

**WEEKLY VISIT**

# Local Woman Adds Flavor To Life for Senior Citizens

By IRMA N. DAVIS  
Staff Writer

Without so much as lifting a measuring cup, Mrs. Gwen Fett of Birmingham and her three associates will have a hand in pampering the sweet tooth of more than one college student from the local area.

That's just one of the reasons Mrs. Fett and friends provided a "cookie kitchen" for culinary-minded grandmothers—in the newly opened apartment residence for retired persons.

The American House, baking facilities and all opened this week in Royal Oak. As the first of the new residents began moving in, Mrs. Fett had good reason to give with satisfaction.



MRS. GWEN FETT

**PUTTING AWAY** the last of the swatches of drapery material, the last of the furniture catalogs, she could look back on two years of working and planning with her associates. The end result represents a new concept in living for single people. 62 retired men and over, who will make their home in the attractive new residence.

A round of visits to the houses during the last few weeks introduced senior citizens such as Mrs. Inez Neilson to the new facility. Mrs. Neilson gave the new early applicants an opportunity to select their "homes" from the 60 colorful one-and-a-half bath apartments.

Mrs. Neilson, whose list of grandchildren includes five who will be university-bound from the Birmingham area next fall, quickly agreed with a daughter-in-law that the cookie kitchen would be ideal for making confections for colleagues.

Mrs. Fett, whose own mother, Elizabeth M. J. Owen, makes her home with her at 1625 Buckingham, knows from experience how to make an older person happy.

There will be balanced meals, comfortable heating, special rest areas, and previously served by her. There will also be limousine services for shopping and socializing ventures and a limited recreation and hobby program which may be expanded later.

The "residence hotel," as Mrs. Fett prefers to call it, is built on and previously owned by her. Stockholders in Personal Care Services, which will operate the facility, include not only Mrs. Fett but also Robert J. Ebbert of Birmingham, Charles R. Rosenberg and William C. Appel.

**PLENTY OF HELP** in the way of support, inspiration and practical aid was also forthcoming from

Mrs. Fett's four children, Owen, David, Gwen and John.

The family have learned, over the years, to pull together.

Mrs. Fett has been the president and owner of the Henry F. Fett Building Co. ever since the death of her husband in 1954 left her with four children to raise. John, the youngest, was only 10 at the time.

"There were houses not completed, and I had to step in," she says.

She and her husband had always discussed his business, she had assisted with the interior decorating of homes and "knew the men he worked with."

"All that helped," she comments.

**CONSTRUCTION** of a 32-unit apartment in Royal Oak was the next big project undertaken by the firm. Then came the design of a convalescent home.

When it became possible to get a FHA-insured mortgage on 90 per cent of the building cost, the four associates, now-husband from their original idea to that of "single partner housing."

Anything but a convalescent home, the apartments provide advantages geared to the needs of people in their later years.

**EVEN THE WORKMEN** have commented on the club-like atmosphere, especially one colorful electrician who wondered why Mrs. Fett had all the rooms painted yellow.

Actually, the decor is primarily kept to pumpkin, copper, and blue-green—as bright and gay as the years ahead for the occupants of American House.

**DOWN TO EARTH**

## Gardens from Abroad Can Be Brought Home

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eclectic

At this date many of our regular readers are packing their suitcases to travel to distant lands. Often you see beautiful gardens and wonder how you can repeat the effects in your own back yard. When traveling out of the country, your columnist makes it a practice to sketch and note pleasing uses of plant material and then comes back to suppliers to reproduce the lessons available material. Believe me, we can reproduce any desired effect right here in Birmingham.

**IN GERMANY**, Holland and Belgium you often see large flower beds in geometric patterns with masses of bright red roses. A search disclosed that Armstrong Nurseries have just the style red rose which is disease resistant and will provide an exact mass effect.

**Red Roses for Geometric Bedding:** Ruby Lips is a Floribunda rose which will have semi-double red flowers but will bloom abundantly right up to the last killing frost. Valentine Mrs. Burlingame is another strong rose selection which is traffic signal

red with large fiery flowers and it will keep to a low height.

**Pink Rose for Geometric Bedding:** County air is a selection by a mass of semi-double flowers on plants which will grow to be three-foot high. They can be used for ground cover or erosion control where they are used in steep slopes. They are very inexpensive.

**Early Lawn Fertilizing:** One of these days available just barely makes a pattern on the lawn—and the weather prophecy foretells a blanket of snow in the next few hours—your spreader will be used for a blanket of fertilizer with the formula 12-12-12.

The second reason to spread it at this time is that the light pattern of snow on the lawn will assist in using your fertilizer with the formula 12-12-12.

The second reason is that any day when the temperature is 40 degrees your lawn can benefit by this food and as the first number of the formula designates a high count of nitrogen the lawn will not be burned at this time of year. The snow will not be deep enough to cause a run off if it melts but will assist the fertilizer to get up immediately in a fluid form.

**Wrap Newly Planted Trees:** It isn't too late to wrap that tree you planted last fall if this detail escaped you. You may use tree wrap paper, wrapping paper or aluminum foil.

**Spiral the wrapping beginning at the ground level.** Don't wrap it too tight. Plan on leaving the wrap on the trunk at least a year.

**Japanese Gardens and Miniature Landscapes:** A new handbook just published by the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens for one dollar. This is the first book on the subject with its 84 pages and 120 pictures. The Japanese feeling in contemporary gardens and the entire technique of developing a Japanese garden with its care is described.

A second reason the book is devoted to Hensaki which is the art of making miniature landscapes with stones, sand, plant material and accessories in trays.

Again the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens has gathered specialists to develop a theme in a handbook at a popular price for everybody to share as a service to gardeners everywhere.

**Greenhouse News:** Today the heavy scent of narcissus fills the air, with marigold, purple petunias, Christmas cactus, azaleas and budding fuchsia capturing our attention.

What a joy is felt to rush out to the greenhouse in the early morning to examine each plant for a report of the night's growth. The greenhouse truly provides a step into Heaven.

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**Features**  
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## NATURE NOW

# Flying Squirrel Rare Treat to See

By Lydia King Freshet  
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eclectic

Last night our nature-minded neighbors had a very unusual experience. As they looked out at their bird-feeding station about 10:30, they saw a small mammal feeding on the grain and trying to get a nip of suet from its wire basket.

The area was illuminated by a floodlight revealing the visitor to be one seldom seen in town or out—a flying squirrel. After feeding for some time at a distance of not more than ten feet from the observers, it climbed a nearby tree and after gliding from one limb to another, it was lost in the darkness.

The angle of descent is ordinarily from 20 to 30 degrees although it sometimes extends to 40 to 50 degrees or even to a perpendicular drop. The powerful hind legs are instrumental in the original force which they extend in the take-off.

**THE USUAL** mode of travel is to sail from the top of one tree to the base of the next, then running up its side and sailing to the next. People who have watched this performance are surprised at the speed made by the little creature although each glide is seldom more than 100 feet from one tree to another. Section describes this squirrel's flight as ghost-like and silent in the evening twilight or moonlight.



Mrs. Freshet

**THE FUR** of the flying squirrel is so soft and the individual hairs so long and lax that this feature alone almost serves to identify the creature. It is colored a soft greyish-brown above and creamy below. Its hind legs are longer than that of any other squirrel and its eyes are softer and larger. Its tail is about as long as its head and body put together.

The flying squirrel's nest is made of leaves in tall trees. It is large and compact to afford protection during cold weather. Like their fellow squirrels the young are born early in the season in the protection of some hollowed-out tree.

**THE FOOD** of this squirrel is buds, seeds, nuts, fruits, bird eggs, insects and possibly young birds since they have a carnivorous turn of appetite.

The little creatures are very tame and make nice pets. Their eyes, like the owls, are adapted to darkness and through the day the animal seeks out some place of concealment where it sleeps rolled up like a ball of fur.

**THERE ARE** two species of flying squirrels in Michigan, the northern and the southern. Neither is abundant and their night going ways are so concealing that they are seldom seen.

Your recall recalls her one and only experience with a flying squirrel. This occurred more than thirty years ago when the family went to the state capital at Lansing, Michigan. I remember how engrossed were our children to see this little creature on the tower of the clock tower. I remember how they walk to the next, run up its side and glide to the ground just as the procedure is described in the book.

**WHETHER** the flying squirrel moves into our wooded suburbs because food is plentiful at this season in the forests outside is a moot question.

At any rate it is a rare treat to discover this little nocturnal creature at the bird feeder.

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## Arithmetic—First Class

Implementing a new tool for the teaching of arithmetic, children of Mrs. Ann Sumera's first grade class at Beverly Elementary School went about their Valentine mailing business. Kenny Stavely, 17415 Lockerie, Beverly Hills, delivered his Valentines at the homemade cardboard post office to clerks Jackie Mitchell, 17875 Kirkshire, and Dana Dahlgren, 32700 Evergreen, who made the appropriate change and provide stamps. The business transactions were conducted each morning and afternoon while the arithmetic class was in session.

## Michigan's Old Capitol A Sightseeing Attraction

It has been said that most persons are looking for less to do, more time to do it in and more pay for not getting it done.

When some persons begin to think seriously of saving

for a rainy day, it's usually a rainy day.

Why is it that the fellows who are afraid to go to the dentist aren't afraid to drink while they drive.

Shadows of the past linger in Michigan, and here and there a shape emerges to bridge the span between the state's romantic past and its ever-changing present.

One of the best known of such tangible links with Michigan's history is the state capital building in Lansing, Michigan's capital city.

A dome-shaped baroque building—generally considered unlovely in appearance, although representative of its period—this crusty old building holds a curious fascination for visitors.

Year in and year out it remains among the top tourist attractions of the state, according to the Michigan Tourist Council.

**MORE THAN** 100,000 sight-seers yearly go poking through the old building in which the hustle of the state's center of government continues in an atmosphere charged with the lore of Michigan's past.

From the museum on the ground floor to the quiet dignity of the executive offices on the second floor and the hum of accounting machines on the top level, they find strange contrast between the old and the new and the old and the new.

Standing sentinel before the Capitol building is a weathered statue of Michigan's Civil War governor, Austin Blair; although he's been dead for nearly a century he is without a doubt the most photographed man in the state. No tourist worth his film can resist snapping a picture of family or friends before the old statue. And it really is an impressive sight with the stern visage of Gov. Blair allowed against the gleaming white of the Capitol dome in the background.

**BUT, OF COURSE,** top tourist billing goes to the building itself, and during the annual session of the legislature it seems with school children on hand to watch their government in action. During the rest of the year "capitol bugs" and the garden variety of tourists keep old Gov. Blair busy.

For thousands of tourists today "collect capitol." It has become a hobby. They visit as many states as they can, on each trip photographing the building and landmarks, just as many persons collect stamps.

**ACTUALLY** the dome-capped four story building is Michigan's old capitol. It replaced a more modest building which was erected in 1847 when the state capital was moved to Lansing from Detroit. Construction of the present capitol building began in 1872 and was completed in 1879, at a cost of \$14 million. To duplicate the

(See CAPITOL 1-B)

## Weather Research A Promising Field For Young People

A proposed tripling of manpower and expenditures in weather research in the next 10 years will provide a field of rich opportunity for young people, a Michigan meteorologist declares.

Prof. E. Wendell Hewson, PhD, director of Meteorology Laboratories of the U of M Department of Engineering Mechanics, explains that the three-fold expansion of weather research has been recommended by a special panel of meteorologists.

The group was established by the National Academy of Sciences at the suggestion of Jerome B. Wiesner, U of M alumnus and President Kennedy's science adviser.

**NEED FOR THE** expanded research program is illustrated by the billions of dollars of damage to property, forests and crops that are attributable annually to weather factors. Professor Hewson explains: "A key problem is how to get the necessary highly-trained personnel into the field." The U-M meteorologist adds: "The necessity and resources for this research make it a field of rich opportunity for young people."

**THE PROPOSED WEATHER** research program would require 45 billion and 2,000 more engineers and scientists in the next 10 years, according to Hewson, who chaired one of six conferences responsible for drawing up the recommendations last summer. This sum is intended to cover the costs of such very expensive modern research tools as satellites and rockets for investigations of the atmosphere of other planets as well as of the earth's.

"We recommend a greatly expanded research effort in the field of engineering meteorology," Hewson says, "especially in air pollution research and water resource research. These are national problems which are urgent and knocking on our door right now. In order to solve them we must learn to work with weather and climate, not against them."

## MSUO Dedicates New Building

Leading scholars in each of the sciences took part in a symposium on improving undergraduate science education recently in dedicating Michigan State University Oakland's \$2,000,000 science and engineering building. In MSUO's "new look" program, every student takes a mathematics-science sequence, and its engineering curriculum emphasizes fundamentals rather than techniques.

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