

# This Tale Is Purely Accidental

By IRMA N. DAVIS  
Staff Writer

If last Friday when a child gets hurt, even if the injury is a minor one.  
But School Supt. Otis M. Dickey will be the first to tell you that his charges can find some wild and woolly ways to chip their teeth or stub their toes.  
No accident at any school child in the Birmingham system is too trivial for a full report, preceded by certain, well-defined steps in each case.  
Every child is given a card to take home at the beginning of the school year. His parents list telephone numbers and addresses; their own and that of their doctor plus the hospital of their choice in case mother or dad cannot be reached.

FORTUNATELY, serious injuries are few and far between. Far more prevalent are the type that require soap, water and antiseptic—and a teacher's

shoulder for Johnny to lean on until the hurt goes away.  
Then teacher fills out a report that eventually winds up in the files at the Board of Education. Reading through them, one is impressed by the remarkable recuperative powers of children—and their instructors and principals.

The youngsters seem to have a remarkable propensity for colliding with each other, scratching themselves on minute pencil-sharpeners, jabbing pencil points into their hands.

THEY PINCH THEIR fingers, walk into walls, trip, fall, tumble and slide into scrapes. They manage to get hurt on their way to and from school, in classrooms and on the playground. They fall off their chairs and into desks. They fight and scuffle and push-in-shove, they do all the things that kids have always done, plus a few more—some of them a little more serious.

Sometimes they just walk into trouble, as in the case of one

seven-year-old miss who was looking at a raccoon and bumped into an iron beam. At least four area youngsters have found that hamsters are not always as trusting as their young audiences.

One report in the files listed some derring-do by a small, would-be aviator who "pretended he was flying a plane and crashlanded his chin on his desk."

SEVERAL SMALL FRY have managed, somehow, to bite their tongues; one little girl fell out of a swing into a puddle. The report reads, "her mother brought dry clothes."  
Still another record notes that a seven-year-old girl suffered a not-so-gallant "hit in the left eye by a boy, for no apparent reason."  
Two other reports cover the knock-down, drag-out of three small boys, one of whom apparently escaped unscathed. That bites were freely exchanged was evident from the

notes taken by teachers, proving that not only hamsters are given to nipping.  
Some of the mishaps evoke strange pictures in the mind of the reader as they note that a student had "his hand stepped on" or, in another case, a 10-year-old boy "was wrapped in a curtain during gym. Two boys ran at him; bumped head on wall."

A CLASSIC SITUATION is revealed as one learns that a little girl "skinned her knees; boys were chasing girls with grasshoppers."  
Imagine if you can, a certain young miss who "hit herself in the eye with the ball she had battered" or the boy whose "pen point" flipped back on his tooth and chipped the edge.

Little boys insist, sometimes, on walking down a slide or sidewalk in stand-up position. One small guy thought he had swallowed some stones that "were put at his face" by another half-pint.

There's always the adventure-some one. For instance, the eight-year-old who stuck scissors in a wall plug and in contrast, the lass who was sitting still on a tree stump—and fell off, just as quietly.

EVEN LESS EXPLICABLE was the case of the youngster who inserted an eraser in his ear or another who insisted on swinging on his stomach until he bumped his head.

They kick off their galoshes and someone gets a boot in the face or to others were "chicken fighting against clearly described regulations."  
And some must feel that they should "have stayed in bed." Like a six-year-old who sat under a tree at noon and bumped her head when she stood up. At afternoon recess someone threw an apple, and guess who got it?  
And like small soldiers they rarely cry for very long. The reports say so.

## The Birmingham Eccentric Features

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### NATURE NOW

By Lydia King Frehse  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

## Witch Hazel Bush Flowers in Autumn

Late tramps in the damp and leafless woodland bring their own special satisfactions. One of these is the sight of the witch hazel bush in bloom. Now in early November when the rest of the forest is bare and we least expect to see a flower, its branches are still covered with a yellow mist of bloom. In the southern part of our range, this may linger on until Christmas time.

of the new world which were being nurtured for the first time by the protective hand of the botanist.  
WITCH HAZEL is our only shrub to flower in the autumn. It breaks into bloom as its leaves fall, arranged in a branch from a woody leaf. The flowers, three or four in a clump, appear at the end of a short stem in the axis of a falling or fallen leaf, arranged in a pattern of four.  
As I turn a bloom in my hand I count and guess, who four long and slender petals somewhat twisted and crumpled and a four-lobed calyx. With my hand lens I can see four fertile stamens alternating with four imperfect ones. The blooms are colored light yellow and have a faint fragrance.

THE WITCH HAZEL furnishes the last of nature's feasts for the insects. When the flowers have been pollinated in exchange for a tiny sip of nectar, the petals fade and fall. The development of the beaked and woody capsule extends throughout the following year until the next blooming season.  
Then the two (usually) large seeds, hard and black, have ripened and are discharged with considerable force by the contraction of (See NATURE NOW, 5-B)

Mrs. Frehse

### STRICTLY FRESH

A road map is the motorist's book of etiquette—it shows them which fork to use.



A sign seen on a country road read: Drive carefully—there isn't a hospital in 50 miles.

A run-down apartment is where persons pay good dollars for bad quarters.

To tell how old some women are, one has to read between the lines.

The weather man could also be called the best paid writer of American fiction.

### WEEKLY VISIT

## Finds Satisfaction in 'Plane' Living

By IRMA N. DAVIS  
Staff Writer

"As far as flying goes, my wife would worry more about me if I were a taxi driver," says pilot instructor Charles (Chuck) Farnum, who has been teaching men, women and teenagers to fly since 1942.

"There's a lot of satisfaction in being able to fly," he said as he sat in the office of the Berz Airport on W. Maple Road where he has worked for the last two years. Over the years, he has taught teenagers as young as 15 and senior citizens in their seventies.

"We have a 78-year-old man who's still an active pilot; using our airport here right along. He flies all over the country. Has his own plane and uses it to go hunting and fishing."

FARNUM HAS come to some conclusions about his students that he can't quite appraise the average male or female.

"A young person may learn faster," he noted, "but not as well." And capped this with "some of our sharpest pilots are women, perhaps because it's different world after keeping house."  
"They're a little leery of the mechanical side but once they get over that initial hurdle, most of them learn fast."

"A famous old timer and barn-stormer."  
DURING WORLD WAR II, he trained army air force cadets at Michigan State University. Later, as an enlisted man in the Navy, he served as a ground instructor.

In 1946, he opened the United States School of Flight at Detroit City Airport. Three years later, he gave up the school to work as a free lance instructor and charter pilot. In the latter capacity, he flew as a corporation pilot for a number of companies.

At one point, he grounded himself to do.  
"I can't kid stuff any more, just means of transportation—a way to get salesmen and executives home nights," he said.

Farnum, whose specialty is "certain phases of instrument training," said that the average student gets 40 hours of flying, plus 40 hours of ground school.  
"To obtain a pilot's license, appli-

cant's are given "something like a driver's test, only much more thorough, by the Federal Aviation Administration." A physical examination is also required of would-be fliers and they must be at least 16.

FARNUM SAID one of his toughest problems is "to teach people who never go to fly." As for the students—the "beginners' big problem is getting lost."  
At the Berz Airport School, Piper tri-pacers are used to instruct students. Farnum said most of his pupils approach the job of learning to fly with due seriousness. Nevertheless, an occasional up-and-down does occur.  
"He recalled one young man who climbed into the front seat of a plane against all rules—for his first solo and "ground-looped all over the place."  
"At another air school where I taught, we had a fellow from South America. When he soloed I forgot no one here at the time could speak Spanish and he couldn't speak English."

THE TOWER TOLD him not to fly—a plane was coming in. He thought they meant to go ahead.  
Farnum looked thoughtful. "I stood on the old carpet a long time for that one."  
He said that "modern planes are practically foolproof. It isn't the planes that kill the pilot, it's the pilots who crack up the planes."  
The FAA rules require complete check-out of a pilot's commercial operation every 100 hours he said; at Berz, they are gone over every 20 hours.

"THAT MAKES them safer than a car—there's no one there to tell you when to get them fixed."  
To clinch his stand, Farnum noted that he and his wife "fly just about everywhere we go."  
"We just don't like that heavy highway traffic," he said.

## Michigan Freeway Wins National Award

A 21-mile section of Interstate 75 Freeway in Northern Michigan has been selected as one of America's most scenic new highways. The freeway, which extends from Indian River to Mackinac City, was cited as an outstanding example of a highway designed to take advantage of the natural terrain and

scenic beauty of the area. State Highway Commissioner John C. Mackie will receive a plaque from Parade Magazine and Better Highways Information Foundation, sponsors of the award. The award is given to the nation's finest new highways.

### DOWN TO EARTH

## Falling Leaves Blur Vision of Fall's Ease

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Maybe there is a virtue of only remembering the pleasant things in life.  
Remember, a month ago, I wrote that the fall garden cycle was one of the best because you could do the garden tasks at your leisure in contrast to the spring season.  
Well, this philosophy was written before the leaves began to fall. I am beginning to envy the person who had a parched site without a tree in midsummer.

IT IS TRUE that the leaves from a medium size tree when collected and used in the making of a compost pile are worth five dollars in humus the next Spring. At this moment, I just want to get rid of the mountainous volume.

This is the time of year to plant evergreens and trees on your property (note the above). You should realize the potential height and diameter of your new plantings and don't expect your mental vision of green splendor to bring to materialize for at least three years. It takes this period of time for them to get accustomed to your location.

L. C. (tender, loving care) really pay dividends with every plant you place.

YOU WILL be a real partner toward your plant's success if you: 1. Start the right plant for the right place.  
2. Prepare the soil, providing a large enough hole and be sure that the soil which is placed at the base of the plant is porous and rich.  
3. Tamp the soil around the roots.  
4. Water well.  
5. Fertilize around the first of April and a second time the middle of July if the plant is poked.  
6. Trim when needed for evergreens and at the right cycle of the year for deciduous plants.  
7. Here is where the personal TLC-care comes in. Only retire the plants you like, providing good companions for the green picture you are creating.

RECENTLY I WAS in New York to appear on the "New York Show" to share with her audiences the art of gardening through the technique of Therapy.

Through Horticulture as it applies to all ages of patients who are either mentally or physically ill. As a part of the course took a short course from Takuma Tono of Tokyo on the Design of Japanese Gardens, sponsored by the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens.

THE JAPANESE garden symbolizes ideas about life. The Japanese like to see the rhythmic form of hillsides and trimmed plants, the look of age and struggle in twisted trees and weathered wood and stones, also the presence of quiet water. Plant material pruned like a turtle or shaped like a tortoise are important in their symbolism. If you want to live a long time, you have a figure in your garden.

White sand and pebbles are employed due to lack of a water supply. No flowers are used, may be some occasionally in a pot because according to Mr. Tono—"If a flower was asked to speak to you it would say, 'Do not show my face when I am dead'."

In construction pebbles are first placed beneath the sand which should be at least two inches in depth. Large stones are important (really boulders). A portion of the stones should be buried to give the feeling of strength to the observer. Stones in a Japanese pattern are described as masculine and feminine.

IF WATER is present or an artificial pond effect is created with sand and stones, it is always in the shape of a bear's paw, a boic purposes. The arrangement of stepping stones are very important and of course never in a straight line. As for the total design of the garden two thirds of the total area should be covered in a straight line. It is interesting to note that over 15 years ago he graduated from the School of Landscape Architecture, Cornell University.

Mr. Tono mentioned that the Japanese garden has natural beauty emphasized while our American gardens have a more complicated pattern. It is interesting to note that over 15 years ago he graduated from the School of Landscape Architecture, Cornell University.

"How do parents of visually disabled and sighted adolescents compare in their ability to understand the world?" This was one of the major questions explored in the new book, "Adjustment to Visual Disability in Adolescence." It is published by the American Publication for the Blind in New York City.

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