

## New and Old To Campus Life

Feeling more at home than in orientation week, but still new students on various campuses; are many local youth.

At Hope college, Kalamazoo, Al Hope, Jr., of Oak Hill drive, and Nancy Jean Kemmler, East a Ruffner, are freshmen.

Albion freshmen are: John Asbury, Fairway; Nancy Brown, Bedford; Beverly; Rosa Coultas, Wing Lake Road; James Flack, Jr., W. Lincoln; Richard LeMoine, Maryland; Paul Mullin, Buckingham; Marilyn Purse, San Quentin, Lakemore; Stewart Schultz, Walnut Lake road; David Sutton, Maryland; James M. Taup, Garden lane; Robert E. Terry, Half Moon; and Stanley S. Thompson, Tibury road.

ACTIVITIES of upperclassmen, as at Marygrove, included welcome

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## NATURE NOW

# Papaw, Rare and Curious Tree

By LYDIA KING FREHSE  
Special Writer For The Birmingham Eccentric

One of the rare and curious trees of the southern portion of our lower peninsula is the papaw. The Spanish explorer DeSoto, pushing his way northward into the Mississippi valley, first chronicled its presence in the Carolinas in the year 1541.

It was autumn time in the rich river flats. The hand of hungry men, never far from starvation's throat, could not wait to see the ripened fruits hanging dark on the branches while the large yellow leaves curled and drooped to the ground.

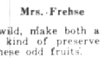
Thereafter two centuries passed while the papaw was shared only by hungry animals and red men. We hear no more of it until 1747 when the English naturalist, Mark Catesby, after a collecting trip to Virginia and Carolina delineated it in his "Natural History of Carolina."

WE FIRST tasted the fruit of the papaw in the Ozark hill country where it grows in dense thickets along the flats of the river. Together with the persimmon it is much relished by the opossum, gray squirrel and raccoon. The hill folk, ever dependent on the bounty of the wild, make both a pudding and a kind of preserve from both of these odd fruits.

Now as then, the river flats of the Mississippi are the chosen home of the papaw. It reaches into the eastern and northern states only as an understorey tree where it is forced into the shade by its competitors.

Most often it attains only shrubby proportions, forming dense thickets along river bottoms and streams.

However on a recent field trip to Bloomer State Park No. 8, we found an unusual grove of the papaw which harbors trees 30 feet high and some six to eight inches in diameter.



Mrs. Frehse

Its fruits were a part of their autumn feasts.

Now in the Ozark hill country the papaw fruits hang ripe and heavy in the frosty air while the great leaves droop and wither on their stems. And along Brazil creek the smoke curls upward from the cabin chimney while the apples dry on the low tin roof. One day soon, on the old rickety table under the kitchen window an odd-sized assortment of jars holding papaw preserves will be set out to cool.

WE CAME away with one of the fruits which is shaped like a stubby banana. This we are ripening (for old-time's sake) on the edge of the back porch.

When picked it was green but now it is soft to the touch and yellowing. When it reaches a sprinkled brown it will be palatable for one who is accustomed to its odd flavor. The flesh will then be custard-like and interspersed with shiny seeds, flat and brown, somewhat resembling those of a watermelon but larger and more oblong in shape.

The papaw (*Asimina triloba*) is a member of the only genus of the great custard-apple family to be found outside the tropics. Several species which are small shrubs are found in the southern parts of North America.

The entire tree has an exotic look borrowed from its tropical relatives. Its flowers first green, then brown and finally a dark winy color, appear in April. They are borne on short hairy stems, attached to the twig, back of the leaves.

THERE ARE six petals which give the appearance of three, because they are arranged in two rows within each other. The effect reminds one of a two-inch edition of the wild ginger flower.

The leaves are obovate-lanceolate in shape. They are among the largest in our North American flora, sometimes reaching a length of 12 inches. As you read these lines they will have turned a clear yellow, blending with the milkiest of autumn tones. In winter the tree can be identified by its long, lustrous, brown and hairy.

Heretofore the papaw has no practical value and its wood is soft and we have no need to eat of its strange fruits. But the Indians employed its strong inner bark for making fiber cloth, fish nets and lines for stringing fish.

## League's Units Studying UN

Meetings in six homes of the area will hear discussion of United Nations next week, according to League of Women Voters schedule.

Unit I of the League will be hosted by Mrs. J. F. Dorough, 32282 Bearwood, Southfield township, from 10 a.m. to noon on Monday.

Other Monday meet is Unit II, 1 to 3 p.m., at Mrs. Allan Keys, 608 Pleasant, Birmingham.

Kappa Delta alumnae will hear Raymond J. Laude, chairman of the Michigan Bankers association, talk on "Finances and Investment" at their Oct. 11 meeting at Mrs. D. L. Weikal's home, 1384 Bates, Birmingham.

TUESDAY MEETS are Unit III from 1 to 2 p.m. at Mrs. Dudley Campbell's home, 2810 Birmingham lane, Southfield township, and Unit IV from 8 to 10 p.m. at Mrs. Robert Stacy's home, 2846 Pine Hill Drive, Pine Hill.

Unit V meets from 8 to 10 p.m. at Mrs. Jack Gieck's 15619 Kirkshire, Southfield, on Wednesday. Next Thursday, Unit VI will meet from 8 to 10 p.m. at Mrs. William McNane's home, 694 Chesterfield, Birmingham.

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Have You Met

The John Lavrakas and nine-year-old Paul John, who came from Detroit and Boston in August to 196 Williamsburg road? He is supervisor in plant engineering office of Ford Motor Co., is a grad of University of Massachusetts and is in the naval reserves. She is a Simmons college, Mass., grad.

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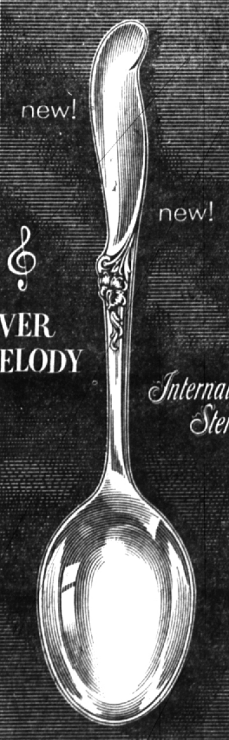
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