

Orchids provide many bonuses

Haven't we experienced the most unusual winter? Somebody must have been selling something when they prophesied that the weather would be very cold.

My refrigerator has many packets of seeds in storage and they won't be started until after April 1. Why start so early that they grow too high before transplanting outdoors - that is just another headache.

If you want to sterilize soil for seeding you can place moistened soil in a metal dish, set the oven at 200 degrees and bake at the end of 45 minutes.

While prowling around town last week I met an interesting man who specializes in cement patios and artistic details with bricks as seen in patios, walls and other things.

Douglas Reed (851-7217) has done extensive work at Cranbrook, Mercy College, Kirk in the Hills and Greenfield Village.

CAREFUL, beautiful workmanship is hard to find, especially when you have an idea on how to upgrade the beauty of your property.

The "off season" is a wonderful time to explore talents. Recently I visited Carolyn Butcher who has more than 400 orchids which she grows under fluorescent light plus some in a south window.

She is a vice president of a large firm and the mother of a son. But, instead of



down to earth
Alice Burlingame

golf, this young person has an interest in orchids. This has taken her to world flower shows for orchids and has had many bonuses of travel and meetings all over the United States with an abundance of orchid friends.

Every Sunday at First Methodist Church's coffee table, she displays a flowering orchid in a unique basket container. Helen Springer of Milford is the talented basket weaver whose works are unusual with an Indian influence in technique.

I went down to the lower level of Carolyn's home to see her fluorescent greenhouse where there is an extensive display of hundreds of orchids.

Soil isn't used as orchids are epiphytes and they like tree bark to grow in, although, in the bottom half of the pots there is a mix of plastic "white peanuts." These are used because they will absorb moisture. Carolyn uses clay pots only because they dry out better to allow better breathing for her orchids.

THESE CHOICE plants of all sizes sit on a plastic grid panel like you often

see in ceilings and these are placed over plastic trays to catch the drainage. They catch the runoff from the pots and give good moisture to the air. The plants are close to the fluorescent fixtures.

The orchids are watered thoroughly once a week and they are misted by a garden hose every day or two. Carolyn says they are a "forgiving plant" if she misses a day.

These very special plants are fertilized every 10 days with a fertilizer mix of 20-20-20 and when in flower or

bud she feeds them a mix of 12-0-45 to strengthen the stem to hold the flower. Goldner-Walsh on Orchard Lake Road, Pontiac, has the needed special fertilizer.

AN ORCHID SHOW will be held at the Tel-Twelve Mall on Saturday, March 26, and Palm Sunday, March 27. The local Orchid Society will be there to answer questions.

Your columnist can't emphasize enough the pleasure which can be yours when you become interested in a specialized flower or the general garden program of the American Horticultural Society, Box 0165, Mt. Vernon, Va. 22121.

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Baby sitters class set

Common sense guidelines for baby sitters age 14 and up will be offered in a five-week series of classes by Providence Hospital's community health education department, "Super Sitters" from 3:30-4:30 p.m. beginning Wednesday, March 3, in the Novi Center.

Kathy Hagar, instructor for the program, will teach childhood development, feeding techniques, safety, how to cope with emergency situations and basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Each participant will receive a Heart-saver card and a certificate indicating completion of the course.

"We will also be talking about how these young teens can market their skills as baby sitters," Hagar said.

The program is aimed at developing healthy behaviors and attitudes in young teens, explained Pamela Ashworth, coordinator of Providence's community health education program.

Providence Hospital's Ambulatory Care Center is located 39500 W. 10 Mile. Cost for the five classes for five Wednesdays in March is \$5. Persons can register by calling 552-9041.



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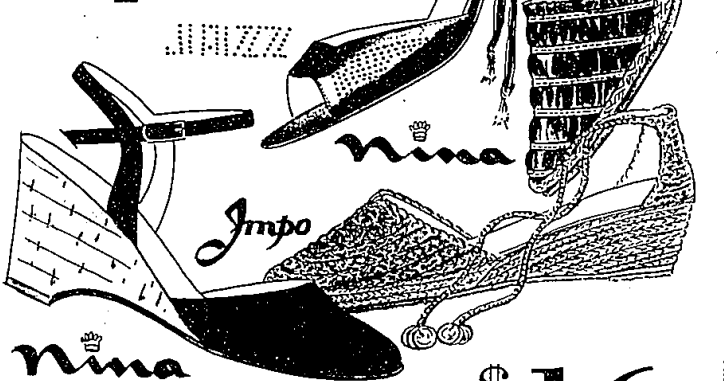
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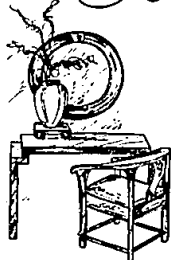
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