

## Where Is Our Memorial?

The tragedy which struck our nation a couple of weeks ago led us to wondering where we could hold a community memorial service.

We first thought about Shain Park, yet there is nothing in the park itself that lends itself to this type of ceremony.

It seemed unusual that a community of the age and stature of ours should not have some sort of hallowed shrine.

We checked with some local historical buffs and discovered that Birmingham did have such a shrine.

In 1869 a Soldier's Monument was erected at the intersection of Saginaw, Mill and Troy streets (now Woodward and Maple) in honor of the people from Royal Oak, Troy, Southfield and Bloomfield townships who served our country in the Civil War.

THE MONUMENT WAS made of veined marble and was 15 to 20 feet in height. It was surrounded by a metal picket fence.

Unfortunately, in the early 1890's the monument "interfered with traffic" and was moved to Greenwood Cemetery over on Oak Street.

## The Decision Must Be Ours

The Birmingham Eccentric publishes the local news. This is our purpose, our business. We publish the news as it develops, as it breaks. This we have always done; this we will always do.

After we printed accounts of two recent major developments, there was a suggestion that we reported them prematurely, before the groups involved were ready to have their plans revealed.

With both of these incidents, the proposed civil rights march and the possibility of a campaign to lower the legal age limit for the sale of liquor and tobacco, The Eccentric reported the news developments as they occurred. We printed the facts as they were presented to us by the people involved.

AND WE might add, with all due modesty, these stories were reported in The Birmingham Eccentric first—which is as it should be if we are to function as a responsible newspaper.

## Now Is The Time

Now is the time for all good men to get the sizes of their spouses.

Not large, small or medium, but gloves, shoes and blouses.

This coming Monday night is Men's Night in downtown Birmingham. On this night of nights ladies must stay home and let the menfolk have a chance to get their shopping done without the watchful eyes of their spouses.

The merchants will try to make it an unforgettable evening with instant credit, refreshments and even models.

ONE OF THE biggest problems with all-men shopping is that some of them don't do their home work.

They arrive downtown with very little idea of what their spouses want or what size they wear.

It's a sales person's nightmare to have hubby try to guess sizes by comparing his wife to some stranger who happens by.

## From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

A party of 21 accompanied Governor Wallace on his Ivy League speaking tour. He needs that many to think up answers to questions about why some things are done the way they're done in Alabama.

The Department of Agriculture predicts a decline in farm income. Farmers used to come to town on Saturday night. Now they come to town and stay.

A research study shows that not all babies look alike or act alike. In fact, conformity doesn't hit them for several years.

The high school used to have Memorial Day services there, but now the monument seems forgotten. Yet, it still stands there.

Within the last couple of years a committee was formed to select an appropriate work of art to grace the center of Shain Park.

There was talk that local resident Marshall Fredericks be commissioned to sculpture some swan statuery.

SINCE NOTHING has been done about the swans, wouldn't it be more appropriate to bring back the tradition we once had by moving the Soldier's Monument back to the center of town?

A community-defined tradition does not seem to have emerged. Part of this we are sure results from the tremendous turnover of residents we have each year, but tradition lends stability to a town.

We feel moving the monument back would be a strong step forward in acknowledging our proud heritage, and might instill in the people who will control or influence future growth of our community an obligation to keep that growth in keeping with the traditions of our town.

In these and other news developments, The Eccentric exercises judgment, as it should and as it will continue to do. It is our responsibility to determine what is news and when it is news.

Assuredly, there may be times when we are informed of a germ of an idea for some possible local activity in which we would recognize that there was no real news value until plans became firm.

THE ECCENTRIC stands ready at all times to cooperate with any individual or group in gathering information, in making plans for a community-wide endeavor. It will always lend editorial support to those activities which it believes are in the best interests of the public.

But the judgment as to what is news and when it is news—when it is time for us to report it—remains solely our responsibility and our decision.

To perform effectively for our readers, we will continue to publish news as it happens.

The end result is that our gals have to return after Christmas to get the proper fit.

AS A SHOPPING convenience we have set forth the kinds of items on which sizes usually are needed when purchasing feminine presents. If our male shoppers get all these sizes together before they converge on the town, more time will be left for the enjoyment of the refreshments and if you are so inclined, the models.

Oh, by the way, gals, if you would like something to wear for Christmas, you might fill in the blanks before your hubby has to ask. This is one way of assuring yourself a chance to get clothing instead of something like a wheelbarrow.

- Blouses:..... Lingerie:.....
- Dresses:..... Slacks:.....
- Gloves:..... Stockings:.....
- Shoes:..... Wigs:.....

Trading stamps cost merchants close to 900 million dollars a year. The stamps are said to be losing favor, but they're far from licked.

Twenty-one toasts were drunk at the marriage of the two Soviet cosmonauts. That way everyone could be in orbit at once.

Some people blame the U.S. for the overthrow of the Ngo family regime, but we can't really take the credit. The Ngos did it all themselves.

In Venezuela, a 34-year-old grandmother bore quintuplets. Well, the folks down there are doing their bit for the population explosion, all right.

### PEOPLE'S COLUMN

## Teen Shoplifters Need Parental, Community Help

To the Editor:

One of the big problems facing the public today is shoplifting. What makes it big is that shoplifting is not confined to a particular geographical area, income bracket or age group. However, according to national crime reports, shoplifting is more prevalent in the teen-age group. It is, therefore, of nationwide concern.

Shoplifting is costing businessmen of this country every year, is anybody's guess. But that it is topping a hundred million dollars may not be far wide of the mark.

UNDER PRESENT DAY merchandising methods of open displays and self-service systems, the shopping public is permitted to touch the merchandise, fondle it or try it on before purchasing. In this manner the customer sells the item to himself and reduces the need for sales personnel. The merchant's overhead is thus reduced. Unfortunately, his losses by theft are substantially increased.

Shoplifters never had it so good as they have since merchants introduced this self-service system of displaying products on what really amounts to an honor basis.

Many beginning shoplifters are teen-agers and many of these teen-agers are girls. They seem to be particularly susceptible to the temptations involved.

Why youngsters should become involved is not clear. Perhaps at the root of this problem there lies selfishness, greed, poor moral standards and lack of self-control. Certainly shoplifting cannot be laid to dire need as this is seldom the case. Often the shoplifter has the necessary money on his or her person to pay for the item stolen. Yet, this person elected to steal it rather than pay for it.

TOUCHING THE first two groups—as temptation strengthens and success seemingly attends their early efforts, expand in ambition gradually takes over, until finally they graduate into the professional class of shoplifters.

Thus, the taking of the first article lures them on to more serious stealing, until there comes the day when the whole miserable thing explodes in their faces with sickening force.

Let's face it, shoplifters whether casual or professional, whether young or old, are common thieves who steal from others. In this respect many shoplifters are people of seeming respectability who rub shoulders with the underworld. The intent to steal being the same as that of the professional burglar, the cloak of respectability avails little in the glare of exposure.

(See SHOPLIFTERS, 7-B)

### PEOPLE'S COLUMN

## Young Adults Suffer From Present Laws

To the Editor:

I have been following with great interest your discussion on the tobacco-liquor laws during the past few weeks.

I agree that 18 years of age is too young to be able to buy alcoholic beverages, but at the same time I think that age of 21 is unreasonable.

If we take a good look at our society today, we see a society geared to either the teenager or the "over-21" crowd. Those between the ages of 19-21 are lost between two worlds and belonging to neither.

MOST STUDENTS graduate from high school at the age of 17 or 18. For those that continue their schooling the problem is not so critical; but for those that venture into the business world the story is different.

They are thrown into an adult world with adults as business associates and companions. What kind of entertainment does society provide for these boys and girls?

The teenage dances and other activities are too young for them; yet at the same time, they are forbidden to go to a nice nightclub, go to older dances or join various clubs because they are not 21.

The main bulk of all the "false proof" is carried by this 19-21 group. For many, especially girls who are going with boys in their

early 20's, it is their only passport to entertainment.

WHY CAN'T a compromise be reached between ages of 18 and 21? Why can't the liquor laws be (See LAWS, 7-B)

## Hits Defense Of Teacher Tenure

To the Editor:

Mr. Cavin's labored defense of teacher tenure in the Nov. 21 Eccentric, does not alter one fact: statewide tenure would discourage some of our most able teachers from remaining in teaching.

Any device that tends to protect mediocrity, regardless of its other merits, inevitably lowers the quality of the whole.

MR. CAVIN should not have stopped with an 1873 quotation of Charles Eliot's, then-president of Harvard University.

A more recent Harvard president, James B. Conant, has had some far more significant things to say on the subject of teachers.

WILLIAM LYMAN 5305 Hickory Bend, Birmingham (MORE PEOPLE'S COLUMN (LETTERS ON 7-B)

## Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO  
Dec. 5, 1913

William J. Spicer is plaintiff in a \$2,000 damage suit in the circuit court against George R. Thompson of Pontiac, for results of a collision between Thompson's auto and Spicer's team last August in which Spicer claims Thompson was going at the rate of 35 miles an hour and the consequences were decidedly detrimental to horse, wagon and driver.

The Jolly Eight was highly entertained at the home of Mrs. Fannie J. Shain Monday night in honor of Mrs. Myers who is going north. The evening was delightfully spent playing progressive pedro. The first prizes were won by Mrs. W. B. Carter and Mrs. Myers of Pontiac. The second prizes by Mrs. Albert and Mrs. Bittner. A three course luncheon was served at the close of the game.

Talk about the luck of the deer hunters. The luckiest man along this line that we know of, wasn't hunting at all but Thanksgiving day brought home eight and a-half pounds of Deer to Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Deer of West Brown Street, and they seem to think the bonnie little boy is worth keeping. (See HAPPENINGS, 8-B)

## Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

A couple of months ago The Eccentric sent out a circulation promotion to the few residents in the area who were not regular subscribers to our fine newspaper.

On the front flap it said "A \$60.75 Value for only \$4.75." The brochure went on to show that in terms of paper ink and manpower the cost of each paper is far in excess of the dime our readers pay for it.

One nonsubscriber dropped our circulation manager a note after reading it saying he didn't want to see us lose any more money so he wasn't interested in subscribing and would even try to save us more money by asking his neighbors to drop the paper.

BUT THE PLAIN truth of the matter is that it does cost us more to produce the paper than the money we get from our subscribers.

We are not, of course, pleading poverty, because the dollars our advertisers spend to have their products displayed cover these extra costs.

But each copy of The Birmingham Eccentric costs over 78¢ to produce.

This is made up of 6 cents for the newspaper that goes into each paper, plus 2/10 cent for ink.

The postage costs another penny even before we get into the manufacture of the paper.

THE EDITORIAL or news department accounts for 11 cents which includes salaries of six reporters, the managing editor, a full-time photographer, our area correspondents and the cost of outside features.

The circulation department expenses amount to 3 1/4 cents per copy. This includes the salary of a staff of three plus commissions to subscription getters, and something for the news carriers.

Our advertising staff contributes 11 cents toward the cost of each paper. The six people in that department are responsible for filling the pages left blank by the news staff.

OUR COMPOSING ROOM costs the paper 23 cents per copy to change the typewritten pages of the news staff and the rough layouts of the ad staff into a quality paper. Then the press room must print the paper at a cost of slightly under 5 cents per copy.

Another 2 cents has to be added to cover the cost of maintaining our plant and a little over 16 cents goes for such administrative expenses as telephone, light, heat, bookkeeping, management salaries, and contributions to various community projects.

All these figures should add up to over 78 cents and at a dime a copy it does seem as though our readers are getting a bargain.

## City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

In Birmingham, as elsewhere in the nation, there is now a tendency to assess John F. Kennedy the man.

That we eulogize him speaks well for both him and us. There is much to be gained by this approach and nothing from partisan political criticism.

I think Mr. Kennedy held forth a promise of a rebirth of the frontier strength and spirit that characterized this nation in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The men and women who, in creating a nation, cut their way through wilderness from the east to the west coast were a hardy people. We have not seen their kind since.

WE ARE NOT a hardy people today. Rather, we are prosperous, fat and lazy. We are sipping in a sea of self-doubt, self-criticism, self-gain.

Mr. Kennedy possessed great vitality, youthful vigor and enthusiasm to forge ahead. This is what the frontiersmen were like, and this is what we could have become in due time under his leadership.

If we can keep fresh in our minds this memory of him, we can still accomplish this goal.

Following Mr. Kennedy's example, we can surge forward once again; we can rededicate ourselves during the horrible days of the tragedy that took her husband from her.

We can stop looking at ourselves with feelings of guilt and instead industriously apply our energies and our resources to improve our nation and the world.

WE CAN TURN off the TV sets, leave the car in the garage, forget the golf course for a day or two and give some serious thought as to where we as a people and a nation are heading.

We can forego the martinis, the manhattans, the daiquiris, the old-fashioned and spend our money and energies in such ways that will give us a greater moral, spiritual and cultural uplift.

And I say this is as true for Birmingham, Mich., as it is for any other place in this country. We can get off our complacent posters and put forth an industrious effort for the betterment of our community, our county, our state and our nation.

We can cast aside partisan politics and band together to bring the State of Michigan out of financial and governmental chaos and give it a fresh, new and different direction for the future.

IN SHORT, we can profit from the example of John F. Kennedy and become once again the strong, sturdy kind of people that gave us our freedoms and our foundations for strength and courage.

We can profit, too, from the courage and devotion exemplified by Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy during the horrible days of the tragedy that took her husband from her. We may not be a hardy people now, but we can become so once again—if we will but apply ourselves.

Ike has a big deposit of goodwill in Europe, but Europeans may consider his proposal that we pull out five combat divisions a heavy withdrawal from his account.



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