

FOUNDED 1869

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LIFE WITH GRAVIS

BY GUS TRAVIS

Here's Wishing A Prosperous, Happy New Year To Everybody

I'm writing this on the last day of the year and have already busted my New Year's resolution three ways from Sunday.

Well, the resolution in the first place didn't originate with me. So I don't feel too upset about it. It was my wife's idea.

"Gus," she said this morning over her coffee, "do you realize this is the last day of the year?"

"Yeah," I said. "I got five good blasted letters from business firms saying they were closing out their books for the year and please clear up the old accounts."

"I'm glad you said got blasted," she remarked, "because that is what I want you to make a New Year's resolution about."

"I don't get it," I puzzled. "Well," she went on, "a lot of children read your column as well as grownups. It certainly doesn't help the younger generation to see you write such words as 'got blasted'."

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SO TIRED — This is Grady Ingram, 11, brought to Good Samaritan Hospital yesterday because he won't eat, and also because he has a broken heart, which is also crippled by rheumatic fever. Grady collapsed six days ago when his playmate, Denny Berry Jr., was accidentally killed. He has refused food ever since. (Observer Staff Photo)

His Weak Heart Full Of Grief, Youngster Spurns Nourishment

By KAYS GARY, Observer Staff Writer

Grady Ingram is a little Negro boy who never had quite enough to eat.

And now he will not eat at all. He knows what will happen if he keeps on refusing food.

He knows that his heart is crippled, too. But it does not matter.

Just try and find a dog and ram it down his throat. I challenged as I kept my stomach sucked in.

"You can't hide that pot belly with your chest," she snapped. "I'll pop right back out when you exhale."

"Confound you, woman!" I shouted. "You must be cross-eyed and year. If you must lose your temper, say dog-gone it!"

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Banks To Report Top-Level Year

\$30,921,044 PACE

Building Boom Second Highest

New buildings sprang up at a \$30,921,044 pace to make 1953 the second highest construction year in Charlotte history.

The total, \$10,376,949 was invested in new residential construction.

The figure for the year was \$10 million higher than that for 1952, but, despite a last-minute spurt, it fell just short of the \$12,011,577 record established in 1950.

Figures compiled as the offices of the Building Inspection Department closed at City Hall yesterday evening showed that \$1,555,945 in new construction was authorized in permits issued during December.

The December clearings, announced by J. M. Brice, manager of the Charlotte Clearing House Association, yesterday afternoon, amounted to \$533,698,437.48, which was less than the total for December of 1952, \$549,050,456.82.

In looking over the clearings records for 1953, Mr. Brice found that Nov. 16 was the biggest day in the history of Charlotte bank clearings. The total for that day was \$55,453,549.21.

Records of the city's bank clearings for the last 20 years show that the totals have increased remarkably from year to year as the city has grown in population and in business and industrial importance.

In 1933, the clearings amounted to only \$419,290,494.52. Ten years later, in 1943, they had grown to \$1,868,817,678. And in the last 10 years, the clearings had increased to nearly \$6 1/2 billion.

The year's residential total includes single-family homes, duplexes, and apartments. The remainder of the \$10,376,949 was invested in business and industrial buildings, schools and other public structures, demolition and repairs.

The total for 1952 was \$30,652,303, roughly the same as that of 1951. Prior to 1950, the all-time record was the \$22,193,751 market set in 1949. Annual construction figures sank below \$1 million during the World War II years. In the latest pre-war year of 1941, the total was \$4,839,966.

Here are the 1953 construction totals, by months: January, \$4,560,776; February, \$1,470,836; March, \$3,157,921; April, \$2,912,957; May, \$2,108,470; June, \$1,673,870; July, \$5,705,274; August, \$3,710,952; September, \$1,875,881; October, \$1,590,628; November, \$1,089,611; December, \$1,355,845.

It's Still Called Salmi

ROME, Dec. 31 (AP)—Bus driver Fernando Fabiani was treated for head wounds today after running afoul of a salami-wielding passenger on a pre-New Year's Eve celebration.

Early last year, officials of the Inspection Department predicted an all-time record of \$35 million in new construction. They stuck by this prediction through early fall. But the building pace started to slacken in September and fell off steadily.

Weathermen, with a clean slate to write on, were all set to chalk up a 25 early this morning and follow it this afternoon with a high reading of 50 degrees. Along the bottom will go the notation of blue skies.

Looking back at 1953, Dec. 31 saw a low reading of 25 and a maximum of 52 while a further look at this year shows part, cloudy and slightly warming weather for Saturday.

A pleasant way to start a new year that will, like all others, have its mixture of storm clouds and sunshine.

See SOLICITATIONS, P. 6B, Col. 7

COLD, CLEAR SKIES USHER IN NEW YEAR

The year 1954 rode in last night on a weather carpet as clear as the tones of the church bells which heralded its arrival and cold enough to chill the marrow of midnight revelers.

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Solicitations Committee Disapproves Polio Drive

By CHARLES HAMILTON, Observer Staff Writer

A policy of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis proved to be the technical hitch yesterday afternoon when the Solicitations Information Committee of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County voted to "not approve" the 1954 March of Dimes in the community.

The New Year's Eve action came during a special session of the committee's Board of Review, which in addition approved the local project and disapproved two others nationally sponsored.

The annual March of Dimes to finance the nation's fight against the crippling disease is scheduled to start tomorrow throughout the nation and in Charlotte.

W. Frank Phillips, who was reappointed Wednesday as Mecklenburg campaign chairman, was not available for comment last night.

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GOALS FOR YEAR City Fathers Give 1954 Resolutions

There were serious reflections, and some levity, specific goals, and general optimism as Charlotte's city fathers greeted a new year.

The mayor and the city councilmen were questioned at their homes last night as to their New Year's resolutions.

Here are their answers: Mayor Phil Van Every—"I have a New Year's wish and a New Year's resolution. The wish is for continued progress for Charlotte and the well-being of all its citizens. The resolution is to do whatever I can toward those ends."

WANTS PARK Councilman Herman A. Brown—"I want to get that 37 acres in Charlotte (a piece of property now owned by the School Board) into the hands of the Park and Recreation Commission to give those people a park. Some way or another I'm going to push through negotiations to get that park. That's going to be my major project."

Councilman Herbert H. Baxter—"Let's thank the people for the privilege of serving the city. Let's give the citizens of Charlotte a New Year's present by having the Council agree to a definite program for cleaning up Sugar Creek. To a definite start of construction of a new hospital, and to a definite program of community planning with a Planning Board provided with funds to do the job."

Councilman Claude L. Albessa—"I resolve to make my resolutions, as I always have, as the situations present themselves."

A NONE AT ALL Councilman Ebb Wilkinson—"New Year's Resolutions? I quit making them 30 years ago so I wouldn't have to break them."

Councilman Basil M. Boyd—"I continue to do the best I know how to do the greatest good in the best interests of the greatest number of people."

Mayor Pro Tem James S. Smith—"I resolve to meet 1954 with optimism and confidence, believing that fear is our worst enemy in all areas of our lives. I resolve to give more of myself in service during 1954 whenever I am called on—as a church member, as a city commissioner, as a businessman, as a husband and father. I resolve to give my best cooperation to everybody I work with—the mayor and other councilmen, my employees, my fellow men—wherever we may meet and work together. I resolve to further all good sound business policies in my personal business and at the City Hall."

STAGGERIN' MAN WITH HEAVY 'LOAD' SOUGHT BY POLICE Don't stagger this New Year's Day. You may be picked up as a suspect in a local theft.

Police started looking for a man with a hanger considerably bigger than the usual variety after A. A. Dupree, salesman for State Distributing Co. of Raleigh, yesterday reported the following merchandise stolen from the package truck he left in a downtown hotel's parking lot.

Two and a half cases of champagne (at \$75 a case), six cases of other wine, nine cases of beer.

Happy and Prosperous New Year

To each and every one of our Many Friends!

The Classified Advertising Department of

The Charlotte Observer

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NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FOR THE GARBAGE MAN

NOON PRAYER

"O God look with pity upon this earth, so fair from Thy hands, so full of evil of our own contriving. Quicken our hearts to minister to the world's wounds, and quicken our minds to seek a better way." Amen. (Forward.)