

## Lathrup Navyman Writes Of Ideas About Formosa

Aboard an aircraft carrier at Formosa is a Lathrup village navyman who hopes his spring discharge goes according to schedule. He has wedding plans for next August.

Richard W. Irwin, has written his aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. George Burnham, 1940 Glenwood, Lathrup village, with whom he lives, "that if Reds land on Formosa, 'The task force of which I am such a wee part of will have its hands full.'"

"Yet," he said in a letter written over a month ago, "if we must have war, and I say must for they will not stop at threats, then let's do it now."

IRWIN, WHO attended Alma college for two years and Michigan State college for one, is a hospitalman second-class, attached to the 40-bed sick-bay. The ship holds 3,000 men.

His letters use such word symbols as the small "cc" meaning "with" but Mrs. Burnham says the terms mix with nava-jargon "and sometimes need a translation."

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Official watch inspectors for the New York Central and Pere Marquette Railroads and registered Chronograph Watch technicians.

"Now c the Commies all around Formosa," he writes, "I wonder how long it will be before I see home again." He adds, "We all pay and everybody tells how hard he works, and politicians wear themselves to a frazzle (?) and still these Red monkeys keep coming."

HE HAS BEEN aboard the USS. Kearsarge since he left the States last October. Although he was home several times last spring while the ship was being refurbished, this Christmas was the second one he spent in Japan.

He and Carolyn McDonald of 40 Westwood, are planning an August 13 wedding, based on plans for his May 25 discharge. He plans to resume study, probably in a metropolitan area school.

Miss McDonald teaches nursing at Butterworth hospital, Grand Rapids. Their engagement was announced last March.

## Wing Lakers Square Dance

A square dance is being sponsored by the Wing Lake Farms association at 8:30 p.m. Saturday night.

Chairman of the event, at the Wing Lake school will be Albert Carr, and the association invites the public to take part in the square dancing, to be called by Jack Lewis.

## Junior League Sets Group Meeting Date

Several group meetings of the Junior League of Birmingham are planned for 12:30 p.m., Feb. 15. Hostesses are Mesdames Paul McKenney, William Bullock, Jarvis McMechan, David White, Harbury Schmitt, Carl Underhill, Merrill O. Bates, William S. James, Harry Swan and Franklin Butler.

All are called for the same purpose, the opportunity for projects discussion of plans and projects for the year.

Society deadline is 3 p.m. each Tuesday.

# Naturalists Can Learn Much In Winter

By LYDIA KING FRESH Special Writer For The Birmingham Eccentric

Winter is a lean and hungry time in the calendar of the seasons. Yet it is a good time for the naturalist whose trained eye and mind are often overwhelmed by the bewildering variety of things to be seen, heard and felt than in our more opulent seasons.

One cannot venture into the lushness of a June meadow without a sense of frustration; there are too many grasses, too many flowers, too many birds calling, too many insects humming for us to give proper attention to each.

But in February, winter has emptied the landscape of this crowded appeal. Now it is possible to observe the doings of a single flock of birds or to reconstruct a life pattern of a lone fox whose tell-tale tracks lead into a snug den in the hillsides.

So it was that on a recent afternoon you scribe followed the path up the hill to the old apple orchard. Summer makes of it a place teeming with life.

NOW ONLY A flock of chickadees are hopping about in the bare branches of the nearest tree, they take slight notice of me until I approach to within a few feet. Then one cocks his head as if to say "hello," all the while peering intently at me with his bright little eyes.

As I watch the birds hopping from limb to limb I am impressed again by their acrobatic ways. But as they perform their unexpected feats of tumbling and swinging with a kind of fearless skill, they never lose sight of their primary

purpose of ridding the tree of insect eggs and larvae. Like all winter birds, they must eat almost constantly to maintain their high body temperature. As they satisfy their own hunger they are also increasing men's food supply by keeping in check many species of plant-destroying insects.

AT THEIR usual rate of feeding, one scientist computes that a single chickadee can eat 138,000 eggs of the canker moth in 25 days. In Michigan alone it is estimated that eight billion insects are destroyed annually by these little birds.

The lively flock keeps up a muted chatter as they explore every crevice and crotch of the tree. As I listen I am back in the north woods. The summer air is filled with bird music and always as I walk along the winding path I hear a clear song: "chick-a-dee-dee-dee—" followed by the call notes "pee-wee," the second note lower than the first.

This call is often confused with that of the wood pewee or even the phoebe. However, the former says "pee-a-wee" in a minor strain using three notes, while the latter is an abrupt "fee-bee" of a raspy quality delivered with a decided accent on the last syllable.

the winter afternoon fades it is evident that nature's blending of black and white and gray against the snowy hillside is in perfect keeping with her plan of bird camouflage.

You may never have found the nest of a chickadee, for he is prone to refine an old woodpecker's hole with leaves, moss and grass, softened with an inner layer of horse-hair, fur and feathers. Within the protection of this enclosure the female lays four to eight white eggs spotted with brown and proceeds to rear her young.

Although the chickadees spend the winter here, he may not visit your feeding station, especially if you live in a densely wooded area. He prefers more open grounds or the edge of wooded hills. Scientists have advanced the theory that this bird does not migrate since he originated in the Old World instead of in South and Central America as did most of our migrants.

BECAUSE OF this he has no established pattern of seasonal flights reaching far back into glacial times when birds fled southward to escape the ice. In

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