

February Is Quite A Month!

The name "February" comes from the Latin verb, "Februare," which means to purify. The Romans formerly held a festival at which a goat was sacrificed, after which the priests struck the hands of women with a strip of the skin of a goat, which was supposed to insure fertility and a safe delivery.

In United States history February is notable as a month of birthday anniversaries. The foremost birthday anniversary of the month is that of George Washington, the founder of the country, whose reputation has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years. It is also the month in which the birthday anniversary of Abraham Lincoln falls. Washington's birthday comes on February 22 and Lincoln's on February 12.

OTHER BIRTHDAYS of interest include those of Charles Dickens, who was born February 7, 1812 at Landport, England. The anniversary of the chartering of the Boy Scouts of America falls on February 8. The chartering took place on February 8, 1910.

The birthday anniversary of William Henry Harrison, ninth president of the

United States, comes on February 9. Harrison was born in Charles county, Virginia on February 9, 1773.

An often-forgotten anniversary is that of the Spanish peace treaty, the signing of which, by the president, occurred on February 10, 1899. By that treaty Spain ceded to the United States the Philippine Islands and the island of Guam in the Pacific, and the island of Puerto Rico, in the Atlantic. In consideration of a payment of \$20,000,000, Spain also agreed to withdraw from Cuba.

ST. VALENTINE'S Day falls on February 14. Jefferson Davis was inaugurated as President of the Confederacy on February 18, 1862. The Washington Monument was dedicated on February 21, 1885.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, one of the most popular American poets of the nineteenth century, was born February 27, 1807, in Portland, Maine.

Another important item: Every four years Leap Year occurs on February 29—which provides the unmarried pair to "pop the question" to the shy and bashful males!

"Learnin' Students to Learn"

The NATIONAL HOG FARMER, published in the interests of the Swine Industry, says: "Predict The Hog Market."

Win A New Fractor.

A good illustration of the Enterprise System. Prizes! Incentives! Better hogs and more of them.

All over this country, from county fairs to international stock shows, prizes are given for the best hogs, steers, sheep, pumpkins and pies.

And not only for grown-ups, but for the boys and girls in the 4-H Clubs and the Future Farmers of America. And what fine boys and girls they are! No juvenile delinquents allowed!

THERE IS SOMETHING about trying

Educational TV Expanding Fast

A recent tabulation shows that 20,000,000 can now take advantage of educational television programs in the United States. This is the largest educational TV audience potential since the advent of television after World War II.

Educational television has grown slowly since its birth six years ago. At that time over 250 TV channels were set aside by the Federal Communications Commission for educational television. Only recently, however, has educational television really begun to catch on.

In fact, Ralph Steetle, executive director of the Council of Educational Television, says that the recent rate of expansion in educational television is "truly phenomenal."

THERE ARE, currently, 29 educational TV stations in the air and several others will begin broadcasting in the next few months. By the end of the year it is estimated that at least 50 educational stations will be in operation.

In time, all of these educational television channels will be utilized and we hope that advocates of pay-television will not succeed in gaining access to any of these channels which have been reserved for educational purposes.

From The Eccentric's Point of View ...

Plans to reduce Michigan's lack of money by deferring payment for the liquor it buys and sells, thus making it possible to dispose of paid stocks, is a dreamy financial gesture. The idea, in lesser size, often has been done for years ... but only by reducing an inventory. But you never can tell what a politician will do when he tries to raise his spirits.

Our U.S. State Dept. announces that we will embark upon a program of cultural exchange with Russia. Each nation will exchange musicians, artists, athletes, students ... which may prove to have some practical value in getting each nation to know each other some better. The Soviets, however, won't exchange newspapers and

news broadcasts. This is understandable, too. Truth always finds barriers.

President Eisenhower has requested Congress to provide a billion dollars, over the next four years, with which to help 10,000 of our youth to gain education each year to become scientists and engineers. The billion is to be matched by 600 millions by the states. (Of course, the billion also will come from the states.) I like points that Russia's military threat requires this educational program for our youth. We don't begrudge the billion—after all it's a better buy than most of the pork barrel "rivers & harbors" program so dear to votes of members of Congress. But there's ultimate danger to education when the federal government subsidizes it.

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OUR CRAZY-QUILT INCOME TAX LAW



NATURE NOW

by Lydia King Frehse
Special Writer For The Birmingham Eccentric

Winter Buds Hold Promise of Spring

Trees and shrubs do not suddenly burst into flower with the coming of spring. What looks like a barren growth in winter is already covered with the promise of new life. This provision for next year's growth is called a winter bud.

Every plant needs the major part of its food supply for the season's growth. However, at the same time the winter buds are being processed. At first they are not much larger than a pin-head and need very little nourishment.

But during mid-summer when its food factory is in full swing the tree begins to build, fold and store the winter buds. Tiny as they are, they contain a miniature of the plant tightly folded and waterproofed against the winter's cold. Winter buds may be either terminal or lateral, the latter growing in various positions on the side of the tree.

Because they are small, winter buds go unnoticed for the most part. But if you examine the lilac bush in your lawn or a hickory tree in the woods they are easily observed. They are packed in an interesting assortment of shapes, colors and markings. A tulip tree stands in my neighbor's yard. Now in February the top of each twig is crowned with a spoon-shaped bud about half an inch long. It is flattened and looks somewhat like a duck's bill. Its colors range from lavender to golden brown. No other tree bears one in any way resembling it. When it opens it will hold the spectacular orange and green tulip-shaped flower for which the tree is named.

ALONG THE TWIG are smaller buds resembling the terminal one. These contain the future foliage of the tree and appear just above the scar made when last year's leaf fell. The flowering dogwood so much admired for its snowy May-time bloom, has a bud like a shoe-button. It is made of four segments glued together at the edges and curving into a little peak. Instead of rupturing the outer scales, as do most buds in spring time, its cover softens with the running sap and separates neatly into four so-called petals. The true flowers are located in the center, a small inconspicuous green cluster.

The dogwood's lateral buds, which hold the leaves, are slender and pointed and composed of two valves. When they open they look like a star's bill with the new leaves sticking out like a tongue.

THE HORSE CHESTNUT is an example of a tree which bears only terminal buds. These are unusual large. When the scales open they reveal an overlapping group of acorn-like leaves enclosing a miniature flower cluster like a tiny white cauliflower. The whole is packed in what looks like cotton batting made up of moist hairs that keep the bud from drying out in winter.

THE PROTECTIVE scales of winter buds may be few or many. The black willow has only one. The black oak has more than fifty. Most are smooth. A few like the silver poplar are covered with hairs. Most fall to the ground when the bud is fully opened. Witness the shower of red maple scales (along with the discarded male blossoms) on the sidewalk in early spring.

Winter buds and the accompanying leaf scars which are located just below them form the basis for tree identification in winter. Their size, color, shape and arrangement are in many ways more accurate than leaves and summer-time characteristics.

"Whether Birmingham will be restrained from proceeding with the construction of the municipal building will be decided in Circuit Court, Pontiac, this week according to Clara H. Ogden, village attorney, who will defend the village against an injunction by four residents."

"Persons who wish to construct bill boards in Bloomfield Hills village in the future will have to obtain the permission of the commission before proceeding, it was decided this week when the board passed an ordinance to this effect."

"For the first time in many years, gardening gets a top position on Page one of The Eccentric! The reason is apparent. This is a war year and people are urged to grow as much of their own food as possible and to participate in home canning and preserving to relieve the shortage of factory canned foods."

"Out-of-doors activity in Birmingham came to a standstill Wednesday morning from 10 to 10:15 a.m. when the Metropolitan district's first daytime alert was held."

"Long an institution in Birmingham 'charge accounts' at gasoline stations are now 'out.' Under a Feb. 1 ruling of the OPA service stations may no longer give credit on purchases of petroleum products."

ONE THING OR ANOTHER By George Wm. Averill

A bit of India has just blossomed in Birmingham.

An Indian lily—usually found along rivers in the jungles of India—has opened its single 36-inch dark purple blossom in the living room of the Eugene Allen family, 459 Townsend.

"But now that the bloom has opened, we've got to move the plant to the breeze-way or someplace. The flower stinks!" Allen declared.

Literally stinks?

"Sure does!" emphasized Allen. "Closest I can come to a description is to say it smells like a backed-up sewer."

THE PLANT ITSELF has grown to a height of 83 inches—an inch shy of seven feet. All this has happened since Dec. 28. Allen brought the bulb up from the cool basement, put the bulb into a half bushel basket of dry sand.

"Five days later, the plant was up a quarter of an inch," Allen explained.

It grew an inch a day, then two inches, six inches, and nine inches on two successive days. Then growth tapered off to six, then to 3 to 4 inches daily.

ALLEN LIKES TO GROW plants, got this from a friend at the GM tech center where both work, Allen as a tool and die maker. (Last year he retired after 28 years as a volunteer with the Birmingham fire department.)

In a few days, the honeysuckle-shaped bloom will drop off, and the plant will become dormant. Along about Decoration Day, Allen will transplant the lily in his garden.

The plant has a straight dark green stalk with light spots.

"It also is called the snake plant, and you might think the stalk looked like a snake if you saw it flat on the ground," the plant's owner said.

But oh, Dear, the O-dor!

"Did you have a nice time at the party?" the little boy was asked upon his return home.

"I never had such a lousy time," he answered. "There was an old lady there who didn't do anything but try to restore order."

Got a charge out of my latest copy of "Calling Your Way," the little 4-page leaflet Michigan Bell Telephone sent you and me with our January bill?

The page one article was entitled "An Unfair Tax."

It started off with this strongly worded sentence:

"Now that Congress is in session, it seems appropriate to cite the continued levy of the discriminatory Federal excise tax on telephone service."

THEN IT WOUND UP four paragraphs later in quite different tone:

"At such time as Congress feels that it can reduce or eliminate any taxes, we suggest that the telephone excise tax should be the first to go."

Reminds me of the old preacher who bowed slightly every time he mentioned the devil in a Sunday sermon. Finally the chief elder asked the person why he made this motion.

"Well," replied the minister. "I don't really know which way I'll be going when I die, and it's a good idea to keep on good terms with everybody ..."

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