

Let's get the youngsters involved

Meetings of garden writers are wonderful places to meet interesting people. That's where I ran into Eddie Rhoades, a garden writer from Georgia who sent me an article he wrote for a men's garden club publication describing a program he had developed for young people.

He did it because he was concerned that his club wasn't providing community educational services for young people.

"As you know, children today don't have the luxury of visiting Grandma and Grandpa on the farm to experience nature and gardening firsthand," he said in his article. "Even though gardening is rated the No. 1 outdoor activity, few children have an opportunity to enjoy the pleasure of gardening."

AS A result of his efforts, a program can be taken to schools and clubs for just this purpose. A 15-minute video, comic books with a con-

servation theme, balloons with "Discover the Pleasure of Plants" printed on them and free seeds (for organizations with an educational gardening program) are available.

By December 1987, Rhoades' club had reached more than 800 young people and bookings for the next year were brisk. The club put its name on the back of the comic books so more people would be aware of it and members set up a booth at the state fair for additional exposure.

This kind of a project might be a challenge for our local men's garden clubs as well as to the staff side of the gardening scene. Won't you take a few minutes at your next club meeting to address this issue and set up a program in your local schools to enrich the lives of our young people? Please let us know the results.

IT WAS interesting to tour the Monrovia Nursery Company of Portland, Ore., and learn how new plants

are developed and how a giant corporation is run with the goal of making our world a better place to live through plants.

The stock is all container-grown and it is shipped to all parts of the United States.

A colorful, compact Spiraea caught my interest. It only grows 2½ feet high, and is dense, compact and nearly maintenance free. We now have so many areas to landscape, it is exciting to see something different from the plants commonly used.

The first foliage is lemon-yellow

with a russet tinge. As it matures, it turns lime-green. In the summer, clusters of light pink flowers add to the beauty. In the fall, the leaves become orange-red. It could be a wonderful addition to your garden. It is hardy to minus-40 degrees.

HERE ARE some sources for gardening for young people. For gardening literature geared toward children, send \$3 and a request for a sample set of all publications to Soil Conservation Society of America, 7515 N.E. Ankeny, Ankeny, Iowa, 50021.

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Marty Figley

Ready, Get Set, Grow" narrated by a child, send \$29.95 plus \$3.50 for shipping and handling to: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225. Specify VHS or Beta.

For information on seeds, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to America the Beautiful Fund, 219 Shoreham Bldg., Washington D.C., 20005.

For \$50 "Discover the Pleasure of

Plants" balloons, send \$25 and a request for item No. 2-41570 to: American Association of Nurserymen, 1250 I Street N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Editor's note: Marty Figley just received the 1988 Garden Writers Award, Newspaper Division, Great Lakes Region, for her column on hostas, published Aug. 27, 1987. Congratulations.

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