

From the archives of Liberal's hometown newspaper since 1886. Researched and compiled by A.J. Coleman, L&T Reporter

1963 **Methodists weigh in on liquor by the drink**

Pancake Day was relatively new in 1963, but it had already earned renown. "Governor Anderson here Pancake Day," read the Southwest Daily Times' exciting headline. "Governor and Mrs. John Anderson will be among the dignitaries coming to Liberal for Pancake Day Feb 6," the article continued. Joe Tomlinson, host chairman for the local Jaycees, had invited the governor and he accepted. Others who had sent notice they would definitely attend were Harry Wiles and Al Graruerholz of the Kansas Oil and Gas Commission. As Lent began, one church stepped up efforts to oppose excess in all ways. "Methodists oppose sale of liquor by the drink," read the newspaper. The official board of the Methodist church of Liberal, composed of 62 members, at its regular monthly meeting, had openly opposed the sale of liquor in Kansas with a statement released to the public: "We, the official Board of the First Methodist Church, Liberal, Kansas, wish to enter our protest against the bill which is being proposed to legalize the sale of liquor by drink in hotels, motels, restaurants and clubs in the state of Kansas. We do not believe that any moral or spiritual or physical or economic good could possibly come from any action that would legalize the sale of liquor by drink. We respectfully request that you use all of your influence to defeat any such effort to legalize the sale of liquor by drink in any public establishment in our state." The argument that the Methodist board brought to the table may sound somewhat strange to modern Kansas residents, but they did have a point about the dangers of alcohol and the usefulness of the law as it then existed.

"Don't mark every little mistake in high school English," read the headline that many a teenager would rejoice to see. The article explained that "high school English teachers who painstakingly mark every mistake on a theme are doing their students more harm than good." That was the opinion of expert Paul B. Diederich, director of research in English for Educational Testing Service. He said the most common effect of such correcting was that "most students learn to hate and fear writing. So as far as they can see they have never done anything on that paper that anyone thought was good." The students' great need, he said, was help and encouragement to do better. Diederich was in charge of a program to encourage the use of qualified housewives as theme readers working under close supervision. "The practice is now firmly established in almost every state," he said. Most of the housewives, who majored in English in college, earned \$80 a month for an average of two hours work per school day at home. In training the housewives, Diederich emphasized the need for positive encouragement. "If you must (mark errors on a paper), find one thing that the writer should try to improve on the next paper," he said. This method is used nowadays to help students to realize that they are indeed good writers.

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