

Garden writer wins coveted national award

By CORINNE ABATT

Alice Wessels Burlingame, who has been writing *The Eclectic's* Down to Earth gardening column for some 30 years, seems to pick up awards as readily as flowers from a garden.

Sharing has always been an important word in her vocabulary. Readers often find it in her garden columns. She's widely known for her folksy admonitions — sharing the beauty of a garden, or a bouquet, or a clipping.

Her avowed interest in sharing recently brought Mrs. Burlingame a coveted award from the Garden Writers Association. She was elected a fellow and given a plaque, one of seven handed out in over 30 years.

"One of the reasons for the award," she said modestly, "was probably for my work in founding the profession of horticultural therapy."

This statement barely gives a hint of the extent of her work in this now well accepted profession that a while back, when she began, was a total unknown. It was natural for Mrs. Burlingame

to want to share her interest in gardening with those who had mental or physical problems. She was on solid ground with training in occupational therapy at the University of Michigan, graduate work in communications from Wayne State, a degree in psychiatric social work from the University of Michigan and four years in the school of horticulture and landscape architecture at Michigan State.

BLENDING ALL THIS KNOWLEDGE, she went to work back in 1951 to establish a horticulture therapy program at Clinton Valley Center.

"I just started with two patients and one volunteer, Mrs. William Hyland," Mrs. Burlingame said. "In those early days we did two things. We made cuttings, and later potted them to give as gifts to families. We also secured flowers from funeral homes and used them for flower arrangements which we placed in tin cans so they couldn't be broken."

The horticultural therapy programs grew steadily and Mrs. Burlingame ex-

panded her efforts to cover almost every area of the handicapped.

Volunteers from local branches of the National Farm and Garden Association jumped into the various volunteer programs at Clinton Valley.

They worked with a variety of patients. Patio and flower gardens were established, two greenhouses were added in 1957, a rose garden for the various wards was planted in 1960 by the Bloomfield branch of the Women's National Farm and Garden Association.

Student training was inaugurated in 1952 and the Foxcroft branch gave the first student scholarship for horticultural therapy.

Mrs. Burlingame said, "Seven years ago, Michigan State University began to send horticultural students to live in residence at Clinton Valley Center to work toward accreditation as horticultural therapists."

By this time, Clinton Valley had a fulltime horticultural therapist, Sam Bridges, on the staff, vegetable garden projects and over 100,000 square feet

of gardens, in which over half the patients were participating.

While the Clinton Valley horticultural programs have grown steadily, so has university and national participation. There is now a National Council of Horticultural Therapy in Alexandria, Va.

"MANY COLLEGES ARE GIVING M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s in horticultural therapy," Mrs. Burlingame said. "It is now spread all over the United States, Canada and England, and New Zealand, Australia and Hawaii are making inquiries."

Adding that she has worked with all types of handicapped people, "even the women at Detroit House of Correction," Mrs. Burlingame said, "We are now doing vocational training with the upper grade of mentally impaired at Melwood School in Virginia outside Washington, D. C. The men are being trained in ground maintenance and the women for florist jobs. Many of these people are now working on the grounds of the public buildings in Washington, D.C.

She paused, took a long breath and said smiling, "I'm at my typewriter all the time developing programs. I just had a call recently from the mother of an epileptic son. So now I am asking myself how I can develop a program so an epileptic can go out safely and earn a living? There are also new horticultural therapy programs for hospices for the terminally ill."

While Mrs. Burlingame is one of seven to receive her recent award, another which she prizes is when she was the only person ever to receive a joint citation of honor from the governing boards and presidents of Michigan and Michigan State universities.

She is also an honorary fellow of the American Scandinavian Foundation. She was given the Elizabeth Heywood Wyman award for compassion to her fellow men by Alph Omicron Pi sorority. The American Horticultural Society gave her a citation of honor during their international congress in Washington and Clinton Valley Center gave her a Pioneer award. There are others.

Dan, a banker and Gail Wiemer of Charlevoix and five grandchildren. Granddaughter, Joan Burlingame, who is completing a degree in hospital management, received training in horticultural therapy under her grandmother. Several others, said Mrs. Burlingame, are showing interest in the subject.

When the busy garden writer and horticulturalist isn't on the road, or in the air, traveling, sometimes for business and occasionally for pleasure, working on horticultural therapy programs, teaching or writing, she may be found working on her Michigan farm.

One thing for certain, she doesn't have much time for just sitting around, nor does what want any.

Classes set for diabetics

A series of six diabetic classes will be held Thursday evenings, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Oakland County Health Division, 27725 Greenfield Road, Southfield.

The classes, which will begin on Sept. 6, are for school-age children and their family members and are taught by a registered dietitian and a public health nurse.

Topics to be discussed include the nature of the disease, dietary management, medications and suggestions for coping with everyday problems.

A written statement from the diabetic's physician is required and should be presented at the first class session.

Classes are free, but you must pre-register. For further information or to pre-register, call Oakland County Health Division Education Office, 424-7058.

Down to earth

Hints for midsummer gardens

by ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME



Among our gardeners are many who have invested in trees and shrubs this season. Maybe you have noticed that a given tree will have its first name in Latin, following it will be cv, then a common name.

No longer do we talk about varieties but instead we use the word "cultivar." This new code was adopted at the International Horticultural Congress in Nice, France. This interpretation will aid you as you read catalogs.

Some of our vegetable growers are concerned because they are seeing squash blossoms fall to the ground without producing fruit. Remember there are male and female flowers. Only the female flowers will produce fruit. You will need honey bees to pollinate the flowers so watch your use of insecticide sprays which could harm your bees.

Greg Patchan, our Extension Horticultural agent, tells us not to be upset about the swellings or growths on our oak or maple trees. They are malformations formed on the leaves by mites or wasps. They are sometimes known as leaf galls. Our agent assures us that it is a cosmetic problem and doesn't suggest chemical control.

If you are having trouble with your geranium plants rotting, it can be due to too much moisture. Geraniums like to be grown dry with sun. If your growing location gets too much water (from a sprinkling system), you can control the botrytis blight with Benlate (benomyl).

Soil is the result of many things which have happened to it. What kind of plants have been grown there, wild, died, rotted and become part of the earth? What animals have used it? Have heavy vehicles been driven over

it, compacting the soil? Have leaves been carefully raked away in the spring and not allowed to enrich the earth? Soil isn't dead and static. It is living, breathing, and is always changing. That is the reason we seek a porous site so air can reach the roots. It is as important as surface water.

A retiree could set up a business of analyzing soil for home gardeners. By the time you dig a sample, pack it up, post it, and send it to Lansing, you have had a long delay before you receive a report. They will tell you what to add to improve it. I hope somebody bites on that suggestion.

Some people use gypsum, a neutral soil conditioner, to make soil workable. It doesn't affect the pH of the soil or add plant food. . . it is good to spread on clay. You just spread it on the surface and the rain and watering will let

it trickle down.

Builder's sand is also good to break up clay, but not lake sand.

If your soil is too sandy, compost is cheap and you can make it free. It will really help add moisture as well as peat moss, perlite and vermiculite.

If you have moles undermining your lawn you will find peat moss a good. Dig a hole in "the run," insert the peat moss and then cover up the hole to protect the nodus.

If you are traveling overseas be very conscientious about bringing back plants. Remember the 8-year-old boy from Miami who brought home a "cute" snail with a shell as big as a teacup, eight inches in diameter. Because they are bisexual, one snail can reproduce. The USDA has banned shipments out of Miami because of the current pest, a snail in a cute shell.

Club Circuit

FARMINGTON AREA Mothers of Twins Club meets at 8 p.m. tonight and invite other mothers of twins to join them by calling Lila Henry at 478-6751.

The club meets on the third Thursday of every month.

JUNIOR GARDENERS of Farmington meet for an outing at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 29, in City Park, Farmington and Shawasssee roads, for their first session of the new year.

New members are welcomed by Penny Stairs, who patterns the group's

goings-on after its parent club, the Hill and Dale Garden Club, a member of the Federation of Garden Clubs.

The age range runs from kindergarten through high school.

On the day's agenda is a planning session for the coming year, a cookout and a nature hike.

Those who will be attending the meeting are asked to call Mrs. Stairs at 476-9453.

THE GATHERING PLACE members have responded to a call from the Metropolitan Society for Crippled Children and Adults, and will staff a pizza booth at the Michigan State Fair, from Aug. 24-Sept. 3 to benefit the society.

All proceeds from the pizza sales will be used for the treatment of the society's patients.

Photographs will be taken of seniors in The Gathering Place beginning at 10:30 a.m. Friday, Aug. 17. The photos will be transferred onto discount cards that will allow the bearer to receive anywhere from 5 to 30 percent off on merchandise and services from a list of participating merchants in the county.

Next guest speaker for the group is Bill Carlson, public affairs supervisor for Consumers Power Company, whose talk is called "Energy Conservation." He will give his talk at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 28.

Upcoming trips are a visit to Apple Barrel Farm on Tuesday, Sept. 11; a wine tour and tasting party in Paw Paw on Tuesday, Oct. 9; and Christmas shopping in Chicago's Chinatown on Nov. 7-10.

All inquiries and reservations will be taken by stopping in The Gathering Place, located in Mercy Center. Guests are asked to use Gate 4, on 11 Mile Road, east of Middlebelt Road.

ArtStart gets new leadership

ArtStart, a pre-school program with focus on the arts, is opening its fall term with new leadership. Nancy Bates, who created and developed the school, announced the change is effective immediately.

The new owners, Barbara Burgess, Sue Ingram, and Kathy Benton, all have been staff teachers at ArtStart, and are responsible for much of the

creative programming.

Their combined education and experience includes early childhood development, psychology, music, art, drama, puppetry. They are all mothers.

ArtStart begins a third year in Mercy Center, located at 11 Mile and Middlebelt Roads.

September registrations are being taken now by calling 474-7175.

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Asparagus Plumosus 8" hanging basket Reg. \$8.98 - Now \$6.98
Streptocarpus "Cape Primrose" 3" pot Reg. \$2.49 - Now \$1.98
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Saks Fifth Avenue

Introducing *Evan Picon*... and the look of the fall leg. Here now at Saks Fifth Avenue, his glorious hose collections. When, in a season of suits — of shorter skirts that focus attention on calves and ankles, now when clean sophistication is all... the sheer leg dominated! Here, the fleur-de-lis and dark-seamed hose, 14 each. The ribbed pattern, also 14. The Swiss dot, 15. All nude, 13. Control tops, 3.50 each. Sheer support, 15. In Hosiery Collections... where we are all the things you are.

Saks Fifth Avenue, Troy, Somerset Mall, Big Beaver at Coolidge, open Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10 AM to 9 PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 10 AM to 6 PM; Sundays, Noon to 5 PM.