



Karl Kae Knecht

Dakota Images

Karl Kae Knecht, whose cartoons have been reproduced in metropolitan daily newspapers in America and abroad and have been collected by presidents from Teddy Roosevelt to Dwight Eisenhower, was born in Dakota Territory on 4 December 1883 in the village of Iroquois. In 1887 his family moved to Freeport, Illinois, where Karl received his early schooling and later attended the Art Institute of Chicago. He began working for the *Evansville* (Indiana) *Courier* in 1906 and over the years drew nearly fifteen thousand cartoons for that newspaper. From 1914 into the '20s, Knecht's half-page Sunday feature, "The Passing Parade," caricatured people and events with cartoons and sketches, first in black and white and then, after 1916, in color. A charter member of the American Association of Editorial Cartoonists, he was editorial cartoonist for the *Courier* from 1906 to his retirement in 1960.

In 1925 Knecht organized Circus Fans of America, founded its publication, *White Tops*, and served for five years as its editor. In 1928 a circus friend offered Knecht a pair of lions, and with these a zoo was begun for Evansville. Through the *Courier*, Knecht sponsored a successful children's campaign to increase the zoo's collection with an elephant, which was named Kay in honor of Knecht's triple initials, "KKK." Thereafter, every cartoon he drew included a small picture of an elephant in one corner.

Mr. Knecht was an honored guest in 1951 at his birthplace, during Iroquois's seventieth anniversary celebration. He now lives in retirement in Evansville.

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