

Capital Journal HOME PAGE

Questions Answered

Q.—Do potted poinsettias make lasting "growing" gifts?—Mrs. G. G.

Ans.—Yes, if properly cared for they will last indoors for some time and they may be set outside in Spring.

Q.—Does the composition of containers for house plants affect their growth?—Mrs. J. B.

Ans.—Not usually, porous clay pots may, due to evaporation of moisture through the sides, but glazed, glass plaster or metal pots have little known effect on plants. After all, it is the care the plants receive that determines their health. Be sure the growing medium in the pot is right and that plants have sufficient light and moisture.

Q.—Should the soil be removed from Dahlias roots before store and how should they be stored?

Ans.—Yes, wash off roots and then let them dry naturally. Store in dry sand, peatmoss or vermiculite in a room temperature between 50 and 70 degrees. Inspect occasionally. If signs of mildew show, dust with sulphur. Do not make divisions until planting time in Spring. When drying roots trim stems down so any moisture will drain out.

Q.—I had a large, dark red, nearly purple dahlia of fine form. Do you have any idea of the variety name?—B. K.

Ans.—This sounds like it might be King David, one of the best dark reds.

Q.—What is the Ginkgo Tree?—Mrs. B. H.

Ans.—This is an unusual Oriental tree with fern-like leaves. It can be grown in this climate.

Q.—Can one buy these so-called "Ming" trees or dwarfed trees?—Mrs. B. H.

Ans.—Yes, several companies handle these, either already dwarfed or ready for you to care for with full instructions. "Ming" trees are often sold by florists made up artificially and there are even kits available for making your own exotic little trees. These include all the necessary materials including artificial moss. "Ming" trees are not to be confused with "Bonsai" trees which are live trees actually dwarfed to miniature size. This is an old Japanese art finding much favor of late, the dwarfing being done by pruning of branches and roots and confining of roots to limited space in pots. Some "Bonsai" trees exist today that are over a 100 years old yet are still growing in relatively small pots. The "Ming" tree, actually, is an artificial replica of these.

Living Gifts For Christmas

By MARK M. TAYLOR

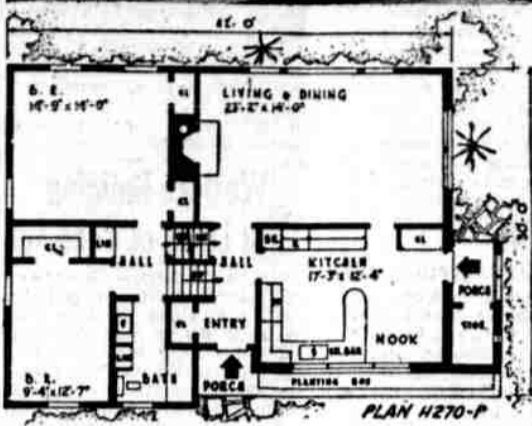
That annual problem of what gift would be most appropriate for that certain person on your list is happily eased if that person is a gardener, for the giving of "living" gifts carries your wishes long past Christmas Day, many such becoming more and more beautiful as they mature. If the recipient is a house plant fancier, then African Violets started in small pots are most acceptable since they are available in a variety of colors. Of course, a little judicious peeking to notice what the recipient already has is in order. Potted bulbs, Lilies of the Valley, miniature roses and azaleas are always delightful gifts.

But, for the enthusiastic backyard gardener tools and appliances should be given consideration. Every gardener appreciates a new pruning shear, hedge trimmer, soil testing kit or the many other appliances that are available in almost any price range you might want. A visit to your nurseryman, seedsman, florist or hardware dealer might be an enlightening experience and solve several of those difficult gift problems.

For the new home owner a gift of suitable shrubs or trees would be welcome. Also the American Association of Nurserymen have made gift certificates available again this year so that the recipients can select their own gifts.

Most gardeners are anxious to acquire more knowledge about their gardens, so books, too, are most appropriate. If you are looking for a gift for someone with a greenhouse then such items as a soil heating cable and the book "Greenhouse Gardening for Everyone" by Ernest Chabot (Barrows \$4.00) are mighty welcome. Most gardeners want an encyclopedia on gardening for ready reference. "The Wise Garden Encyclopedia" (Wise \$5.00) and "Better Homes and Gardens Garden Book" (Meredith \$4.95) are valuable and will be continuously in use. For specialists, there are books in practically every plant subject so that your garden friend will be pleased at your choice. Yes, if you have a gardener on your gift list, your gift problems should be eased somewhat!

HOMES FOR AMERICANS



AP News Release

How to have a basement where deep excavations is inexpedient is one problem solved by split level design. The house shown here permits the creation of a large hobby room with lavatory and closets, a separate laundry room, a storage room and a furnace room under the bedroom wing of the house. Ground under the living room—kitchen wing is unexcavated. A third bedroom can be finished off above the living room. This arrangement gives the house only half-flights of stairs. This plan H-270-P by the Homograf Co., 11711 East Eight Mile Road, East Detroit, Mich. The house covers 1,254 square feet and contains 20,896 cubic feet—convenient figures for local estimates.

Foundation Planting Should Be Geared to Size of Home

By MARK M. TAYLOR

Planning your planting, especially for new homes, can hardly be done according to a stock plan or blue print, for your planting must be keyed to your individual problems, soil conditions, uses to be made of an area, purpose of the planting and, quite naturally, the size of one's pocket-book! Your plantings should be planned to require a minimum of maintenance, replacement, trimming, etc.

Basic planting of homes has changed considerably in recent years, the heavy evergreen foundation planting being largely a thing of the past. However, certain basic plantings should be made in order to best emphasize the beauty and personality of your home. The entrance, being the most important feature of the house, is usually planted first to accent that important part of the house. Theoretically, the planting should direct the eye to the door, not cause it to linger on the planting itself. Avoid having shrubs all of the same height as the effect would be monotonous.

Tall Corner Shrubs

Corners can be softened by using tall shrubs at those points. Unless one is a collector of rare shrubs, one should avoid planting shrub beds, except for such things as roses where the blooms are especially desirable for cutting. A natural border of native shrubs or harmonious ones is always effective when in bloom. Plant rhododendron, mountain laurel, azaleas and dogwood, all of which are compatible and similar in their soil requirements. For color effect, select harmonious colors for the same border or bed. For orange or red flowers, choose azaleas for flowering quince. For yellow flowers, choose forsythia, hybrid brooms or golden currant. For blue and purple flowers, choose shrub althea, hydrangea, blue spirea, buddleia (butterfly bush) and the various lilacs.

For pink or rose colored flowers, choose flowering quince, weigelia, dahpne, beauty bush, tamarax or pink snowball.

To have white flowers plant mock orange, star magnolia, spirea, deutzia, white lilacs.

And, a caution in planting—remember your neighbor's property may form the background for your garden scene so be sure that it harmonizes with his color scheme, too! Place your showy shrubs, such as your prized rhododendron, in a conspicuous spot to be viewed from inside the house or as a focal point when entering the garden area. Let the rest of your planting be subordinate to it and in harmony with it.

For Winter Effect

For fall and winter color effects select plants with showy berries that may hang on all winter—such as firethorn, which is always viewed with interest and admiration

for its large clusters of orange-red berries. With regards to cost of a foundation planting many are concerned with the fact that evergreens, either broad-leaved or coniferous, are relatively expensive. However, one should remember that they are long-lived and thus justify their original cost, whereas less expensive deciduous material might need periodic replacing.

Vines should be given consideration in a planting where they may be used to soften bold and sharp architectural lines, where they provide screening of unsightly areas and where they will bring color up to eye level. Vines trained along fences soften the sharp lines of the fence and screen any openings as well as add color and a sense of privacy to an otherwise colorless part of the garden.



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Your Garden Notebook

BY MARK M. TAYLOR

- What to Do in December**
1. Plant or transplant deciduous shrubs and trees as the weather permits.
 2. Check storage of bulbs, tubers and roots to see that no rot or fungi has started. If so, cut away infected part and dust with sulphur. If roots, such as Cannas or Dahlias, have started to shrivel, they are too dry. Sprinkle them lightly and re-pack. If bulbs are sprouting, they are too warm or moist. Correct those conditions immediately.
 3. Propagate deciduous plants from hardwood cuttings. Take 6 or 8 inch lengths of last year's wood. Lay cuttings in a shallow trench at an angle, pack soil around cut ends. Many will form a "heel" and roots form.
 4. Check drainage of your flower beds or garden plot. If necessary, provide a drainage system now.
 5. Check new trees or shrubs set out to see if they are firm. If necessary, stake to protect against winter wind damage.
- ... Start planning for your Spring garden now, have tools repaired or replaced. Plan plantings for previously vacant spots.
7. Check house plants against excessive heat now that homes are being heated again.
 8. Try giving house plants a lift with artificial lighting. African Violets, fibrous Begonias especially respond to artificial lighting.
 9. In event of snow, hose off or shake off from the limbs of most evergreens, both the broad-leaved and coniferous to prevent breakage.
 10. Give "live" gifts to your gardener friends for Christmas.

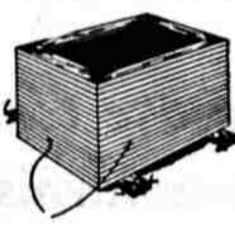
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Fifty Paraplegic War Vets Get Jobs in P.O.

Chicago (AP)—Fifty paraplegic war veterans have jobs at the Chicago post office for the Christmas rush, the largest number ever employed during the holiday season.

Acting Postmaster Carl A. Schroeder said the veterans, all partially paralyzed by injuries and in wheelchairs, will commute from Hines Veterans hospital. They work about four hours a day at clerical jobs.

Make Do



A short cut in painting the frames of screens or storm windows is to stack saw millwork and paint the edges first. This makes use of a 4-inch brush practicable. When the edges are dry the faces can be painted and the frames are easy to handle by their dry edges. It's a tip from the idea pool of the American Builder.

Select Trees to Fit Garden Size

By MARK M. TAYLOR

Standard size apple trees need a 30-foot circle in which to develop; peaches, pears and plums from 15 to 20 feet, thus room must be given for future growth. In the small garden dwarf trees cut this space requirement about in half. Dwarf trees are easier to maintain, too, than standard trees as they can easily be reached with home spraying equipment and pruning. Dwarf trees usually start bearing at an earlier age than the standard trees hence one gets a quicker return on his investment. These small trees make good accent points in a garden as their colorful blossoms burst forth in spring and the fruit comes on later. With their small size they appear attractive as ornamentals, with the added advantage of a harvest later!

The crabapple is again coming into its own in the home garden. Hundreds of varieties being offered by nurseries now. Some are grown principally for the bloom, such as the Floribunda whose fruit is about cherry size, golden to red in color and which stays on most of the winter.

Bechtel's Crab is another grown for its delicately pink and fragrant double blooms. The Redvein Crab is an excellent one for ornamental effect, with its red dogwood-like blossoms and dark red fruit in good quality that makes delicious jelly.

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