

Firemen Plan Theater Party

Birmingham city commissioners Monday night approved a request from the Uniformed Firemen's Association to sell tickets for the organization's annual theater party.

Thomas L. Fox, secretary-treasurer of the organization, said the proceeds from the affair will go to the group's welfare and recreation fund.

The show is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 1, at the Birmingham Theatre.

Commissioners also approved a request by Cub Scout Troop No. 1008, Adams School, to hold its annual picnic at Springdale Park Sunday, May 24, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Local Woman M.D. Pioneered Newest Polio Treatments

By JULIE CANDLER
Special Writer

Dr. Ben Casey would be sick with jealousy if he knew of the medical adventures of Birmingham's Dr. Ethel Calhoun of the Sister Elizabeth Kenny Center in Pontiac.

She won the acclamation of former football great Pete Dawkins when she helped him recover from the after-effects of polio.

Dawkins credits his care at the Sister Elizabeth Kenny Foundation's treatment center for the return of muscle coordination and strength in his afflicted leg.

The 98-pound, five-foot-two physician recalls 17-hour days, even going without sleep for days at a time during the serious polio epidemics which used to strike Oakland County.

It was during and just after World War II, and the energetic doctor was using the famous Kenny method for treating her patients at the Oakland County Contagious Hospital.

"SOMETIMES I would get home late at night and get a few hours' sleep. Then a doctor would call me and say he was sending a patient to the hospital for diagnosis," recalls Dr. Calhoun.

"Then I would have to go right back."

At that time, she was living in the home she occupies today at 707 Lakeview, Birmingham.

Her small son and her husband, Robert H. Whitlatch, willingly shared her time and attention with the young polio victims who needed her.

(Son Robert Calhoun Whitlatch, Ph.D., now 23, teaches speech and dramatics at Illinois State College.)

"To do what I did, takes a very understanding husband," she believes.

Mr. Whitlatch, S. S. Kresge Co. executive who died four years ago, was very understanding.

"HE KNEW THAT his wife had wanted to be a doctor ever since she was a little girl, who loved driving the horse and buggy for the country doctor who was her uncle.

"I used to pick up the medical journals in my uncle's office and try to read them," she recalls of her childhood in Ohio.

"But I couldn't understand what I was reading. I promised myself that some day I was going to read those journals and understand what it was all about."

She decided, too, that she would have a horse and buggy and ride out to care for the sick, like her uncle.

"Only I was going to take a collie dog along with me," she says.

"The automobile spoiled my plans, but I had a collie dog for 25 years—two of them for 13 years each."

She followed up her A.B. degree from Western Reserve in Cleveland with an M.D. from the University of Michigan. After interning and studying orthopedics in Worcester, Mass., she was married and came to Detroit. Her young husband was assigned to the Kresge executive offices there.

FOR FIVE YEARS she practiced general medicine from an office in the Kales Building, formerly the S. S. Kresge offices, in downtown Detroit.

It was about 1942 that she met Sister Elizabeth Kenny at a Michigan Medical Society meeting.

"She was just under six feet tall and a striking-looking woman," recalls the doctor. She was a very devoted, determined woman. She knew she had something which would help these patients."

Sister Kenny was determined to see her concepts and treatment of polio accepted by American physicians. That was why she was attending the meeting where Dr. Calhoun met her.

So impressed was Dr. Calhoun that she went to the University of Minnesota for courses in the Kenny method.

"I was going to give it a whirl and see what it would do, and I was convinced."

SHE USED THE Kenny method first at Herman Kiefer Hospital, where she taught others the technique. Then she answered the call for help with the polio patients at the Oakland County Contagious Hospital. She stayed last year.

"I think we saved many children and adults from deformities and from going into respirators," she said. "When they developed the technique in the chest muscles, we used the Kenny technique of teaching them to breathe properly, along with the moist, hot packs and later muscle re-education."

Before Sister Kenny, the only treatment for afflicted legs and arms was to keep the patient in bed with aspirin, and later put him in a cast. A few doctors used heat treatments later.

Using the Kenny method, Dr. Calhoun said, "I could see the improvement that it made. The moist packs were applied very hot. It was the intense heat and the cooling down that relaxed the muscles and relieved the pain."

Later, there were procedures of therapy and exercise to try to get the muscles out to normal length. It was far better than the old method of putting them in casts.

"BY THE TIME they would take the cast off, the immobilization had caused stiffness and deformities."

With the Sister Kenny Foundation's Torck Drive agency, Dr. Calhoun still treats many former polio patients whose muscular development she checks regularly.

She and other staff members use the Kenny techniques for the rehabilitation of patients suffering from after-effects of strokes, injuries, arthritis and dozens of other ailments. They provide polio shots for patients who could not otherwise afford them.

Until recently, Dr. Calhoun had spent five years caring for patients who came to the Kenny Foundation's rehabilitation centers in both Ferndale and Pontiac.

Last week, the Ferndale center was moved to the Rehabilitation Institute, adjoining Harper Hospital in Detroit. Dr. Calhoun now directs the diagnostic, treatment and consultation services provided at the Sister Kenny Physical Therapy Department and Rehabilitation Center in Pontiac.

There she will carry on with the philosophy that has made her life as exciting as any Ben Casey.

That sincere and simple philosophy is: "When people are real sick, and there's no one else to take care of them, it's a doctor's duty to do it."

Abraham Lincoln paid 37½ cents for his first pair of eyeglasses which he bought in 1856.



A 14-MONTH-OLD PATIENT gets a loving hug from Dr. Ethel Calhoun of the Sister Elizabeth Kenny Foundation. The youngster is Kathy Roehler of Clarkston, who is recovering from paralysis left by an undiagnosed illness eight months ago.

Public Schools Show 9,000 Increase in '64

Nine thousand more children are enrolled in Oakland County public schools this year than last and almost half of them are in senior high.

There is an increase of 4,168 in the enrollment figures of the 30 school districts that comprise Oakland Schools.

The six grades of the elementary schools accounted for 3,058-child increase, while in the three grades of junior high school 1,997 youngsters were counted over last year's enrollment.

These numbers, from the official September child-count, are the basis on which state aid is paid to local school districts.

ONLY THE kindergartens are less crowded this year. There is a drop of 216 children, which places the number of beginners of 1963-64 at 18,822.

The eleventh grade, increased by 2,287, and the twelfth, with a 1,608 gain, show how far the bumper crop of post-war babies has gone in school. Some educators also believe this figure indicates a higher percentage of youngsters are staying in high school after the legal school leaving age of 16. The total number of eleventh graders is 12,244, with 9,383 in the twelfth grade.

Other big gains in grade levels are in the seventh grade—1,023 more children, the sixth grade—823 more and the eighth—719 more.

Fifth grade teachers counted 14,714 children in their classes, but the gain over the last year was a mere 27—just enough to fill one new classroom. The next smallest increase was in the ninth grade with 255 more students—enough for nine new classrooms.

The total number of public school children enrolled in all grades and special education classes was 191,926.

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City Plan Board Studies Zone Change

A request for a zoning map change on E. Maple was referred last week by Birmingham city commissioners to the plan board for study and recommendation.

The petitioner, H. A. Wiles of Royal Oak, has asked that the City change the zoning on the property he owns at the southeast corner of Maple and Yorkshire from single-family to multiple-family.

Wiles said the property has almost no value as a single-family lot. He said multiple-family property adjoins his to the south.

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Property Owners To Get Refunds

City Commissioners Monday night voted to send refunds to property owners involved in three construction projects recently completed in Birmingham.

A total of \$276 was refunded to three property owners along Hunter, south of Maple to Forest, involved in the construction of an access drive near Peabody's market.

The Becker Orthopedic Clinic on S. Woodward at Smith will receive \$93 for overpayment in the construction of its access drive.

The Birmingham House Motel will receive \$406 as the unexpended balance for the construction of an access drive on Hunter and Maple.

Cataract, one of the major causes of blindness in the world, is a clouding of the lens in the eye that blocks the passage of light rays needed for sight. It is treated only by surgery.

Arthritis has at least 60 different forms and requires a doctor's diagnosis and treatment.

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