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B'field Hills Prayer Issue Rises Again

Attorney Rules Policy Violates Court's Decision

By SAVILLA SLOAN
Special Writer

Prayer in public schools has again become an issue in the Bloomfield Hills School District. At a meeting of the Hills school board Tuesday night, it was decided that further investigation of the legality of the district's present prayer policy will have to be made.

The issue arose as the result of a written opinion rendered by the school board by its attorney, Stratton Brown, that the Bloomfield Hills prayer policy now in effect "would probably be prohibited" under the recent United States Supreme Court decision in Engel vs. Vitale.

THE BLOOMFIELD Hills School Board policy, adopted Jan. 16 at a meeting attended by hundreds of residents in the school district, states that teachers may at appropriate times in the presence of their students orally thank God for blessings and ask for His help and guidance.

Brown's opinion was submitted to board members before Tuesday night's meeting. The board had sought his legal opinion on its policy after the Supreme Court handed down its decision in the Engel vs. Vitale case.

He will now be asked to appear before the board at its next regular meeting, Oct. 16, to discuss in detail legal reasoning behind his opinion. The meeting is open to the public.

MEMBERS OF the Bloomfield Hills School Board were divided in their reaction to Brown's opinion. Only after considerable discussion did they agree as to their next move.

Mrs. Jean Martz presented her point of view from a written statement, following a motion by Merrill O. Bates that the board meet in executive session with Brown in holding a public meeting to make a decision in the matter.

MRS. MARTZ stated that since a substantial number of the people in the school district indicated at the Jan. 16 meeting a strong desire for a permissive prayer policy that "as an elected member of this board my duty is to represent the majority of the people in our district. I cannot consent to or participate in a closed meeting to discuss the policies which affect the responsible concern to so many of the people we represent."

Mrs. Martz also said that she thought the board should take action to reverse its present policy until further legal action had brought forth a clearer interpretation. (See ISSUE, 8-A)

Planning Board Member Resigns

Edward A. Proctor has resigned from the planning commission of Bloomfield Township after 16 years of service.

First appointed to the zoning board in 1946, Proctor was elected chairman in 1955. When the zoning board was succeeded by the planning commission in 1959, he became its first chairman.

Proctor said that the recent adoption by the township board of the new master plan and zoning ordinance afforded an "opportune time" to relinquish his responsibilities.

He resides at 6180 Wing Lake Road and is president of Proctor and Co., mortgage bankers, and Homer Warren & Co., industrial and commercial realtors, of offices in the Dime Building, Detroit. He is a past president of the Bloomfield Township School Board.

Federal Official Again Rules Out Oakland Jetport

A Federal Aviation Agency administrator said Saturday that only one general aviation airport is called for in the metropolitan area under the FAA's current five-year plan.

N. E. Halaby there reaffirmed a June FAA letter ruling out a major jet airport near Pontiac. Halaby spoke at a news conference at Willow Run airport.

Halaby gave no indication as to where a proposed new general airport might be located.

League Debate Attracts 3rd Party



Anti-Litter Campaigners

Those good-looking young men seen in downtown Birmingham Saturday morning were members of the local Junior Chamber of Commerce, distributing posters on the city's refuse regulations. The Jaycees and their older counterpart (the Chamber of

Commerce) have been campaigning to "Keep Birmingham Clean." Shown leaving the Chamber's offices are Jim Willitt, Bowson Brooks, Jim Neithercut, Ward Ouradnik, Al Marshall, Larry Marr, Richard Brayton and Jaycee president Pat Deignan.

The Mayor Makes a Call—To Aid English Fund Drive

By KEN WEAVER
Managing Editor

The phone was supposed to ring at 7 a.m.—but it jangled at 5:45 instead.

"It woke me up," the woman of the house at 655 Pilgrim, Birmingham, said later.

Although the call was really for her, the operator asked for the man of the house.

G. Howard Willitt, Jr., the man in the case, still insists that he should have taken the call.

But it really was for his wife—our mayor.

HERE'S HOW it all came about: Mrs. Willitt received a letter from Michael H. Wilson, co-

founder and director of the Sunfield Appeal Committee.

Dated Sept. 3 and addressed to the mayor, it read in part:

"You, Sir, as chief citizen of a town which our gazetteers tell us bears the same name as Britain's Birmingham, might care to know of a great humanitarian Appeal being launched here on the 18th of this month—an behalf of Sunfield (Coke's) Home for mentally handicapped children at Cent, close to Birmingham, England.

"We would like to associate you with us in this contest. Our fund drive is taking a keen personal interest . . .

"Worldwide awareness of the need to give special care to mentally-handicapped children, including mongrels, grows daily.

"Our Birmingham motto is 'Forward'—Ours is a forward-looking Cause. We need 200,000 dollars to

meet our Research, Extension and Teacher-Training program give tremendous impact to our campaign; that is, if you would be so kind as to send a goodwill cable to reach us by the 17th instant . . .

MRS. WILLETT promptly replied by an air mail letter, wishing the Englishmen success in their campaign.

"We in America," she wrote, "are most sympathetic to your cause because we are equally concerned with the needs of our own mentally handicapped children. There is much to be done here in research, building of facilities and training of teachers.

"We may all grow in satisfying these needs."

THEN CAME a telegram to Mrs. Willitt, reading:

"Deeply touched by your letter. (See MAYOR, 6-A)

Search Starts for Suburban Homemaker of Year

Related Story, Photos 1-C

We are proud of our women. We believe they are among the best homemakers, the best citizens in the country.

Because of this belief, The Birmingham Eccentric is sponsoring a Suburban Homemaker of the Year contest. Any woman in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area is eligible.

The winner will receive: A \$250 cash award. A weekend in Chicago for two, flying by jet, first class. A trophy and certificate. Dinner at Jacques French Restaurant in Chicago. A lake-view room at the Drake Hotel.

IN CHICAGO, the local winner will compete in the National Suburban Homemaker of the Year contest. The winner there will receive a cash award of \$5,000.

The Eccentric joins the Suburban Foundation in sponsoring the local contest. The Foundation, an organization of suburban com-

munity newspapers, is sponsoring the national competition.

Official entry blanks are available at The Eccentric, 1225 E. Bowers, and from 58 participating merchants (listed in a full-page advertisement on Page 1-C).

THE LOCAL contest is open to any woman living in the area bounded on the north by Square

Aviation Writing Award Goes to The Eccentric

See Editorial 1-B

The Birmingham Eccentric's coverage of the Oakland County jet airport issue has won it an award for aviation writing.

The Michigan Association of Airport Managers last week presented its award for Outstanding Aviation Writer in the weekly newspaper field to The Eccentric.

Winner of the award in the daily classification was the Jackson City Comen-Patriot.

Lake Road, on the south by 12½ Mile Road, on the east by Crooks Road and on the west by Orchard Lake Road—plus Cranbrook Village and Lathrup.

Candidates may be nominated by individuals or groups by filling out an official entry blank, writing a letter of no more than 600 words and sending them to the attention of Mary Ellen Mead, The Eccentric's editor.

How well does she demonstrate her own health and fitness through her attitudes, habits, appearance and physical well-being?

To what extent has she taken part in civic and community affairs? (Be specific.)

How well does she exemplify her ability in the management of the family resources of time and income in relation to family needs and goals?

To what extent has she demonstrated skills in preparing

Muncy Surprises Bentley, Staebler

By GEORGE R. AVERILL
Editor Emeritus

Three candidates, representing three political parties, came to Birmingham's Community House Monday afternoon, each to urge his audience to send him to Washington, D.C., as the Michigan congressman-at-large.

It was the first time they were together and despite their differing social, political and economic beliefs, no blows were struck.

The occasion was set up by the Birmingham League of Women Voters, who, during every election campaign, seek to bring candidates and issues before their members.

Alvin Bentley, millionaire Owosso citizen and former congressman, spoke for the Republicans.

Neil Staebler, wealthy Ann Arborite and former chairman of the Michigan Democratic Committee, pleaded his party's cause.

An unexpected third chap, also from Ann Arbor, bearing the name of Ralph W. Muncy, made an academic plea for support for the Socialist-Labor group.

Originally, Bentley and Staebler were to be allowed a half-hour each, plus additional time to answer questions from the audience of 175 people, mostly women.

When Muncy requested time to present his arguments, Mrs. George Hillinger, League president, and her committee decided to retain the hour for formal speeches for the three candidates, giving each 20 minutes.

This curtailment of time, naturally, displeased the two originally scheduled speakers and, it also prevented the audience from getting "greater doses" of the panaceas each candidate offered on the subject of "U.S. Foreign Policy."

Bentley led off in a strong voice, reminding the audience that he supports the United Nations in general, yet joins his own party in admitting differences in regard to some of its methods.

He argued that the United States should not have to bear a burdensome portion of the UN's financial needs, holding that this world organization could not measure up to its overall obligations, unless every member "paid its dues."

THE FORMER congressman said that as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, he supported U.S. foreign aid.

But he also stated that our first foreign aid obligations should be extended to our known allies, but to neutrals—but, if the U.S. had to curtail such aid, he would curtail most or all of it, if necessary, should be given to those allies, who like us, seek to defend freedom against Soviet enslavement.

The Republican candidate also stressed the need for the United States to retain a strong international export market, so that not only Michigan but equally other states could find foreign markets.

How well does she demonstrate her own health and fitness through her attitudes, habits, appearance and physical well-being?

To what extent has she taken part in civic and community affairs? (Be specific.)

How well does she exemplify her ability in the management of the family resources of time and income in relation to family needs and goals?

To what extent has she demonstrated skills in preparing

meals, clothing the family, furnishing and decorating the home and in housekeeping?

LOCAL JUDGES will be announced in next week's Eccentric. Their decision will be final.

Deadline for entering the contest is midnight Oct. 20. The winner will be announced in the Oct. 25 issue of The Eccentric.

Art Shafer, advertising manager of The Eccentric, is contest coordinator.

In November, the local winner will be entered in the national contest in Chicago, competing with other area winners from throughout the country for the grand prize of \$5,000.

The national award is planned as a tribute to and recognition of the important role of the homemaker in the family, civic and economic life of the suburban community.

See entry blank, 2-A



Special Delivery

An early morning visitor to the Birmingham Post Office Friday morning was the tiny opossum held by postal clerk Jim Davis of Troy. The young animal wandered into the post office at 3 a.m. Davis said it took the whole night crew of seven employees to corner the opossum. Davis said he planned to turn the animal loose in a field near his home.

Sam Levenson Starts Season at Town Hall

By IRMA N. DAVIS
Township Editor

Birmingham Town Hall's first lecturer in the 1962-63 series, Sam Levenson, may be described as a "comic speaker" and his audiences on Sept. 27 and 28 will get a healthy dose of fun as they listen to him discuss "Humor Is the World's Greatest Medicine."

The first of six speakers who will address Town Hall groups this season at the Birmingham Theater, Levenson will be the guest at a luncheon after each performance at the Bloomfield Open Hunt Club, launching a new policy the luncheon locales will vary with each lecture in the series.

Levenson has been credited with contributing "more to public relations between teacher and pupil than all the apples ever grown." A member of the New York City School System for 15 years, he has been in show business for the past 11 years.

Birmingham Town Hall, in its ninth season, is sponsored by St. Anne's Guild of St. James Episcopal Church. Tickets for the series are sold out.

OTHER TOWN HALL speakers scheduled to appear in the new series are Lisa Howard whose topic will be "Must the Enemy Call the Tune" on Oct. 18 and 19 and Walter Szekely who will discuss "Show Business Is No Business," on Nov. 15, 16.

"Art as an Investment" is the topic chosen by Richard Bush on Jan. 17, 18. Beverly Nichols will discuss "Laughter in an English Garden" on Feb. 21 and 22 and the season will wind up March 7 and 8 with Dr. Werner von Braun, discussing "Why We Must Explore Space."

Levenson has been credited with contributing "more to public relations between teacher and pupil than all the apples ever grown." A member of the New York City School System for 15 years, he has been in show business for the past 11 years.

Birmingham City Commissioner Ralph A. Main said today that he is circulating Vigilance Tax Committee petitions which seek legislation on income taxes.

The VTC seeks a state law to prohibit communities from levying an income tax on nonresidents. Main said he has petitions available for anyone wishing to sign them.

Comments from...
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