

The Voice

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

"Dedicated to the promotion of the cultural, social and spiritual life of a great people."

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EDITORIALS

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Co-operation Converted a Bar

By Herman Spruit, Jr., in The Christian Advocate.

The late Al Capone was once asked to what one factor he attributed his rise to success in gangdom. His answer was simple and direct: "The bad people stick together, and the good people don't." Anyone who has had anything to do with reforms will admit that the gang leader was right. But, occasionally the good people do get together as they did at South Gate.

One day citizens picked up their morning papers to find on the front page the architect's drawing of an attractive building for which the ground was to be broken within a few days. The accompanying description pointed out that this establishment was to house a wrestling and boxing arena seating 1,000 spectators. It was also to provide an 85-foot cocktail bar, the longest in that part of Los Angeles. On the arena floor itself there was to be another refreshment counter serving beer and soft drinks. And worst of all, this new sports arena was to rise across the street from one of the city's largest elementary schools and adjacent to South Gate's 90-acre city park.

The conscientious citizens could imagine what would happen. They saw hundreds, sometimes thousands of boys and girls and adults finding wholesome recreation on the many lighted athletic and play areas in the nearby park every night of the year. They saw the school with its many day and night functions, the attractive working-class homes in this section of the city, and the cocktail bar going full blast.

The community leaders immediately banded together for action on a basis of broadest interdenominational co-operation. Among them were the Roman Catholic chief of police, the minister of the Presbyterian church, the Methodist "Y" secretary, a school principal whose alert social consciousness dated back to the days when he was an active Epworth Leaguer, a park superintendent who was a member of the Disciples of Christ, a Methodist preacher, and the executive of a state temperance organization, a Seventh-day Adventist. This team of leaders geared into the co-ordinating council.

This council was originated by the probation department of the county years ago, in the belief that crime prevention is more desirable than crime. There is a council in every high school district, and it combines into one effective striking force representatives of all character-building groups in town.

The council lodged a protest

with the state board of equalization, which is charged with alcoholic beverage control, making the request that the board reject the application for liquor licenses requested by the arena owners.

True of Capone's dictum, the liquor people were on the job to protect their interests. They poured lavish sums into the fight. They summoned a highly impressive battery of legal talent. The Chamber of Commerce was represented through its executive who defended the combination of alcohol and wrestling as a factor for community betterment. Solicitors were employed who combed large sections of the community systematically garnering signatures that favored the wet cause. While they were able to place their fight on a highly professional basis because of the ready availability of cash, the co-ordinating council's fight was forced to proceed on a simple volunteer basis because of the absence of funds. In the light of these limiting conditions the struggle for decency seemed doomed from the start.

The board of equalization conducted a series of hearings. A large delegation spoke on behalf of the co-ordinating council in an endeavor to make the protest more effective. Unfortunately this group was not sufficiently schooled in legal technicalities to side-step the pitfalls by which the opposition sought to pervert the offered testimony.

The community was taken by surprise when, a few days after the hearing, the board of equalization refused to grant the licenses. This decision was immediately appealed and the appeal turned down. This factor may have been entirely coincidental, but both of these refusals were handed down by the state board on the eve of its election in which that board was seeking to be returned to office with the help of the church vote.

With the election passed and the officials safe for another four-year term, and contrary to established precedent, another appeal was made and granted. The owners of the arena were so certain of victory that they did not stop for a moment in their determination to establish a saloon. All through these legal maneuvers cabinetmakers, plumbers, painters and decorators were busy equipping this swank cocktail lounge to be one of the show places of town.

But it seemed that their enthusiasm and determination were misplaced. Through the co-operation of the good people what was destined to become a saloon recently opened as the most fashionable soft drink bar in town.—Oct. 28, 1948.



by JAMES C. OLSON, Superintendent STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The great fleets of combines which march across Nebraska's fields each summer rapidly are turning the threshing crew into an obsolete institution and the thresher into a museum piece. Yet during Nebraska's pioneer period, the thresher itself was a new and exciting device, making possible a phenomenal increase in American's small grain production.

Although threshers had been used in the United States since the 1840's, when Nebraska was still Indian country, not all of Nebraska's pioneer farmers were able to afford this means of separating grain from straw. Many of them had to rely on main strength applied to home made flails.

Another early technique was to drive horses or oxen over grain placed in a circle with the heads in the center, thereby separating the grain from the straw. The straw was removed with a fork. Grain and chaff were separated by throwing into the air and depending on the wind. If there was no wind, one or two men swung a sheet to create a breeze.

By the early seventies, however, threshers began to appear in Nebraska. The first ones knocked the grain from the straw but did not separate. Later separators were developed. A further refinement was the winnowing device which separated the chaff from the grain.

The early separators were horse powered, with the most common type being the sweep power drawn by five teams of horses. Three men composed the machine crew: the driver, the separator tender, and the man who fed the machine. Threshing was done from a stack or bundles were brought to the machine in racks, as they later, although the early separators had to be hand-fed, one bundle at a time. Two men were kept busy sacking the grain.

Threshing under these conditions was hard work at best. To the joy of the hired hands, and the discomfiture of the owners, however, the pace was broken by frequent break-downs.

By the middle eighties, steam began replacing horses as the motive power for threshing. An even greater improvement was the de-



PLAN LIBERIAN TRIP—David N. Howell, associate executive of the Southern Area council of Y.M.C.A.'s, will leave for Liberia in September as the representative of the International committee of the National Council of Y.M.C.A. Shown with him are his wife, Mrs. Maye Howell, and their two sons, Pedro, 4, on the left, and David, 7, right. Howell, who will be accompanied by his family to Liberia, is the first Negro to be appointed under American auspices to Africa to do association work.

velopment of the traction engine which could move the separator from place to place as well as power its threshing operations.

Steady improvements in both separator and power enabled the threshing process to keep pace with Nebraska's expanding grain production. The threshing "ring" was an integral part of the state's

News from Elwood, Kans.

By Wilberta Brady.

Mrs. Mary Wynn is visiting her relatives in Kansas City.

York Adams received a leg injury while working with some machinery at work.

Willa Mae Hayes is confined to her home with the measles and a cold, we hope she improves quickly.

Mrs. Charles V. Scott took her piano pupils, of Elwood, on a picnic at Krug Park last Thursday. Sandwiches, ice cream and pop, were served. Games were played on the playground.

The Scout house was opened Sunday afternoon. Mr. Frank Brown also opened his restaurant Sunday afternoon. When you have nothing to do, here are some places to go and spend time and money and really enjoy yourself.

economic and social life, and a prime example of the cooperation that has developed the American West into the world's bread-basket.

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