

NATURE NOW

# Springtime Magic Awakens Woodland

By LYDIA KING FREHSE  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Now, in mid-May the twilight hours lengthen and the robin has space to sing his evensong. Other sounds drift in through the open window; the click of a neighbor's lawn mower, happy children's voices rising to a full crescendo in the last stolen moments of playtime, the rhythm of passing footsteps. All these are evidence of the ebb and flow of life's insistent pulse.

And in mid-May the naturalist steals a few hours here and there to keep his trust in the spring woods. Here life is newly astir. A red bellied salamander scampers away from the first stone upturned. A bald faced hornet rolls out of a crumpled handful of rotted tump wood, her hibernating sleep ended. A garter snake leaves its discarded skin on the sharp end of an overturned stick.



Mrs. Frehse

Recently your columnist spent a half-day exploring a woodlot on the border of Macomb and Oakland counties, northeast of Rochester.

This is a beech-maple association not yet fully matured, and there may be many intrusions of such trees as swamp oak, hornbeam, ash, basswood, elm and walnut.

NO SOONER had I climbed the fence than I came upon one of the lowliest bits of color to be found in any spring wood. Growing on a dead stick stuck in the dry leaves were a half dozen specimens of the beautiful scarlet saucer (Peziza coccinea). The name is wholly descriptive of this fungus which when tapped with the finger sent up a little cloud of microscopic spores from its cup-like surface. Later in the afternoon and growing in a similar situation I found its companion, the black goblet (tremula craterium).

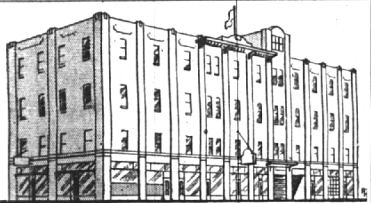
With its stem hidden by last years debris, it looks exactly like a diminutive cooking pot, smoke blackened and left behind by a hasty camper.

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Woodward at Maple

Berkley Branch: 3055 W. 12 Mile Rd.

dance of spice bush (Lindera Benzoin) in bloom.

THE TINY six-parted yellow flowers grow in clusters of 4-6 on the still leafless branches. Leaves, fruit and bark are strongly aromatic and spicy in flavor, suggesting their relationship to sassafras and the tropical cinnamon tree, all members of the large laurel family.

On the rich hummocks that dot the low lands the ferns are uncoiling their fronds.

Of these Thoreau wrote "Nature made ferns for pure leaves to show what she could do in this line."

The dark red fiddle-heads of maidenhair and flowering fern, the green root-stalks of the ostrich, cinnamon and interrupted varieties; the evergreen wood and the Christmas fern still surrounded with a sudden circle of last years fronds; the beauty of all these is yet hidden within their secretive croziers.

The tiny brittle fern (Cystopteris fragilis) is the earliest of our southern Michigan species. Already in full-leaf, it makes a fairy-like showing around the base of old stumps and trees.

As I move deeper into the woodlot a host of wild flowers suggest a carpet of yellow and blue, and pale pink. The rusty rosettes of hepatica are covered with a great show of bloom.

Adder's tongue and spring beauty are most in evidence. Red trillium has opened, white trillium is in bud. The heart-shaped leaves of wild ginger on their woolly stems suggest crisp paper taffeta.

There is scant space to mention a host of others including violets, lunellery, miterwort, Jack-in-the-pulpit and cut-leaved toadwort. I came upon a small clearing where the great paragon-like leaves of the May apple were unfolding. Marsh marigolds, skunk cabbage and the delicate lavender spring cress lighted the hollows.

BEFORE I leave the woodlot I must pass under a giant box elder tree covered with bloom. As I approach I hear a great humming like an airplane far out of sight. Upon closer scrutiny I am amazed to find that the noise is made by thousands of bees, their tiny wings moving from flower to flower.

I reach up to pull off a single bloom, but this species male and female blossoms occur on separate trees. With my hand lens I make out its certain outlines. It is a staminate or male flower and its kind covers the entire tree with waiting pollen.

THIS THE bees are gathering. Mixed with honey it makes beebread to which the nurse bee adds an unknown ingredient from her own body which turns it into royal jelly. If the young are destined to be workers, they are fed only a very little of this mixed with beebread but if they are to be queens they are fed only on royal jelly.

As I leave the woodlot to skirt the nearby marsh the frog chorus subsides, but only for the brief space of my passing. The birds absorbed in their nest-making chores pay me slight heed. A field sparrow's song sounds clear from the pasture beyond the rail fence and I am back on the country road where a thin spiral of wood smoke signals supper-time at the old farm house.

## GLENN WING POWER TOOLS

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SALLY LOU HUBBARD

## Troth Reveals Wedding Plans

Mr. and Mrs. Theodore E. Hubbard of Petoskey announce the engagement of their daughter, Sally Lou, to Richard Collins Page, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph F. Page of Townsend.

Sally was graduated from the University of Michigan and was a member of Delta Delta Delta. Her fiance attended Trinity College, Hartford, Conn. The University of Michigan and the University of Rochester. Richard served 3 years in the U. S. Navy during World War II.

A July wedding is planned.

## French Teachers Select Two From Cranbrook School

Twelve students of French from the Detroit area have been awarded honors by the American Association of Teachers of French, the local area chairman, Mr. Howard R. Conn, Cranbrook School, has announced.

Two Cranbrook students were honored. They are Jon Himmelhoch, winner of the French II class, and Frank Duffy, who took third in the French IV competition.

The twelve were selected from among 1000 contestants representing 60 high schools, both public

and independent, in the Detroit area.

Each of the twelve will receive a medal designed and made in France, and presented by the Service du Conseil Culturel de France.

The best paper at each level has been sent to the Ohio regional center which covers six states including Michigan. The winning papers in each regional contest will in turn be forwarded to the national center for final judging.

## In MIT Fraternity

Jacques E. Linder of Birmingham has been elected to Tau Beta Pi, national honorary engineering fraternity at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



From where I sit... by Joe Marsh

## The "Write" Prescription

Noticed three half-finished letters lying on the counter down at Jones' Drug Store last week. "Writing three at once, Doc?" I asked.

"No," Doc said, "you are—you and the rest of the town. Those are for the boys from our town who are at the National Guard encampment."

"Everyone who comes in adds a line or two, and when a couple of pages are filled, I mail them. That way the boys hear from folks who might not write otherwise. They sure do enjoy it."

From where I sit, little things can add up pretty big. A few short notes make a letter. Boys from our little town help build up a strong National Guard to protect our freedom. Even freedom is made up of a lot of things—living where we like, voting the way we think is right, choosing between coffee, tea, or beer at dinner. And anything that adds up to freedom gets my stamp of approval.

Joe Marsh

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# Largest medical bill payment ever made for Michigan people!

**Blue Cross - Blue Shield pay out more dollars for hospital and doctor care, provide worry-free protection for more people in Michigan than all other kinds of medical bill protection combined.**

Your Michigan Blue Cross - Blue Shield paid out \$91,299,797 for subscribers in 1953. As of today the total paid out for hospital and doctor bills during the last 15 years is more than \$400 million.

## The most successful protection against hospital bills

Blue Cross is the most successful idea ever devised for protection against hospital bills. Non-profit, it is the only organization for hospital care officially approved by the American Hospital Association. Over 3,000,000 Michigan people have Blue Cross. Chances are, your neighbor has it. Talk it over with him—and see if he doesn't agree that there's no finer protection at any price!

## Hospital Service Protection... the Blue Cross way

Blue Cross differs from other kinds of hospital protection, because it supplies service protection. This is important since you rarely know in advance how much a hospital bill will cost you. So you can't feel really safe with protection that limits you to \$10, \$15 or some other set amount per day.

When you become a member of a Blue Cross Group it is like becoming the "owner" of a wide range of hospital services in advance of need. Then, when you need hospital services... such as bed and board, expensive extras like oxygen, drugs and medicines, operating room, and others... these

services are automatically yours. And this same protection holds for every enrolled member in your family. Blue Cross hospital service benefits are available in more than 200 Blue Cross participating hospitals in Michigan alone.

## Doctor Bill Protection... the Blue Shield way

Paying doctor bills is different from paying hospital bills, because in almost every case, your doctor can tell you beforehand what his charge will be. The thing he can't tell you, however, is when you are going to need his services. So, against that need, Blue Shield offers a smart way to safeguard your savings... to take doctor bills in your stride.

Blue Shield offers two basic plans—one, a straight surgical plan, the other, a medical-surgical plan. Under either plan, Blue Shield pays generous, specific amounts directly to your doctor for thousands of surgical procedures, including maternity care. And in non-surgical cases, under the medical-surgical plan, Blue Shield also pays liberal amounts for your doctor's visits to you in the hospital. Often the doctor's full bill is covered.

## The cost is low

For only pennies per day, Blue Cross - Blue Shield protects you with the most complete protection against hospital and medical bills it's possible to obtain. To help keep cost low, Blue Cross - Blue Shield do not pay for purely diagnostic treatment—or for procedures which can properly be done in a doctor's office... except emergency treatment as covered in the contracts. You, too, can help keep cost low by using Blue Cross - Blue Shield only when necessary.

## There's no red tape!

When you have to use Blue Cross - Blue Shield, there are no claims to make... no long waits for payment. All you do is present your Identification Card to your hospital or doctor... and Blue Cross - Blue Shield pay them directly.

## How to get Blue Cross - Blue Shield

Ask your employer or your union representative how you can get low-cost Group Enrollment! A company with as few as 5 employees may qualify as a group. Check your Farm Bureau or Garage. Write or phone your nearest Blue Cross - Blue Shield office.

## STATEMENT OF CONDITION

Report of Condition as of the Close of Business, December 31, 1953

### MICHIGAN HOSPITAL SERVICE

ASSETS	
Cash in Banks and Office	\$ 5,044,102.99
Real Estate, Home Office Property	801,010.18
United States Government Securities	10,886,064.00
Accounts Receivable	104,981.47
Accounts Payable	6,692,662.20
Funds Advanced for Veterans Administration	101,198.57
Other Assets	214,079.47
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 23,732,384.24</b>

LIABILITIES AND RESERVES	
Reserve for Payments for Services Rendered	\$ 11,721,450.00
Subscribers (Including Unreported)	4,612,445.90
Reserve for Unreported Subscriptions Paid	6,692,662.20
Other Liabilities	705,846.04
<b>Total Liabilities and Reserves</b>	<b>\$ 23,732,384.24</b>
<b>Total Assets Paid Since Inception</b>	<b>\$258,900,791.29</b>

### MICHIGAN MEDICAL SERVICE

ASSETS	
Cash in Banks and Office	\$ 8,777,897.06
Real Estate, Home Office Property	637,727.36
United States Government Securities	1,044,981.91
Accounts Receivable	17,262.81
Accounts Payable	87,127.08
Funds Advanced for Veterans Administration	125,584.37
Other Assets	125,584.37
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 10,152,106.90</b>

LIABILITIES AND RESERVES	
Reserve for Payments for Services Rendered	\$ 1,183,094.54
Subscribers (Including Unreported)	854,302.73
Reserve for Unreported Subscriptions Paid	125,584.37
Other Liabilities	125,584.37
<b>Total Liabilities and Reserves</b>	<b>\$ 1,183,094.99</b>
<b>Total Assets Paid Since Inception</b>	<b>\$1,048,136.19</b>

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