

Writer Describes a Dragon Fly's Beauty

FALLOON LAKE— This morning the "biggest little girl" in our summer household came in with a dragon fly in her hand; its wing broken in last night's storm; its small life ended.

And all I could say was that death is a part of life; so poignantly felt, so difficult to accept for both child and adult.

Insects are the wonder creatures of earth. Their kind is everywhere present; sometimes a curse and sometimes a blessing. But today I write only of a gossamer-winged dragon fly lying inert on the table before me.

ALL ITS BODILY shape, all its neatly timed functions show its near-perfect adaptation to the life it lives.

Only so could it have survived the vicissitudes of the 300 millions of years that have come and gone since the first of its kind (some with a wing spread of two and one half feet) flew lightly about the lush greenness of our Coal Age swamps.

And there was no man abroad to testify to this "living flash of light," but the age-old rocks have sealed—in the record.

DRAGON FLIES belong to the great insect order Odonata which includes more than 5,000 species. My little gift of the morning is commonly called a "green darner" because he is supposed to sew up bad boys' ears. To entomologists he is "Anax junius" and his kind abounds wherever there is fresh water.

IN LIFE HE darts back and forth over the water and across the treetops while his grass-green thorax, his bright blue abdomen make of him a striking creature. To our eyes his wings moving at the rate of 30 to 40 beats per second are no more than a hazy blur. Outside the insect world only the humming bird can rival such an aerial performance and man with his complicated flight maneuvers cannot even approach his consummate skills.

FOR DRAGON FLIES are predatory sects and their speed and agility in securing their food is the key to their age-long survival. My green darner searched for flies and mosquitoes throughout the daylight hours and so adapted was he to his life on the wing that few insects were able to escape his lightning pursuit.

most completely covered with two great compound eyes each containing as many as 30,000 facets. These give him a keenness of vision which enables him to see his prey at some distance.

AS HE FLIES through the air the dragon fly holds his six spiny legs in a sort of basket pose below his body. With swift precision he can spot a mosquito and scoop it up in this ready-made holder, eating it on the wing with his toothed mouth parts.

When twilight falls, green darner alights on a leafy shrub there to spend the night. As soon as the sun has warmed the morning air, he is off again across the fields and swamps for another day's hunting. Here he patrols a regular "beat" or territory since he has many competitors for his living space.

WHEN HE SEEKS a mate his sure instinct also compels him to compete with many rivals. So it is that he chooses a female darner on the wing as she flashes across the lake.

When he catches up with her, he grasps her around the neck holding her tight with the elapsers located at the tip of his body. Thus linked in tandem fashion he leads her across the water on their nuptial flight.

ARRIVED ON SHORE, she alights on a cattail stem, where she immediately thrusts her abdomen under the water, piercing the plant tissues with her ovipositor. Here she carefully deposits the first of more than a hundred newly fertilized eggs, each a tiny watermelon-shaped object.

Six hot sunny days pass over the pond until a small wingless creature emerges. Alert and agile, it spends the first year of its pupal life among the underwater vegetation catching and devouring microscopic animals.

DURING THE NEXT year as it eats and grows, it will undergo as many as twelve or thirteen successive molts before it reaches its adult stage. At summer's end it has become a dull greenish creature about an inch long with small wing

pads developing on its thorax. October's frosts kill the adult dragon flies, but the nymph survives under the protective lee. Another spring brings a fresh food supply and it soon grows to be about two inches long.

It has now developed a double-lined lower lip armed at its tip with sharp hooks. This is a formidable weapon which enables it to catch prey almost as large as itself.

BY MID-SUMMER the nymph is full grown and on a warm night it ascends a cattail on a reed stem to begin its aerial and adult life. Here it discards its skin for the last time.

Its wings expand, then stiffen and dry and soon it is off in swift flight; a green flash across the shimmering pond.

SNAKE DOCTOR, bee butcher, horse stinger, devil's needle—his vicious and voracious ways have earned for the dragon fly these unflattering pseudonyms.

But in truth he is a harmless creature. Unarmed, having neither

bite nor stinger, he feeds on insects harmful to man thus making of himself an ally rather than an enemy.

An even in death my dragon fly is beautiful; his gossamer wings unfolded, his blue-green body aglint in the morning sun.

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4 Youth Chorale Members Report On Concert Tour

Enthusiastic letters are being received by parents of four local members of the Michigan Youth Chorale as it nears the end of its European tour.

The members are Claudia Kessler, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Kessler; Marilyn Mitchell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Mitchell; Linda Weston, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Earl Weston, and Jerry Stone, son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Stone.

THE CHORALE is composed of 70 Michigan high school seniors

who met Saturday mornings during the major part of last year's school year in Ann Arbor to rehearse for this summer's concert schedule.

The group arrived in Helsinki July 14. It spent one week there, during which it received a special invitation to sing for the President of Finland. From July 22 through 30, it toured southern Finland, singing in towns along the Russian border.

THE LAST TWO weeks of their tour, the chorale will spend in

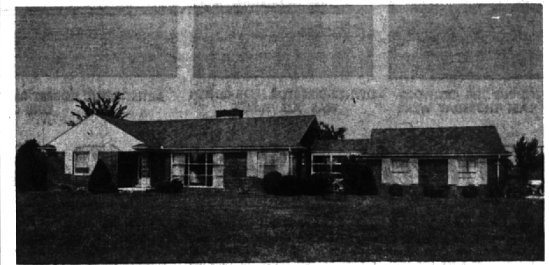
Sweden and Denmark. They will leave from Amsterdam Aug. 15. A homecoming concert will be held in Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor on Sept. 1.

One of the girls reported to her mother that it was difficult to tell in nations where other languages are spoken if the boys were being friendly or fresh.

The Michigan Department of Health was the first state health agency to distribute blood plasma to hospitals and physicians for civilian use.



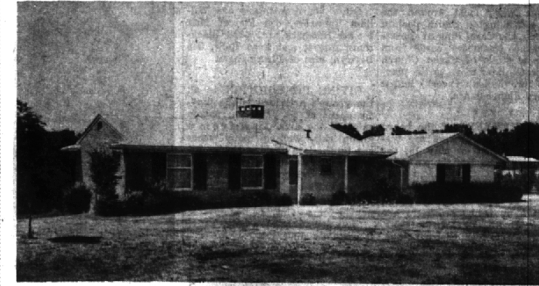
Mrs. Frehse



This custom built ranch on a nice quiet street in beautiful Kenneway Meadows offers spacious living for the young family. The living room with dining area at one end is unusually large. There are three bedrooms. One and a half baths and an enclosed breezeway. All hardwood floors; all draperies; carpeting in the living-dining room and hall; two car attached garage. Excellent buy at \$22,500.

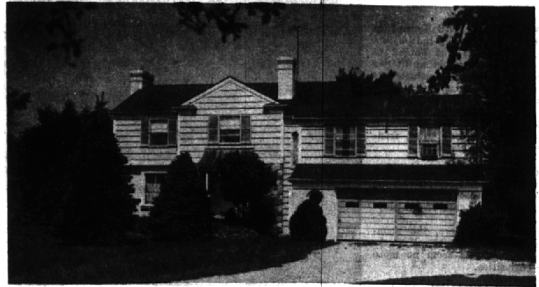
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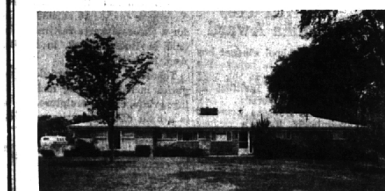


3 Bedrooms, 1½ baths separate dining room 2-way fireplace, carpeting & draperies, Kitchen with built-ins, Recreation room space and school bus at corner.

- Lake Property—Boat Dock
- 100 feet of frontage
- 4 bedrooms, 2½ baths
- Dining room
- Recreation room
- Screened porch
- Breakfast room
- Kitchen with built-ins
- Carpeting, Draperies
- Lake water for lawn
- Rear yard fenced



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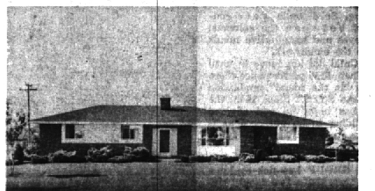
THE THREE "R's": READY for occupancy. RIGHT neighborhood. REAL value for your dollar. Four good sized bedrooms, 2½ baths, 20-foot family room and a great kitchen. Near Harlan school and in excellent condition. Carpeting and intercom system included at \$29,900.



YOU'LL BE SURPRISED at the price for this terrific tri-level with aluminum siding. 3 bedrooms, 2½ baths, dining room and family room with fireplace. Built-in oven and range. Hobby room on lower-level. On Court Street off Quarton road—Bloomfield schools. Great value. \$31,500.



FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S SAKE (and yours, too!) see this home now. Walking distance to QUARTON SCHOOL. Four bedrooms, two baths and TWO lavs. Dining room, library, paneled recreation room and 19-foot screened porch. An abundance of storage space and NEW CARPETING. \$37,250.00.



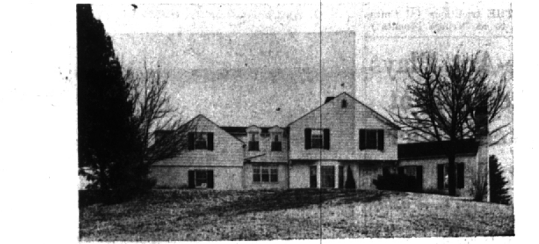
WANT TO GET SETTLED BEFORE SCHOOL? Don't miss this! On big corner lot and walking distance to Westchester school. Full BASEMENT, 3 bedrooms and a family room. Built-in oven and range. Carpeting and draperies. \$24,900.



DUE TO TRANSFER THIS BLOOMFIELD VILLAGE home is available to you. Four bedrooms, 2½ baths, dining room and library. Large screened porch. Paneled recreation room with fireplace. Carpeting and draperies included. Beautiful, big lot!



EXCITING HOME NEAR THE KIRK—access to Island Lake thru Outlot. Four bedrooms and 2½ baths. 45-foot family room with fireplace plus hobby room on lower level. Superbly built—many extra features. You must SEE INSIDE! \$53,500.



SEVEN ACRES—AND IN BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT. Magnificent family home with 4 bedrooms, 3½ baths, large dining room and library. Sewing room on 2nd floor, recreation room and screened porch. Fire and burglar alarm system. LOW taxes. One of few areas you can KEEP your own HORSES. \$53,500.

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