

# Observer

## GARDEN PAGE

Page 4-B Wednesday, August 17, 1988



**WINNERS OF CONTEST** conducted by Eckles Heating Co., 882 Holbrook, Plymouth, are shown claiming their prizes. They are: (from left) Leo Crane, of Plymouth, and Mrs. Nora Dudley, Northville, who won humidifiers and air cleaners; Mrs. Lonnie Brashear, Livonia, winner of the grand prize—a gas furnace; and Doug Bell, manager of Eckles Heating.

**Mint and Pineapple**  
Fresh mint chutney aboard pineapple slices makes wonderful eating with meat. Just chop a handful or two of fresh mint with an equal amount of green onions and tomatoes. Sharpen the flavor with lemon and honey.

**Stain Soothers Eyes**  
Impatient homeowners who can't wait through the ugly duckling stage of weathering a cedar fence or deck can give nature a hand by applying a single coat of exterior quality driftwood stain to the structure. Weathering will continue and eventually bestow the prized silver patina.

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### Lightning's Destruction Sets Record

Lightning had its most destructive year of all time in 1985, as major bolts hit 12,900 American houses, causing damages totaling \$51,063,000. This includes major losses only—not the countless unreported "nuisance" strikes that cause minor damage.

The statistics, released by the Lightning Protection Institute, Chicago, reflected the growing number of unprotected homes exposed to nature's electrical puns.

According to the institute, they also are a result of greater vulnerability to damage by lightning, brought by such features as antennas, more metallic plumbing pipes, and larger floor slabs.

Of the houses hit, 11,730 were damaged, with the average dollar loss about \$4,000. Lightning caused a record 1,150 deaths, with an average loss of \$15,300.

Fewer than 600 of the lightning losses were identified as being farmhouses, indicating that by a matter of numbers, city, suburban and countryside homeowners have inherited most of the lightning problem.

July and June, normally the worst lightning months, in that order, were in third and fourth places in numbers of homes struck.

August was 1985's most severe loss month with 3,480 major residential strikes over 100 a day. May had 2,700 strikes to homes, July had 2,650, and June about 1,900.

### Computer Helps Soil Problems

"Improvement in soil testing laboratories has resulted in more efficient operation. The use of electronic computers is a good example. But recommendations are no better than the data on which they are based."

The above, taken from a technical publication, gives you a quick idea of how complicated soil analysis has become. It takes a computer to figure out the variables. Not so long ago we used to think it was all pretty simple. You put a little soil in a test tube and poured in something or other, and voila!—an answer.

It was all good fun but not much science. Further research has shown that to be meaningful, analysis must be much more detailed, and as far as the typical lab was concerned, it never could answer the question of adequate nutrition.

Since the typical lawn is undernourished most of the time, what it needs most and needs least is a square meal of balanced, long-lasting fertilizer.

A soil analysis under these circumstances is hardly worth while. Not that it is, unless you've got a computer handy to interpret the results.

### Signs of Tomorrow

## There'll Be More Color In Metropolitan Cities

At last, a little color seems headed for America's cities. With any luck, the dull, drab urban blah will begin to disappear in a tide of red, green, orange, blue and gold as city dwellers start realizing everything doesn't have to look gray.

Chicago has a new Civic Center and it is dark brown, but things could be worse. It could be concrete color, which most of the buildings are around here.

You'd think there was a law against color, the way most buildings avoid it. And that includes the new glass buildings, too. Glass isn't exactly colorful.

The people in these glass buildings could, of course, break the color barrier by brightening the acres of glass with draperies in shades other than buff, egg-

### 50 Types of Concrete Blocks

## Livonian Uses Customer's Products in New Building



THIS SHOWS THE new office facility of Schoolcraft, Livonia, which was constructed from products of the firm's customers.

A new high in customer relations has been established with the completion of the Light Weight Aggregate Corporation's office facilities at 27611 Schoolcraft in Livonia.

Products of all the firm's customers were used in the construction of the office quarters which house the Beslie, Zell Products and Duo-Wire Divisions of Light Weight Aggregate.

"We were determined to use the products of all our customers in construction of our new building," said Mel Cruzen, executive vice president and general manager of the firm, whose divisions manufacture light weight aggregate, a sound insulating floor fill and masonry wall reinforcement, "and, as a result, our offices include light weight concrete blocks from 50 different concrete block plants, as well as the products of another 20 different concrete suppliers."

At the direction of Cruzen, Samuel Redstone, A. I. A., of Louis G. Redstone Architects, Inc., specified common block and brick alone to be used as finished materials.

Cruzen said the use of special architectural shapes in constructing the building was avoided purposely to demonstrate that ordinary sizes and shapes of concrete block, all commonly available, are sufficient in themselves to create a pleasing, aesthetic effect.

The light weight concrete block employed in various sizes, patterns and textures on the exterior and interior alike provides a contemporary look that is at once complementary and decorative.

As a final touch, Cruzen said, even the shrubs in the patio area are set in a light weight aggregate mulch, which has been described by a leading horticulturist as an extremely effective mulching material.

### Teaching Foreign Languages Made Easy

More than 50 area educators will attend a five-day audio-visual language teaching workshop at the Mercy College of Detroit beginning Monday, Aug. 22, for instruction in the Saint-Cloud Method of teaching foreign languages.

The workshop is being held in cooperation with the Center for Curriculum Development of Philadelphia which is responsible for teacher-training in the Saint-Cloud Method in the U.S.

The objective of the audio-visual method is to instruct students to speak, read and write the foreign language with native-like fluency.

Educators will receive a basic introduction to the principles of the Saint-Cloud Method and its special teaching techniques. They will observe demonstration classes, plan lessons, practice-teach, and participate as students, to gain first-hand knowledge of the new system.

**Soil-Filled Trench**  
**Will Blanch Celery**  
Celery that has been grown in a trench may be blanched by filling the trench with soil. If it has, instead, been grown at ground level, set a board along each side of the row so that one edge is half an inch deep in the ground, the other hidden under the celery leaves.

In about 10 days the hearts of each celery clump will be blanched.

**Verve for a Walk**  
Need to emphasize the front entrance of your home? The front walk may be a key. Widen it with brick borders and add a dainty knee-high fence of painted spindles on one side, set in a bed of low but fluffy greens.

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