

Pinch petunias to encourage buds Larger site chosen for season's finale

Do you recall the childhood song that begins "There Stands a Little Man 'Neath the Great Oak Tree"?

It always reminds me of a fascinating plant in my wildflower area—Jack-in-the-pulpit. It seems as though it grows several inches overnight. The plant can reach a height of three feet. Some of its relatives are the skunk cabbage—that endless harbinger of spring—sweet flag, green dragon and a tropical relative, the philodenron.

The leaves, one or two per plant, are broad and shaped like a pointed trefoil. The hooded pulp is formed by a part of the plant called a spathe. The ones in my garden are green with purple stripes, although some of them are solid green.

In the center of this pulp stands Jack, a candle-shaped spike. The flowers are clustered at the base of Jack and are either male or female. The amount of food stored in the flower during the winter determines the gender of the new plants.

The bright red berries that can be seen in late summer are borne on stiff succulent stalks. They

are well-loved by the birds. Isn't nature wonderful?

Now that petunias have been planted for summer color, I recommend that you pinch all the flowers to stimulate branching and branching. If the temperatures were already above 70 degrees when the plants were put in the ground, they should be pinched often. Pinching is the removal of young shoots, which will encourage the development of buds.

Pinch again in early summer, cutting back each stem 3-4 inches above the soil line. In about two weeks, flowers will again be plentiful. As temperatures become cooler later in the summer, cut back the older stems to force more branching and flowering.

After pinching, the beds should be fertilized. Petunias like to be well watered by applying the water beneath the blooms. After pinching the buds, they tend to dry up for several days.

Two small pamphlets, "Beautify Your Community With Flowers," and "How to Get Started... Tips for Starting a Community Flower Center," offered by BPI, a growers' organization, Box 286,

down to earth

Marty Figley

Okemos, 48864, can be obtained for any organization with a flower growing goal in mind to beautify an area of the city.

A self-addressed stamped envelope is requested. This may be a good project for garden clubs, scouts or Senior clubs. BPI stands for Bedding Plant Industry.

The final concert of the Chamberworks' debut season will be held at the Central Woodward Christian Church, Adams at Big Beaver, Troy at 8 p.m. Friday.

This marks a departure in location. The group's other five concerts were held at the Bellan Art Center of Troy. All were sold out well in advance. More room will be available for this concert, which is titled "Voices and Instruments in Concert."

Thomas Kuras, harpsichord, is artistic director. Other members are

preview

Stephanie Preucil and Marla Smith, violins, and Paul Willington, cello. They will be joined by guest vocalists and instrumentalists performing works by J.C. Bach and G.F. Handel.

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