

Enjoy Valentine's Day gifts longer

If you receive cut flowers for Valentine's Day and want them to last as long as possible, here are some tips.

Cut the stems on a slant, harden them out by placing them in warm water for several hours, then place them in a container and arrange to your liking.

Don't forget to change the water daily, keep them out of drafts and direct sun and move the vase to a cooler location at night. Along with roses, other flowers that are popular for this day are red or pink carnations and tulips. Daisies are often given, I suppose because of the "she loves me, she loves me not" association, and they will stay fresh for many days.

Plants such as the hibiscus also make suitable Valentine gifts. These need at least four hours of sun each

day, a warm room (about 70 degrees during the day) and fertilizer once a month. If you keep the soil constantly moist, they will reward you with many blooms. Prune occasionally to keep in a proper form.

An azalea is another perfect-for-Valentine-giving plant that likes its soil to be moist. If you wish to put the azalea, pot and all, into the garden in the spring and bring it in before frost, you will again remember your love when it blooms anew. Night temperatures below 35 degrees are ideal. Keep the soil on the acid side; a dose of iron sulfate or iron chelate three or four times a year is sufficient.

A cyclamen with red, pink or white blooms may be the one you receive and it too will convey the proper sentiments. Fertilize this plant every two weeks and keep it in



down to earth Marty Figley

a cool, but sunny window to prolong the flowers. Since this flower grows from a corm, water around the edges instead of directly into the center.

If roses are delivered to your door, cut the stems under water before putting them into a vase. It isn't really necessary to remove the thorns, but as with all cut flowers, the foliage that will be below the water line

should be removed. In a clear glass bud vase, the thorns on a single rose add interest.

Another thoughtful gift would be a gift certificate for a plant to be delivered in the spring at planting time. Now is the time to order special selections from the nursery.

Whether you give or receive a gift on Valentine's Day, remember your special one with a hug.

Artists invited to enter countywide competition

Oakland County artists are invited to enter their original works in the Oakland County Art Show to be held at Summit Place Mall March 2-12.

Judging will be in three categories, Young Adult (16-21), Adult (21-31) and Golden Ager (32 and up). Ribbons and prizes will be awarded in nine categories — oil, acrylic, sculpture, drawing, graphic, watercolor, mixed media, pastel and calligraphy.

Special awards include Oakland Press award, Pontiac Oakland So-

cieté of Arts, Pontiac Art Center, Best Young Adult, Best Golden Ager, Best Handling of Material, Best Painting, Joe Franz award, Most Popular and Best of Show.

Entry forms with rules and regulations are available from the Mall office, 682-0123. Entries must be submitted, with entry form, 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 1. Summit Place Mall is at Telegraph and Elizabeth Lake roads, Waterford Township. Hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Speaking on modern artists

Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association's winter lecture series with Rick Axson continues at 8 p.m. Friday at Bloomfield Township Library, Telegraph and Lone Pine, Bloomfield Township.

He will speak on Elsworth Kelly. On Friday, March 10, he will speak on Robert Rauschenberg. Admission charge. Refreshments will be served following the program. For information, call 644-6866.

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