From cowboy to city manager—

Ray Botch calls seawall his major accomplishment

By SUEZANNE KIRCHNER

Not many people think of a cowboy as the person most responsible for a city's future growth and development. Yet Ray Botch, city manager of Rock Island, Ill., has done just that.

Botch is a man of many talents. He was born in a small town in the Midwest and grew up on a farm. He attended college on a football scholarship and later went on to earn a degree in business administration. During World War II, he served in the army and later became a successful businessman in Rock Island.

Botch attributes his success to hard work and determination. He has always been a leader and has a strong sense of community. He believes that the city of Rock Island has benefited from his leadership.

Although Botch has been in office for only two years, he has already accomplished much. He has worked to improve the city's infrastructure, attract new businesses, and improve the quality of life for the residents.

One of Botch's biggest achievements has been the construction of a seawall to protect the city from flooding. This has been a major undertaking and has required a lot of resources and time. However, Botch believes that it is an important investment in the future of the city.

Botch is a man who never gives up. He has faced many challenges during his tenure as city manager, but he always finds a way to overcome them. He is a true leader and a man of vision.

Botch is a shining example of what can be accomplished with hard work and determination. He has shown that even a cowboy can become a successful city manager and make a difference in the lives of the people he serves.
Ray Botch ends 16-year 'marriage'

City manager: A husband serving two wives

By GEOE OAKLE

Raymond Botch, Rock Island's City Manager, ends his 16-year tenure as City Manager. He has served the city with dedication and leadership, making significant contributions to the community's growth and development.

'WE HAVE A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS,' SAYS ROCK ISLAND'S RETIRING CITY MANAGER. 'ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS IS PROVIDING THE FINANCES TO MEET THE RISING COST OF GOVERNMENT CAUSED BY INFLATION.'

Botch has managed the city's finances efficiently, ensuring that the city's budget is balanced and that funds are allocated effectively. His leadership has been instrumental in maintaining the city's financial stability.

A man of many talents, Botch has served in various capacities, including as a city manager, a city editor, and a journalist. His dedication to public service is evident in his work, and he has made a significant contribution to the city of Rock Island.

Botch's retirement marks the end of an era for Rock Island, and the city will undoubtedly miss his leadership and guidance. His legacy will continue to inspire future leaders in the community.
Issues in the Times

Ray Botch

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dialogue, a continuing series of in-depth interviews with newsmakers and personalities of the Quad Cities and elsewhere, begins today in the Quad-City Times. Reporter Joe Sheridan will be looking for people with something to say about their professions, their philosophies and the way they live.

Dialogue

A Conversation With... I really have no regrets...

A Retiring Helmsman... It makes you feel good...

...I'm not a yes man...

...I enjoy people...

Following are excerpts from an interview with Raymond P. Botch, who will retire Feb. 1 after 16 years as Rock Island city manager.

Q. — Your office door was open just now. Has that been your customary practice over the years?

A. — That's not considered a good management technique. The experts say that when a manager has something to do, he should close his door, and not take calls or visitors. I never have followed that policy except once in a great while when I had a rush job for a council meeting that night. But as a normal day-in, day-out thing, that door always is open, and I think this is one of the things that have helped me a great deal because people feel I was accessible, whether by telephone or walk-in.

I'm not a yes man. I frequently have had to say no.

There have been a few occasions when I didn't get out on the right side of the bed, and I told people off, and any time I ever did that — I could count them on the fingers of my hand in the 16 years — I always have regretted it because it turned out that it was someone I should have handled differently.

Q. — What do you feel are the most important goals that will confront the new city manager (J. Neil Nielsen, of Mexico, Mo.)?

A. — Well, I can't speak for him, of course, but I can talk about the city's goals. Or perhaps I should put it differently and say I think the city has some problems to which it will have to address itself.

One is the need for industrial expansion of the economic base of the community. This means the city is going to have to attract new industry and new retail business to broaden the base.

Another need is for additional housing. And still another is the rehabilitation of deteriorating areas. And, I had hoped we would have had the problem of separating and sanitary sewers so we are polluting the Mississippi River. I would have hoped, too, that the city's southwest area would have developed more rapidly.

As for commercial expansion, one of the things the people often do not realize is that a community that is purely residential must impose exorbitant taxes in order to provide services.

On the other hand, in a community with a broad economic base, the industries and the businesses pay a very high percentage of the taxes.

One of the major tasks the new council and the new city manager will face in the next two to three years will be to determine how the city is going to dispose of its solid waste.

Q. — What would you say was the most pleasant aspect of your years in Rock Island?

A. — I enjoy working with people. It becomes frustrating at times because some people can be very de...

— BOTCH

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