



The Nation's Top Prize-Winning Suburban Weekly

Major News In Area: Ax Murder Of 7

By DAVE PHILPO Area News-Editor

The man walked down the dirt road, stopped and waved his hands in the air... The truck driver hit the brakes and brought his vehicle to a dead stop on the shoulder of the highway.

WILLIAM G. GRAVLIN, who spent almost two years in Pontiac State Hospital after stabbing his cousin's wife in 1961, awaits trial Jan. 19 in Oakland County Jail on a charge of first-degree murder.

Police found a blood-stained ax under the house. In a sanity hearing before Circuit Judge James S. Thorman, Gravin was ruled mentally competent and able to assist counsel in his defense.

This, however, does not rule out the possibility of a plea of insanity or temporary insanity during the trial.

A NEW ZONING ordinance was adopted, 4-1, which included provisions for 3-story apartments and more units per acre, despite a citizens committee survey showing that a majority of residents were opposed to the higher buildings.

In retaliation, the citizens committee endorsed two stickier candidates to run against two incumbents who had voted for the controversial measure.

The battle raged right up to election day, April 1, and when the votes were tallied one "three-story" proponent and one "two-story" advocate had been elected.

THE WRITE-IN candidates outpollled the incumbents, but several of the votes were cast in the wrong slots on the ballot.

A court order forbade any of the candidates from taking seats at the commission table and for a month the city had only two commissioners.

A county board of canvassers subsequently discounted the misplaced write-in votes and awarded the disputed seats to the two incumbents, Robert A. Frye, the lone

Asks Joint Project For Storm Drain

By DAVE PHILPO road only." Case said, "It will cost us a lot more if we have to construct storm drains later."

If Pontiac doesn't agree to join the project, the township has the alternative of asking the state to install larger tubes and paying the difference in price, Case added.

THE SUPERVISOR said that Bloomfield Township is ready to petition the county drain commissioner to get the project under way.

The drains would provide Pontiac with an outlet for storm waters in the southern end of the city and would solve one of the problem areas in the northern portion of the township.

TWO STORM drains are proposed to serve an area bounded by Franklin on the west and the Grand Trunk Railroad on the east, extending along Square Lake and including 1,000 feet east and north into the city.

According to cost estimates, Pontiac would pay \$506,555; Bloomfield Township, \$314,186; the Oakland County Road Commission, \$88,400; and the state highway department, \$58,257.

The matter of how to finance the project is yet to be decided, but in the township case would be to see the assessment for storm drains spread at large over the whole community.

IN HIS letter, Case urged immediate action due to planned development in the area. If the joint drain project cannot be worked out, the state will provide its own drainage for the road.

"If the state goes ahead and does the construction, it will drain the



L. R. (DICK) GARE BIDS FAREWELL TO CITY Mayor Charles W. Renfrew listens to city manager's remarks.

Gare Ends Duties Today As B'ham's City Manager

Birmingham City Manager L. R. (Dick) Gare ended a "very satisfying" 15-year-association with the City and the commission Monday night.

Gare, 61, the City's chief administrative officer since 1957, will retire officially today, but Monday's commission meeting ended his formal duties.

Robert S. Kenning, assistant city manager, has been selected by the commission to replace Gare.

Mayor Charles W. Renfrew termed Gare's retirement as "sort of the end of a dynasty."

B'ham Eyes Full-Time Job For Attorney

Birmingham commissioners Monday directed the administration to study the possibility of hiring a full-time attorney to handle the City's legal work.

All legal matters involving the City are presently handled by the Pontiac firm of Howlett, Hartman and Beier.

Mayor Charles W. Renfrew said that he believed the City may have reached the point where a full-time attorney would be advisable.

COMMISSIONER Carl F. Ingraham said he would agree to look into the matter but doubted if "we could find comparable counsel."

Commissioners approved Monday night a \$1,750 increase in the firm's retainer fee for the months of December, 1964, through June, 1965.

Robert S. Kenning, assistant city manager, had recommended the fee increase because of the added time the firm is serving the City.

Mayor Renfrew termed the increase "fully justified."

Planners to Hear Rezoning Request

A public hearing to consider the rezoning of property in Birmingham Farms subdivision from residential to multiple has been scheduled for 8 p.m. Monday by the Bloomfield Township Planning Commission.

The proposed changes are in Lots 9 and 10, Section 32, at the corner of Sandalwood and Telegraph roads, and Lot 18 of the same section on the west side of Telegraph, north of Cedarbrook Drive.

Text of the proposed ordinance and accompanying maps are available for public inspection at the clerk's office during regular business hours, according to Herbert Herzberg, chairman of the planning commission.

Early Deadlines Next Issue

Offices of The Birmingham Eccentric will be closed on New Year's Day, Jan. 1. They will be open, however, on Saturday, Jan. 2.

Centennial Tops News Events In B'ham In 1964

BY LARRY EVOE City Editor

The top news event in Birmingham in 1964 was the city's springtime observance of the 100th anniversary of its incorporation as a village.

Thousands of persons jammed the city during the month of May to take part in and witness various centennial events. The two-week long program was chairmaned by former Mayor Mrs. G. Howard (Twink) Willett.

The weather was letter perfect on Saturday, May 23, as the 125-piece Michigan State University Marching Band swung up Woodward Ave., leading the mile-long parade.

The previous week residents were entertained by the U.S. Marine Corps Band and provided with fun-filled days and nights with an old-fashioned Village Fair in Shain Park.

NOT ALL was mirth and merriment in 1964 in Birmingham.

On the governmental level, a blue-ribbon citizens committee presented city officials with an opportunity to plan for the future development of the community.

Following an eight-month study, the Civic Design Committee, subcommittee of the Citizens Action Committee—outlined general concepts for the Birmingham of the future.

The CDC proposal called for the immediate construction of a ring road around the central business district, erection of more parking lot areas and continued development of the civic center.

THE THIRD major news story in 1964 was one of tragedy.

On a damp foggy Friday morning, a 14-year-old Birmingham girl, Nancy Jean Jones, was stabbed to death as she walked near Barnum Junior High School.

Within an hour, Birmingham police had arrested Daniel Lovas, 15, also of Birmingham, in connection with the slaying.

Several weeks later Daniel admitted stabbing the girl in testimony before Oakland County Probate Judge Norman R. Barnard.

The boy made his confession to defense-hired psychiatrists after he had been administered a "truth serum" of sodium amytal.

He is still a patient at Pontiac State Hospital.

THE BIRMINGHAM Public Schools also made news during the year.

In June, voters approved a \$5,300,000 bond issue for construction of new facilities, okayed a 5.6 mill increase in taxes and extended for five years another 1.9-mill levy.

Also at that election, Mrs. Louise Adams was elected to a full school board term. She had previously been appointed to fill the spot vacated by the late Mrs. L. H. Beers.

B'ham Jaycees Start Search for 'Man of the Year'

The search is on again by the Birmingham Junior Chamber of Commerce for the "Outstanding Young Man of the Year" in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area.

The name of any Birmingham area man between 21 and 35 who has been active in community work may be entered in the contest.

ALL ENTRIES must be returned to The Community House by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 13.

Henry M. Hogan, Jr., associate publisher of The Eccentric, was the 1963 winner and F. Ward Ouradnik, administrative director of The Eccentric and former executive director of the Community House, was the winner in 1964.

and improve the educational quality of the schools.

Known as the "Birmingham Plan," the project's principal author, Supt. John Blackhall Smith, calls it a "research and development" program.

One city commissioner, Robert W. Page, was re-elected at the polls. (See EVENTS, 6-A)

Retail Sales Climb With Higher Incomes

(Special to the Eccentric) NEW YORK—How well did Birmingham residents make out, economically, in the past fiscal year? The figures for the period are now in.

They show how much was earned and spent per household in the local area and the degree to which the community as a whole participated in the general prosperity.

For the majority of local families, incomes were higher than before and more money was available for discretionary spending. As a result, it turned out to be a banner year for most retail businesses.

THE FINDINGS are set forth in the annual fiscal-year survey conducted by the Standard Rate and Data Service. It gives comparable figures for every section of the country for the 12-month period ending June 30, 1964.

Retail stores in Birmingham, it shows, chalked up sales in the amount of \$105,183,000, which topped the previous year's \$94,674,000.

How large a volume this was is indicated by the fact that it represented .0416 per cent of the nation's retail business; whereas, on the basis of local population, its quota was only .0151 per cent of the national.

SOLID GAINS were registered by most retail lines. Those selling automotive equipment set the pace, as they had done the year before.

Home appliances were also in the forefront. Electric clocks, automatic coffee makers and air conditioners, washing ma-

chine and other household conveniences were among the big sellers.

The increase in business activity is attributed chiefly to the steady rise in personal income, bolstered to an extent by the cut in taxes, and to the fact that the consumer was in a buying mood.

THE REPORT shows that net earnings in Birmingham in the year, after deduction for taxes, amounted to \$129,442,000, as against the previous year's \$115,708,000.

It was equivalent to an average of \$14,789 in disposable income per local household.

Just how long business throughout the country will stay at the present level, how much better it will get, if any, and what promise 1965 holds forth, are matters of current speculation. Most economists feel that the next six months, at least, will be good ones.

Reflects on 36 Years In B'ham Post Office

By LARRY EVOE A familiar smiling face will be missing at the Birmingham Post Office next week.

Eugene C. Beers, assistant postmaster, will be beginning his retirement and won't be on hand to greet the customers as he has for so many years.

Beers, 55, has worked for the post office department 36 years and all of his service has been in Birmingham.

"I started work on Oct. 1, 1928, in the old building over where Huse-

ton Hardware now stands," he recalled. Although his specific job was that of a clerk, Beers admits that "in those days we had a little bit of everything."

"We only had about 30 employees in 1928 and, believe me, there was plenty to do," he said.

BEERS MOVED up to his present position of second in command of the now 176-employee post office in September, 1938. Joseph H. Byrne was the postmaster at that time.

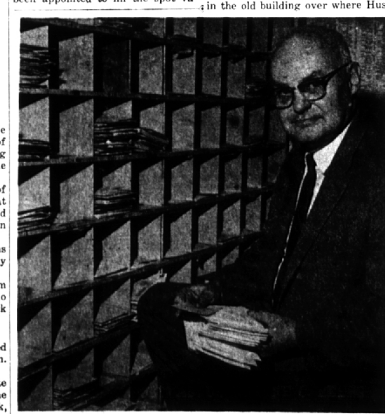
Born and educated in Lansing, Beers came by his interest in post office work quite naturally.

"My father worked for the post office in Lansing as a carrier for more than 30 years," he said. Beers also has a son, Gerald, who has been a carrier in Birmingham for about seven years.

"I was only about two blocks away when it happened," he said. "We went over to see if there was anything that could be done, but of course it was too late."

Things have changed a lot in Birmingham in the last 36 years, Beers said.

"I used to know where everybody in town lived. In fact, you could stand in the post office window sorting mail in 1928 and see just about everybody's home."



ASSISTANT POSTMASTER EUGENE C. BEERS "I grew up with the Birmingham Post Office."

IN THIS ISSUE

Local collegians preview New Year's Eve. See pictures on 1-C.

Birmingham first graders take part in national experiment on new method of learning reading. See story, pictures on 1-D.

Carlton World Open rated top sports event in 1964. See stories, pictures on 1-E.

Table of contents listing sections and page numbers: 8-E Editorial, 1-B Art for Art's Sake, 1-D Homecoming, 1-D Movie Guide, 2-D Nature Now, 3-A Business News, 2-D Real Estate, 4-B Church, 1-B City Beat, 6-T Classic Ads, 4-D Crossword Puzzle, 4-D Down to Earth, 1-B Eclecticities.

Early Deadlines Next Issue

Offices of The Birmingham Eccentric will be closed on New Year's Day, Jan. 1. They will be open, however, on Saturday, Jan. 2.

Because of the holiday, early deadlines will be observed.

Therefore, all advertisers and news contributors are asked to submit their copy as early as possible for the Jan. 7 issue.

The Birmingham Eccentric extends the greetings of the season to everyone.