

LWV to Explain Home Rule

In an editorial on this page last week, we suggested that a good-government type of organization could perform a valuable public service in the area of county home rule.

Now, we are pleased to report that the League of Women Voters of Birmingham is undertaking just such a task. The local chapter has thoroughly researched this subject and is making its information available to the public.

Beginning with this week's issue, the Birmingham LWV is presenting a series of articles in The Eccentric on county home rule. We are always happy to cooperate with such groups as the LWV and the Oakland Citizens League in programs to help inform the citizenry.

DRAWN FROM the LWV's five-year study of metropolitan problems, six of the first seven articles will explain the structure of county government in Michigan, the county system under the old constitution, the meaning of home rule, a history of home rule in this state, home rule in other states and Wayne County's proposed enabling legislation.

Other articles in the series after these first seven will deal with a description of Oakland County government, beginning with the board of supervisors and elected officials and continuing with a department-by-department analysis, and home rule for Oakland County with suggestions, alternatives and recommendations.

THE LWV has a long history of service to the public. More than any other group, it was largely responsible for the calling of a state constitutional convention and

then was instrumental in the successful campaign for ratification of the new document.

It is recognized and respected for its fair and nonpartisan approach to governmental problems. We know of no group that can equal the thoroughness and objectivity of its research.

County home rule needs a lot of explaining to the people of Oakland. What is it? How does it differ from our present form of government? What are its advantages, its disadvantages?

IN THE state's new constitution, which became effective Jan. 1, there is a provision for nonself-executing home rule. What does this mean? How can it be implemented? What is meant by enabling legislation?

These and other questions will be answered in the LWV series.

All of these questions—indeed, the entire subject of home rule and its ramifications—are important to the citizens of the Birmingham-Bloomfield area and the entire county.

IF OUR form of government is to be changed, we need to know why and what will be accomplished by changing it. The better informed the public, the wiser the decision, the smoother the transition if there is to be one and, in the long run, the more efficient and effective the government.

The Eccentric is pleased to cooperate with the League of Women Voters of Birmingham in bringing these articles to our readers. The information gleaned from them should benefit everyone.

Observing a Hundred Years

This is Birmingham's centennial year. It was 100 years ago that the county board of supervisors resolved that the area in Bloomfield Township which had been its shopping center be incorporated into a village under the name of Birmingham.

Then, as now, a shopping area called Birmingham serviced the entire surrounding area of Bloomfield, West Bloomfield, Southfield and Troy townships.

Indications are that the festivities of the centennial will take place during Michigan Week in May.

A lot has to be done between now and then to prepare the city for the celebration. This will take a tremendous amount of work and money if the job is to be done well.

ANTICIPATING A need to raise money, The Eccentric is offering a special program to the mayor's centennial committee. This consists of a series of historical documents to be offered for sale through our pages.

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

It should be some solace to women who are losing hair pigmentation to know that gray tresses are moving toward the top of the glamour league. Those who shrink from having their hair dyed may be uplifted to learn that some notably elegant and beautiful women are proving that one can grow gray without losing appeal. It is pleasant to note this rebirth of the obvious truth that gray hair and dowdy old age are far from synonymous. A lot of attractive gray-haired women have done themselves more harm than good via hair dye. Some of them discover the fact and return to their natural silvery color. Others remain forever brunettes or blondes or redheads, oblivious to the fact that a lined face is softened when framed in gray, and unaware that it takes more than colorful hair to conceal age.

There is something of a run on expensive books these days. Fancy volumes on history, art and the like are selling at fancy prices. On the whole, this is a pleasant thing. It is good to see people spending their money on beautiful examples of the bookmaker's art rather than on other more perishable items. One point of reservation comes to mind, however. The elaborate books tend to be leafed through and then left, beautiful but unread, on some table where they will be seen by visitors. Sometimes, seeing such a book used for coffee adornment, we catch ourselves wishing the money had been spent on four or five ordinary books designed for nothing other than to be read.

There's a GOP nomination buildup on for Scranton. Likewise for Goldwater, Rockefeller, Nixon, Romney and Stassen. Wait 'til the winning crews get to work.

Chubby Chancellor Erhard looks great in a tennigan hat. Maybe that's because he has a tennigan face.

The John Birch Society has just celebrated its fifth birthday. Now and then it behaves like a five-year-old, all right.

A complete profit from these sales will go to the centennial. The cost of promoting the sale will be borne by us.

We have undertaken it only because the cause is good and we feel the documents offered are of such quality that they would be readily acceptable in community homes.

THE DOCUMENTS offered are 12 in number and range from the Declaration of Independence to the Prayers of Peter Marshall.

But we feel that not only will the sale of each set bring a dollar into the coffers of the centennial committee but each document will actually be an asset to the home.

Very few homes have the important American documents readily available. These, if framed and properly displayed, will give the family a renewed interest in the history of our nation. It is fitting in our centennial year that we review our history to see that we gain from our forefathers' experiences.

In Berlin east is east and west is west, but how the twin did meet when the gales of the wall were opened for awhile.

The head of the Blue Cross Association would refuse Blue Cross payments to "unnecessary" hospitals. Sounds fine—until you get to the problem of who's going to have the say about which ones are unnecessary.

A fixed retirement policy is recommended for Congress. A lot of citizens are mad enough at their congressman to try fixing their retirement next election.

California authorities probe FBI handling of the kidnaping of singer Frank Sinatra, Jr. They figure the FBI didn't sing enough to California authorities.

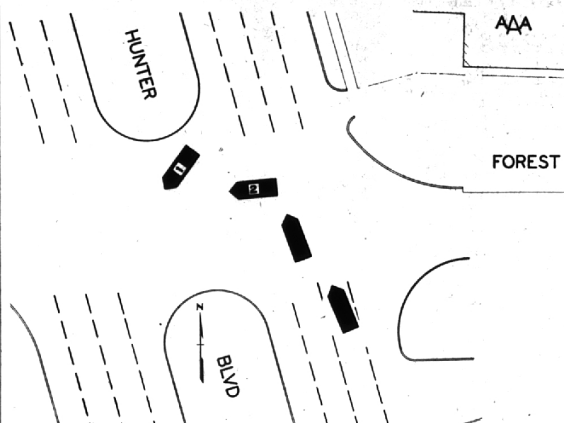
Senator Goldwater accuses President Johnson of "arm-twisting" in Congress. Johnson supporters say Goldwater's accusation is truth-twisting.

A man with kidneys transplanted from a chimpanzee is apparently healthy. That's fine—but a diet of bananas is going to get awfully monotonous.

The question of who's next in line for the presidency worries commentators—and, from a slightly different angle, Republican politicians get to work.

A new machine automatically dials phone numbers and delivers commercial messages—which many an irate recipient will make a point of ignoring.

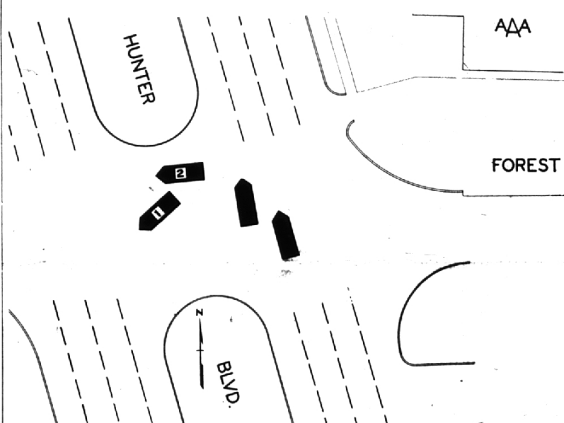
Headline: Potluck Dinner Cooks Itself. Now we're on the lookout for one that will wash its own dishes.



Making U-turns on Hunter

The incorrect and correct methods of making U-turns on Hunter Blvd. are the subject of this, the fourth in a series of safety diagrams presented by The Eccentric in cooperation with the Birmingham Police Dept. In the top diagram, car No. 1 is making an improper U-turn from the northerly portion

of the crossover. The vehicle is blocking the westbound car (2) on Forest, which in turn halts high speed traffic on northbound Hunter. In the correct method (bottom diagram), car No. 1 makes a proper U-turn from the southerly portion of the crossover, and as a result, traffic is not blocked.



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Lower Drinking Age Won't Solve Problems

To the Editor: "A Sober Student" wrote in the Dec. 27th issue that his contemporaries are more and more seeking amusement and solace in Toledo bars after a hard week at the books. The reason (?) is stated that alcohol is much easier to obtain in these famous Ohio watering spots. One doesn't have to be 21. Birmingham and environs, it is to be assumed, are too puritanical, terribly strict, in short, too dry. This Seashore student suggests lowering the age limit so that the dangers faced by his drunken classmates driving home from Toledo or ending up in the company of disreputable companions are greatly reduced. Student further implies that parents, out of consideration and love for their children, should compel this reduction.

THIS SEEMS to be a common fallacy among the youth of today; parents love their children to the degree they give in to their every desire. In fact, the student states: "A common attitude of the adults is that of 'giving in to teen-agers' which they don't like." Nothing could be farther from the truth. The real adult and the genuine parent love to give their children what they know will make them happy and useful men and women.

Among the most useful gifts a parent can give his child are love,

understanding, guidance, a sense of self-discipline and, most important, a love and understanding of God and a desire to serve his fellow man.

Now where does giving an 18-year-old the right to drink fit into the picture as a useful gift? It doesn't.

THE AUTHOR of the article of the 27th issue Germany as an example of a young culture which has free use of beer, ale and other forms of intoxicating drinks. He could have used France or Italy, too; take a good look at all three.

There is today an almost complete schism between parent and offspring in Germany. Why? The basic cause is lack of understanding.

There are two extremes, the strict though intolerant parents of the World War II era and the promiscuous and undisciplined youth of that era, just now coming of age.

Parents don't understand the wildness and "Westernization" which typifies their youth, and their kids won't try to understand their "square" parents.

The easy availability of alcoholic beverages is no minor cause of this schism.

Life in Germany is no peach (See PROBLEM, 8-B)

(MORE PEOPLE'S COLUMN LETTERS ON 8-B)

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
Jan. 9, 1914

The K. of P. Lodge which is one of the always progressive societies of our town has just signed a lease for the hall again which they now occupy in the Ford block for a term of 10 years and will remodel the same to quite an extent. When the improvements contemplated are finished they will have as cozy a lodge and club rooms as there are in the state.

One of the curiosities of the night traveler over the D.U.R. from Birmingham to Detroit, just now is the large mausoleum in Roseland Park Cemetery which is beautifully lighted by electricity every evening until 12 o'clock. The mausoleum is fast nearing completion. The terrazzo floor is nearly laid and the marble which is being installed by the Vermont Marble Co. is being put in place. Superintendent Wendorff says that barring any unforeseen mishap, that the building will be finished in the early summer.

Mr. Fred E. Holmes' chauffeur, was caught red-handed auto speeding and being new comers, and not used to our ways. Justice Campbell omitted the usual terms, \$25 or 30, and made \$5 and costs. A very easy getaway. Mr. Holmes is the new owner of the E. Donald Roberts fine country home.

(See HAPPENINGS, 2-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

In the old days Christmastime was over when you took down the tree and packed away the ornaments for another year.

Today, the spirit of Christmas stays around the house until you buy a filing cabinet or finally throw away those little cards with the word warranty written across the top.

Everything Santa brings these days is warranted and has a tag to prove it. If this continues the three-bedroom house will become obsolete, and we will have to build housing rooms instead of family rooms into all of the new houses.

IF YOU READ the cards carefully, you will find out that they are not as valuable as you might suspect. They tell you where to send the broken pieces in case the expected happens and what the manufacturer isn't responsible for.

If the manufacturer publicizes his warranty, and most do because it's good advertising, the purchaser isn't any better protected by holding this magic card than if he or she tosses it in the waste basket.

Its only advantage is that it has the address of the manufacturer.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE that the real purpose for most warranty cards today is to give the manufacturer some inexpensive research as to who is buying his product so he knows how and where to advertise it. Practically every warranty card has a little form for the new owner to fill out and send in to make his warranty effective.

You will notice that this form is never sent to the company's legal department, but rather, in most cases to the sales department.

This form in itself has no relationship to the product's durability and whoever thought up the questions never had anything given to him for Christmas.

IF THE NEW owner received the product as a gift, how would he know who bought it (male or female) or where it was bought (department store, appliance store or discount house, heaven forbid) or what prompted the giver to purchase this particular make or brand (radio, television or newspaper, naturally).

Because many people can't answer all of the questions, they never send the card back and spend the rest of their lives with a guilt feeling because they are sure they are not protected in case something happens to their prized possession.

They never get full use out of the product because they are overly careful to see that nothing happens to it.

MAYBE IT'S TIME that we gift-receivers get together and demand that manufacturers file their warranties with our local merchants and then if something happens we can let them figure out if we are covered.

Otherwise, within the next two years we are going to have to move again.

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

The facts speak for themselves. The facts are that: James A. Lane is an intern in public affairs for the Coro Foundation in California.

The Coro Foundation is an establishment that conducts research in public affairs. It is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization through which various segments of a community may participate in the training of future public leaders.

Through sponsorship of the Oakland Citizens League, the Foundation sent Lane to Oakland County on an eight-week assignment to study its political structure, the work of the OCL and the county's governmental problems.

LANE SUBMITTED a written report on his findings, with his recommendations, to the OCL.

In his report, he said—among other things—that the league lacks membership participation in its activities. Of its 400 members, he said, about 40 do most of the work.

Lane said the board of directors has delegated to the president much of the responsibility to make decisions and to take action.

Membership interest and participation can be improved, he said, through more interesting, informative programs. He proposed a broader scope to OCL projects.

THESE ARE facts. The latter items are the things Lane said in his report. It is factual that he said them, though there may be disagreement as to the accuracy of his findings.

And what he said are the facts that this writer reported in the lead news article in the Dec. 27 issue of this news-paper.

I didn't say these things about the OCL. Lane said them; I merely reported what he said.

I also reported that some board members were displeased with the reaction to Lane's report. They felt it should have been accepted in a better spirit by top management.

That they felt this way and said so is fact.

When there is a report that a citizens group lacks citizen interest and participation, this is news.

When there is a report that an organization of such importance and influence as the OCL experiences this kind of trouble, this is big news.

IN MY OPINION, some of the people who bemoan the fact that I wrote this article and caused it to be published in a prominent place in this paper would do better to see what they could gain from Lane's report.

The contention is that he said nothing new. Perhaps so. But if what he said has been true for long, doesn't that make his remarks that much more significant? Being offended by criticism does not offer much hope for improvement.

It has been reported that the OCL already has initiated (See CITY BEAT 5-B)

ESTABLISHED IN 1878

A Free, Responsible and Aggressive Press Is Democracy's First Line of Defense

Published every Thursday at Birmingham, Mich., in The Eccentric Building, 1225 Bowers Street Telephone Midwest 4-1100



PUBLISHER: PAUL N. AVERILL
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: HENRY M. HOGAN, JR.
MANAGING EDITOR: KENNETH R. WEAVER
ADVERTISING MANAGER: ARTHUR SHAFER

George R. Averill, Editor Emeritus