

Creative Living



Monday, April 16, 1988 O&E

(O1E)

Containing those spring blooms



organizing

Dorothy Lehmkuhl

Q. I have two boys, a husband who travels, a full-time demanding job and volunteer at school. I am tired, have too little time and so much clutter I can't find anything.

A. I am a 45-year-old doctoral student, mother of seven young adults, run the house, spend "quality time" with hubby and kids, etc. Husband is lots of help, but still

A. The amount of responsibilities people are willing to accept is appalling. What are people doing to themselves? Our imaginations are bigger than our abilities. We've become convinced to "go for it" regardless of the consequences. We refuse to acknowledge that simply existing is more complex than it was just a few years ago. We render cleaning and organizing as our lowest priority, yet thoughtlessly overlook our calendars, treating every entry as indelible.

We hurry our children into our can-do attitudes, enrolling babies in classes when they're barely out of the womb. We hurry their stories of their accidents during recess or of conflicts with their peers because we are so involved with our own success it's difficult to take the time to listen.

It seems that too many people have their priorities twisted. We kill ourselves working to afford a BMW instead of a Chevy. (Yes, even in Detroit.) Working late for a promotion is more important than being together with our family. Raising our standard of living is more important than taking time to enhance our spiritual life. When we do get time to relax, we only get bored or nervous.

We constantly drive ourselves and then wonder why we don't have enough friends, why we are eating and drinking ourselves into oblivion, why our children don't talk to us. We sign up for everything in sight and then become frustrated that we don't have time to maintain order or to smell the roses.

The result is, like the mothers above, we put ourselves into situations where we are constantly tired and down on ourselves for not accomplishing more. We don't seem to understand that by taking on too much, life closes in on us, suffocating us with "To Do's" and complexities.

This is not meant as an indictment of people who are struggling to make ends meet (especially single parents). It is directed toward men and women who are driven by their own ego and success at the expense of their own environment, their inner peace, and their relationships with their loved ones.

While I believe deeply that people are happier and more successful when they set goals, these goals must be few enough to be carefully focused and tempered with common sense before true contentment can be achieved.



designing ways

Eve Garvin

IN MY LAST column I responded to a reader who was interested in remodeling the bathroom. I suggested one way to go would be to shop antique stores for a "dry sink" cabinet that can be converted to a vanity.

In shopping plumbing supply houses to see the latest in plumbing fixtures, I found the Uccello console table by Kohler.

This piece is shown with a marble top and faucet set in high polished brass. Very handsome — a striking piece for the powder room.

The problem I have with it for a bathroom is that it is a table — no drawers. It would not function as well as a cabinet for a bathroom.

Consider a new surface for your counters in the kitchen and baths for a fresh look.

Corian is a wonderful, solid surface. It has the elegance of marble and the permanence of stone. Corian is made by DuPont and is warranted for 10 years. It comes in a variety of colors. Siera is their new color. It has the look of natural stone.

A practical way to go in achieving a new look in your kitchen would be keeping your existing cabinets and changing the doors and drawers. These can be another surface and color.

The ultimate in kitchen cabinetry is the SleMetric kitchen. I love their high-gloss lacquer finish. If your kitchen functions well for you, keep your cabinetry.

With wood cabinets, I suggest painting them with a high-gloss enamel. Be sure to do a good job in sanding so that the paint looks and feels like glass.

You may consider using mica for your doors and drawers in the glass finish to achieve the lacquer look.

A trip to your favorite hardware store will give you any number of designs in door and drawer pieces. In the past, I have found that Russell Hardware has an extensive "on hand" line of hardware.

Eve Garvin has been an area interior designer in the area for many years. She welcomes comments and questions from readers. Send those to her in care of this newspaper, 36231 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

THE JOY of our Michigan spring will soon be upon us in full force and with it comes the pleasure of showcasing its harvest of spritely blooms and flowering branches with a simpler cleaner and more sophisticated approach.

Here are some new ways to display the toddler's delightful expression of love — a fistful of freshly picked dandelions in all their golden glory. Or how to artfully display the season's first daffodil or bunch of spritely red tulips. And, how to create a centerpiece that allows guests to have eye contact at the dinner table.

Florist Jerry Earles also supplies the following tips on how to give your garden bounty staying power in the house.

• Flowers grown from bulbs like to have their stems immersed in cold water. All others like hot water.

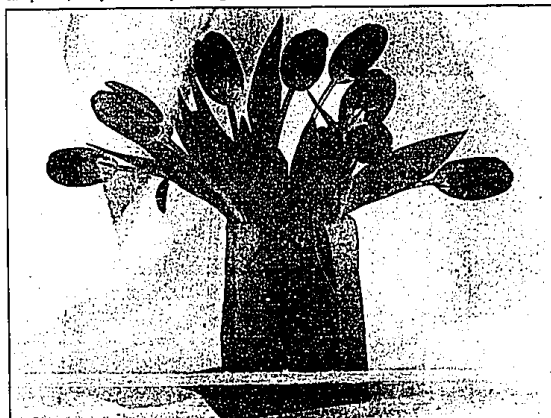
• Garden flowers must be cut with a sharp knife, always in the early morning or

late afternoon and then conditioned for 24 hours by immersing the stems deeply in water.

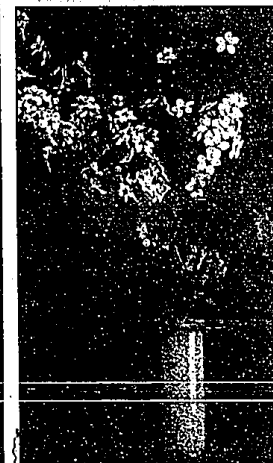
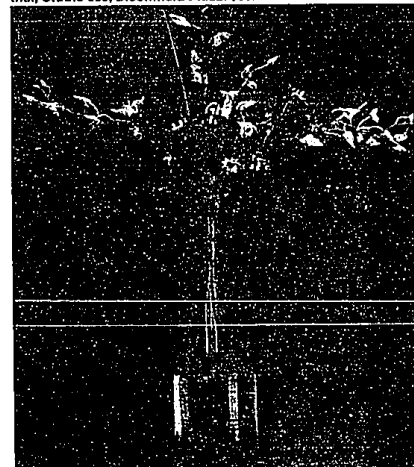
• Never cut flowers with scissors because they pinch the cells of the flowers. Cutting with a sharp knife opens the pores so they draw the water faster.

• Force early flowering of branches such as forsythia, cherry, flowering plum and apple by cutting them with a sharp knife and putting them in deep warm to hot water. Change the water 2-3 times a week and then allow 3 to 4 days for the forsythia to flower and a week to 10 days for other flowering branches.

• The use of natural foliage is important when doing garden arrangements. Add ivy or trailing ground cover to soften. Pachysandra leaves add drama to bud vase flowers. And weedy flowers such as field daisies or Queen Anne's lace add a nice dimension to the roses of summer.



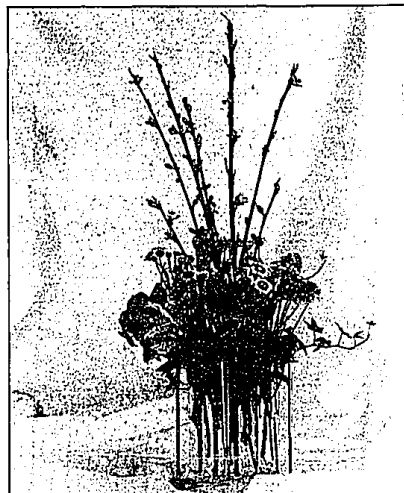
For a casual arrangement, a fistful of spritely red tulips with their natural leaves are enfolded by a Rosenthal sculpture in the form of a brown paper bag. Vase by Rosenthal, Studio 360, Bloomfield Plaza, \$80.



A tall, clear bottle vase (above), uncomplicated yet dramatic, supports long or short stemmed flowers. Holds Dendrobium orchids and long, weedy grass. When the garden permits, will hold lilacs, sweet peas or wisteria with equal grace. A galix leaf is used in this arrangement. Violet, lily of the valley or other large leaves work equally well. Flowers and vase by Jerry Earles Florist, Bloomfield Hills. At the left, contemporary bud vase in the form of a Japanese Uabata has a heavy leaded crystal base and full, cirton yellow, red-rimmed lip. Vase from Ilona & gallery, Farmington Hills, \$86.

temptations for the home

Rustle Shand



Popular many years ago, those unusual test-tube flower holders are enjoying a revival. They turn even the most inept floral designer into an artist. Six glass test tubes rest in a brass-footed rack, \$25.50. Joff Fontana Designs, Royal Oak.

Staff photos by Steve Cantrell

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