

Christmas Gifts That Grow On You

If you buy or receive a Christmas plant this year, you can keep it looking better and make it live longer by increasing the humidity in the air around it, giving it cool nights, good light, and adequate but not excessive watering.

Many Christmas gift plants should be regarded as cut flowers and discarded when they lose their attractiveness. Those marked with an asterisk can be kept as house plants.

1. **Fonsettia:** Avoid high or low temperatures and drafts.
2. **African Violet:** Keep it in the brightest window in winter, in shaded light in summer. Water from top or bottom, but never on the leaves.
3. **Chrysanthemum:** It lasts a long time in flower if you keep it cool and water it every time the soil surface becomes dry. If the plant is attacked by spider mites, spray them off with cold water.
4. **Christmas Cactus:** It's hardy and will live for years, but it needs more water and humidity than other cacti. Keep it in full sun, but cool in winter. And remember, it must have 12 hours uninterrupted darkness a day after Oct. 1 to bloom by Christmas. Fertilize after March 1.
5. **Christmas Cherry:** Raise the humidity to extend the life of leaves and fruit. Grow new plants from seeds in ripe cherries. Special caution: the fruit is considered poisonous, especially to children; it can cause rashes in adults.
6. **Christmas Pepper:** This one needs sun, 60 degree temperature, and high humidity to survive. It's easier to grow new plants from seed.
7. **Citrus:** Never let the soil dry out completely, but don't overwater, either. Fertilize monthly when it's in flower or actively growing. Give it full sun in winter and place it in shade, outside, in summer. Fruit is not always edible.
8. **Azalea:** It needs 50 degrees to 60 degree temperature, high humidity. Use rainwater or melted snow for watering. Thrives in shady garden spots in summer, and needs two inches' cooling-to-keep the flowers.
9. **Gardenia:** Keep it damp, in good light and very high humidity for longest life. Night temperature is critical; above 65 degrees flower buds drop; below 62 degrees leaves turn yellow.

Dates Set For Annual Workshops

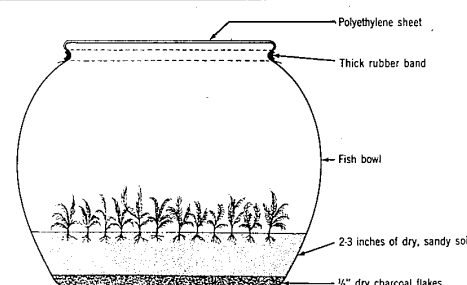
"Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly" and all of the other delightful trimmings of the holiday season.

The Detroit Garden Center will again present its annual greens workshop at the center, 133 E. Grand River, Dec. 2, 3 and 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost will be \$2 for the day and will include a generous bundle of greens. Expert instructors will be on hand to assist and make suggestions. Bring work tools and a sandwich, tea or coffee will be served at noon. Reservations may be made by calling the Center, WO 1-8485.

This is for members only, but you may join when you come for the workshop. Membership dues are \$2 per year.

Airy Patio Wall

Patio screen walls are needed for privacy when a neighbor's terrace is higher than yours. Screen walls of spaced across 2x4 posts set two feet on center. The walls look open and airy from inside but exclude a view from outside.



A GARDEN IN A BOTTLE can provide hours of gardening enjoyment during the long winter months. Virtually any bottle shape will do; and with a few easy-to-get materials and once-a-year watering, this miniature "terrarium" will thrive in its own moisture-producing atmosphere.

'Wardian Bottles' Good Winter Garden Projects

Over a hundred years ago a London physician named Nathaniel Ward discovered that he could grow ferns and mosses inside glass cases. His development, called the "Wardian" bottle, can give adults as well as children hours of gardening enjoyment during the winter months ahead.

Some simple instructions provided by the American Association of Nurserymen can help you develop your own garden in a bottle.

A brassy snifter, a fish bowl, or a large bottle will make a good container (or, to give it the correct name, a terrarium). The size and shape is up to you, although it is good to be able to cover over the opening at the top after planting.

WASH, DRY and polish the container until it sparkles. Then pour in a half inch of dry charcoal flakes. On top of that add several inches of dry sandy soil. Some bottle gardeners place moss, green side up, on the charcoal and then add the sandy soil.

Now you're ready for planting. Most small house plants that thrive in a moist atmosphere will be happy in a bottle garden. You may want to use *Wandering Jew* (*Zebra plant*), *Pellionia*, *Miniature Ivy* and small ferns. The *Creeping Fig* plant and the *Prayer Plant* are also wise choices. If you need ideas, seek advice at your nursery or garden center.

THE MOST DIFFICULT part in beginning a bottle garden is the actual planting process, which is very similar to constructing a ship inside a bottle. Long instruments are needed to be your "hands" inside the container and handy tools can be created by taping a fork and a spoon to sticks or poles. After planting the miniature garden you have designed, add water until the soil is damp, then cork up the bottle. The plants will give off moisture which will accumulate on the sides of the container and return to the roots. This "rain" provides sufficient moisture for about a year, and so watering your garden once each twelve months will usually be sufficient.

Locate the bottle in good light, but not direct sun, then sit back and watch it grow.



Hail: Red, White, Blue!

IN TODAY'S well-conceived decorating scheme, walls have much to say. They add warmth, stimulate conversation and expand the personality of a room. As in the one illustrated, the effect can be patriotic as well as decorative.

Among five decorator colors introduced by Masonite Corporation in its Royale Antique series is Yorktown Blue. This color was used in a family room featuring a kitchen pass-through window for entertaining and conversation.

The room (visualize, now!) gives three cheers for the red, white and blue in typical colonial tradition. Standing out against the blue herringbone paneling are unfinished cupboards, chairs and furnishings painted in bold white. The patriotic theme is enhanced by the red tablecloth, cushions, and mat around early American print.

Other points in the antique series are Jamestown Gold, Suffolk Green, Georgetown White and Cambridge Red. As the pioneer American spirit reawakens, colorful wall panels like these can play a dual role of authentic antique decor and patriotism. For a few brochures, send a postcard to Masonite, Box B, Chicago, Ill. 60600, requesting Form No. 7011.



The Handyman

Q. We have an 18-year-old house, brick with a concrete foundation and a medium-sized, L-shaped living room. We have developed a bad crack in the plaster which seems to be traveling right across the ceiling and is now about a quarter of an inch wide. What do you think might be the trouble?

A. With a house that old and a crack that big, it's obviously not the natural settling and drying of the roof framing. The trouble is probably in your basement. Check for cracks in the foundation. Also examine the main supporting beams under the floor to see if they are sagging or warped. If there is a basic foundation problem, have the condition remedied before repairing the cracked plaster, or the crack will keep re-appearing.

Q. How can I remove wallpaper that has been painted over?

A. This is a real problem, and there is no easy solution. You could use paint remover, but this is hardly practical for large areas, and there is also the danger of getting the paint remover on floors and woodwork. You will have to scrape through the paint film to allow steam or water to penetrate into the paper underneath. You must be very careful, of course, not to scar the wall itself. A small putty knife or a scraper with a wooden handle works well, or you can make a scraper by nailing pop bottle caps to a block of wood... say a six-inch length of 2 x 4. But any way you do it, it's going to be a lot of work.

License Office Closing Battled

A decision to close the Secretary of State temporary branch office in the Wonderland Shopping Center will be reconsidered in the department's staff meeting in Lansing.

That was the announcement Tuesday by Walter Elliott, chief aide to Secretary of State James Hare who has charge of all operations in the Metropolitan Detroit area, after receipt of a letter from Walter Goodman, executive manager of Wonderland, in which he pointed out some factors that were not considered when the original closing order was issued.

The Wonderland branch, which has operated from January through March for the past several years, is under the supervision of the Division of Motor Vehicle Registration. Livonia Councilman Jerry Raymond, said Elliott in explaining the actions of the department's executive staff.

"Although the Livonia office has been awarded to Jerry Raymond, it has been under the direct management of his son, Eldon Raymond. It was the feeling of the staff that the office on Plymouth Road could adequately handle and service the needs of that area.

"We realized that the City of Westland did not have a branch of any kind and decided to close the temporary office in Wonderland and open one in Westland in the shopping center there."

Elliott said the communication from Goodman put a different light on the situation and that he would recommend the executive staff study reconsideration of the closing.

"GOODMAN pointed out that the Livonia office was about a mile and a half from Wonderland and that geographically he felt there was a need for the temporary branch in that shopping center to serve folks in that section of Livonia," said Elliott.

"WE DECIDED to close Wonderland and establish a temporary branch in the Wonderland Shopping Center under the supervision of Harry Koss, manager of the office in Wayne," said Elliott.

The reconsideration decision was expected to be available Wednesday afternoon.

Breslin MSU Vice President

EAST LANSING

A man who has served in many capacities at Michigan State University has been named executive vice president of MSU, Jacevir (Jack) Breslin joined the university staff in 1950 as field secretary and assistant director of alumni relations. Since that time he has been placement director, assistant to the vice president for off-campus education, assistant to the president, and secretary of the university.

In addition to his new duties, Breslin will continue in his present position as secretary of the board of trustees and secretary of MSU. He also serves as chief legislative representative for the university.

He holds BS and MA degrees from Michigan State.

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