

The PERISCOPE

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News Service

TOO MANY COOKS FIGURES DON'T LIE FLIGHT OF SCHOOLS STREAMLINED ECONOMY ONLY SIXTY DAYS

After spending four days sitting on the sidelines at two important conferences in Tampa, called for the express purpose of evolving some workable method of keeping the kids in school nine months each year and raising enough money to maintain our politicians in the luxury to which they have been accustomed, your commentator finds himself in the mental state of the befuddled Quaker, who once told his wife and me, Martha, and sometimes I think even three may be a bit daft.

Approximately forty members of the House of Representatives, plus a dozen or so senators, broke camp on the banks of the muddy Hillsborough with just about as clear an idea of how much money the Legislature must raise as Neville Chamberlain's guess on what Adolf Hitler will do next. July. Summed up, the boys are wandering around in a smoke screen of figures, laid down by groups of special interests, and thick fog of statistical fear gas. Hence we have completely revised our predictions on what may transpire in Tallahassee between now and June. Theoretical, my friends, will be, in the parlance of the boys in the street, "one of those things, wherein any change can happen—and probably will."

Any bookmaker can lay me forty to one that the Legislature will cede everything north of Ocala back to Georgia and we wouldn't raise a questioning eyebrow. Because we've never seen a parallel situation in Florida. There has never been a time when a Legislature packed bags for Tallahassee knowing less about what the state, its departments, the schools and other governmental agencies would have to keep that old devil waltz from the door. There has never been a Legislature more sincerely and honestly striving to do a good job, either House or Senate, and the pity of it all is the fact the people expect their lawmakers to wind up the job by the end of the year and come home with every-body happy.

Nevertheless, Speaker Wood's hard-working committee members have made some progress. They know, for instance, that some merchants prefer the gross receipts tax to a three percent levy on sales. They know the hotel men hate the sales tax as manna from Heaven—provided it lifts the alva from Florida's taverns. They know the schools are wallowing in a financial quagmire because previous Legislatures put a bounty on tax-dodging and they are thoroughly convinced the popular tax is the one the other fellow pays.

Batches of weighty statistics were dumped on the Tampa conference tables, written in enough red ink to float the Queen Mary. If you'd been there, you'd have wondered if they sold blue ink any more because, from the looks of those reports, red is a mighty popular color among Tallahassee bookkeepers these days. Anybody reporting a surplus would have been greeted with a loud huzzah. Yet there were plenty of plans suggested to save the Ship of State. In fact, the only person we encountered who didn't have a tax program up his sleeve was the bell captain at the Tampa Terrace.

Speaking seriously, however, out of the maze of figures we gleaned one inescapable truth: The Legislature of 1939 will pass into history as a "make or break session" and there are only two guideposts at the crossroads. One points to a wholesale shifting of the tax burden and the other points to a complete overhauling of the present ad valorem system, including a brand new set of moflars for an emergency approval next year as big as the general fund deficit. But when the legislators asked some of the school folks: "What do we use for money?" they were told: "That, my friend, is your problem."

But you can't laugh off a deficit as big as the schools must make up or close the classrooms a couple of months early. So it is our guess (Continued on page five)

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AVON PARK, FLORIDA, FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 1939

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OHIO PUBLISHER "PINCH HITTER" AT ROTARY CLUB

C. H. Spencer Discussed
Flood Prevention; New
Officers Are Nominated

C. H. Spencer, publisher of the Newark, Ohio, "Advocate," served as "pinch hitter" for the Rotary Club at its meeting Wednesday noon. Mr. Spencer was president of the Newark Rotary Club about 20 years ago and his son, Frank, now heads the Newark club.

Mr. Spencer discussed the problem of flood prevention. Briefly referring to the disaster which visited Ohio in 1913, causing great loss of life and untold property damage, the speaker told of the passage of the Ohio conservancy act under which the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy district was organized, embracing about one fifth of the area of Ohio. During the past five years the district, in cooperation with the federal and state governments has expended approximately \$45,000,000 in the construction of 14 dams. Two of the dams are "dry," the others have leaks.

The purpose behind the enterprise is: (1) flood control, (2) water conservation, (3) reforestation, (4) prevention of soil erosion, (5) development of recreational facilities.

The work necessitated the abandonment of several small villages, the removal of 400 graves from one cemetery, the relocation of many miles of railroads, of highways, of telegraph and telephone lines and natural gas lines.

Federal and state agencies are now at work in planting trees and doing work designed to prevent further erosion of the soil which already has wrought great damage in some sections of the state.

A high fish hatchery is being established at one of the new lakes. One of the 14 dams is more than 100 feet in height with a base of more than 500 feet. Another is a dam and a half long. All save one are built of earth with concrete spillways. The huge dam at Dover, however, is made of solid concrete.

The work of the Muskingum Conservancy district does not compare in extent or in cost with many of the large federal projects but it is of great importance to the populous state of Ohio in that it is designed to serve numerous Ohio cities and towns and to provide drainage for vast agricultural areas.

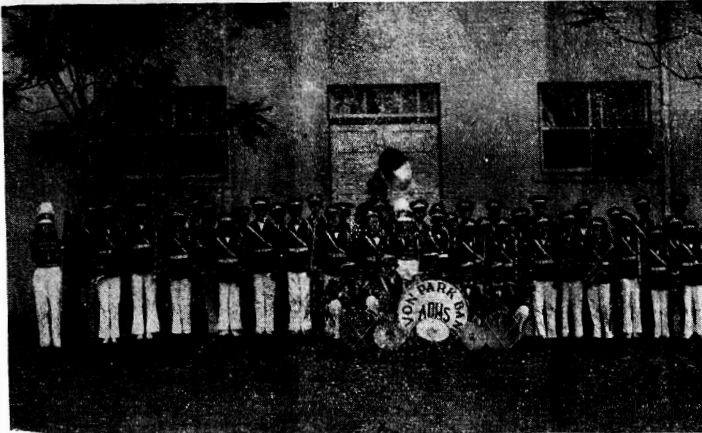
Mr. Spencer was chairman of the board of three appraisers who fixed the value of more than 90,000 pieces of urban and country property. The appraisal required more than three years of work.

Mr. Spencer's enjoyable talk the entire club membership was placed in nomination for directors for the coming club year. The election was held at five to be elected at the meeting next Wednesday. The 10 were: Chester Yates, M. V. Pitcher, R. R. Brown, J. Paul Garber, C. R. Glick, E. Lanier, D. G. Perry, W. S. Betts, J. S. Francis and J. L. Wells. Yates received the highest number of votes and the last three were tied.

The birthday of J. P. Garber was observed with his biography being read by Fred Stanley Reeves.

Col. F. N. K. Bailey of Sebring, Charles Johnson of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., Fred Reynolds of Silas, Mich., Charles E. Caylor of Bluffton, Ind., W. E. Fletcher of Louisville, Ky., E. A. Billman, L. A. Stewart, Dr. J. M. Billman and J. L. Bowman all of Sullivan, Ind.

Avon Park School Band Will Compete At West Palm Beach Next Week



Avon Park's school band under the direction of Prof. E. L. Roberts will journey to West Palm Beach next week to take part in the annual state school band festival, sponsored by the Florida Bandmasters Association. The contents will be held on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 20 through April 1. The soloists leave here Wednesday afternoon and the rest of the band early Thursday afternoon over the Seaboard railway.

The soloists are: Betty Touchton, alto clarinet; Nancy Betts, alto saxophone; Solomon Abrams, baritone; Felton Cussey, Herbert Todd and Marion Foster, trumpet; Walter Mandia, mace drum; Chas. Shepherd, flute and L. C. Davis, trombone. Their pictures were published last week.

The full band making the trip to the festival will be composed of: B flat clarinets: Sanford Hartt, Eric Palor, Francis Skipper, Sibyl Digbee, Frances Porter, Warren McFarland, Odell Skipper, Jimmie Hetherington, Josephine Brown, Mary Townsend, Vivian Luthy and Jimmie Bradbury.

Also clarinet, Betty Touchton; Alto saxophones, Nancy Betts, Tommy Lou Greene, Marjorie Wells and John Jones. B flat soprano saxophone, Helen Jarrett; French horns, Edward Sherman, and Albert Watter; Flute, Charles Shepherd.

Corinets, Marion Foster, Herbert Todd, Felton Cussey, Desmond Roberts, George Elliott, Walter Crews, Jack Head and Arthur Martin. Trombones, L. C. Davis and Fred Kirk; baritone horns, Solomon Abrams and Henry Wild; bass horn, Jimmie Heim; drums, John E. Laster and Walter Martin; Charles Lawton and Howard Johnston.

The visitors will be guests of the Avon Park chamber of commerce for lunch at the Jacarana Hotel and will continue their meeting in the Palm Room of the hotel.

At the close of the meeting the visitors will be taken to inspect the site offered here for the proposed southern branch of the state hospital. Other entertainment features may be offered there later in the day.

Members of the chamber of commerce and other Avon Park citizens are invited to attend the luncheon and meet the visiting commissioners and attorneys. Those planning to attend should contact R. R. Brown, president of the chamber, in order that the necessary arrangements can be made with the hotel.

Attend O.E.S. Meeting
Among those attending the Eastern Star meeting in Sebring Thursday evening last week were: Mrs. L. M. Marsh, Mrs. Ida Butler, Miss Jennie Gribble, Miss Cora Cox, Mrs. and Mrs. R. H. Royard, Mr. and Mrs. Albertson, Mrs. W. D. Cameron, Mrs. Blanch Williams, Mrs. Estelle Sonnenmann, Mrs. Frank Wolfe and Mrs. W. J. Frevat.

Preparing For the Fish Fry Tuesday Evening



Over 200 guests attended the fish fry Tuesday evening in Donaldson Park and sponsored by the Avon Park Fish and Game Club. There was plenty of fish, potatoes, grits and everything else and everybody appeared to enjoy themselves to the utmost.

The new barbecue pit was christened on this occasion and proved to be very good and is reported that Albert Garrett, city superintendent of public works, is planning to build a serving table and benches at the pit as well as plant grass there.

The club wishes to thank everyone for their cooperation and attendance. They cleaned up the grounds when everything was over and left them in spic and span condition.

CITRUS MEN ARE READY WITH NEW BATCH OF LAWS

Complete Program To Protect Growers For Presentation to Legislature

L. H. Kramer, of Lake Wales, president, announces Florida Citrus Growers, Inc., the purely growers' organization, is about to complete its program of legislation to be presented before the next session of the Florida Legislature. H. O. Schering, chairman of the legislative committee of the organization said at Lakeland Thursday last week: "This will be the soundest and most widely supported program that has ever been presented to a Florida legislature affecting the citrus industry. Some 200 citrus growers have contributed toward its preparation. Every other influence has also been consulted, including scientific men on the one hand and practical business men on the other. If the legislation proposed by our organization is enacted into law without crippling amendments the Florida citrus industry will be immeasurably benefited, and we will be on our way to a new era of soundness and order instead of the present situation of distress and chaos."

The 300 men referred to by Mr. Todd were said to be members of the committee of Florida Citrus Growers, Inc. To these committees was delegated the tremendous task of investigating and working out proper procedure. The committees have made their report and it was accepted by the directors in session at Lakeland Thursday. The committee will be the final authority in the organization and the program is being rushed to the 21 county wide units who will discuss it thoroughly and propose changes and amendments as they see fit and return it to the machinery of the state organization to be handled in its course through the legislature.

After the program is approved by the growers in all 21 units, it will be turned over to the legal wing of the organization to be put into definite, plain, legal language so that after the laws are passed there will be less question of their constitutionality and no question as to their intention.

W. J. Stied, attorney of Kissimmee, was unanimously elected by the directors as general counsel for the state organization and on him will rest the responsibility of getting the work done. He is at liberty to call for assistance upon the good supply of legal talent within the organization. Also at liberty to call for assistance upon the good supply of legal talent within the organization. Also at liberty to call for assistance upon the good supply of legal talent within the organization.

H. E. Keller, clerk of the board, reported that the commissioners of all south Florida counties are scheduled to meet in Sebring next Tuesday for the purpose of discussing proposed legislation affecting ranging in Florida, with especial consideration as to the funding the citrus receive from taxes on the receipts of the various tracks.

A delegation of Avon Park and Sebring citizens appeared before the board requesting the county to appropriate \$500 for the purpose of presenting the county's claim that Avon Park is the best available site for the erection of the proposed new state hospital for the insane.

Walter Betts, prominent Avon Park real estate man, presented the proposition to the commissioners, pointing out that should the hospital be built in the county it would mean jobs for several hundred people and would also provide a market for hundreds of tons of fresh vegetables grown in the county.

The board voted unanimously to supply the requesting county. H. O. Schering appeared before the board requesting the county to clear the right-of-way for a road following the spoils banks of the Indian Prairie canal from lake Lakopaga to a junction with road eight near Brighton.

Forester Zorn Asks Cooperation To Combat Fires

County Forester, Lloyd Zorn, is asking for cooperation of the citizens and the tourists of Highlands county. Recently there have been several destructive woods fires in which not only the woods and soil have suffered, but homes and other property have been threatened, and only by hard and long fighting have they been rescued from the flames.

Only those who have been fighting these fires know what it means to save anything at this time as due to the long drought, fires are easily started but hard to conquer, and when a lighted cigarette, cigar or a match is dropped, the grass is quickly ignited and spreads rapidly.

Rebekahs Meeting

The regular business meeting of the Rebekahs was held Monday evening at the Old Fellow's Hall. Those present were: Mrs. George Haynie, Mrs. Harriet Smith, Mrs. Tennie Haynie, Mrs. Elmer Wray, Miss Mildred Wray, Miss Doris Williams, Mrs. Floyd Houghmon, Mrs. Jenn Correll, Oscar Bridges, and Eddie Hansen.

CRUMMER CO. IS NAMED COUNTY REFUND AGENT

Present Six Percent Bonds
Will Be Exchanged
For Fours

Highlands county commissioners voted in their regular meeting Tuesday to sign a contract appointing R. E. Crummer & Co. refunding agents for the county to exchange the county's callable six percent bonds for four per cent bonds maturing in from 12 to 20 years.

H. J. Laster, representative of the bond house, told the commissioners that the exchange will net the county a minimum saving of \$7,020 after all expenses are paid and will give the county \$11,900 per year, after the first two years, to apply on payments of debt principal, without an increase in taxes to meet interest and principal payments.

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The county will make a request to the state road department for help in throwing up the grade for the proposed road as soon as the short stretch of clearing is completed from the lake to the edge of the prairie.

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