

Meffer's mystery bulb identified

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(Editor's note: Several weeks ago we received a call from Mrs. Dennis Meffer of Livonia. A perfectly dry bulb, that she had put away for the winter, had suddenly sprung to life and was growing at an enormous rate. She asked for help in identifying the smelly plant. Staff photographer Harry Mauthe took a picture of the plant which was published in our home and garden section.)

After many letters, phone calls, post cards and visits to the library, Mrs. Dennis Meffer's mystery plant has been identified.

Former Livonia residents, Mr. and Mrs. Veikko Kivimäki, sent a clipping from their retirement home in Hancock. It was a picture in the local upper peninsula paper of them and their Sacred Lily of India. The headline in the accompanying story said, "Giant Lily Springs to life in Hancock."

Home & Garden

One caller had a similar bulb which was as large as a bushel basket. She said her husband threatened to leave it in the garden to freeze. It was just too heavy to dig up every fall.

One gentleman said he knew the botanical name. Another caller said it was an East Indian plant called the giant Krubi.

But the folks at the Alfred Noble branch of the Livonia Public Library tracked down the information and background of the unusual lily.

The Amorphophallus is a giant aroid from the eastern tropics. They are propagated by offsets of the tu-

bers. These offsets are miniature tubers which grow out of the parent tuber.

The flowers are like a huge calla except that the spathe and spadix are a dark chocolate color.

Mrs. Meffer was told the bad odor that accompanied the blooming of the plant was to attract carrion insects to aid in the pollination of the flowers. When the white ring of flowers drops off the sickening smell goes with it.

Some readers of our garden pages reported their plants had reached a height of eight feet. Growth is so fast

you can almost see the stalk move upward.

When the flowers first bloom they generate an astonishing amount of heat. The flower may be 10 to 15 degrees warmer than the surrounding air.

The plant shoots forth twice a year and the bulb requires no special handling. The large flower growth of late February or March soon withers and the bulb remains dormant until planted outdoors in late spring.

At that time it reaches a growth of about half the earlier size. Instead of flowering it produces palmlike leaves at the top that spread out several feet.

The plants should be lifted again before the frost, and potted in any good, rich soil, according to the information garnered by the library. Mrs. Meffer let the top of hers die down in the fall before digging up the bulb.

She is going to "go by the book" this fall.

Mum cultivar sale planned

Chrysanthemums are not difficult to grow. They provide a home garden a bevy of color from mid - August to hard frost.

At a time when most plants are going into their winter rest, along comes the chrysanthemum with its beautiful flowers in an array of colors. Gardens need never have a drab season where the mum is part of the planting. It's flowers are very hardy and when used as cut flowers in arrangements in the home, they have a long life that provides beauty and color.

Thousands of mum cultivars will be available at the annual sale of the Greater Detroit Chrysanthemum Society. This year plants may be ordered from Mrs. Joseph Neaton, 22653 Nona, Dearborn. A plant list may be procured from her and ordered now for pickup at her home Saturday, May 25. Plants will be on sale that day at her home.

There will be 108 different cultivars available through the society sale. They will include every kind from cushion and pompons to the large beautiful spiders and harvest giants.

According to Edwin Slesak, Sr., of the Chrysanthemum Society, the most popular of the harvest giants is "Indian Summer." It starts blooming in August and keeps growing throughout the fall. The flowers are a beautiful rich bronze.

One of the newest garden mums is Cloud 9, considered the first large flo-

wered mum that stays dwarf. It grows ivory white flowers, with no disbudding, that reach a size of more than four inches in diameter. The bushy mound - shaped plants grow to a height of 12 inches and are almost completely covered from early September until hard frost.

It is a spectacular border plant and

provides beautiful contrast in and among foundation plantings. Petals are semi - incurved.

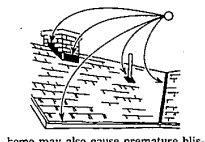
True Love is one of the most popular spider mums. It is a large pure yellow with long tubular petals and hooked tips. It is a sensation in any home garden.

Time to check up on roof repairs

When water seeps through a break in a roof coating, or if a coating has been applied over a wet surface, the action of the sun's heat on this type of surface will cause blistering in some roofs.

To prevent this, check and repair all flashings (edges of roof) which are broken. A broken flashing will let water underneath the roof coating resulting in blistering.

Another cause of blistering in roofs is when a roof coating is applied when the temperature is extremely high (in the summer months the temperature of a roof may reach 140 degrees F.) That is why it's best to begin roof coating projects in the spring or fall when roof temperatures are low. Excess moisture conditions in your



home may also cause premature blistering in a room. As a precaution, be sure to properly vent your home.

Remember that it is always wise to choose a high quality roof coating. Low grade coatings are made of inferior ingredients, and are usually a cause of future roofing problems. High grade roof coatings are always the most economical in the end.

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