

# Garden talk

## Plant spring flowering bulbs now

To force paper-white narcissus for an early taste of spring, you'll need a brushed clay pot or other shallow container. It is important to have the bulbs at the right level to ensure their successful bloom.

Other bulbs that store so much food all they need is water to bloom include hyacinths, muscari (grape hyacinths) and crocus. These latter three are often suspended in jars made especially for this purpose.

Other narcissus that are fine for forcing — enticing may be a better word — include varieties of N. tazetta, Chinese sacred lilies and "Soleil d'or."

Paper-whites from Israel are reputed to be very good quality. The Carmel brand (Ziva and Gull cultivars) will produce good results.

Many mail-order companies carry these bulbs, but don't forget local nurseries, which offer bulbs of all descriptions at this time of year.

**ENTICED BULBS** make excellent gifts and their "show" can be timed simply by advance planning.

If you begin the process at the end of this month and plant in two- to three-week intervals, a succession of blooms will result. Paper-whites for Christmas should be started about the middle of November. The gift can be presented (with instructions) right after you planted or when growth has begun.

A very simple way to entice narcissus into early bloom is to place gravel (add a bit of activated charcoal to keep the water sweet) in the shallow container.

Use plenty of gravel to support the roots and add water until it just touches the bottom of the bulbs.

Next, set the pot in a cool (40-50



down to earth

**Marty Figley**

**A very simple way to entice narcissus into early bloom is to place gravel (add a bit of activated charcoal to keep the water sweet) in the shallow container.**

degrees) dark area. When roots start to grow, bring the pot to a sunny, cool spot. In about three weeks, the bulbs will appear.

Bulbs grown in water should also be kept in a cool, dark place until roots are well developed and top growth is developing.

When the buds on crocus are about 2 inches tall and when hyacinth and muscari are about 4 inches tall (with flower buds showing through leaf

sheath), bring them into the light so their cycle can continue to produce flowers.

**DIRECTIONS FOR** planting bulbs in the garden are generally included in the packaging, but sometimes it is difficult to decide just where to plant them for the best effect.

When deciding upon the location of the bulbs, remember that the foliage must remain and turn yellow before it is removed, so that it can nourish the bulb for another season's bloom.

The bulb can be removed and stored for another year, annuals can be planted over the bulbs, or they can be planted as undergrowth for taller plants.

In my bed of vinca minor (with blue flowers), I have planted "Violet Pearl," purple-violet hyacinths, around the sundial since I want to keep that area one color. When the foliage dies, it will be camouflaged by the vinca.

An alternative idea would be to scatter crocus, perhaps "Princess Beatrix" (blue with a yellow heart), and then put tall narcissus "quail" in a focal spot, with mini trumpet narcissi "Little Gem" cascading their yellow blooms from the taller flo-

wers.

Many new bulbs are on the market, so spend some time in the decision-making.

**MANY PEOPLE** like a variety of color in their gardens, and this can make a very striking display.

I would advise you to read the labels as to bloom time, height and color so that one doesn't clash with another and the flowering time can be prolonged, since all bulbs don't bloom in the same month.

It is best to plant bulbs close together so that the color is continuous rather than a dot here and a dot there.

I like the look of naturalizing the smaller bulbs, such as snow-drops and scilla, through the grass to make a pretty carpet under a tree as spring arrives.

Bulbs can be planted in containers and moved around to catch the sun at different times of the season or to make a pretty display at an entrance, patio, balcony or desk, perhaps for a special occasion.

Now is the time to plant spring flowering bulbs and help the Dutch flower bulb industry celebrate its 400th anniversary.



## Puppet Connection

The Livonia Arts Commission will present "The Puppet Connection," with Marilyn O'Connor Miller and her puppet, Tiffany, at 2 p.m. Saturday in the Livonia Civic Center Auditorium, Farmington Road and Five Mile. They'll tell enchanting Halloween tales. Miller, who studied with the late Jim Hanson, has performed at the Meadow Brook Music Festival Children's Concert Series; the Detroit Historical Museum; with Victor Borge at Detroit's Orchestra Hall; and with Mona from the Hot Fudge TV show. Tickets are \$2 at the library during regular library hours. Photographs may be taken with Tiffany after the show.

## Michael Farrell to offer tour series

Michael Farrell, one of the metro area's leading authorities on fine art, will give a three-part series, "The Exotic Tour: Turkey, Morocco and India," at 8 p.m. Mondays beginning Nov. 5 at the Cranbrook House Li-

brary. He will discuss the landscape, history, culture and art of these countries.

The program is sponsored by Cranbrook P.M. The fee is \$33 for

the series or \$12.50 for individual programs.

For information, call 645-3635. Cranbrook House is at 380 Lone Pine, Bloomfield Hills.

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**EXECUTIVE DREAM HOME!** Elegant custom Tudor has a contemporary flair. Presents dramatic 2 story ceramic foyer and circular staircase, whitewashed woodwork, sun room off great room with gorgeous fireplace, 4 bedrooms, lower level with wet bar and multi-tiered deck. Extra! \$393,000 626-9100



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**ALL THE FRINGES!** Gorgeous newer brick Contemporary is sure to sell fast. Features ceramic floors, vaulted ceiling with skylights and fireplace in family room, recessed lighting, spacious formal kitchen, 4 bedrooms and finished lower level with hot tub. \$181,900 626-9100 02-B-4971



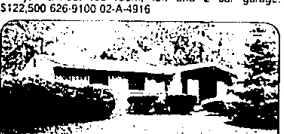
**ONE-OF-A-KIND CHARMER!** Unique and quaint describes this home located in downtown Farmington's historic district. Highlights extensive use of wood moldings and trim, hardwood floors, gracious dining room with Franklin stove, 3 bedrooms, cozy den and family room. \$115,000 626-9100



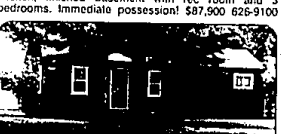
**ONE OF FARMINGTON'S FINEST!** Stately and elegant describes this Tudor. Highlights hardwood floors, formal living and dining rooms, in-law suite library, 4 bedrooms and 2 fireplaces. Includes bonus room, massive family room, deck and patio. Professionally landscaped and decorated. \$239,000 626-9100



**GREAT LOCATION!** Located near shopping, services and expressway this trendy Townhouse is packed with extras. Features vaulted ceilings, great room with fireplace and doorwall to balcony, 1st floor bedroom study, walk-out rec room, loft and 2 car garage. \$122,500 626-9100 02-A-4916



**EXTRA SPECIAL!** Quaint Cranbrook Village sub is the location of this tremendous Ranch. Comes complete with Florida room, hardwood floors, fireplace in fabulous living room, dining room, chef's delight kitchen, finished basement with rec room and 3 bedrooms. Immediate possession! \$87,900 626-9100



**OPEN SAT. 1-4** 19011 Jeanette, S.W. of 10 Mile, E. of Evergreen. **START OUT RIGHT!** Set on spacious double lot of mature trees, this Ranch is priced to sell. Boasts roomy living room, large master suite, 2nd bedroom with doorwall to deck, delightful kitchen and 2 car garage. \$47,900 626-9100

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