

Island beds are the newest style

Even though I now have a small garden, it is colorful and challenging. I also study the landscape and placement of color accents in gardens I pass while riding.

This evaluation of landscaping helps keep you up-to-date on new landscaping styles. You can do the same and then go back and evaluate your landscaping. While you are doing this, be sure to notice the growing height of shade trees and how they'll look at maturity. Trees are like human beings — at maturity they look like their ancestors.

Recently I visited some excellent gardens belonging to members of the Birmingham branch of National Farms and Garden. I realize there is a trend toward independent islands set in broad turf. These islands are cut in the sod in a free form style and feature one particular type of plant such as roses, small perennials or annuals of similar size arranged in patterns.

Among the themes one could develop would be an artistic herb island, an island of interesting

small, low evergreens or an island with different plants of the gardener's favorite color, or shades of the same color.

These islands would be sure to keep the people who grow the lawn on their toes.

Some of the islands I saw had a fruit tree as the focal point, others had interesting, well-groomed columnar trees. The islands themselves were formed in attractive, curving patterns — kidney shaped or free form — in the main lawn area.

AS I RECALL interesting gardens I have visited, I remember Twink Willcut, former Birmingham mayor and dedicated gardener. Many years ago she had an attractive flower garden with a bench on a rise of land that backed up to the garage. The flowers were a riot of color and it was her favorite spot for reading her morning paper.

Attached to the window sill was a flower box brimming with colorful blooms. When you read

texture than traditional oil paints. This harbor scene is one many local residents recognized immediately.

Volunteers help gallery

Continued from Page 17

Serving her volunteer time in the co-op one day in late July was Katharine Smith, former Birmingham resident, now of Northport and Vero Beach, Fla. Smith, who was the Eccentric's first art critic, is also a painter.

With a little encouragement, she talked about her own work, a small neatly arranged painting with rows of apparently random selection of brightly colored triangles, "It's called 'Robert Frost's Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening.' The triangle is the long O. It follows the sound of the syllables. It is a 16 line poem with eight syllables. Shakespeare works beautifully. It does the most fabulous internal rhymes which you don't realize until you see it visualized."

Along one wall was a group of landscapes of the

Leelanau area by Allen, a switch from the more contemporary approach for which he is known.

Around the gallery were paintings by Margaret Kelleher of Bloomfield Hills, Corinne Weissman of Birmingham and other names familiar to metro area residents. Rita Skoczen, Peggy Kluar, Dorothy Delaney and ceramic pieces by Sue and Russell, former metro area residents who now live and work in northern Michigan.

"We have many Michigan artists and a few from Indiana," said Smith adding, "We're open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. everyday in the summer and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday in September."

Smith said she still keeps her membership in Birmingham Women Painters and sees her fellow painters when they come up to work their allotted 10 days during the summer.

Barb Stevenson is the gallery manager.

Announcing auditions

Cantata Academy, a 45-voice professional ensemble, will hold vocal auditions for the coming season 6-10 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 28, and 6-10 p.m. Friday, Sept. 5.

Frederick Bellinger is musical director of the

group which has presented choral programs both here and abroad since 1961. Rehearsals begin in September. For audition location and information, call 478-5718 until 6 p.m. and 528-1331 after 6 p.m.

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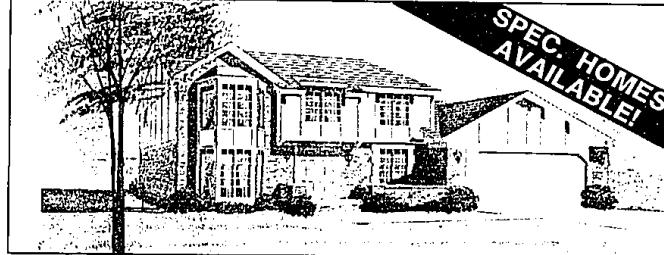
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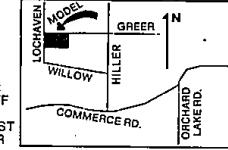
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