

House plants respond to tender care



down to earth
Alice Burlingame

We may be a little tardy in suggesting fall care for your house plants, but better late than never is my motto. So the next rainy day set up a cord table, place a protective cover over the surface and some open newspapers on top of the covering. You do that double covering stunt to protect your table and help you keep the working surface from getting too earthy.

I assume you have a bag of good humus for the renewed potting of your house plants. When you place a plant into a new clean container, in some instances you may need a larger size. Plants do better when the container isn't too big for their size. Discard old soil repotting in a new container.

If you have clay pots which have been sorted on a shelf you will want to rinse them in a bucket of water with soap and household ammonia in the water. A vegetable brush used on the clay pots saves energy. Even if you have fancy pots, they too should have a good bath.

THOSE PLANTS which are being repotted should have their leaves washed. If the plant is small just dip it upside down in a bucket of mild, soap water... sort of like a bubble bath.

That will put you and the plant on friendly terms. Take a square of firm paper larger than the pot and put a slit from one side to the middle. Put it over the surface of the soil, around the base of the plant and holding it firmly turn the plant upside down and wash in water with soap.

This technique will hold the soil in the pot. If you have a large plant which needs a bath, you will find yourself busy washing the leaves with a soft cloth which has been dipped in mild soap. Don't forget to cleanse both the upper and lower surfaces of the leaves. Time will pass rapidly if you have a good program on the television.

Before re-establishing your plants in a new location, analyze the light factor, the heat of the room and, of course, whether the plants can show off their merits better singly or in a plant group.

Another factor toward the good health of your plants is to fertilize them once a month. There are many kinds of fertilizer on the market with many new ideas offered to the consumer every year. I will leave it up to our readers to find a fertilizer which is easy to apply and meets the need of a specific plant.

For me to push one particular fertilizer would be silly as most of those on the market have practically the same

formula for root growth. The way I look at it a plant has to pay its own rent by performance. If it sulks analyze the light exposure and whether you have been remiss in tender loving care expressed by appropriate watering periods.

THE THICKNESS of a leaf tells you a lot about the nature of a plant,

whether the demand will be for good sunlight or the plant can function with artificial light only determined by the leaf's thickness.

Many public buildings with plant displays return them at intervals to the lease for a shot of aeration and a change of light. This rotation of plants gives them a new lease on life so they always look their best.

When plants only receive light from an electric light bulb they soon begin to pout and ask for a change of scenery. They will perk up and can be returned after they have had a vacation, just like going to a health spa!

Plants have the ability to give you, their keeper, happiness. They earn praise from friends who admire your use of living plants and bring warmth and friendliness to your home.

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From Livonia Stevenson High School, Monday; Livonia Churchill High School, Tuesday; North Farmington High School, Wednesday; Northville High School, Thursday; and Novi High School, Friday.

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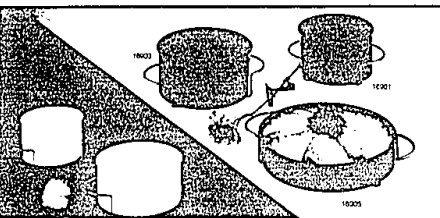
Applications are being accepted for the 1986 Mrs. Michigan-America Pageant, which will be in April, 1986.

To qualify, a contestant must be 18 years of age and married at least one year as of date of entry. She must also be a Michigan resident.

The contestants are judged on a personal interview, figure, poise, personality and beauty. No talent presentation is required.

The winner will receive numerous gifts, including an all-expense paid trip to Hono, Nev., for the national competition for the Mrs. America 1986 title.

Entry forms are available by mailing a request to Mrs. Michigan Headquarters, 4359 Stratford Ct., West Bloomfield 48093, or by calling Mrs. Michigan 1985 Joanne Powers, 855-1322, or Mrs. Michigan 1984 Darlene Dutsch, 569-1300.



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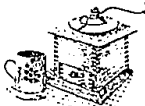
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