

Secret Societies Have to Go

Should we have secret societies in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area high schools? This is a question of long standing. Parents of children who are "in" see nothing wrong with their children associating with others in a club which they believe contributes to worthwhile community activity. These parents say it is better to have them working together on something worthwhile than to have them hanging around "the corner drugstore". Many of the parents whose children have joined one of these sororities, fraternities or clubs, feel that the boards of education have no business in controlling the lives of students outside of school hours off school property.

THE PARENTS of children who haven't been asked to join one of these organizations feel, on the other hand, that it is not fair to exclude children from popular teenage activities because of the arbitrariness or capriciousness of the members of the clubs.

We have seen this fight continue in the area for years. First the Greek letter societies were forced to become school clubs. Then they were disbanded into pseudo corporations or charitable groups with parents, nominally but not substantially, participating to get around loopholes in either school regulations or state law.

Finally the state legislature stepped into the picture and said that henceforth it is illegal for "a school board to give a pupil credit for subjects taken in school, promote a pupil from grade to grade, or to graduate any pupil "who knowingly is a member of any organization whose active membership is composed wholly or in part of pupils of public schools of this state and perpetuating itself by taking in additional members from pupils enrolled in public schools on the basis of the decision of its membership."

When this law was enacted it should have ended the controversy. While the clubs or societies were fun and amusing for the kids, the state law said no more.

PARENTS WHO HAVE helped their children attempt to get around the law are only instilling in their children at an age where their values are being established, a contempt for law that could last a lifetime.

If the parents and the children dislike the state law they should work to have it repealed. And no parent or child has written the local state legislator in the last three years to attempt to accomplish this.

Until the law is repealed it is plain and simple that these organizations are illegal and should be disbanded. And if the parents value the education of their children, it is their duty to see that this is done.

Foil Burglars While You're Away

With summer half gone, there are still many local people who have not taken their vacation. To these people we direct our annual reminder about what to do with their home when it is left unattended for any length of time. Our local police departments ask you to double check before leaving to see that all doors and windows are locked. Be sure to have your milk, mail, newspapers and other deliveries stopped in your absence, because nothing is a better tipoff to potential burglars than no one is home than accumulated mail or papers. The post office will be happy to hold your mail if you give them notice.

MAKE SURE that your lawn is cut in your absence. Unkept grass, top, is a giveaway that your home is unprotected. Our local police departments have specific requests also. Robert Stadler, public safety director of Bloomfield Hills, asks residents to notify his office when they are leaving so that the police can keep a careful eye on vacant residences. Contrary to the old school of thought, he requests residents not leave any lights burning in the house, because it is easier to spot a burglar inside using his own light. Stadler also requests that Bloomfield Hills residents leave the name of a person to be notified in case anything does happen.

CHIEF NORMAN DEHNKE of Bloomfield Township requests his residents to notify both his department and their neighbors on either side when they are leaving. He asks that Township residents only leave on lights which are attached to timers, because a light burning all night every night is as bad as no light at all. He also suggests that one of the neighbors should be left a key and check the house occasionally. It is even better if the neighbor can change some of the lights. Robert Murphy, director of public safety in Beverly Hills asks his residents to notify both his department and a neighbor. The Beverly Hills Police Department would like to know where a key is located and who to contact in an emergency. They suggest that a light should be left on in a room which it is impossible to look into from the outside, like an upstairs room or a curtained downstairs room. If you use a timer, so much the better.

NEIGHBORS WATCHING an empty house should report all strangers around the house to the police. Birmingham police would like residents to notify them when they are leaving town. They suggest that you leave a key with a neighbor, leave a light or lights burning, preferably with a timer, and to leave the shades up so the house looks lived in. If you are about to leave on vacation, we hope these tips will help protect your home while you're gone. If you notify your police department your house will be watched. After you have taken the suggestions of the experts, pack your car and have a good time.

Not Another Holiday

The Senate has passed a resolution to establish September 17 as a federal legal holiday to be known as Constitution Day. The wisdom of this is open to serious question. Although the Constitution deserves all the attention that can be focused on it, the prospect of another costly and essentially meaningless holiday is not a happy one. It is to be hoped that the House will not go along with the Senate. Though the Senate's motives were doubtless laudable, the fact is that there are already more than enough holidays. This judgment is not intended to be a wet-blanket on national fun and games. The question is: Should Constitution Day be set aside, only to become another occasion for fun and games and highway slaughter? THE EXISTING HOLIDAYS, notably such occasions as Independence Day and

Memorial Day, tend to have less and less of the meaning they once had. They have become notable chiefly as occasions for holiday pleasure, marred year after year by a terrible accident toll. Moreover, the cost to both private industry and the government is tremendous. The cost of an additional holiday has been estimated at more than 900 million dollars. The cost might be considered almost negligible if Constitution Day were genuinely a focal point for widespread public interest in what the Constitution's influence on our way of life is and ought to be. Experience suggests that, even if it started that way, it would soon deteriorate into perfunctory celebration and might even be commercialized as Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays have been. Citizens' attention can be directed to the Constitution without declaring another holiday.

I, TOO, am a proud citizen of Birmingham who has lived here 15 years, and I for one feel that in coming to us the Haven Gallery is raising the intellectual and cultural standard of entertainment in our community. By my personal yardstick Mr. Moyne's letter attests that the Birmingham he champions is woefully sub-standard. CARLYN ASHLEY VOGT 615 Patten Road Birmingham.

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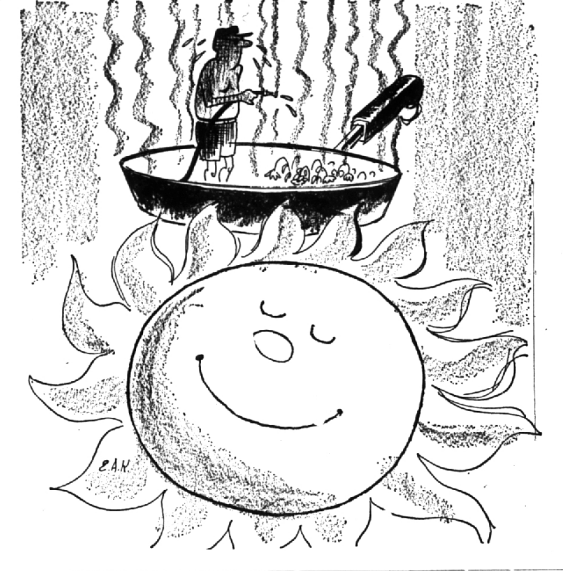
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In the Good Old Summertime



PEOPLE'S COLUMN Urges Taxpayers Buy Rail Coaches

To the Editor: The Pontiac Press the other day urged public support for a \$3,000,000 expenditure for a new runway and other improvements at Pontiac's Municipal Airport. Cost would be shared by local, state and federal governments. Improvements in Pontiac's airport are no doubt important to the corporations whose private aircraft are based there, whose personnel travel frequently by air, and the construction firm that gets the contract.

But EQUALLY important to hundreds of Oakland County residents is the maintenance of daily, all-weather commuter train service to their jobs in Detroit. Present Grand Trunk Western commuter coaches are about worn out and commuter revenues can't pay for repairs or replacements. Inability to pay for the desired airport improvements doesn't divert the taxpayers should help them out.

Likewise, inability to pay \$2,500,000 for 17 new air-conditioned double-deck commuter coaches should not dismay the GTW or its commuters. It's far less than is being asked for the airport improvements and the convenience is just as great.

CONTINUED availability of rail passenger equipment in the Detroit area will serve not only daily commuters, but also weekend excursionists. Growing patronage of one-day rail trips to points of in-

Lauds Gallery For Moving, Chides Critic

To the Editor: I should like to take issue with Mr. Moyne's of Fairview who bemoans the arrival in our midst of the Haven Gallery. Contrary to Mr. Moyne, I feel that we are fortunate that the price is willing to "pay the price of Art" and has undertaken the cost of moving his excellent gallery, which will open the mind and the emotions to fatigue-erasing vistas.

I, TOO, am a proud citizen of Birmingham who has lived here 15 years, and I for one feel that in coming to us the Haven Gallery is raising the intellectual and cultural standard of entertainment in our community. By my personal yardstick Mr. Moyne's letter attests that the Birmingham he champions is woefully sub-standard. CARLYN ASHLEY VOGT 615 Patten Road Birmingham.

Letters from readers always are welcome, although they MUST be signed, although identities will not be divulged if the writer so requests.

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO Aug. 1, 1913 Rapid progress has been made by the officials of both Bloomfield Township and the village of Birmingham toward securing gas service for the residents of that section. On last Friday evening at a special meeting of the village board of Birmingham an ordinance was passed to regulate the distribution and sale of gas in that village and on Monday evening a similar ordinance was passed in the township of Bloomfield.

When Mr. H. G. Spencer undertakes to do anything he does it right up to the hilt. He is at home, tending store, he is out and does it right. When he vacationizes he does that in royal style. He with his family, and Mr. and Mrs. Amos Howland are all at Straits' Lake enjoying life and a well-deserved rest.

Our children's playground at the Baldwin Park on West Maple avenue is being well patronized each Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons, under the direction of the village council. Mr. F. Hervis is installing swings, gymnasium bars, teter boards and sand pit for the little folks. On each of the open days a lady is in attendance and parents need have no fear of sending their children.

30 YEARS AGO Aug. 29, 1933 The Blue Eagle of the NRA is appearing with rapidly increasing frequency in Birmingham this week as merchants and other employers move quickly to pledge adherence to President Roosevelt's national re-employment and recovery program. Already a total of 70 business firms have filed certificates of compliance with Postmaster Joseph F. Byrne, indicating that they have adjusted the hours of labor and wages of their employees.

The State Tax Commission is expected to call a hearing within the next few days on applications of the cities of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills from the 1933 county equalization report adopted last week by the Board of Supervisors. Both cities had threatened to make the appeals when the report, which their supervisors declared had unjustly raised the assessed valuations of property in their municipalities, was adopted.

Unless direct aid received from the state, the length of Birmingham's 1933-34 school year will depend entirely upon the percentage of taxes collected next winter. The Board of Education decided with the adoption last Friday night of its new budget. The budget calls for expenditures of \$218,751.44, of which \$147,308.44 is for operations.

15 YEARS AGO Aug. 29, 1948 Names of the three committee members who will serve on a committee with the city manager and DPW directors to determine the proper method of financing parking lots in (See HAPPENINGS, 2-B)

Eccentricities

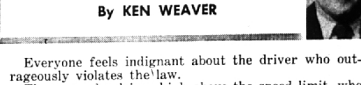


I looked across the room of my cottage the other night and saw a white tag hanging down from one of the cushions on the sofa. I went over to rip it off and bold faced print warned me DO NOT REMOVE UNDER PENALTY OF LAW. I was taken aback at first and glanced around the room to see if anyone had noticed that I had intended to commit a crime. Luckily no one else was in the room and the curtains were closed. As I sank back in my easy chair and thought about it, I got braver and braver. Who the devil can tell me what I can do with my own furniture? I WAS ALL set to rise up and rip it off, when my conscience quivered a little. I went to the phone and called the local constabulary and asked them if they would come out and arrest me if I removed the tag from my sofa. The officer was somewhat hesitant but indicated as long as no one made a complaint, he would not be interested in arresting me. I heard him mumble to someone in the office that some kind of a nut was calling.

I WENT BACK to the sofa and reread the tag. It said it was required by federal regulation, so I thought I'd better double check with the F.B.I. I don't know if you ever tried to get hold of the F.B.I. in a small town, but I was glad that there wasn't an armed bankrobber in the house because to get the F.B.I. you have to call the operator and explain your problem. After discussing it with the operator, I told her to forget it. If it was that hard to get hold of a G-man, there certainly wouldn't be any around to arrest me.

WITH AN AIR of bravado I walked over and ripped the tag off. I knew that it was all right, but I burned the evidence in case of a subsequent investigation. When I got back to the office on Monday morning, I called my attorney to see if I should sue the country. He told me that the law said that before you sell cushions, you must set forth the materials contained in them. Since I was not ready to reseat the sofa, why the devil don't they put a post script on the tag saying if you don't plan to reseat you will have to call us to rip it off. It would have saved me a night of looking out the window waiting for the law.

City Beat



Everyone feels indignant about the driver who outrageously violates the law. The man who drives high above the speed limit, who weaves recklessly in traffic, who takes out his aggressive feelings on other drivers, gets short popular shrift. This we know. But what about the guy who adds to the hazards of driving not through arrogance or overconfidence or disregard of the rights of others, but through lack of attention to important details? What about the motorist who parks a foot from the curb on a hill without cramping the front wheels or setting the brakes? Or the man who gets in the habit of "drifting" through stop signs? Or the one who conveniently forgets he's in a "right-turn only" lane and shoots straight ahead with the rest of the traffic? And what about the driver who fails to adjust his rearview mirror and thus drives with a blind spot? What about the man who zooms from a side road into the highway in front of speeding traffic and immediately proceeds to move along at 30 m.p.h.? These are small things, but that doesn't mean they are insignificant. In driving, as in other activities, little things may cause big—and tragic—results.

BIRMINGHAM Mayor Bill Burgum sent us a clipping the other day from the Denver Post which might be of interest to some people. It reads: "A peculiar little leak seems to have developed in the Western Alliance's voluntary embargo of trade with Communist Cuba. How else can one explain the sudden quiety spectacular rise in U.S. trade with Britain's crown colony of Grand Cayman? "According to Post correspondent Thayer Waldo, this small Caribbean island, population 5,000, some 300 miles southeast of Miami, is importing enough spare auto parts—of which there is a great shortage in Fidel Castro's Cuba—to re-equip its 208 autos every 15 days. "Similarly, Grand Cayman's four 'consumption' has soared from 200 pounds a month in 1961 to an average of 70,000 a month now. "Apparently, no one in the British government—which has pledged to cooperate with our Cuban embargo policy—aware of what's going on in tiny Grand Cayman. Nor is anyone in the U.S. government, which should be interested in the sudden increase in trade between Florida ports and that island near Cuba. "We would suggest it's time both governments took a look." Amen.

In his coronation speech, Pope Paul used eight languages to call for peace and unity—but a lot of people still don't get the message. Dirksen deplores the move to limit Senate debate to pertinent remarks. Why, if that went through, half the fun would go out of being a senator. Heavyweight Cassius Clay made good his boast to stop British champion Henry Cooper in five rounds. The only person more irritating than a braggart is a braggart who carries out his boasts.

Delegates to the World Petroleum Congress is Germany took time off to see Kennedy. They had a professional interest in seeing him spread the political oil.