

# Greenhouses capture public fancy

Thursday, February 14, 1980

(F7C)

Cymbidium orchids win my acclaim as the ideal orchids for the indoor gardener who doesn't have a greenhouse and would like to experiment with the most highly prized of all flowers.

Although the orchid literature continues to recommend the phalaenopsis (Moth Orchid) or the paphiopedilum (Lady Slipper Orchid), as the most likely to succeed in the average home, I have yet to see or even hear of anyone who has brought these species into bloom in their home. If you have grown them, please let me know.

On the other hand, I can congratulate three local people, Joyce Cohn, Lee Frank and Melba Winer. These fine indoor gardeners have had the thrill of raising cymbidium orchids in their home — no greenhouse, no lights. If they can do it, perhaps you can, too.

Many people find orchid plants unattractive and even if the plants did bloom in the house, they often are considered too ugly to warrant the extra cost, extra misting they require and the extra risk.

A large pot of cymbidiums on the other hand, with the long, slender, grassy foliage makes a stunning, year round, indoor specimen plant, even when not in bloom.

Cymbidiums grown in the house, as in the greenhouse, prefer a cool but sunny exposure during the winter months. During the summer they benefit from nearly full sun outdoors on the terrace. Then comes the tricky part of cymbidium culture.

**MOST GROWERS AGREE** that these orchids need a long period of very cool temperatures during the fall in order to initiate bloom. They can be left outside all fall when the



down to earth  
**Alice Wessels  
Burlingame**

days are still sunny and warm but the nights are cool. Some growers recommend a 45-day period of night temperatures between 45-50 F. I generally bring the plants inside during the first frosty nights but put them out again during the sunny days, and keep them well chilled until late October.

As for other cultural factors, both in the greenhouse and the house, treat cymbidiums like terrestrial plants. They aren't tropical or epiphytic like most orchids. Their roots grow in soil and therefore should never be allowed to dry out completely. Water them thoroughly and then let them become almost dry before watering again. They like a high humidity and frequent fertilizing. I suggest a schedule of high nitrogen in the spring to speed vegetative growth and a low nitrogen-high phosphorus fertilizer toward the end of summer to encourage flower spike formation. Blooming generally during the drab late winter months when flowers are most welcome, cymbidiums come in a fascinating range of colors.

Whether used individually or in a spray, the waxy delicately colored blooms make a stunning display.

**THE KEEPING QUALITY** of cymbidiums is unusual, even among orchids, and the flowers will last on the plants from six to 12 weeks. If cut and cared for regularly with warm water, they will easily last two weeks.

You don't have to order cymbidiums from orchid greenhouses as many of our local florists carry both the standard and the miniature form. The standards are quite large plants, and the more popular miniatures are being used increasingly as space savers in small home greenhouses. Since cymbidiums are cool growing orchids and can bloom with a 55-degree night temperature in the greenhouse, they are highly desirable to the energy-conscious greenhouse owner.

Whether a greenhouse or an indoor gardener, I suggest you start — take the leap! Become an orchidist. Don't let those professionals scare you.

## Winter classes continue

Registration continues for winter classes for children and adults at Cranbrook Institute of Science, 500 Lane Pine.

Classes for children include: "Reptiles and Amphibians," for kindergartners, at 4 p.m., beginning March 3, 4 and 6; \$10. "South American Indians," for first and second graders, at 4 p.m., beginning March 3 and 5; \$12. "Seasons Have Reasons," for third and fourth graders, at 4 p.m., beginning March 3; \$10. "Make Your Own Museum," also for

third and fourth graders at 4 p.m., beginning March 4; \$12.

"Common Senses," for students ages 9 to 12 at 9:30 and 11 a.m., beginning Feb. 23; \$20.

Adults classes are "Seasonal Skies," beginning at 7:30 p.m. March 3; "Indian Cultures of the Great Lakes," at 7 p.m., Feb. 21; and "Introductory Lapidary," beginning at 7 p.m., Feb. 14. Fees range from \$14 to \$36.

For more information, call 645-3230. Cranbrook Institute of Science is a natural history museum, open daily except major holidays.

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**SPECIAL MESSAGE TO MOTHERS OF TEENAGERS**

The Teen Class, featuring the styles Teenagers love, and the Ann Person Method Class will be held at the same time for the convenience of those bringing daughters to class. (See schedule below.)

Take this opportunity to learn the Ann Person Method or to refresh your sewing skills, and make it a special outing for your daughter and you.

**ANN PERSON METHOD**  
8 Weeks — \$20  
Saturday, February 16, 10:30 A.M.  
Saturday, February 18, 12:30 P.M.  
Wednesday, March 12, 7:00 P.M.  
Thursday, March 27, 7:00 P.M.

**WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW AT STRETCH & SEW FABRICS CENTER**

**MINI CLASSES**  
1 LESSON — \$3 (includes \$2.00 coupon toward fabric purchased on day of class)  
GOLF SKIRTS  
Thursday, March 6, 7:00 P.M.  
Friday, March 21, 1:00 P.M.

**SPECIALTY CLASSES**  
TEEN \$15.50 Lessons  
Saturday, March 1, 10:30 A.M.  
MEN'S JACKET 4 Lessons, \$15  
Monday, February 18, 9:30 A.M.  
MEN'S PANTS 2 Lessons, \$6  
Monday, March 17, 9:30 A.M.  
FASHION FOUR 4 Lessons, \$15  
(A Spring '80 Fashion Update — call store for details)

Where space permits, registration will be accepted for individual classes.  
Thursday, February 21, 9:30 A.M.  
Tuesday, February 26, 7:00 P.M.  
LITTLE WOMEN 2 Lessons, \$6  
Tuesday, March 11, 7:00 P.M.  
LITTLE MEN 2 Lessons, \$6  
Tuesday, March 25, 7:00 P.M.  
TERRIFIC T-SHIRTS 2 Lessons, \$6  
Our Spring & Summer Series  
Thursday, March 13, 7:00 P.M.  
Friday, March 21, 9:30 A.M.

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