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# The Birmingham Eccentric

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The Nation's Top Prize-Winning Suburban Weekly



10 CENTS

## Multipurpose Auditorium In Community House Plans



Robert Thorson—happy to be home

### Reading, Friends Aid in Jail Stay

By LARRY EVOE  
City Editor

"I'm happy to have Bob home," smiled Joan Thorson. Robert M. Thorson was home for the first time since his surprise arrest Dec. 17 on the slaying of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Dorothy M. Thomas.

He was released on \$5,000 bond Friday by Detroit Recorder's Court Judge Joseph A. Gillis. A tentative trial date has been set for June 10.

Thorson's attorneys, Konrad Kohl and Walter Denison, said they planned to appeal two other motions on the case to the State Supreme Court.

GILLIS DENIED defense motions that clothing taken from Thorson's car was seized by Detroit police without a search warrant and that the case be quashed.

Although bail on a murder charge is not unprecedented it is unusual. A veteran Detroit homicide detective told The Eccentric that he knew of only one other case in 16 years as a police officer where bond was set.

Mrs. Thomas had been found bludgeoned and strangled to death in her home at 9371 Appoline, Detroit, on Dec. 4.

WHEN THORSON returned to the family home at 2352 Buckingham Friday night, he was reunited with his 10-month-old adopted son, David.

"It doesn't even seem like the same Davey," Thorson said. The youngster can now take a few steps with the aid of his mother and has "da-da" down pat.

Dressed in a green sport coat and dark slacks, Thorson sat in an arm chair of the smartly furnished home, sipped a cup of coffee and talked of his plans for the immediate future.

THE 31-YEAR-OLD securities salesman had planned to return to his desk at Watling and Lerchen Monday but he came down with a minor case of the flu and delayed his return to work until Tuesday.

He said he also planned to return to his work with the Birmingham Exchange Club and the Junior Chamber of Commerce and he and Joan will return this Sunday to St. James Church.

Since his arrest in middle December, both of the Thorsons have received hundreds of letters of encouragement and offers of help from friends, relatives and complete strangers.

"WORDS ARE not adequate to express how we feel," Thorson said. "The response from our friends defies description.

"I have a whole box of letters that I received in jail, some from people I've never met," Thorson said that he planned to call or write everyone who sent letters.

"It was wonderful to know that people had this confidence in me and made my stay a little bit more bearable."

(See THORSON, 5-A)

### Influence Peddling Charges Irk Board

By SAVILLA SLOAN  
Special Writer

Did an unidentified real estate broker offer to peddle influence in a West Bloomfield Township rezoning decision for a \$1,000 fee? Or was the fee asked for assistance to be rendered in ironing out zoning technicalities for the proposed purchasers?

Jack Lawrence, a sales representative for Ripley Bowling Co., charged before the West Bloomfield Township Board last week that an unnamed party had offered to obtain township cooperation in the rezoning of property on Orchard Lake Road "for a slight consideration."

Lawrence's charges came after he complained to the board that the township planning commission had failed to give a decision in the rezoning of property on which the bowling company has an option to purchase, although it had been before the commission since last November.

The township board immediately passed a resolution asking for a detailed report from the planning commission on the entire background of the rezoning case, including the charges made by Lawrence.

The planning commission has refused to make any rezoning decision until Lawrence's inferences before the township board are completely explained.

ning commission Tuesday night, Arthur Freeman, attorney and officer of Ripley Bowling Co., who flew in from Chicago to attend the commission meeting, said that Lawrence's comments "were rash and unfortunate statements."

Freeman told the board that the fee was asked because the unnamed person felt he was entitled to recompense for finding the (See CHARGES, 5-A)

### 2 Area Snipers Face Hearings, Mental Exams

By IRMA N. DAVIS  
Township Editor

A psychiatric examination has been ordered for one of two self-confessed young snipers, Gary S. Goodrum, 22. A hearing for 15-year-old Douglas Godfrey of Bloomfield Township was scheduled for Wednesday afternoon. It may be decided at this time whether or not Douglas is technically an adult or a juvenile.

Goodrum, a Southfield resident who confessed last week to shooting at a Novi Township woman Mrs. Gertrude Race, was arraigned Friday before township Justice of the Peace Robert K. Anderson. He was arraigned on a charge of assault with intent to kill. The sentence upon conviction could carry up to life in prison.

OAKLAND COUNTY Prosecutor George Taylor asked that Goodrum be held in county jail until he undergoes sanity tests. They will be administered by a psychiatrist chosen by Goodrum's parents. The report will be completed before Goodrum appears for examination Feb. 21. The sniping took place on Jan. 30.

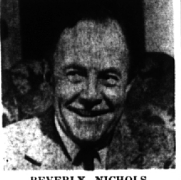
Bond for Goodrum was set at \$1,000 but Taylor said it is contingent on the results of the psychiatric examination. If the report indicates the Southfield youth has suicidal or homicidal tendencies, bond will be raised to \$25,000.

GOODRUM GAVE himself up to police on Feb. 6. State Police crime laboratory experts said the slug recovered from the Race house matched Goodrum's rifle.

The youth, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alva Goodrum, 414 W. Ninth St., said he surrendered because of the arrest Feb. 6 of the Godfrey boy.

Goodrum's attorney, James Douglas, said he had turned into a (See SNIPERS, 5-A)

AT A MEETING of the plan-



BEVERLY NICHOLS

### British Author Next Town Hall Speaker

A British author and owner of one of the finest gardens in England, Beverly Nichols, will speak at Town Hall in the Birmingham Theater for the fifth lecture of the season.

Nichols will talk at 11 a.m. Feb. 21 and 22.

He will be introduced at both performances by Johnathon M. Ball of the McCallan-Ball Co., a Birmingham garden center.

AUTHOR OF "Down the Garden Path" and many other books on such subjects as cats, children and travel, Nichols also was the author of a revue for which he wrote the book, lyrics and music. He will discuss gardening and will present impressions well-known to people in relations to his main topic.

Luncheon will be served at the Kingsley Inn following both lectures.

### Filing Deadline Extended in B'ham

The deadline for filing nominating petitions for the spring election in Birmingham has been extended to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 23.

The deadline had been announced as Feb. 18, the date of the spring primary.

Under a 1962 amendment to the state election law, the deadline hereafter will be the date of the spring primary—but that amendment did not become law in time to affect this year's election.

Petitions must be filed in the clerk's office in the municipal building at Martin and Pierce. The election will be on April 1.

### Hills Voters Will Choose 4 Candidates

Three commissioners and a constable will be elected by Bloomfield Hills voters on April 1.

Filing deadline for the positions is 5 p.m., Saturday, according to City Clerk Robert J. Stadler.

In order to be qualified, a candidate must present petitions signed by a minimum of 25 registered voters.

"COMMISSION" terms expiring this year are those of John S. Bugas, Robert A. Frye and Lyman J. Craig. Petitions have been filed for Frye and Craig. Each Hills' commissioner serves a two-year term.

The constable position, a one-year term, is presently held by Homer Murphy.

Stadler reminded voters that the deadline for registration to vote in the April 1 election is Monday, March 4.

### Franklin to Vote On Gas Service

Franklin voters will cast ballots at Franklin School Wednesday to decide if Consumers Power Co. gas service will be made available. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

All costs of the election will be borne by the company. If voters approve the proposal, gas service may be available by summer.

### Seek Money to Bring Family Home

Bibbys Find Tragedy at End of Journey

Friends, neighbors and school mates of the Harold Bibby family and continued their efforts Wednesday to raise enough money to bring the Bibby children back to Birmingham.

Mrs. Bibby and the youngsters had gone to California Friday to join Mr. Bibby with hopes of beginning a new life for the family.

The Bibbys, residents of 1492 Humphrey, had divorced two months ago but recently reached a reconciliation after Bibby found a job as a salesman with an automobile agency in Los Angeles.

WHEN THE family arrived in Los Angeles, Bibby was not there as Feb. 18. He died a few hours earlier from injuries suffered the night before in an auto accident.

Authorities in California had tried to reach Mrs. Bibby Thursday night but were unable to do so because the telephone had already been disconnected.

A friend, Mrs. Mary Davis, met the American Airlines plane as it landed and took Mrs. Bibby into the terminal office to break the news.

The pilot of the plane took the children, Flora, 13, Harold, 8, Bill,



THE COMMUNITY HOUSE at Bates and Townsend has been serving the community, night and day, at its present location since March, 1930. Before that, a small frame building had served the area for seven years. (See photo, 5-A). Tonight, the BCH board is expected to reveal expansion plans for a major addition to the building.

### Southfield-Townsend Zone Problem Aired

Birmingham city commissioners tackled a major zoning problem—the Southfield-Townsend area—Monday night and held off a decision pending receipt of more information.

Commissioners asked for a written report from the city attorney on the ramifications of contractual arrangements with property owners and for another plan of the area on its study of that specific area.

The discussion came during a public hearing on a petition from Dr. A. L. McNaughton to rezone property on the northeast corner of Southfield and Townsend from R-7, multiple dwelling, to B-1, nonretail business.

McNAUGHTON seeks to build a doctor's office on the site, which now is occupied by a two-family frame structure.

He submitted his petition to the commission in August, 1962. He asked that if the property were not rezoned to the business classification consideration be given to rezoning some other area to permit construction of office-type uses.

The planning board at that time was studying the nonretail business problem in the city. Commissioners Monday night asked that the report on this study be accelerated so it can be utilized in making a decision on McNaughton's request.

### Eye Expansion To Keep Pace With Growth

The board of directors of the Community House are expected to reveal extensive plans tonight on the expansion of the 35-year-old gathering place.

The proposed plans will be outlined at the CBDD meeting in the commission room, city hall, at 8 p.m.

In order to keep pace with the growth of the Birmingham-Bloomfield area, the board of directors deemed it necessary to plan a major addition to the existing facilities.

INCLUDED IN the major addition will be a multipurpose auditorium, banquet, meeting and class rooms, office space for charitable organizations and storage facilities for groups.

It is expected that the new facility will be of proportions comparable to the \$1,000,000 William Fries Auditorium in the Groose Pointe War Memorial Building. The Community House has already acquired property on its own block and is negotiating for additional land.

AT THE present time the long-range planning committee is conducting studies to determine the specific needs—both current and future—to maintain the Community House as the "activities center" of the area.

The board is currently holding discussions with various architectural firms, including some local architects, regarding dimensions and design of the addition and the preparation of preliminary sketches and drawings.

Plans to carry on the initial steps have already been appropriated.

THE BOARD plans to seek financial support of an individual, group of individuals, organizations and/or a foundation to provide the necessary funds to complete the plan.

A tentative target date of sometime in 1965 has been set for the completion of the addition.

The future plans of the Commission (See GROWTH, 5-A)

### 10 Groups Meet Tonight On CBDD

A meeting which many hope will have a great effect on the future of downtown Birmingham will get underway at 8 o'clock tonight in the commission room of the municipal building.

The boards of 10 city and civic organizations will present their views on the proposed Central Business District groups Wednesday in Birmingham.

Among those in attendance will be members of the city commission, planning board, board of education, library board, real estate board, council of churches, Community House board, chamber of commerce, junior chamber of commerce and the citizens committee.

EACH GROUP is expected to present a short summary of its needs that could be included in a CBDD plan adopted by the city commission.

Mayor Florence H. Willett, held a briefing session with representatives of each of the groups Wednesday of last week to go over final details of the meeting.

Mayor Willett, under the direction of the city commission, called the meeting so that the many groups who are concerned over the future of the downtown area might discuss the problem.

A tentative CBDD plan, bought and paid for by the merchants, was first presented to the commission in June of 1961.

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### Comments from... CLASSIFIED



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