

See what one little candle started

Recently I had the pleasure of meeting Nancy Morgan of Birmingham. She remembered how surprised she had been, about 10 years ago, when I commented in my column about her use of plumber's candles in brown paper bags with a couple of inches of sand as a base. She had placed them along the sidewalk in front of her house on Chestfield on Christmas Eve.

This idea which has a quickly become a holiday tradition now adds considerably to our Christmas spirit. It's used on Christmas Eve on black after block in residential areas. Nancy said she brought the idea from Grand Rapids.

Wouldn't the idea be elegant transposed to summer patio parties — or even in winter to dramatize the snow covered patio? It is very important to use the slow burning plumber's candles, and they will last for at least two occasions if not more. A call to a local hardware store revealed them priced at 39 cents.

MANY PLANT ENTHUSIASTS are enjoying a flowering amaryllis that was a holiday gift. When the flower is through with its show, cut off the flower stem and water sparingly. When the leaves become dry, move to your coldest non-freezing spot. In late spring, begin to water the flower pot while moving it outdoors and fertilize frequently. When a freeze is expected, move to



down to earth
Alice Burlingame

your storage area for dormancy and allow the leaves to dry. Bring out again when you wish to force it to flower in midwinter. Some people have good luck repeating this performance each year. Try it.

As you review the areas of your garden which are shady, think about annuals which can add spark and accent the area. Impatiens will do well where it is shady but light. By this I mean, you can

have shade from a tree most of the day, but light comes through on the plants for brief periods.

I have had luck with salvia in an area where branches of a tree were high. Be sure to remember that salvia varieties can be tall, medium and low growing. They give a delightful accent in August and September.

FOR PARTIAL SHADE you will like

"flowering tobacco" (nicotiana).

When watering your houseplants, save your ice cubes as their melting is slower and more effective than swamping the pot. The amount and frequency depends on the variety of houseplant, light and heat source.

I have had people complain about their cats chewing their plants. Try sprinkling pepper around the perimeter of the pot. This system will take care of an upright growing plant.

"Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let others spend it for you. And when you spend, spend it wisely so that you give it the most return for your expenditure."

— Carl Sandburg

Class teaches how to make oral history

Glenn Ruggles, educator, historian and writer, presents a new technique for preserving a family or community history in a 7:30 p.m. class Thursday, Jan. 28 in Farmington Community Center.

The class will help develop methods necessary for asking pertinent questions which will provide information for future generations. "Anyone can learn to conduct an oral interview with

ease," Ruggles said. Ruggles has co-produced several films dealing with folk history. He was a co-founder of the Michigan Oral History Council and associate professor at

Oakland Community College and has his master's degree in history from the University of Detroit.

Registration is in the center, 24705 Farmington Road.

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