Wrong dates on some ballots

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'In-filling' saves Morey Mansion

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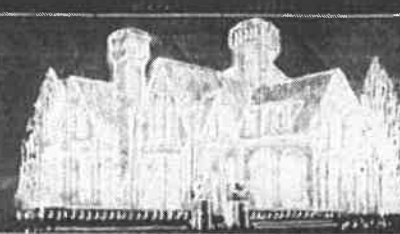

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS STAFF PHOTO BY GEORGE KOCHANIEC JR.

Old Man Winter must be on overtime

Students at Gove Middle School ended "Spirit Week" Friday by wearing shorts to school. Eighth-grader Benny Fishman's spirit was a bit chilled as he waited for a bus.

Meatcutters vote to end their strike

By JOAN LOWY
Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

Denver area meatcutters voted Friday to end their week-old strike immediately and return to work without a contract agreement with Denver's three largest supermarket chains.

The decision to return to work came despite the rejection by management of a union contract proposal that conceded to almost every management demand.

However, Charles Mercer, president of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 7, which represents the meatcutters, said another strike or other action against the grocery chains remains a possibility if the supermarkets don't offer a contract acceptable to the union membership.

The action could take several forms, including a new strike of only one chain or an organized consumer boycott plus pickets, Mercer said.

Federal labor laws require companies to make a timely contract offer, but no further negotiations have been scheduled.

The meatcutters struck Safeway stores last Saturday after failing to come to an agreement on a seniority system for work hours and benefits. The strike was extended Wednesday to King Soopers stores, bringing to about 100 the total stores under strike.

Albertson's supermarkets locked out its meatcutters when the strike began. The three chains negotiate jointly with the union through the Mountain States Employers Council.

Jack I. Moore, spokesman for the council, said the companies would "very happily" accept the meatcutters back to work.

Mercer and other union officials accused the supermarkets of trying to break the union by refusing to accept a union contract offer made early Friday unless the union agreed not to fine members who crossed picket lines to work during the strike.

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Clayton Trust could quadruple earnings

By LOUIS KILZER
and KEVIN FLYNN
Rocky Mountain News Staff Writers

Denver's Clayton Trust for orphans could earn four times as much money under new management as it did when it was administered by a commission headed by Mayor William H. McNichols Jr., a report released Friday said.

The George W. Clayton Trust runs the Clayton College for Boys, a home for orphans at Martin Luther King and Colorado boulevards.

A court-appointed trustee, former University of Denver Chancellor Chester Alter, said in a 171-page report filed in Denver Probate Court that an entirely new governing structure is needed to combine management of the trust with the operation of the institution.

The trust, with a value Alter said was impossible to appraise because of its large real estate holdings, had been earning about $500,000 annually under the McNichols commission. Alter wrote that the trust "has the potential of producing ... as much as $2 million annually."

Mismanagement of the Clayton Trust by McNichols and his city commission was revealed in a series of articles in the Rocky Mountain News starting in 1981.

The News revealed that the commission sold property below market value, made unproductive investments and violated Clayton's will by selling trust assets to pay operating expenses. News stories also said the trust was making almost nothing from its principal asset, the Park Hill Golf Course.

See CLAYTON, page 13

CLAYTON: Report urges new board of directors

Continued from page 1

Alter made no recommendations about the future of the 160-acre golf course in his report.

Friday's report also revealed that another tenant of Clayton property had been allowed to fall behind in rent.

A note in the financial statements shows that Child Opportunity, an organization that counts some of McNichols' longtime allies among its active members, has occupied buildings on the college campus without a formal lease.

Clayton College was set up in 1909 under terms of Clayton's will to care for and educate "poor white male orphan children" between the ages of 6 and 18.

Over the years, the college's operation has evolved to accept boys of any race who have lost at least one parent. Girls are not formally excluded, although no girls have been admitted.

But the college has become more of a residential care facility than an educational institution. Nearly all the children attend public schools.

Alter was appointed last year by former Denver Probate Judge James Wade to head the trust. That action came after McNichols and two other city officials resigned as trustees under pressure of a lawsuit filed by the Colorado attorney general alleging city mismanagement of the trust.

In arranging an out-of-court settlement with the attorney general, the commission never admitted mismanaging the trust. The attorney general stipulated that mismanagement had not been proved.

Alter's report said the "root cause" of problems at the college were the divided responsibilities between the city, which Clayton named as trustee in his 1892 will, and the college's separate board, which operates the school.

He recommended that the trust and college be governed by a new board of directors, and that the college be incorporated as a Colorado non-profit corporation.

Among Alter's other recommendations:

- The educational mission of the college should be revived and added to it residential care function.
- The new directors should regularly evaluate the program as social conditions change.
- The new board should establish a formal financial-planning process.

The News reported several questionable transactions involving the old Clayton Trust Commission. Under McNichols' supervision, $800,000 in orphanage money was spent to build a clubhouse at Park Hill, $200,000 found its way into city coffers, trust property had been sold without bidding and millions of dollars in trust funds were tied up in investments that produced no income.

The News also reported that the Park Hill concessionaire — who is supposed to pay the trust at least $84,700 annually — had been allowed to fall $138,000 behind in rent.

An audit attached to Alter's report said the Park Hill concessionaire still owes $115,714, which is being repaid over a five-year period at 18 percent interest.

While Alter's report is long on recommendations about the school, it does not mention what should become of the golf course. There has been some community discussion about selling the land, which is carried on the trust's books at its original value of $274,500.

At $5 a square foot, a conservative market value estimate, the tract would be worth $35 million.

A standard 8 percent return on that amount would net the trust $2.8 million a year for the operation of the orphanage.

The trust has also lost money in its landlord relationship with Child Opportunity.

Child Opportunity signed a five-year lease on one building on the campus in 1972, but did not renew it upon expiration although it continued to pay $415 monthly rent, Alter said.

It occupied a second building in 1975 with a lease of $450 a month, but Alter said Child Opportunity has not made payments on that lease.

In 1980, he said, Child Opportunity occupied a third building without a lease and without making any rental payments.

Alter has sent a bill to Child Opportunity for $44,000 in back rent.