

Get the Facts First

Homer Case, the supervisor of Bloomfield Township, has appointed a citizens committee to study the township form of government, and contrast it with both statutory charter and incorporated cities to see in what direction Bloomfield should head in the future.

The township form of government under which Bloomfield is operating was created to take care of the vast wastelands that were not included in incorporated areas, like cities and villages.

They were given limited constitutional and statutory authority because the nature of these areas were such that they didn't need the powers to assess residents to build roads, sewers or waterlines.

The sheriff did most of the policing and the county road commission was supposed to tend to the roads.

NO ONE NEEDED sanitary sewers with their basic plumbing, and storm sewerage was taken care of by a big ditch at the side of the road.

Now emerges the problem of a well populated metropolitan township like Bloomfield with close to 25,000 inhabitants and with needs that are completely dissimilar to a traditional township. What should it do?

The legislature in 1947 recognized that not all townships could operate in the old way and created a new type of township called "charter townships" in areas of dense population or areas next to larger cities.

THIS ALLOWED PEOPLE living in unincorporated areas to adopt a charter giving the township board many of the same powers possessed by a city commission.

For example, it gave the township board the power to levy taxes up to 1/2 of 1 per cent of its assessed valuation, whereas the old township was restricted to what it could get from the county allocation board after competition with school districts and coun-

ty government in splitting the constitutional limit of 15 mills (1 1/2 per cent of assessed valuation).

It allowed the township board to initiate special assessment districts for sewers, water or paving, whereas the old law made it mandatory that these things were only started by petition of the residents.

IT ALLOWS A township to buy and sell real property without a vote of the people each time. The old restriction is quite cumbersome to a township that might need well-sites or recreational areas.

It allows a township to appoint a superintendent, with duties similar to a city manager. This is one of the first recognitions that township government can be as complex as city government with the same needs of expert assistance.

Thus, you have one answer to where Bloomfield could head.

It could also incorporate into a city as Troy and Southfield did. This would enable the township board to give the people city services and have the tax-collecting base to finance them.

WE BELIEVE that this would be a mistake in the near future.

The township's 27 or so square miles is broken up by the cities of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills in the middle. You can see by the zoning ordinance that it is also broken up into at least three different economic areas.

Our neighbors Troy and Southfield ignored these factors and have had a long row to hoe in trying to provide the necessary services to all of their residents.

Since the township is outgrowing its present form of government, it is a fore-sighted thing to do to study other forms of government before the question is forced on the voters by some sort of petition.

We compliment Mr. Case on his appointment of a study committee and wish the new committee success in its search for answers.

Yes, It's a Positive Step

"Let's do something to help our young people instead of spending so much time talking about their problems. Let's do something constructive. Let's try to keep them from getting into trouble."

How often do we hear these comments? How frequently do we hear the plea for preventive programs? Who among us has not said at one time or another that too much emphasis is placed on youths after they get into trouble?

The constant wish is to devise programs with a positive rather than a negative approach; that will produce effective results, that will accomplish worthwhile goals.

It is The Birmingham Eccentric's considered opinion that the Learning Abilities Laboratory in the Bloomfield Hills School District is such a program. We believe that this experiment in psychological testing and counseling will be effective.

BOTH THE school administration and the sponsoring Wayne State University Department of Clinical and Educational Psychology have stated that it is an experiment. So let there be no quarreling on that score.

This Learning Abilities Laboratory seeks to determine which children have emotional problems, what those problems are and how to deal with them.

Besides offering psychological counseling for troubled children in this particular system, the program is designed to gain information that will be helpful generally in dealing with emotional problems throughout the educational system.

From The Eccentric's Point of View...

So it now comes out that one of Bobby Baker's business associates sent a \$540 stereo record player to President Johnson's former Washington, D. C. home. This "associate" had sold the then Vice President Johnson a big insurance policy, and "his" said that Bobby wanted the "associate" to show his appreciation of that business deal. Mr. Johnson states that he assumed the record player was a gift from Bobby—and wasn't Bobby secretary of the Democratic Senator's own closely held group? And why, naturally, should a man question the nature of a gift from such a close friend? A man shouldn't be of course—for in this case Lyndon really was innocent of any wrong. Wasn't Bobby at fault here?

Say what you will... the streets and sidewalks of today are much cleaner than when women wore long, trailing dresses. It was Mattie Baldwin, Birmingham "crusader," who long ago got the then

Students, teachers and parents all are included in the experiment. Thus, all should benefit from it and that much more information should be gleaned from it.

IS THIS a sound investment? We believe it is. The school system pays Wayne \$20,000 a year for three years to provide this service.

This compares to \$18,000 per year which the district reportedly would have to pay as the salary for one psychologist. In its contract with Wayne, the school system is getting the services of several fully accredited consulting psychologists—for the testing of some 5,000 students, plus counseling when necessary (or asked) for students, parents and teachers.

Referrals to social service agencies and to psychiatrists are made when there is an indication that such assistance is needed or merited.

HERE IS A PROGRAM that seeks to identify a problem before it becomes serious. This is the thing we've been asking for all along. Surely, this is a positive step toward prevention.

We will be watching with great interest the results of this program as it progresses, and we trust that the residents of the school district will adopt an attitude of open-mindedness toward this experiment designed to help a community better understand the emotional stresses that lie hidden within our young boys and girls; stresses that often can only be detected through careful examination by skilled and concerned professionals trained in personality and psychological diagnoses.

Village Council to pass an ordinance against men spitting on sidewalks—many men in these days chewed tobacco, too.

Numerous political posters now intimate that one Richard Nixon more and more looms as a possible Republican presidential candidate for 1964. They reason that a convention deadlock, with not enough votes for either Rockefeller or Goldwater, could bring Nixon into the fracas to contend for the office. Well, "politics does make strange bed-fellows." To be sure—yes, to be sure—which is about the only surety teaching the subject.

It's been figured by experts that the average woman speaks 4,800 words each day. Now, if some other expert will come up with the average male verbiage per day, maybe the sum total of both will amount to too many words spoken.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Offers Us Suggestions For Handling Teen News

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Student Congress of Seaholm High School, I should like to protest the articles in recent issues of The Birmingham Eccentric playing up juvenile delinquency in Birmingham. The most sensational reading, but they have not presented a true picture of the teenagers in Birmingham.

The delinquent acts you have reported have been the work of a very small percentage of the Birmingham teenagers, and the majority are good citizens and are not guilty of this delinquency.

In order to present a true picture of the Birmingham teenagers, we believe you have a responsibility to print complimentary and constructive articles. Most of us are trying to do well, and we want to know that you support us and believe in us.

HOW CAN you do this? There are many good teenagers. At Christmas time we collected food and distributed hundreds of baskets to needy families. This is a true picture of our teenagers.

You could also feature an outstanding teen of the week, rotating among the several high schools in this area. Instead of just playing up the poor teenage driving, why not ask the local police to select a teenage safe driver of the month, thus encouraging good driving?

YOU COULD run an article on the local high school girls, complimenting them on their good grooming and good taste. They have not been swayed by the Hollywood-inspired hairstyles and make-up which has made freaks out of girls in some schools across the country.

Instead of underrating the young people of Birmingham for loitering in the stores, you could encourage the merchants and local citizens to help us start a place of our own. What we need is a place where we can go on week ends and after the high school games. We want a place where we can meet and dance and get something to eat and talk.

If we had a place where we could gather with our friends, it would lessen the racing down the drive-ins. The center could contain a record player, a piano, a concession stand, tables and chairs, an area for dancing and possibly some ping pong tables.

THE ECCENTRIC could also run a weekly symposium, getting the views of Birmingham teenagers on current topics. You could run a series of articles on the foreign exchange students currently attending our schools. You could ask them to compare the American edu-

ational methods with educational methods in their countries, and ask them about their countries.

This year some of the local churches are making a study of "Youth in the World Today," and these articles would be of timely interest to the members of their congregations.

YOU GIVE good coverage to school sports, but many teenagers are not out for athletics, and those of us who are do other things, also. The weekly columns from the different schools are good, but each column is probably read by only the students and parents connected with the respective school.

We believe we have one of the finest groups of teen-agers in the country here in Birmingham. Let your readers know that the majority of us are not delinquent teen-agers.

Help promote Birmingham teenagers and encourage them to do well. Show us that you are behind us and believe in us. We believe your readers will enjoy reading constructive articles about us, because we are the future of Birmingham and the future of America.

Thank you for your future cooperation and support.

DAVID ZIMMER
President of Student Congress
Seaholm High School

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Increase in Service Costs More Dollars

To the Editor:

There are two reports in your Jan. 15 issue which merit the very serious study of residents of Bloomfield Township.

The one reports on the appointment of a citizens committee to study what form of local government might best serve the needs of our community, and the other describes the necessity of a \$6 million dollar bond issue to provide additional classroom space in Bloomfield Hills Schools.

With all of its wisdom, we cannot expect the committee to find a way that will provide us with comforts and security of urban life but at a cost no greater than those that prevailed when cows grazed in our fields.

WE CANNOT expect to achieve the services of an urban community (viz. sewers, fire, waste collection, adequate police and fire protection, etc.) without the imposition of additional taxes.

With all of its wisdom, we cannot expect the committee to find a way that will provide us with comforts and security of urban life but at a cost no greater than those that prevailed when cows grazed in our fields.

FOR THIS reason, it is prudent for us to give some serious study to fundamental financial facts that will be involved in an evaluation of the proposed bond issue. One of these facts is our need for additional classroom space and the mounting cost of meeting that need.

We must come to the conclusion that if we are to meet the aspirations of our school board and currently set in motion the machine that will bring urban services to Bloomfield Hills, then certainly we had better prepare ourselves for a tax burden of monumental proportions.

It is obvious that the money to pay for adequate urban government and expanded school requirements must ultimately come from the same source.

NOW, THE School Board's plan for expansion is predicated on the belief that the taxpayers of this community will want to continue to pay for the luxury of limiting each classroom to 25 pupils.

This means that while the Birmingham schools accommodate 178 pupils in five classrooms with five teachers, here in Bloomfield Hills we need seven classrooms and sev-

en teachers to do the same job. Certainly, if it can be demonstrated that the worth of a citizen is related to the size of his classes in primary and secondary schools (i.e., the smaller the class, the better the citizen) we only extend our condolences to our friends in Birmingham.

THEIR THRIFT in permitting classes of 15 will prove to be expensive economy.

The burden of our plight in Bloomfield Hills is that we must resolve our problems realistically. The aspirations we have to create a model community must be measured against the ability of our people to pay and pay.

The day of reckoning is ahead and it will probably come when the cost of achieving the recommendations of the Citizens Committee is estimated. Our determination to create a utopia is most praiseworthy but even in utopia it takes more than faith to pay the bills.

E. LEO KOESTER
4750 Pickering Road
Birmingham

STRICTLY FRESH

It's said that the man who rows the boat, doesn't have time to rock it.

A middle-aged man dreams of



getting a smile from his banker instead of from a pretty girl.

Grunting adds to the total effect of almost any job you undertake.

In the battle of tongues, many are sure they can hold their own, but seldom do.

The University of Michigan was the first in the U.S. to provide a laboratory course in hygiene, started in 1884.

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
Jan. 30, 1914
Apparently the combination of white with black crepe has come to stay. In those shops that specialize in hats, a hat of approval one sees a great deal of white crepe used in millinery. In the winter time it appears in facings or borders of made-up garments. It is in facing hats of black crepe that it is best liked. For summer mourning, white crepe is used more extensively. We are indebted to the English manufacturers of this fine product. Crepe used to be a luxury which only rich people could afford.

Miss Winnifred Robinson, the popular young lady at Miner Grocery Co., stole a march on John Heth this year, and walked west on Martin Street and as she passed John Heth's home saw his barn robin ahead, and now announces that she is the first of John or any other of Oakland and saw the very first 1914 robin. For the past 22 years Mr. Heth has announced his annual first robin of the season. He now is a crier only.

There are three bidders for furnishing a new Post Office and others who have expressed a desire to put in a bid. No matter who gets the lease, which will run either five or ten years, whenever and wherever settled upon, our people are to have a modern up-to-date Post Office and one they need never be ashamed of.

30 YEARS AGO
Feb. 1, 1934
While state police, sheriff's deputies and city police departments throughout southeastern Michigan were combing the area for his assassin, Fire Chief Russell V. Moore of Bloomfield Hills was rapidly recovering last night from the effects of being slugged and burned Tuesday afternoon when two thugs looted the city's safe in the Harbour Building and escaped with an unknown amount of cash.

Charles W. Crandell, superintendent of the Birmingham public schools, has been extended a contract at a salary of \$5,000 for the 1934-35 school year. It was learned yesterday, Mr. Crandell refused to commit himself as to whether or not he would accept the contract. Asked yesterday whether he would renew his contract, he said he would (See HAPPENINGS, 8-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

I looked all through the surgeon general's report on the effect of smoking and didn't see one mention of what happens to people who smoke matches.

Never having been addicted to cigars, I can casually wonder why anyone would want to smoke them if they do to your body all of the things the medical men say they do.

But, I do chew on a pipe while sitting at my desk meditating, and I can see why a pipe isn't as bad as those nasty reefers.

I fill the bowl of the pipe first thing in the morning. I light it and watch the lazy curls of smoke curl toward the ceiling. Then I light it again.

SOMEONE WILL DROP by the office and I'll take the pipe out of my mouth to talk, and then I have to light it again.

The phone rings and I lay my pipe down for a minute and at the end of the conversation, it's light-up time again.

At the end of a day I've probably filled the bowl of the pipe four or five times, but I've used up at least two books of matches.

At the rate a pipe smoker uses up matches, he either eventually buys a match company or kicks the habit. When he runs out of matches he sneaks around looking for abandoned matchboxes lying on top of some unsuspecting soul's desk.

If you think a drug addict is bad when he's out of drugs, just be careful of that matchless pipe smoker.

WE, IN THE news room, used to sneak down and appropriate the books of matches in the stock room left over from Christmas until the office manager locked the door and posted a note "This is not Christmas, keep out."

This forced us to befriend the local real estate office in town because they are always sending out packs of matches as mementos.

Every time I leave a restaurant I stuff my pockets with those little flint adorned treasures. Unfortunately, you can't take too many because they usually set them out where everyone can see you sampling the merchandise.

Maybe we pipe smokers would be better off if the medical profession announced that pipe smoking was worse than cigarettes. We wouldn't have to go to a cocktail party with our pockets full of tobacco, pipe cleaners, tampers, matches and, of course, a pipe.

THE LETTERS we write wouldn't have that telltale little burn in the middle where an ash fell out as we bent our head to read at our desks.

(See ECCENTRICITIES, 8-B)

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

It was a talk that should be heard by the entire community.

It was too long, perhaps, inasmuch as most of us have a concentration span of about 15 minutes and he held his thoughts together for 50.

But Bob Thom's speech before the Jaycees and their bosses at their annual banquet last week offered the best perspective of this community I have yet heard.

It wasn't the Bloomfield Township artist-community leader's oratory but the content that had least this individual with the desire to go out and crusade for a better Birmingham for tomorrow.

BOB'S THE type of person who thinks deeply as he speaks; thus he talks slowly, but this helps the listener to stay with him as he expresses his thoughts.

He has a conversational approach; and on this occasion at least it was as if he were talking confidentially to each person in the room.

He left no one untouched, jabbing his ever-ready needle at all of us in an uninhibited but meaningful way. He may have ruffled a few feathers; but when the feathers settled, the "ruffle" must have derived some benefit from the medication.

AFTER THE banquet, toastmaster Bill Roberts was heard to say:

"Several people asked me if I felt his needle. I told them, 'No, he's jabbed me with it so many times before.'"

Let's face it; Bob Thom is not inhibited by the proprieties of society. He says what comes to mind, not belaboring himself or his audience with diplomatic apologies.

And if you're offended, obviously you've paid more attention to the manner in which he spoke rather than to what he said.

AND WHAT Bob Thom said at this affair augurs well for this centennial year of ours. It should help pull us together, to get us a little further toward that corner to the future.

We're not a quiet little village any longer. We are a sophisticated city of 28,000 people and with the potential for a great future if we are but ready to help achieve it. In my book, Bob Thom is a true intellectual; an original thinker; a creative artist with the ability to communicate effectively with the nonintellectual.

He is able to get his ideas across in language—in expressions—that are understandable to all. He is not, thank goodness, a pseudo-intellectual.

AND I SHOULD like to see an opportunity for the entire community to hear this talk by Bob Thom.

How about a Centennial Rally in Shoh! Park with a band concert or a hootenanny and Bob Thom as the speaker?

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