

DOWN TO EARTH

Some Plant Families Need Fall Attention

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

The debate continues to go on whether or not the best season of the year is the spring or fall. To me it can always be rightfully compared to the cycles in our lives with the latter years assuming the role of the fall.

In the fall we can take an easy garden tempo and kindle our dreams for that perfect garden to be recreated for the following spring.

There is always more of a feeling of peace during the splendor of the fall while in the spring we are always hustling to place plants into the ground at the right scheduled time, knowing that a garden should "be set" by December 1st.

One of the pleasant tasks for September is to put a card table up in the yard in a shady spot, cover it with old newspaper and begin to repot all the house plants.

Flower pots can be washed with one cup of washing bleach to a bucket of water. Soak them for 15 minutes or more, then wash thoroughly with a stiff brush.

A GOOD potting mixture of soil is one half good topsoil, one fourth peat moss or leaf mold and one fourth sharp sand. I always add some fertilizer.

If a plant looks mangy see if it can be saved, but if it has no sentimental attachment, toss it out! Put your time on a plant which "appreciates" the care given it.

Be sure and leave a uniform margin at the top of the pot for all of your plants so it is easy to measure the amount of water you will be giving them.

If vines are too large, remove several cuttings for gift plants. Divide your African violets.

On your garden shelf you may have a powder which you can mix with water to assure you of minimum damage for transplanting plants. Remember this hormone powder will work fine for house plants, too.

Your plants will react better to their new potting if you keep them out of the sun for at least five days. I place mine in the cool basement.

SEPTEMBER is the time to pick out the chrysanthemums you like best. Buy them in their tar paper pots and plant them in the garden where you have dull spots. They will be in flower.

If you buy several mum plants keep track of their color and next Spring I will teach you to take one plant purchased this fall and propagate it so that you will have at least 25 plants.

About the middle of November

plan to mulch your plants with leaves or other winter mulch. Avoid earlier mulching because the mice might think you were building them a winter apartment.

There are several retired men who have settled on acreage outside of Birmingham and have taken as their plant specialty the growing of mums for the commercial market, a challenge for the days beyond retirement.

THIS IS THE time to plant your lilies for next year's pleasure. They like air so do not place them in a corner where they can't enjoy a breeze. Good soil drainage is taken for granted. If you have clay, lilies are not for you until the soil has been conditioned.

If lilies are placed where they have filtered sunlight they will have weak stems and soft flowers. Also lilies should not have reflected warm sunlight from a white building.

Upon the arrival of your new

lily bulbs be sure and plant them at once as they should not be allowed to dry out like other types of bulbs.

But enough of serious garden talk! Let us stop off at the Greenbriar at White Sulphur Springs and perhaps I can give you an idea or two which you might be able to use in your own yards.

IN 1947 THE famous garden designer, Richard K. Weber, was called in from Roslyn, Long Island to interpret with plant material his idea of a series of fine southern gardens.

Naturally, boxwood was needed and after exploring trips into Virginia he located many fine specimens to place in the courtyard garden of "Old White".

There in this brick walled courtyard you will see many specimens of boxwood, I saw one which is over fifty feet high.

The boundaries of many of the flower beds employed the Korean box which can be trimmed to two feet and will do very well in Birmingham. It holds its leaves throughout the winter.

Some places the walls were around eight feet high and they had espalied a cuspidata yew planting it within ten inches of the brick wall. Every branch was radically cut so that only the side branches were allowed natural growth. This was an effective wall covering for winter in the garden.

NOT FAR FROM this was a forsythia which received the same radical treatment of pruning allowing only the side branches to grow in a normal manner. It seemed very dense at the "feet" which is the aim of a gardener.

Toastmasters Plan Season's Opening

The Birmingham Toastmasters Club will start its fall activities Tuesday, September 15, with a dinner meeting at the Community House starting at 8:45 p.m. Hon. Tom Jones, president, has stated that the club will meet there September 15, 22 and 29 before moving back to the Birmingham Y.M.C.A. A program of regular and educational speeches has been worked out by William Andrews and the basic training course in speechcraft is again offered for businessmen who are interested in improving their techniques in giving public addresses.

Anyone interested in the program offered by Toastmasters may telephone the president or the office of the Birmingham Y.M.C.A. or attend the September 15 meeting.



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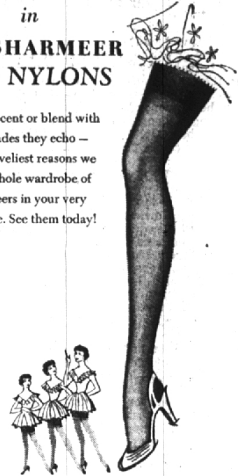
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Cranbrook Plans Five Excursions For Naturalists

Young naturalists of southeastern Michigan, wishing to go on conducted photographic and collecting trips are invited to register at Cranbrook Institute of Science for five Saturday excursions beginning September 19 and ending October 17.

Under the supervision of Cranbrook naturalist Walter F. Nickell, the trips will include the study of birds, fall wildflowers, trees, and insects. Students with cameras will be given special help.

Because the size of the groups must be limited, only Junior Members of the Institute can be accepted. Membership is open to the public at a nominal fee, and can be arranged at the time of registration for the trips.



BARRY R. HARPER, son of C. F. Harper, 1236 Edgewood, recently graduated from the USAF Pre-Flight school, Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. He will now enter the first flying training phase of the program at bases of the Flying Training Air Force.

41TH ENGINEER AVIATION BRIGADE, KOREA — Michigan State College classmates Second Lieutenant John E. Hardy and recent arrival Airman First Class David W. Bird, are now assigned to the Special Service Section of the 41th Brigade here. Neither have seen each other since graduation in 1951. The unit continues in post-truce construction and maintenance of air strips for the Fifth Air Force. Their parents are Mr. and Mrs. Francis B. Hardy, 551 Hazelwood, and Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Bird, 3050 Dixie highway.

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