

Opera star appears Prepare now for wildflower garden

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trills in the opening arias of Donizetti's "Don Pasquale" and Verdi's "La Traviata," the astounding range and quality of her voice became apparent as the program progressed. She was accompanied by pianist Thomas Muroco, whose skill in anticipating her every pause and nuance was an important contribution. Another portion of the program was dedicated to Irving Berlin, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday. This part also included selections by Jerome Kern, of "Showboat" fame.

A collection of Hebrew and Yid-

dish songs was very relevant. Peters related her experience on her visit to Israel in 1967, when she was temporarily stranded due to the outbreak of the Six Day War. She was asked to perform before the troops at a secret location and called that one of the most thrilling experiences of her career.

She evidently feels more comfortable with the Italian than the Hebrew language. This is especially obvious to one whose skills are the opposite.

Her rendition of the Hebrew songs was also stylistically less authentic, but there was an unmistakable emotional commitment.

Each fall gardeners begin to dream about next year's garden. Now is the time to begin making the dream a reality.

A decision must be made about the shape of your flower or vegetable garden. Remember, curves are easier to mow around than sharp angles. A shape that blends in with existing beds and landscaping will add to the beauty of the area. Perhaps pulling an existing bed out into the yard a bit is all that is needed.

The first item of business is to check the drainage. One way is to dig a hole about 10 inches deep, fill it with water and let it drain. The next

day refill the hole and if the water drains away in 8-10 hours the drainage is adequate.

If any water remains in the hole the soil will need to be amended to improve the drainage. Organic matter such as peat moss, compost or well-rotted manure should be blended into the soil to a depth of 8-10 inches, make sure the soil is turned over completely.

Once a week for the next three or four weeks respade the area. For ordinary soil a 1-2 inch layer of peat moss is fine. For sand or heavy clay soils, a 2-4 inch layer of peat moss can be added.

Fertilizer can be applied in the spring, following the soil's recommendation. If peat moss or other organic matter wasn't used in the fall, it can be worked in in the spring.

With careful preparation, the spring planting will be an easier task and you will be ahead of the game when warm weather arrives.

If you are contemplating a wildflower garden, tilling is the best way to prepare the area for sowing. This also is the time to begin. Till no more than 6-8 inches deep (viable weed seeds may be disturbed if till-



down to earth
Marty Figley

ing is deeper). Once this fall and then several times in the spring, at 3-6 week intervals, will do nicely.

Since some wildflower seeds need a chilling period before germination they may be sown at this time of year. Of course all of the tilling necessary to prepare the bed should be done before the first seeding begins.

However, decide first if a wildflower garden would fit into your landscape. Study the flowers you wish to plant and select ones that will do well in your area.

Generally, woodland flowers perform well in a shaded spot. A sunny location will be more suitable for plants that naturally grow in meadows and along roadsides, while a moist, poorly drained area is best for bog or swamp plants.

Mixes for sun, shade, and other growing conditions are available.

They generally include both annual and perennial flowers for a long blooming season.

After sowing the seeds (which have been mixed one part seed to four parts sand), tamp down (with a wide piece of plywood, perhaps) or roll the soil for good contact.

The sand will help distribute seeds and you can see where you have scattered them to eliminate bare spots. The soil should be kept moist with a light mist until the seedlings are well established.

As with all flower beds there will be some hand weeding necessary. This is when knowledge of flowers and weed seedlings is important.

If the plot is mowed once a year, late fall, early winter or early spring, depending upon your flowers, invading weeds will be less of a problem.

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