

Who Creates This Image?

The story below appeared in the Dec. 19 issue of The Highlander, student newspaper at Seaholm High School. It was headlined "A Look at a Typical Teen-age Saturday Night from an Adult's Point of View." The story:

Honk! Honk! (Bill's car horn can be heard summoning his friend).
Bill: Hey Joe hop in. Let's find something to do tonight. You know just for kicks. We can bomb around town for a while. I know where there's a real neat record joint.

The "old man" in charge must be half blind. You can "lift" about seven albums at a time out of that place.

Joe: O.K. then we can drag down to the "Boy." We're supposed to meet Tom there at 10:30. Good thing I remembered that six pack of beer and carton of cigarettes.

Tom: (A couple hours later) Hey, I heard that Peggy is having a party tonight. Let's crash it. We might be able to get some good food.

YES, THERE it is. A typical teenage Saturday night. Exaggerated? Not at all, according to a local Birmingham newspaper. Today's teenagers have become a terrific problem. Why the word "teen-ager" itself has become synonymous to "shoplifter," "vandal," "drunkard" and just a general all-around "trouble maker." Their main characteristics are immaturity, immorality and recklessness.

Is this what the adult world thinks of us as teenagers? It must be judging from all of the magazine and newspaper articles written on "How can teenagers be helped?"

A PRIME example can be found right here in Birmingham. In every issue of a local newspaper for approximately the last four months a large portion of the front and editorial pages has been devoted to "Teen-age Problems."

Each article begins by presenting the problem. Then it analyzes the wrongdoer (or teen-ager), revealing all of his inner anxieties and frustrations as motives or reasons for his crime.

In conclusion it states that more parental control and stricter law enforcement is needed to help solve the problem.

WHAT RESULTS do all of these articles get? After reading them, most adults say to themselves, "Nowadays teen-agers are the same everywhere. They're either out smashing up their family car or getting drunk. Why when I was a kid I wouldn't even think of doing anything like that."

After reading about the crimes of a few teen-agers they condemn every teen-ager. They think that the minute a teen-ager is allowed out of the house with the car, he will drag down Woodward to the "Boy," meet some friends and get liquored up, then go around smashing up private property.

OF COURSE the adults may deny this by saying, "We only want to solve the problems of those few trouble-makers, we are not condemning every teen-ager."

Then why is it that often a teen-ager is the last one waited on in a store and yet is constantly being watched to make sure he does not steal anything? Why is it that on Woodward an adult driver will automatically slow down when he sees a teen-age driver, so that there will be no questions about serving as a "dragging" companion?

WE ADMIT that reckless driving is wrong, that drinking excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages is wrong and that stealing is wrong. And believe it or not most teen-agers face up to these realizations and do not partake in any of these activities.

We, as teen-agers, would like to offer these suggestions in our own behalf. For a few teen-agers there is no solution and probably never will be, but for most just a little bit of understanding at the right time, a little encouragement when things get rough and a little praise for a thing well done can have the greatest results in molding the lives of today's teen-agers into responsible citizens of tomorrow.

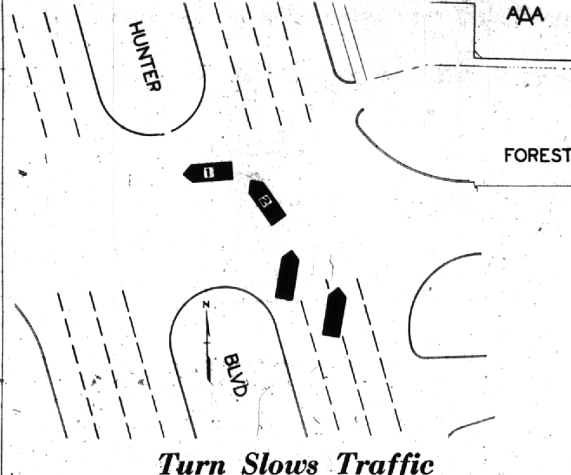
WE PLEAD guilty to running a series of articles of our teen-agers.

We admit, by featuring the wrongs of the minority teen-agers before the public, that the remaining majority who stay out of trouble and lead decent wholesome lives tend to be indicted by associated references.

However, we do not believe The Eccentric is responsible for the adults' image of the teen-agers' "Woodwarding" or drinking or doing things which have brought criticism to them as a group.

IF THE TEEN-AGERS resent this image, only they can change it. They have more influence with their contemporaries in determining what is "in" or acceptable and what is "out" or unsocial in their conduct.

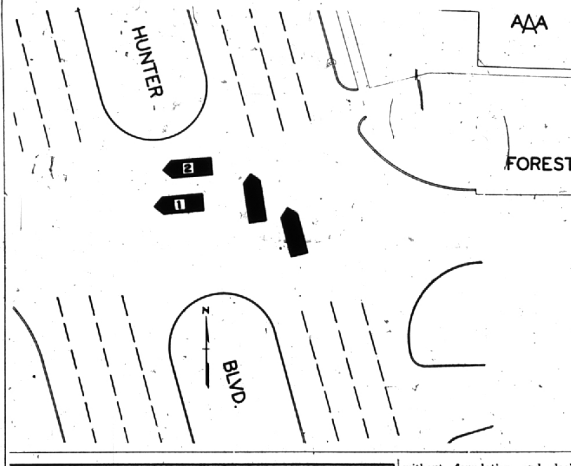
Instead of criticizing the criticism, wouldn't it be better if the teen-agers, themselves, took a good look at their image and do something about changing it for the better.



Turn Slows Traffic

Another common mistake made by motorists, is illustrated in the top diagram. The westbound vehicle (1) on Forest has not pulled far enough into the crossover, blocking access by turning Northbound Hunter car (2). Note that vehicles following car No. 2 must shift lanes in order to proceed north on Hunter. The correct method for

making the turning movement is shown in the lower diagram, with the westbound vehicle in proper position in the crossover. This allows the turning Hunter vehicle to pull into the northerly westbound lane of Forest. This is the third in a series of safety diagrams presented by The Eccentric in cooperation with the Birmingham Police Dept.



Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
Jan. 2, 1914

The proposed Birmingham club shows signs of eventually developing into an organization of which our town may be proud. They have several places in view for a clubhouse, the old Taber property on Woodward Avenue, being the most prominent. A large portion of the stock has been subscribed and some of our most prominent citizens are taking a very active part in the matter.

30 YEARS AGO
Jan. 4, 1934

Charges of disorderliness and drinking on the part of young people attending a New Year's Eve dance at the Community House were laid before the City Commission Tuesday night by James Atwell, 371 Townsend street, who declared the noise prevented him from sleeping between 11 Sunday night and 6 o'clock Monday morning. Members of the Commission agreed that the complaint was not

without foundation and decided that the most effective remedy would be to station two officers outside the Community House every night a dance is in progress.

A resolution endorsing the repaving of West Maple avenue from Southfield to Lahser roads with CWA funds was adopted by the City Commission Monday night, with instructions that a copy be forwarded immediately to the State Highway Commission. The project, if approved by the State, would result in the street being paved to a width of 40 feet between curbs and would probably include the widening of the bridge over the River Rouge. (See HAPPENINGS, 5-B)

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Reader Lauds Paper's Stand on Freedom Walk

To the Editor: Congratulations on the fine editorial (Dec. 19 issue), "Gives Meaning To Festival" in support for the religious procession now scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 9. This public event should give Brotherhood Week 1964 added meaning in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area. Much is said and heard about civil rights these days. Civil rights legislation is pending in the Congress but how many people know what is all contained in this deceptive attempt to increase the federal regulation of the majority while purporting to gain the rights of a minority?

should be the utmost dissemination of news on the important topics of the day:

What is said pro and con regarding the civil rights legislation now pending by responsible people should be worthy of a place in The Birmingham Eccentric.

The remarks of Rep. Howard Smith, Democrat of Virginia, and John O. Satterfield, former head of the American Bar Association, should give pause to one and all before the pending "civil rights" bill is considered for passage.

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Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

It's 1964. This is not an ordinary year in Birmingham. The Village of Birmingham was incorporated in 1864. We are now a hundred years old.

I suppose we wear our age well, but we have changed. The first settlers along our community in March of 1818. The first real settlement consisted of the three taverns of John Hunter, John Hamilton and Elijah Willits.

The area was then known as either Hunter's, Hamilton's or Willits', depending on what roadhouse you stopped at while traveling the Saginaw Trail.

EVENTUALLY, OUR area got the name of Piety Hill. Some religious souls say it was because of our churches. But the name apparently was used before we had any established churches.

Piety Hill was a fitting name for a traveler's stop that had little else but three taverns.

In the 1820's industry came to the area. There was a grist mill, a tannery, a foundry, a potash works, a fanning mill and in 1827 a distillery.

Because of the industrial nature of the community it came to be called Birmingham, after the industrial capital of England.

PRIOR TO incorporation the railroads came to Birmingham in 1840 and the first post office was in 1836. Through fire and natural business causes, by the time the village was incorporated, only the foundry, a wagon shop and a couple of blacksmiths remained of the once-prodigious industrial area.

Slowly it changed to residential and then suburbia. In the 146 years from Hunter's to Birmingham we have changed from industrial to residential and from very wet to dry, and yet we have very few collectors of our historical growth.

WOULDN'T IT BE a good idea while we are young enough to start a historical society so that the mementos that have been collected can be preserved?

Such a society would enable the Jim Flacks, the Russ McGrides, the Percy Burnetts and the Manley Baileys to share with the whole community their hobby, and have something chronicled for our children and their children.

It seems such a natural that such an organization be started in 1964, the year that Birmingham became 100 years old.

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

"An interested mother of six" is concerned with the effect of the tobacco industry on our youth, physically and grammatically.

She bemoans "the poor taste" that some advertisers are now displaying in their cigaret ads.

"The tobacco industry has enough of an effect on our youth," she writes, "and now to publicly damage their grammar!"

She points particularly to the ad that says "Use Tareyton smokers would rather fight than switch!" and suggests that the firm would do well to switch its ad agency.

"With taste being such a factor today," writes the mother of six, "I pondered whether we were to accept this display of obvious poor taste or to voice our disapproval."

"May our MacManus, John & Adams (Bloomfield Hills advertising agency) not stoop to such tactics! It is better that we should uplift our culture."

THE ADVERTISERS, of course, believe they are getting their message across more effectively and to more readers by this eye-catching approach.

They look upon this practice as an informal way to communicate with the masses. Believing that this is the manner in which the masses talk, anyway, they are confident that they are doing nothing serious to the language.

But to those who are concerned with proper grammar, with the education of the masses, this represents an attempt to vulgarize the language.

I personally think that "Winston tastes good as a cigaret should" would be just as eye-catching as "like a cigaret should."

THE UNTRAINED eye might not recognize the correct grammar. But there would be more of a tendency to use the proper phrase than the improper one just through usage alone.

The masses use improper grammar more as a result of repetition than of ignorance or lack of education. Therefore, repetition of correct words and phrases should help to achieve greater usage of correct grammar.

A more beautiful language, and in the long run a better understanding among peoples as a result of more effective communication.

I agree with the contention of "an interested mother of six" that we — all of us — have a responsibility to strengthen our youth by setting "good and interested examples for them."

Teen-agers are blamed for most of the 1000 auto thefts a day. That's the trouble with young Americans: they hate to walk.

California launches an attack on cosmetics firms for deceptive packaging. The attorney general has a notion there's more bottle than lotion.

The League Holds Promise

With renewed motivation, inspiration and proper direction, a nonpartisan organization such as the Oakland Citizens League could accomplish much good for the citizenry of this area.

Certainly, the problems of county government represent a challenging opportunity for the league to study and to make recommendations for sound, practical solutions.

However, to achieve such results, the OCL must be an active, energetic, citizen-involved organization. In the past year, hopeful signs have emerged in revitalized programming and membership expansion.

SOME OF the steps being undertaken correspond to those suggested by a professional researcher in his written report after a two-month study of the OCL. These include:

- Provide a program of activities to assure membership interest and participation.
- Expand the scope of the Issues Committee to include issues of importance to citizens throughout the county.
- Solicit more members from the Democratic Party. (In the past, the league has been criticized as being an organization primarily of Republicans.)
- Hold programs in various locations in the county and secure members for its committees from the different sections of the county.

THESE MEASURES undoubtedly will strengthen the OCL and make it even more of an influential citizens group than it has been in past years. It was an organization

of worthwhile goals when started 25 years ago and it still is.

In the beginning, the league enjoyed success in county governmental reform. In more recent years, there have been less meaty problems, with a resultant citizen apathy and a slackening of league activities except for the evaluation of candidates for public office.

BUT SUCH is not the case today. There are problems, pressing problems, that call for citizen interest, perusal and action. The OCL can bring these to fruition.

For example: In need of research, improvement and development in Oakland County is the structuring of county divisions such as the board of supervisors and the road commission. County home rule might solve this situation.

We hope that the OCL's new programming will continue into the future, that it will mean a true rebirth of the league and will not be just a temporary spurt of sudden energy.

From The Eccentric's Point of View

President Johnson calls on diplomats to end the cold war. And if it's convenient he'd just as soon they'd do it before next November.

A witness testifies that Bobby Baker had stacks of 1100 bills in his Senate office. Shucks, Congress still has stacks of bills—mostly unpassed.

A poll shows the South is returning to the Democratic fold. Goldwater is beginning to feel like the lost sheep.