

JUNE'S GARDEN

Billy called ... the well-known Rev. Billy Hultz, creative Editor-in-Chief of the belated, missed, U.L.E. ... and said in an excited voice, "We're going to press." Well, maybe his voice didn't have the ring of true excitement in the usual sense of the word, but I heard an under-the-breath, positive decision of "Man the boat, full steam ahead!"

He added, "If you want to turn in a column, the deadline is the 20th." This was the 14th. Six days to put together thoughts or helpful hints about this year's garden.

All I could think of was it seems I'm never satisfied with what nature dictates, or that by the time the rains quit and the soil warms up enough to plant annuals and seed, the displays at the garden stores have been picked over, my favorite pansies are bought out, along with other annual bedding plants. Maybe you share my thoughts.

This last mild winter allowed all my geraniums and fuchsias to live over in my cold frame.

Problem: I thought it was going to be a very cold winter and I just bedded them down deep in the cold frame with covering of peat moss, newspapers and a heavy plastic lid. They were all blooming so prolifically I just couldn't bring myself to cut them back. Because of the heavy rains of winter, I seldom opened the lid of the cold frame to check them, but continued to see blossoms all winter through the clear plastic. In May when I opened the lid to start planting them with other annuals, the geraniums were still blooming, but on the ends of 2' tall stalks. Again I hated to cut them back to bare stumps that would take lots of prayer and hope that they would thrive for summer blooms. The fuchsias were also leggy with end blooms.

My complaint is nature would have probably been kinder to me if it had been a cold winter and killed off all my tender plants, as I now have the problem of trying to place all these tall, blooming geraniums in corners of my deck to hide all the tall, bare stems with blossoms. I did pinch the fuchsias back and hope I'll eventually have bushier plants.

The mild winter also didn't harm all the bad insects that attack my garden! It may take gallons of soapsuds and Safer product to get rid of all the aphids, white flies, spider mites and other starving bugs. My garden does have an abundance of ladybugs this year and each morning I talk to them: "Go, Baby, go, eat to your heart's content." Their little bodies are getting fatter by the day.

Solution: I have marked on my calendar next fall to cut everything back before putting them to winter storage, and in the late summer take cuttings for more vigorous and healthy plants. The same could be done with fuchsias.

Another complaint: The lament of the garden store owners is that the public demands the growers to produce flats of annuals for early

trade. By late May, a lot of the plants have been picked over or are root bound and producing overgrown, leggy plants. Is this also the reason for stores to start advertising Christmas on Halloween? Who is to blame--public demands or the merchants?

Since I'm not one who buys Christmas presents in July or swim suits in January or frozen turkeys on sale in August for Thanksgiving dinner, it seems I'm always six months behind!

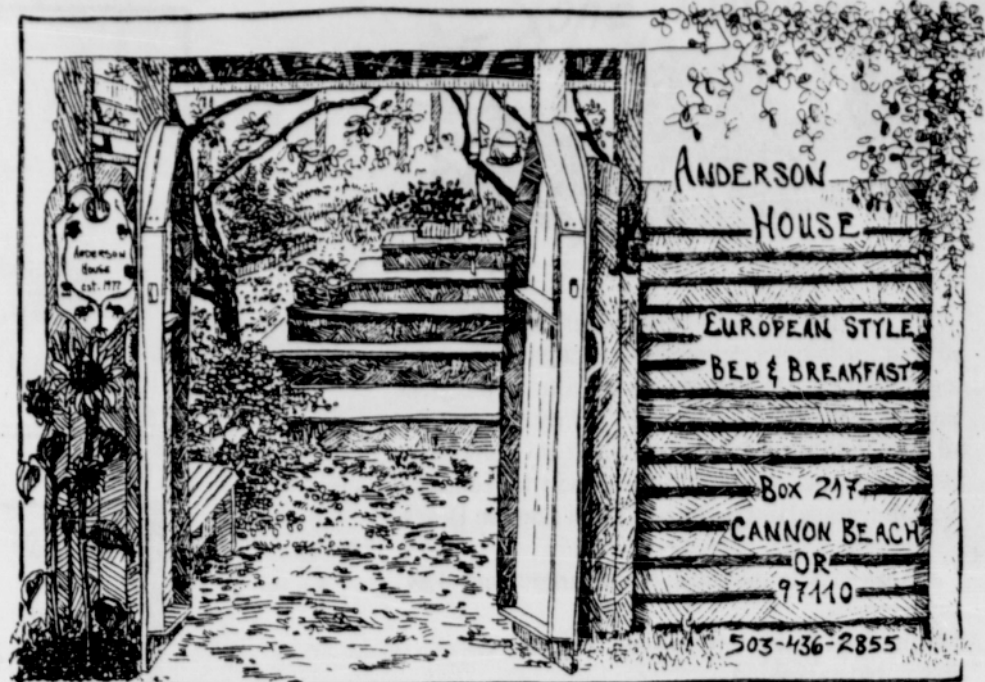
My Solution: Well, so be it! I'll never mend my ways. I'll still be shopping for annuals in the middle of June. I won't even give a thought to Christmas for another six-and-a-half months. I will buy a fresh turkey at Osburn's Grocery to cook for Thanksgiving dinner, and who needs a swim suit to wade in the cold surf ... I'll just roll up the cuffs of my jeans.

Please send your comments, suggestions and questions to **June's Garden**, P. O. Box 74, Cannon Beach, OR 97110.



Ignorance once dispelled is difficult to reestablish.

--Laurence J. Peter



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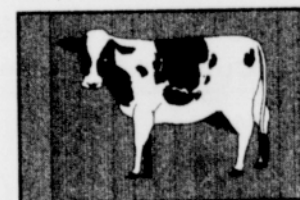
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