

Creative Living

Marie McGee editor/591-2300



Monday, August 28, 1989 O&E

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organizing Dorothy Lehmkuhl

Q. I am disorganized at the office and it is affecting my work. I am very good at tackling the big projects and excel at them. However, the little items and paperwork keep piling up and start getting in the way. Can you help me?

A. A key to your problem may be the way you refer to "big" versus "little" work. You seem to assign more importance to "big projects" while you view the "little items and paperwork" as unimportant pests that have no right to be there.

In fact, those little items are the cogs on the wheels that keep your job moving smoothly. If you don't maintain the vital components of machinery it won't function properly and neither will your job. Those little bits are integral to your career's survival and should be viewed as equally important as the "big" stuff.

Imagine a large contractor who is only concerned with moving hundreds of tons of dirt. If he ignores the oil, tires and other maintenance of his equipment, he could suddenly find his expensive machinery and workers idled. Or imagine a home where everything else is considered more important than cleaning up the kitchen. Those dishes pile up ever so quickly; they don't take long when they are fresh, but if they are left... the same is true at work. It is imperative that you schedule main-

tenance time every working day to handle what you consider the pestky situations.

One reason paper accumulates is a lack of on-the-spot decision making. Rather than procrastinating and then having to shuffle through stacks repeatedly, learn the rule "touch it once." Perhaps half the papers on your desk should have been tossed immediately upon receipt and the rest handled right away.

At least place papers in an appropriate slot for action later - a dictation file, filing box or route to them. Take appropriate action as it arrives and then schedule time to do your filing, dictation and reading at specific times daily. Leaving it in a jumble is self-defeating.

One advantage of touching it once is maintaining a clear desk. This frees your mind to concentrate on the "big projects" without feeling weighed down by mountains of papers. The other reward is the time-saving ability to find what you need when you need it instead of having to dig through piles of debris several times a day.

You can obtain Dorothy Lehmkuhl's first 52 Organizing columns by sending a long self-addressed envelope with \$.65 postage and a check for \$5 payable to Organizing Techniques, 6155 Worthington, Birmingham, 48010.

Interior design seminar planned

Michigan Design Center of Troy, normally closed to the public, will serve as a backdrop for Schoolcraft College's "Design Directions '89," a comprehensive seminar on interiors to be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 13.

Four prominent designers will share their expertise and offer advice on subjects all interior design enthusiasts can relate to, whether their taste is traditional, contemporary, country or eclectic. The cost is \$55, including luncheon.

An additional feature of "Design Directions '89" is a specially guided tour of the Design Center for all participants. The facility annually serves a buying market of more than eight million professionals from Michigan, Indiana, Ohio and Ontario. The Center is open to the public only when accompanied by a designer, architect,

furnishings retailer or contract specifier.

The three separate hour-long sessions with professional designers are: "How to Work with a Designer," Sheldon J. Scott; "Terrific Trends in Home Furnishings and Decorating," Sandra Seligman and Kevin McManamon; and "How to Use Color, Light, Texture and Fabric Effectively" by Brian Killian.

Scott is a 25-year veteran consultant in the field who has been written about nationally for his award-winning work. He will discuss how to choose the right designer to fit the client's need, personality and budget. Scott's session is 9-10 a.m.

Seligman and McManamon have a combination of 30 years of experience as professional designers. During their presentation, they show

what works that's old, what's good that's new in the design market and what's best to bring out an individual's style.

Killian has more than a decade of design experience. His designs have recently been in the national spotlight and have been featured in local publications. His presentation of slides will show examples of how to use color, light, fabric and texture effectively. He will discuss their importance as keys to successful interior design.

Following luncheon will be the tour of the Design Center. Each group of 12 will be led by a professional from the International Furnishings and Design Association. For descriptive brochure and registration information, call Schoolcraft College Continuing Education Services, 462-4448.



condo queries Robert M. Melsner

Q. I am living in a two-story town house condominium on the first floor. My upstairs neighbor, who is a nice enough guy, unfortunately creates a terrible noise when he walks over my unit, a noise that is driving me crazy. I have met with the developer, who had previously promised that there was noise conditioning in the unit and that I would not experience any unreasonable noise problems from upstairs. I'm wondering if I'm going crazy or am unreasonable being concerned about this and am wondering what you would suggest I can do.

A. There are acoustical engineers who can define exactly whether or not adequate materials were used, by way of sound insulation, to deal with this noise problem. For example, the degree of impact being made by the upstairs person as it relates to your unit can be measured and qualified. There are standards to which developers should comply so as to maximize the use and enjoyment of a unit by a co-owner.

After you have considered and discussed this matter with an acoustical engineer, you should confront your developer with the results, assuming it shows that there is some liability on the part of the developer. You may also wish to consult with legal counsel to determine what

rights you may have concerning representations made to you by the developer as well as the express or implied warranties that may go to the question of sound conditioning and sound transmission.

Q. I have basically a domestic relations and real estate question for you. My ex-wife and I jointly own the marital home, although she is residing in it. I am not happy with the way she is keeping it up, but it is not to be sold until our youngest son reaches the age of 18, three years from now. To make things worse, my ex-wife's lawyer encouraged her to insist that no clause forbidding cohabitation clause be inserted in the divorce decree. She has allowed some beatnik-type flower salesman to move in the house with the kids, operate a business out of the house and store cartons of seeds and other sundry items in one of the rooms on the first floor. I think the idea of cohabitation stinks and am worried about the property values. What can I do?

A. I can certainly empathize with your plight regarding your concern of not only your real estate investment, but the welfare of your child. Perhaps the most expedient way of resolving the problem, assuming that you cannot get your ex-wife to agree to removing her "live-in" and otherwise to maintain the house more decently, is to seek protection through the courts in regard to the proper upbringing of your child in an effort to attempt to get the flower man out of the house together with his belongings.

It may also be that the flower man is violating the restrictions of the homeowners association in the neighborhood in which your ex-wife is residing, and since you are a co-owner of the premises, you may have standing in that regard.

You should consult with your divorce lawyer to determine what efforts you can take including change of custody.

A virus named Abby going after the gypsy moths

By Earl Aronson
AP Newsfeatures

Will Abby prove to be a potent new weapon against the gypsy moths that devastate trees in many parts of the country?

Abby is an improved biochemical virus strain that kills gypsy moth caterpillars but does not harm anything else, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture entomologist Martin Shapiro.

Abby is an NPV - nuclear polyhedrosis virus - that Shapiro named after the town of its origin, Abington, Mass. It has been studied for seven years among 19 different virus strains from all over the world. NPV strains produce a systemic infection in gypsy caterpillars. With Abby, reports Shapiro, "there's a higher kill early in the game."

Once applied, the new Abby could run its own moth-control program from year to year, often with no need to reapply, claims Shapiro. Abby could serve as an alternative to Bacillus thuringiensis bacteria or to Dimilin, a chemical that keeps gypsy moth caterpillars from reaching adulthood. The virus, unlike chemicals, is transmitted from generation to generation and is capable of self-perpetuation within the gypsy moth population, says Shapiro.

The Agricultural Research Service and Forest Service will conduct a joint dose-and-mortality field test with Abby. They will count the number of dead moth larvae and measure the amount of foliage protected by the virus. In field tests at the Beltsville, Md. lab, the new strain performed five times better than the lab's standard virus.

Gypsy moth populations have been exploding in recent years, and federal officials anticipate that this year and the next two years will be worse. All states east of Ohio and north of Virginia are infested with the moths, the officials reported. Pockets of infestation also have been found in California, Oregon, Wisconsin, Michigan, South Carolina and North Carolina.

The caterpillar eats the foliage of more than 500 species of trees, shrubs and ornamentals, but does most harm to American oaks and alders in forests and parks, along roadsides and in back yards.

The gypsy moth was brought to Massachusetts in 1859 by French biologist Louis Trouvelot as part of a silkworm-breeding experiment and escaped from the laboratory. The worst infestation was in 1982,

weeder's guide

Earl Aronson

When moth caterpillars defoliated about 8 million acres.

Work at the Beltsville Insect Reproduction Laboratory led to a way to rear moths to mass-produce the biochemical virus.

You can help fight gypsy moths by seeking out and destroying their eggs. Your Agricultural Extension Service office has educational information. Check for eggs on tree trunks, lawn furniture and stone walls, and under brush piles. Scrape egg masses into a can of kerosene, bleach or "tree wound" paint and destroy them.

Spray trees or shrubs with an insecticide, preferably a biological one that won't kill bees or other beneficial insects. Recommended is Bacillus thuringiensis, sold under various trade names such as Dipel, Thuricide and Bactospeine, or as "Organic Caterpillar Killer."

Biological controls - beneficial bugs, bacteria, fungi and even viruses - give chemical-free control in food production or require the use of much less chemical pesticide.

"Even where chemicals may not be suspected of polluting water or leaving residues on foods, they simply may no longer control a pest," says the USDA Agricultural Research Service. "Biocontrol can be a large part of the solution to these problems."

ARS biocontrol efforts include: negotiating two five-year agreements on research and exploration with the Soviet Union; sending scientists, starting in May, to China to explore for biocontrols of range weeds and water weeds, such as hydrilla; the gypsy moth virus project; and aiding eggplant growers, "who have seen proof that tiny wasps control Colorado potato beetles better than 15 spray applications of insecticides."

(For a copy of Earl Aronson's "AP Guide to House Plants," send \$1.50 to: House Plants, AP Newsfeatures, 60 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020.)

(Gardening questions must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.)

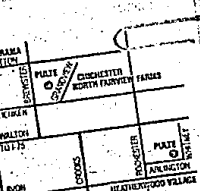
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