

FROM BASKETBALL TO LAW COURT

David F. Breck, city commissioner and assistant prosecutor

# Breck: Basketball Lost to the Law

Second in a Series  
By LARRY EVOE  
City Editor

Except for the fact that he was more interested in law than basketball, David F. Breck might be wearing the uniform of a professional cage team today instead of being a Birmingham city commissioner.

"I played freshman ball at State but dropped out because my grades were slipping and I was afraid I wouldn't be able to enter law school," Breck said.

"WE LIVED near the Boulevard and Woodward and during the summer I would go downtown and listen to cases in Detroit Recorder's Court," he said.

"There was a boy who lived near my home who attended Cranbrook and once in a while I'd visit him," he said.

Breck applied for and received a semi-athletic scholarship to Cranbrook. He later went on to play basketball, baseball and soccer for the Cranes.

During his stay at MSU Breck met his wife, Fran, and they were

married before he entered law school in 1954.

"Fran taught in Dearborn and we lived in Ann Arbor until I graduated," he said.

IN 1957 Breck joined the firm of Markle & Markle in Detroit. He later formed his own firm with Elmer Dieterle and State Sen. Farrell E. Roberts in Orchard Lake, leaving it when he joined the prosecutor's office in February, 1963, because he was "interested in trial work." Later he opened a private practice in Birmingham, at 199 Pierce.

The 33-year-old commissioner and his family moved to Birmingham in 1959. The Brecks have three children, Kevin, 5, Margaret, 2, and Kathleen, who arrived just six months ago. They live at 928 Clark St.

In 1960 Breck was unsuccessful in an attempt to be elected associate municipal judge.

WHEN THE 1963 election rolled around, Breck said he had just about decided to run for the judgeship again when a group of his neighbors suggested he try his luck at running for commissioner.

"They were concerned about the Birmingham city limits," he said.

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## TO IMPROVE READING

# Vacation Time? 400 in School

By LARRY EVOE  
Nearly 400 Birmingham youngsters are spending their summer vacation in school — learning to improve their reading ability.

The children, all in grades 1-6, are enrolled in three reading improvement courses being given by the Birmingham Public School system.

The classes which include an enrichment course as well as a large remedial program, are under the direction of Richard Heiser, summer elementary school head, and Mrs. Namoni Erdman, reading consultant.

William Corliss, director of elementary education, is coordinating the program.

The bulk of the students, 304, are enrolled in a remedial reading program.

CORLISS DEFINES these students as "youngsters who function two years or more below their expected reading level."

He said the expected reading level is a combination of intelligence plus age.

Although the remedial students make up nearly one-third of the total elementary summer school enrollment, Corliss said they represent only 3 or 4 per cent of the regular school attendance.

"And these do not represent all of the 7,600 first through sixth graders who need some type of reading help," Corliss said.

DESPIITE WHAT seems to be a large percentage of youngsters who need help with reading, Corliss says, Birmingham's rate is far below the national average.

"About 10 per cent of our youngsters can probably use some type of help, while on the national level about 26 per cent could qualify for such classes," he said.

In fact the average Birmingham child is above the national reading level, according to Corliss.

"Our 4th grader is a year above the national level, a 5th grader is a little better than a year ahead and a 6th grader is a full two years ahead," he said.

GARE SAID the administration had no objection to eliminating the walk from the project because it serves only five or six houses east of Cambridge.

CITY MANAGER L. R. Gare said this was the only section along the length of Southfield that did not have a walk.

He presented the commission with photographs showing a path that had been worn in the grass by pedestrians using the block.

Commissioner William E. Roberts said he felt it was in the best interests of the city to have the walks installed even though some of the residents were opposed to the project.

In another phase of the 1964 sidewalk program, commissioners ordered the deletion of a project to repair walkways on the north side of Dorchester near Cambridge.



## Back in the Fold

Two former councilmen—Dr. Douglas J. Wood (right) and John A. McClinton—returned to the Beverly Hills council Monday night to take up where they left off more than a year ago.

Dr. Wood served from 1958 to 1963 and McClinton was elected to one-year terms in 1960 and 1962, but did not seek re-election in 1963.

They replace Marvin B. Cline and John Magee, both moving from the village because of their jobs.

## Trap, Free Suspect Of Obscenity Calls

Aided by a pretty, female undercover agent, Bloomfield Township detectives Monday apprehended a Pontiac man suspected of making obscene telephone calls to a township woman during the past month.

Although admitting that he had called the township resident "to make a date," the man denied using any obscene language over the phone.

THE RECIPIENT of the calls, who was taken into custody by Keller and Bloom and was driven to police headquarters for questioning.

Although admitting that he had called the township resident "to make a date," the man denied using any obscene language over the phone.

THE SUSPECT had previously asked the township resident to meet him at a drugstore at noon Monday. She agreed and immediately informed the police.

When the suspect made contact with the female decoy, he was taken into custody by Keller and Bloom and was driven to police headquarters for questioning.

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# \$50 Million Complex Raises Concern Here

By DAVE PHILPO and LARRY EVOE  
A feeling of "hopeful optimism" was expressed by Birmingham officials Wednesday regarding plans for a \$50 million residential and commercial development in the neighboring city of Troy.

The major area of concern presently is the additional traffic and service problems that the proposed 2,000-unit multiple housing complex and two shopping centers will bring to Birmingham.

Norman J. Cohen, executive director of the Billmore Development Co., announced Saturday that the firm would build the complex on a 200-acre site along Coolidge between Maple and Big Beaver.

Coolidge is the dividing line between the city of Troy and city limits for about one-third of a mile north of Maple.

BIRMINGHAM Chamber of Commerce President Virgil E. LaMarre said his group is "hopefully optimistic" about the development.

"If the combined housing and shopping centers are constructed in a 'real quality' fashion, they could be an asset to the Birmingham-Bloomfield area," he said.

"We are hopeful that these people will make Birmingham the nucleus of their activities."

"We recognize the need for small neighborhood shopping centers in that area and believe the housing development will be of the same fine quality as Birmingham," LaMarre said.

COHEN ESTIMATES that the development will ultimately house from 6,000 to 8,000 persons and will be situated on 122 acres of the 200 total.

The site is T-shaped, he said, and the apartments will extend a mile between Maple and Big Beaver along Coolidge and into a subdivision of homes in Birmingham.

Cohen said present plans call for a shopping center at the Coolidge-Big Beaver intersection and a small shopping center on the northeast corner of Maple and Coolidge.

MAYOR CHARLES W. Renfrew said he was "vitaly concerned" about the impact on Birmingham residents.

neighboring shopping center is built at the corner of Maple and Coolidge it appears it would not injure our residential areas to the west," Renfrew said.

He added that a good development could add to the values of the Birmingham residential properties on the west side of Coolidge.

The developers have petitioned the Troy City Commission to widen Coolidge from its present two lanes into a broad, four-lane boulevard between Maple and Big Beaver.

Re-elected to serve a second one-year term president of the Birmingham Board of Education was E. Ross Hanson at the annual organization meeting Monday night.

Other officers are George Coombe, re-elected to the vice president's post; Louise Adams, secretary; and Bennett Root, re-elected treasurer.

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NEW OFFICERS elected Monday night by the Bloomfield Hills Board of Education: Jean Martz, secretary; and Max Miller, who are (from left) Dr. Charles Bowers, vice president; Richard McGraw, president; Mrs. Johnson, Asst. Supt. Irvin Mennucci; McGraw; Bob Sadler, a former board member; and several teachers and PTO Council representatives, to be named within the next 10 days.

# B'field Hills School Board Elects Officers, OK's Budget

By DAVE PHILPO

Two committees—one to study teachers' salaries and the other to interview architects—were established by the Bloomfield Hills Board of Education Monday night.

In addition, the board elected new officers and approved a \$3,040,708 budget for 1964-65.

Richard H. McGraw, former board secretary, was chosen to succeed Dr. Charles L. Bowers as president; Bowers was picked for the vice president position; Max Miller was re-elected treasurer; and Mrs. Jean Martz was picked as secretary.

MILLER WILL BE chairman of the salary study committee a nod will be joined by new board members.

## Case Dismissed, Thorsons Look To Quieter Life

Life will be a little easier for the Robert M. Thorsons from now on.

For Rob, 32, it will be the end of six months of apprehension and uncertainty.

For his wife Joan, 30, it will be a reward for having faith in her husband's innocence.

Thorson, 2352 Buckingham, has been tried twice for the Dec. 4, 1962, slaying of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Dorothy M. Thomas. Twice 12-member juries have been unable to reach a verdict on Thorson's guilt or innocence.

Last Thursday the Wayne County prosecutor's office announced it would not try Thorson a third time on the murder charge.

Assistant Prosecutor Max M. Silverman said his office had decided to drop the case against Thorson in the "interest of justice, common sense and decency."

"WE HAVE neither the right nor the disposition to venture an opinion as to guilt or innocence in this case, or in any case as this is within the exclusive province of the triers of fact," Silverman said.

The prosecutor's office said it reversed an earlier decision to seek a third trial for Thorson.

## Hanson Wins Second Term as B of E Head

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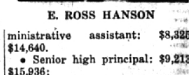
Other officers are George Coombe, re-elected to the vice president's post; Louise Adams, secretary; and Bennett Root, re-elected treasurer.

Salaries for Board of Education employees were also boosted from \$150 to \$300 yearly.

BEGINNING TEACHERS with 2 to 4 years' experience will now make \$5,250 yearly instead of \$5,100, while the maximum rate was increased from \$5,200 to \$5,600 yearly.

Ten salary for a teacher with 12 years' experience was raised from \$9,650 to \$10,050.

Other salary minimum and maximum increases are: Secondary school assistant coordinators: \$6,087.50 - \$12,144; Coordinators: \$6,098 - \$12,196; Elementary principals: \$7,159.50 - \$12,950; Elementary principals: \$7,159.50 - \$12,950; Junior high principals and administrative assistant: \$3,325 - \$14,640; Assistant superintendent: \$9,712.50 - \$17,200; Re-appointed school officers with the firm of Miller, Bailey and Co., while B. A. Scheidt and Associates was retained as the school district appraiser.



E. ROSS HANSON