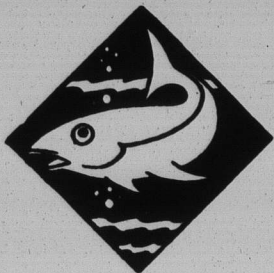


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MORE SCARLET FEVER

Two new cases of scarlet fever and one new case of chicken pox in Wilmette were reported by the local Health department for the week ending March 4.

John Law Wilds, 244 Oxford road, leaves Kenilworth Sunday on a business trip to Providence, Boston, and New York.

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Citizens League Head Replies to Attack Upon Organization

F. O. Mason Explains Functions of League and Reviews Candidates Endorsed

Frederic O. Mason of Winnetka, president of the New Trier Citizens' league, issued the appended communication this week in reply to an attack made upon the league by a Glencoe citizen and which appeared in another publication recently. The statement enclosed with Mr. Mason's letter is a comprehensive review of the functions of the township government and an explanation of the operation of the Citizens' league which, since its inception more than a score of years ago, has succeeded in eliminating petty graft from township offices and drafting competent and honest citizens into the service of the township. The statement follows:

The New Trier Citizens' league asks that you publish this letter in reply to the open letter signed by George W. Mason published in your last issue:

The form of township organization now existing in Illinois is designed for small rural communities, whereby petty lawsuits may be cheaply disposed of in justice courts, taxes assessed and collected by local officials well acquainted with their neighborhoods, county roads kept in order and the poor looked after. Once a year there is a town meeting which levies whatever taxes are necessary and discusses current business.

This simple legal machinery is admirably suited for sparsely populated country districts. With the urbanizing of Chicago's suburbs, however, this organization became somewhat obsolete and few people were to be found who knew or cared what it was all about. For many years the average attendance at town meetings has not exceeded eight and the public attitude can only be described as one of complete indifference. The result was that persons of indifferent qualifications held the offices, the township tax rate was raised, and a good deal of petty graft existed.

Combat Irregularities

It was to combat these conditions that the New Trier Citizens' league was founded some twenty-two years ago, by well known citizens of the four villages, with the support of the public spirited element in the township, a complete ticket of candidates was nominated and elected, and ever since that time the league has continued to function with the result that standards of public service have been considerably raised and economical administration obtained.

The league is in no sense a closed corporation. Its directors are annually elected from persons interested in civic affairs, and the cooperation and assistance of all disinterested persons have been uniformly welcomed. Anyone may join the league. As a practical matter, it has been found difficult to interest enough people to make a public caucus representative. The proof of this is the infinitesimal attendance at the annual town meetings, which any citizen has a right to attend and personally help to determine the tax levy. It therefore became a choice between maintaining a skeleton body to watch township affairs, and report about them to the public, or surrendering control to self-seekers.

Reviews Offices

There are sixteen offices to be filled at the coming April election. Of these five are justices of the peace and five constables, all of them fee offices, which do not affect in any way the levying or spending of taxes. Of the ten league candidates five are new men of good qualifications and five are holdovers who have performed their functions acceptably to the various Village authorities.

Another official to be selected is a township school trustee, one of a board of three, who exercise some control over the boundaries and affairs of the various school districts. As legal questions are constantly arising in connection with this business, it is important to have at least one trained lawyer on the board. To meet this need the league has nominated Mr. Lee Walker, an attorney of high standing, who is in effect contributing his professional services gratis to the community, as he draws no remuneration of any sort. There remain five officers who do re-

ceive compensation: the collector, the clerk, the supervisor, highway commissioner and assessor.

Held Best Collector

The collector is the most important township official as it is his duty to collect the taxes as promptly as possible and turn them over to the various taxing bodies without the delay attendant upon waiting until the county treasurer makes distribution. An efficient collector saves our municipalities interest and enables them to get their money when they need it. His compensation is in the form of a commission of \$10,000 on the first \$800,000 of taxes received by him, which he may be able to collect by diligent effort, from which he pays the cost of printing tax bills, mailing, clerical labor, office rent and various other necessary expenses. Consequently, the present incumbent, Sanborn Hale, has not averaged annually more than \$3,500 net during his term, a remuneration which the league feels to be not inconsistent with the responsibility of his office.

In addition to this commission since 1932 the collector is entitled to deduct another one percent of all moneys received by him in excess of \$800,000, which is turned over to the township. From this money the present statute permits the Township Board of Auditors to pay part of the collector's expenses if it sees fit, and another statute authorizes the payment of his bond premium. In the last year, Mr. Hale collected taxes substantially in excess of \$800,000 and turned over to the township several thousand extra dollars, and the Board of Auditors voted to pay his bond premium, amounting to some \$3,000. This year the legislature has increased the size of the bond substantially with consequent increase of premium, and has also provided for the payment of taxes in two installments. The effect will be to materially reduce the size of the collector's compensation, which it is estimated will not exceed \$2,000 for the current year.

Sanborn Hale, who is a banker, has unquestionably been an efficient, honest and cooperative official. He bears the reputation at the county building of being the best collector in Cook county. In view of his good record and wide experience the league directors felt that the public interest would be best served by renominating him.

Efficient Clerk

The township clerk keeps the records, arranges for elections and is a member of the Board of Auditors, for which services not to exceed \$700 a year are paid. The league's nominee is Mrs. Margaret Pierson of Wilmette, a widow, who has filled this office acceptably for many years. Through long experience she has become an expert in the maze of township laws, and has always been an exponent of economy.

Mrs. Gertrude Thurston is the present incumbent and is our nominee for supervisor. She directs the township poor relief, and stands well with the various persons interested in those matters. Her annual compensation and expenses exclusive of office rental, do not exceed \$1,200. She is able and experienced and performs her work well.

Expert on Valuation

The nominee for assessor is Mr. George Harbaugh of Wilmette, an expert in valuation, who has administered his difficult office with fairness and ability. His compensation last year was \$2,800, which is supposed to be paid by the county. Actually part is unpaid.

The township highway commissioner at one time had many roads under his jurisdiction and needed and expended considerable sums of money. With the growth of our villages the number of wholly township roads has been reduced to a little over two miles, with a jurisdiction of an additional four miles shared with other municipal corporations. The highway commissionership is a separate municipal corporation and levies a separate tax. There is now about \$8,000 in the road fund. The league feels that in view of the small mileage remaining substantial curtailment of township highway activities is in order. It has accordingly nominated a new man, Dr. Lloyd Ayres of Wilmette, who is pledged to reduce his statutory fees for supervision to not over \$1,200 a year. The funds on hand will be sufficient to obviate another tax levy for highway purposes for several years. His compensation is paid by the township and does not come from the road fund.

Township Costs Reduced

The actual expenses of the township for the past few years have been approximately as follows:

1. 1930	\$10,200
2. 1931	9,124
3. 1932	5,500

It is estimated that the expenses for the current year will be substantially less. In view of the foregoing it is submitted that it cannot be fairly said



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