

The Three Most Qualified

It is not usual for The Eccentric to endorse candidates for public office the week before the election. We try to do this far enough ahead to give aggrieved parties an opportunity to answer any questions we might raise.

Along with this policy we don't print letters to the editor about candidates the last week before the election, so that no one can raise issues at a time when opponents would not be in a position to answer them.

Even though we have these policies, every once in a while we have to change them.

Because both Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills are having well-contested elections, we couldn't treat both communities in fairness to all concerned in last week's issue, so one city was left out.

Inasmuch as we treated the Birmingham candidates quite exhaustively last week, we have undertaken the job in Bloomfield this week.

THE CITY of Bloomfield Hills offers problems very different from those of the City of Birmingham, and yet the main issues in both towns seem to be zoning.

Bloomfield Hills in the last month has enacted a new zoning ordinance. And we feel in the most part it's a good and well-needed ordinance. Editorially, we found fault with one part, that of three-story multiple-housing units, but we stressed our approval of the rest of it.

THIS NEW ordinance seems to have split the candidates into two camps, which is unfortunate, because qualification for office does not rest on one vote, or one like or dislike.

There are six announced candidates for office although only four will appear on the ballot. Two are waging a sticker or write-in campaign.

Only one candidate is an elected incumbent. He is James A. Beresford. His experience on the commission since 1948 makes him the most qualified candidate and we therefore endorse him.

ON THE other hand, while it is every

citizen's right to run for public office via the write-in route, we believe this practice has a tendency to disrupt an orderly election.

We feel that if a person is seriously interested in being elected to public office, he should take the time and effort to be properly placed before the electorate on the ballot.

Thus, combined with the fact that neither George Webb nor Ross Pierce have in the past contributed to the functioning of the city government, we find them not as acceptable.

We take this position because we recognize that the job of being city commissioner is far more than objecting to zoning.

THIS LEAVES us with three candidates for two positions. Since John Blanchard is seeking the one-year term arising from the death of Lyman Craig, and his only announced opponent is Mr. Pierce, we feel that Mr. Blanchard's experience on the zoning board of appeals makes him a more qualified candidate.

For the other two-year term we feel that Robert A. Frye is the most qualified based on his previous experience as a commissioner.

The remaining candidate, Edward A. Schirmer, a long-time resident of the area, offers spirit but not experience with his candidacy.

WHILE TWO of the candidates selected were exponents of the taller apartment units contrary to our position, it seems that some of the other candidates have taken the view that there should have been no liberalization of zoning in the new ordinance which shows a lack of understanding of the trend of court rulings and zoning ordinances today.

We feel that the large number of candidates will make the election next Monday healthy, and we congratulate all of the candidates for their interest in good government.

We have selected Beresford, Frye and Blanchard because we feel that they as individuals have the most to offer to the electorate.

importance to them. We hope, too, to expose them to adult thinking and, perhaps, assist them in finding solutions to problems.

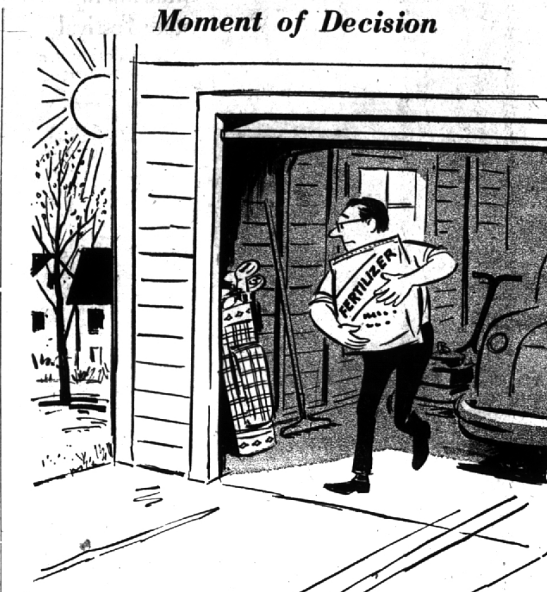
WE EMPHASIZE that our intention—at this point, at least—is not to create a teen center. We have absolutely no plans or aims along this line.

Nor do we wish—or will we permit—this group of young people to be used by any group or individual to foster selfish goals and objectives.

We emphasize, again, that the young people participating in these symposia are to serve as a discussion group. Nothing more.

If out of these sessions there arises a valid community movement to establish a teen center, we will give it our enthusiastic support. But we repeat that this is not our purpose in sponsoring the symposia.

The first symposium was, in our judgment, a success and gives promise of even better results in future sessions. We are confident that much good will come out of them.



PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Junior League Lauded For Another Service

To the Editor:

After reading your March 19 editorial on the Birmingham Junior League, of which any organization would be justly proud, I felt that one more deed of theirs could not be passed by without recognition.

My son, Kevin, who has cerebral palsy, attends the Tyler Orthopedic School in Berkeley. This school services the physically handicapped children in southern Oklahoma and County.

THREE YEARS ago, the Tyler Parents Orthopedic Group decided that these children needed a program during the summer so that they would not regress as far as their therapy was concerned and also to provide them with playmates of their own kind.

Because of their physical handicaps the children cannot keep up with other children and, thus, summer is looked upon as something to be dreaded.

FUNDS HAD been raised by the parents and suddenly the summer program had become a reality with one major problem. The Birmingham children had no transportation to the program.

Public transportation was too expensive and could not even be considered. Then, the League came to our aid.

FIVE DAYS a week, for six weeks, these women, many of whom had children of their own, picked the children up at their homes in the morning, took them to school and again returned in the afternoon.

This service has been performed for two summers and now they are preparing for the third. We all would like to thank these women

for their most invaluable assistance which we never will be able to repay.

AS YOU so aptly stated, "The Junior League exemplifies community service in the highest degree."

This is one more reason why my husband and I are proud to be residents of such a community.

CAROLYN S. DEGEN
Birmingham

Yesteryear Happenings

50 YEARS AGO
April 3, 1914

D. B. Wilkinson has been appointed by the Village Board, as Inspector of all water taps for the village and will therefore visit every house within the Village limits, to inspect all the outlets in the houses and to make a report of the condition of the same.

Many people in Birmingham are wondering if the health officials, and common council, will see that clean ice is delivered to customers as the State Law says. Take notice. Anyone served with ice delivered by an ice company can enter complaint if the ice served them contains any filth or loose snow.

Who can say that our dairy man Mr. G. W. Woods is not equal to the occasion. Besides furnishing our people with a superior quantity of absolutely pure cream and milk, he now proposes under the firm name of the Birmingham Creamery to supply all demands this coming summer for ice cream, ice, etc. His products will be second to none, absolutely pure and sanitary. We should never, not one of us, go outside of the Birmingham Creamery for these goods.

30 YEARS AGO
April 5, 1934

Easter Sunday was a banner day in the history of nearly all Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills churches. Not only did the attendance at the Easter services this year exceed those of the past several years in most churches, but the offerings set a new record as well. At the 11 o'clock service at St. James Episcopal Church, the largest congregation ever to attend a service there, the 320 persons (See HAPPENINGS, 7-B)

PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Teacher Prompts Thinking On State's Tenure Law

To the Editor:

The Eccentric of March 19 carried an editorial entitled "The People Were Deprived."

Concerned as we all are with the President's war on poverty, I read further to find out who these deprived people were. I am disappointed to report that the editorial wasn't concerned with the people at all but with POLITICS.

Seems these teachers had not only been telling their students about civics but some of them had read the book. They found out about initiative procedure and made tenure the subject.

TENURE is a method of forcing fair dismissal policies and providing a reasonable chance for the public to know on what basis teachers are hired, evaluated and dismissed.

What with the union teachers

in Detroit petitioning for a collective bargaining election, the MEA teachers in Detroit petitioning against a collective bargaining election, the civil rights group petitioning for open housing, and the home-owners group petitioning for freedom to maintain closed housing, not to mention the anti-Detroit income tax petitioners, it got pretty difficult to get into the supermarket.

BEING A teachers group, the MEA people didn't get around to collecting the necessary signatures until the last minute, but then they came through to the extent that the drive went over the top by about 100,000.

Initiative in this state places a measure before the legislature; only if the legislature fails to act does it go to the people.

Well, the legislature has acted; but I was shocked and disappointed to learn that it had done so only under the whip of coercion and aggressive lobbying by the MEA.

IT'S ENOUGH to make strong men weep when the governor, the majority leader of both parties and some of our most respected legislators bow to this kind of pressure from such a group.

I used to think that the MEA was a nice professional organization; but when they begin to actively carry out their own resolutions, this is going too far. Why, we've had a resolution on statewide mandatory tenure for at least 20 years and no one ever did anything about it before.

IT USED to be that you could get a job in some of the nicest (See TEACHER, 4-B)

Eccentricities

By HANK HOGAN

WANTED: Intelligent young man, preferably with a legal background, who is willing to associate himself in business with a group of men averaging 52.8 years of age, the majority of whom are either farmers, real estate salesmen or union officials with a high school education or less. Successful applicant will receive a two-year employment contract at an annual salary of \$7,000. Compensation may be increased this year. Job includes the spending of some \$1,300,000,000 per year. Apply: House of Representatives, Lansing.

Some of the readers of this corner are aware while others may not be that the writer wears more than one hat.

For the past four years he has been the representative for this district in the State Legislature.

He does not plan to seek re-election when his term expires this coming December.

Many people ask him why he plans to leave politics after garnering the seniority it takes to chair important committees.

Many people wonder after seeing the pomp and circumstance afforded a legislator at public gatherings why he would want to retire to the simple life again.

THE ANSWER is simple and yet it's complex.

Four years ago the legislature, except for the fateful year of 1959, used to meet for a yearly three-month session in Lansing; giving the legislator a chance to earn a living and get acquainted with his family the other nine months.

Because of financial collapse, new constitutions, tax reforms and financial booms, the three-month sessions have now become twelve-month sessions. What was considered a part-time job is now treated by the majority of legislators as a full-time job, it is still but compensated for at a part-time rate.

THIS, OF course, takes the young lawyer or business executive out of the running, unless he wants to become a professional politician.

The decision to leave the legislature, of course, is not really related to dollars. The low pay is offset by the tremendous ego satisfaction of being a very important person to those who want something.

But it is an alone sport. It is not something your family can join in. It is a frustrating sport when you work for what you believe is right and are beaten down by people who don't even understand problems other than when the corn is coming up.

AND YET if all of the young people leave the service, we will be turning over the law-making duties to the "negatives."

There is an answer. It is to raise the compensation high enough so that people can be attracted to these positions on a full-time basis.

But even if we do this we haven't solved the problem until we go out and recruit qualified candidates. My want ad may be a little trite, but it's now up to the community to find a good man to fill the slot.

City Beat

By KEN WEAVER

It's time to stir up another storm.

But before I do, I'd like to make it clear that opinions expressed in this column are strictly those of the writer's—they do not necessarily represent the views of the publishers.

Now, to get on with the storm!

Though hardly anyone ever speaks of it, Birmingham has some homes that qualify for inclusion in the term "slum area."

These poor, run-down, unpainted, deteriorated houses exist in the southern portion of the city—primarily in the section west of Woodward, south of Lincoln, east of Grant and north of 14 Mile.

ADMITTEDLY, ALL of the homes in that area are not of slum quality. But that there are some cannot be disputed.

And there are a few on the other side of Woodward. For the most part, we ignore these houses. We say very little about them. I suppose there's a silent hope that some day they will disappear and new ones will rise magically and majestically in their places.

But they are there now. They do exist and are part of our community, whether we admit it openly or not. We could go on ignoring them, pretending they aren't there; but actually this attitude would only breed more of the same.

THIS WRITER cannot help but wonder what those people who so strongly fear the loss of unique and beautiful homes in Birmingham would do about these houses in the slum area?

Why are their voices never raised about these homes? How far are they willing to go in their campaign to "keep Birmingham residential?"

Are there any suggestions for preserving these homes, for remodeling or replacing them? Where, oh where, are the efforts to elevate this part of our community to meet the standards of the rest of it?

The next time you're out for a Sunday drive, you might take a look at this part of town. A good, long, hard look.

Then gaze up at the sky and see if there is a storm brewing.

Biologists hope to find life on Mars. There's always the chance that life on Mars, having observed humanity from afar, is deliberately staying out of sight.

A commission recommends that all states consider dropping the minimum voter age to 18. That way there'd be even more voters to stay away from the polls.

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