DOWN TO EARTH

Hanging Baskets Make Comeback in Gardens

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

"Hanging baskets" are back in style to add glamour to your garden area around your terrace or enclosed porch. You can hang them from a tree or a standard attached to a garage wall or the house. They were an outstanding highlight of the recent Builder's Show at the State Fair Grounds. Gardeners from the metropolitan area competed in their design.

The metal mesh baskets are lined with moss to assure the retention of moisture. The flower content will be dependent upon the number of sunlight hours falling on the location of the hanging basket.

* * *

IF THE BASKET has up to six hours of sun a day you will enjoy using geraniums, lobeliam, petunias, verbennias, ivy or vinca vines, low growing marigolds, phlox drummondii, etc. Don't forget to also use colius.

If the basket only receives a couple hours of sun per day you will be able to use impatience with vinca or ivy vines.

Mrs. Burlingame

If your hanging basket is in the shade I would plant a series of pots with annuals which would fit within the moss cavity. Plan to grow them to a lush level of color and vegetation and then weekly change the pots within the hanging basket in the deep shade and give the alternating pot a few days in a sunny location. If you sink the pots in the soil up to the top during the grooming period they will not be so apt to dry out. This technique proves you can conquer most every garden problem.

* * *

ANOTHER fascinating contest seen at the builders show was a competition for the setting of picnic tables.

As we are all getting smart and locating our picnic tables near our home exits do not overlook the possibilities of having an interesting motif at all times on your picnic table and when the table is set for hospitality you can dramatize family hobbies, special occasions, as well as spotlight the fine flowers in the garden at the moment.

This last summer you were apt to see on our terrace redwood picnic table an interesting piece of driftwood with two pottery ducks "quacking" at each other over a hump of the driftwood.

There weren't many hours spent on the maintenance of this "masterpiece."

* * *

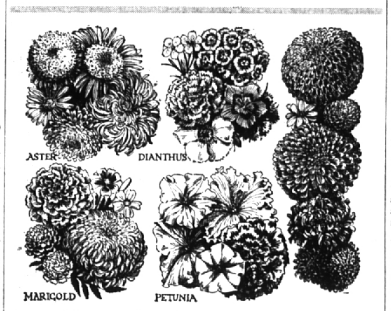
LOOK AROUND your garden at this date and decide which is your most uninteresting site. Let's concentrate from this time forward to make this spot your highlight of the garden. It wouldn't take many years of following this philosophy to really have a showplace.

This weak location may need a clump of trees with an interesting flower bed in a kidney shaped pattern at the base of the trees. Perhaps the area woull look important by having a raised flower bed the height of two pieces of broken concrete with fresh top soil placed within the enclosed raised bed. Maybe a piece of interesting sculptoring is the answer. Good luck.

MIGHTY MITE

Today's modern LP-Gas space heater is no bigger than a TV set yet it could actually heat two 42-passenger railroad Pullman cars!

OUTDOOR LIVING



Let Your Imagination Run When Designing A Garden

Garden design is limited only by the gardener's imagination, with the many, many species of annual flowers whose seed is now commercially available.

With a little planning, the gardener can produce continuous bloom throughout the growing season in a wide variety of sun and soil conditions.

By sowing appropriate annual species, he can eat his cake and have it, too—produce a rainbow of color for his grounds and, at the same time, bring the beauty of fresh-cut flowers into his home.

For best effects, even "self-seeding" annuals should be sown fresh every year, in order to maintain the carefully developed colors and sizes which have been achieved by horticultural scientists.

Three of the most popular and hardy annuals are zinnias, petunias, and marigolds.

Zinnias are easily grown in all sections of the country. Among varieties which give one of the broadest ranges in color, flower size and plant height in the annual category, are (from top) Dahlia flowered, Lincaris, Lilliput, California giant, Fantasy, Mexican and Scabiosa.

Petunias, popular border flowers, flourish in sunny or partly shady areas. They are suitable also for window boxes, hanging baskets and rock walls. Some varieties are (counter-clockwise, from top left) striped, giant, dwarf, double, frilled.

Marigolds may be sown as late as June for fall blooming, which continues until hard frost. Among varieties are (counter-clockwise, from top left) carnation type, double French, button, chrysanthemum, single French.

Dianthus varieties (pinks) have a long flowering season. In the species are such varieties as (counterclockwise, from top left) rock pink, carnation, Chinese pink, Dianthus plumaris and Sweet William.

Asters yield long-lasting cut flowers and are especially suited for bouquets. Types include such varieties as (counter-clockwise, from top left) ball, single, two commercial varieties and Giant Sunshine.

Asbestos-Cement Siding Tops for Remodeling Home

Smart homeowners are always interested in having money and improving property value, and informed "constructive" thinking may lead to many a dollar saved.

One of the most popular materials in home improvement projects is asbestos-cement, a fireproof, weatherproof substance made from a mixture of asbestos fibers and portland cement. Because of its tough longevity, attractive appearance and easy maintenance, asbestos-cement is extensively used as roofing and siding on homes and on farm and industrial buildings.

It's the favorite re-siding material for homes, fitting quickly over wood shingles, clapboard or stucco. The odds are good, therefore, that you'll someday need to know the facts about this unique substance—even if you have no intention of refurbishing your roof and four walls this season.

In addition to use as roofing shingles, asbestos-cement takes many forms as a sidewall material; it's made in a variety of shapes and textures. Colorful—literally as well as figuratively—asbestos-cement siding is available in a range of deep hues and soft pastels to supplement the more traditional whites or grays. Colors are sealed into the material, which makes point jobs unnecessary!

If you ultimately decide you do want a change of hue, a latex paint or a solvent thinned resin paint will yield best results. But make sure the surface is completely dry and free of dirt or oil before you wield that brush!

Where installation is concerned, resist all do it yourself temptations. The laying of asbestos-cement siding and roofing is a job for a professional. Careless handling can damage the shingles or sheets before they're applied (though once nailed down, they're indestructible). Amateurs may use too many shingles or apply them in a way that doesn't capitalize on all their advantages and, of course, the amateur is in imminent danger of falling off the roof! The artisan can cut special sizes on the job, follow manufacturers' instructions with ease, and make it a point to use correspondingly high quality materials for chimney, sidewall flashings and nails for example.

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Fruit Trees Add to Home

Spring blooms, summer shade and fall fruits are the triple values offered by planting fruit trees on the home property. With today's high prices for fruit, a few such family trees can pay well, according to the American Association of Nurserymen.

Dwarf fruit trees can be planted on the small property. They won't grow big enough to supply much shade but the fruits will be superb and the flowers beautiful. New varieties of dwarf fruit trees bear more fruit than ever, with even the commercial orchardists switching to them in many instances. For the home owner who has the space and wants shade as well as flowers and fruits standard-size fruit trees may be preferred.

The dwarf fruits will bear earlier, usually the year after planting, and heavier in later years. The standard trees take longer to bear, though they can be obtained at bearing age in fairly large sizes from any leading nursery.

Fruit trees must be sprayed to get quality fruit, but all-purpose sprays developed in recent years make this task comparatively easy.

There is a wholesome satisfaction for a the family growing its own high grade fruit on its own property. In between the young trees you can have your own strawberry bed to produce delicious small fruits for the family. High food prices are an added incentive for growing as much home fruit as possible.

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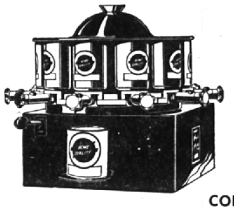
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