

Pamper plants - it's cold outside

Why go to all the bother of bringing in your outdoor plants?

Because unlike the grasshopper, you're thinking ahead — and planning to save a little money in the bargain. A few hours with your plants this fall beats paying \$1.69 per geranium next spring.

With a few easy steps, you can have a fresh set of seedlings to plant from your plants stored this winter. Rather than going out every spring and buying fresh, you might just consider bringing in a few geraniums, wax begonias, and coleus. Simply dig them up and put them in pots. Cut them back a little, and let them winter over indoors.

Geraniums and begonias in a sunny window will bloom all winter long, and one smallish plant will give you from one to two dozen cuttings you can root into complete plants in the spring for next year's planting outdoors.

Lazy friends are better than a free florist. The geraniums that dot my backyard each year are the results of a raid on a friend's geranium patch six years ago.

MOST PLANTS are tropical in origin. Coleus come from Java, dracaenas from west Africa and Madagascar, phil-

ledendrons from Central America, and prayer plants from Brazil. They can live with temperatures in the high 30s, and let's face it — the humidity and sunlight outdoors even now are better than anything we have inside.

But because they are tropicals, they will not stand up to frost. Bring them indoors and soon. Clean their foliage with running water. In fact, at this point, it's not a bad idea to clean off the plants you have kept indoors at the same time.

If you think you have sinus trouble, take a look at that rubber plant you haven't washed since spring.

Plants are extremely conservative — sort of to the right of John Birch. They don't like to be moved. Any drastic change — such as bringing them from an environment where it is consistently 80 degrees, bright and muggy into one where it is hot, dark, and very dry — will prompt a shock reaction from the plant.

Be prepared to lose a few leaves in the process while they adapt to the Gobi Desert you call a living room.

Trim a little if necessary. It promotes growth within the plant. The lushness it has acquired outdoors dur-


ing the summer is likely to look bare and leggy by February.

CHECK FOR bugs. No plant is totally immune, although some are better able to fend for themselves than others. At the same time, check over your indoor plants too. Spidermites are small enough to walk through your screens on a summer's breeze. "Hungry" is an understatement for what they are prepared to do to your glorioxa.

If you have planted directly into the ground, try to eliminate even earthenworms before potting. These ubiquitous friends of the outdoor gardener just don't do well in a 6-inch clay pot.

If you have an insect problem, isolate the plants for a while once you get them indoors so the pests don't spread. There are many things you can do at this point from Q-tipping with rubbing

gardening



Rod Brown

alcohol to tossing out the plant. But the most effective execution is simply to spray.

Make an emergency greenhouse from a clear plastic cleaner's bag. Put the plant into the bag, spray, and twist the end. Leave it closed for a week to 10 days to give the spray time to work. Then punch a few holes in the bag to gradually acclimate the plant to standard room conditions.

A few days of this and you can remove the bag altogether — minus insect predators.

Remember: Read the label carefully and follow manufacturer's instructions to the letter. Sprays that kill insects are poison. About the first time young Ralph or little Tabby decides to eat the leaves from a plant you have just covered with Malathion, you are going to have to replace young Ralph or little Tabby.

The writer learned horticulture at his grandmother's knee, Michigan State University, and as a weekend gardener.

Celebrity auction at Gorman's

If you've got a yen to own something that once belonged to celebrities such as designer Bill Blass, New York politician Bella Abzug, or Sen. Ted Kennedy, make tracks to an auction to benefit the American Cancer Society this Friday.

"Convention 1980" is the theme of the gala evening from 7 p.m. to midnight, Oct. 12 at Gorman's Gallery of Furniture, 29145 Telegraph, Southfield. To celebrate the theme, Gorman's

man's showcase windows are designed to reflect the personalities of eight political luminaries. Tickets are \$12.50 per person available through the American Cancer Society.

Honorary chairman Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Indiana, will be assisting C.B. Charles, "The Stars' Auctioneer," in auctioning off 60 exciting and unusual items contributed by a showcase of celebrities. In the past, the event has raised more than \$95,000 for the cancer society.

Sen. Bayh will also present the proceeds of the evening to the society in honor of his late wife, Marvella, one of the many tireless volunteers in the fight against cancer.

Entertainment, roulette, gastronomical delights and libations will round out the evening. For further information, contact the society at 557-5353.

9 healthgrants to OU faculty

Nine grants from the National Institute of Health accounted for \$312,486 of the \$590,275 in gifts and grants accepted by the Oakland University Board of Trustees.

The grants are: \$67,360 to John B. Reddan, biology, for "Control of Cell Division in the Ocular Lens"; and \$203,903 additional for indirect costs of that research.

\$56,426 to Venkat N. Reddy, Institute of Biological Sciences, for a study of "Intraocular Fluid Dynamics."

\$32,192 to Reddy for research on "Proteins of Normal and Cataractous Lenses" and \$15,462 for indirect costs of that program.

\$61,018 to Arun K. Roy, biology, for research on "Hormonal Control of Alpha Globulins Synthesis in Liver" and \$23,258 for indirect costs of the research.

\$42,817 to Harold Zepelin, psychology, for research and indirect costs of a study of "Aging and the Quality of Human Sleep." Paul Tomboulis, chemistry, is a project director of a \$39,742 grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare to support a "Baccalaureate Program in Occupational Health."

Danny Thomas at fund-raiser

TV personality Danny Thomas will in Troy, Oct. 14, to help raise funds for the Thomas More Center, a school for preaching and prayer.

Thomas will be recognized for his many activities on behalf of St. Jude Hospital in Memphis. The benefit begins at 6:30 p.m. with cocktails and hors d'oeuvre, with dinner at 8 p.m. at the St. Marino Club, 1635 E. Big Beaver. Dancing and vocals also are included in the \$100-a-plate dinner. Call 843-6720 for further information.

The purpose of the dinner is to raise funds to build a school to train preachers to better spread God's message,

says Fr. Michael Champlin, director of the center.

"Many reasons have been given for the lack of enthusiasm and rejection of organized Christianity, but one fact continually emerges. The slate of preaching in our churches is at a very low ebb. People hunger for the word, but all too many who minister to them are men of good will but unable to share an exciting and powerful vision of God," says Fr. Champlin.

Champlin, a member of the Dominican order, plans to build the teaching center in northern Wisconsin.

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