidential race and feeling ran high.

WE LIVED IN South Bend then and the city's newspapers were devoting columns of space to both the national conventions and the local baby parade. My father saw a connection and rushed right out to buy red, white and blue crepe paper. He also stopped at the customer's shop.

"Try them on," he told my sister and me, indicating the lightweight donkey mask, the heavyweight elephant head.

When I put the box-like contraption on, I felt like a hermit wearing his cave. It weighed almost as much as I did. Vision was afforded through two tiny holes in the appropriate places—appropriate for an elephant, that is.

All I could see were two pinpoints of light, provided I tilted my head back without disturbing Jumbo.

WHEN I WASN'T sleeping, I was drafted in the ensuing weeks to help wave the patriotically (See ONCE OVER LIGHTLY, 4-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN



I had the opportunity last week to attend a session of the Birmingham Teen-age Traffic Court.

Under Michigan law a minor may get his driver's license at the age of 16, but because he is not legally an adult he can not be prosecuted for violations of the motor vehicle statute until he reaches his 17th birthday.

What happens, then, to the driver between 16 and 17 who gets a ticket? Normally, he would be taken before the juvenile judge in Pontiac and some punishment would be meted out. Whatever happened would never appear on his driving record.

THE PROBLEM with this system is that the juvenile court docket is overcrowded; and traffic offenses, being rather minor in nature, do not receive the attention they should if a young driver is to profit from this type of experience.

To solve this problem, the Birmingham Police Department worked out with Judge Arthur Moore, the county probate judge, who handles juvenile cases, a court here in Birmingham wherein students act as jurors and more or less try their contemporaries for violations. The police felt this would increase student interest in traffic safety and treat traffic violations with the seriousness they deserve.

LT. ROBERT Schaulde of the police department has been the driving influence behind the court, and he has been assisted by the Birmingham Exchange Club, which underwrote the cost of publishing a manual; the civics teachers in the local high schools who supply the students to act as jurors; and some local attorneys who act as referees.

In the chosen day the students take over the Birmingham Municipal Court Room. A student judge, recorder and bailiff are selected.

Then the students in the area who have received tickets appear before the court with their parents and explain the violation.

THE STUDENT jury acts both as prosecutor and judge and questions the offender extensively.

After all the testimony is in, the jurors decide whether the offender should lose his license, have a man-to-man talk with the traffic referee, write a theme about his transgression or attend a traffic clinic, or any combination of these.

I WAS IMPRESSED by the maturity of the jurors and their attempt to let the punishment fit the crime.

One offender charged with one of the more minor transgressions lost his license for a couple of weeks because the jury felt that his driving attitude was wrong. However, one of the more serious offenders escaped with a 1,500-word theme and a lecture because the jury felt that his family had taken steps to impress upon him the gravity of the situation.

The parents had nothing but praise for the court and I share their feeling.

By KEN WEAVER City Beat

The rocking chair is gone now. It leaves an empty spot in a corner of our dining room. But it also leaves a warm spot in our hearts that probably will remain forever.

You see, it was "the chair" as far as baby care was concerned. It was with us while our two children, Laurie Ruth and Jeffrey Kent, grew from infancy into the earlier stages of childhood.

You wouldn't call the chair—a platform rocker—stylish according to today's standards. A big, bulky piece of furniture about 15 years old, it was, nevertheless, in good condition and quite comfortable.

WE WORE OUT two slip covers in the four and a half years we were permitted its use.

We almost always fed Laurie and Jeff their bottles of milk in this chair. And, of course, we rocked them to sleep in it on many an occasion.

In fact, when conditions required rocking them during the wee hours of the morning—we all but rocked ourselves to sleep as well.

MEMORIES of contentment will linger of Laurie being rocked and sung to following her afternoon nap. The chair became something of a toy for her, too. She would climb over and under the open arms of the chair. Standing up in the seat, she would reach up and pull the cord to open and shut the venetian blind.

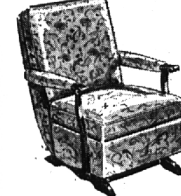
Many times, she would stand and gaze out the window, enraptured at the cars speeding by and the kids playing in the vacant lot.

Other times, she would hold her bunny rabbit or doll in her lap—"like Mommy"—and sing her own version of "Rock-a-bye Baby."

JEFF, A TYPICALLY adventurous boy, utilized the rocker as a passageway, crawling through the narrow space behind and to one side of it.

It was only natural that sometimes he would get caught and issue forth with a loud cry for help.

Of course, we didn't exactly ignore the chair for our (See CITY BEAT, 2-B)



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