

Creative Living



Monday, September 4, 1989 O&E

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organizing Dorothy Lehmkuhl

Q: We moved recently and I had such high hopes of getting our new home organized quickly and going back to work, but it hasn't worked that way. Our children have been sick constantly and I just can't seem to "get it all together." Do you have tips on how I can get organized soon?

A: Yes I do, but they won't be the ones you are expecting. A long-distance move can cause a great deal of family stress.

In 1957, Drs. T.H. Holmes and R.H. Rahe devised the Social Readjustment Rating Scale. They assigned value units to major life event changes. Death of a spouse rated 100; major business readjustment 39; taking out a mortgage 31; wife beginning or ceasing work 25; moving 25, etc. (The complete study can be found at the library.)

Almost 80 percent of those people who accumulate 300 or more life change units within a past year get sick in the near future. With 150-299 units, approximately 50 percent get sick and less than 150 units produced sickness in approximately 30 percent.

I REALIZE it is tough to live amid chaos and that you are anxious to re-establish your own career, but those things may have to be put on the back burner temporarily. Right now it is more important to get your family settled into your new community.

You see, physical organization is only a result of mental order. Depression can be a natural by-product of moving stress, and it's difficult to remain organized when you are depressed.

It is incumbent upon you, therefore, to create a relaxed atmosphere where you are patiently able to laugh at unpacked boxes in the garage, pictures yet to be hung and walls you are dying to paint.

Instead, take time to invite your children's new friends to play at your house (they don't care what your house looks like — trust me), attend Welcome Wagon or Newcomers groups, go to church — do some social things that will help you and your family adapt.

When your own mental attitude becomes less stressful, it will automatically reflect to your family and they will rebound quickly. Once your family has adjusted, your own thinking will clear and you really will be able to "get it all together." There will be plenty of time then to get your house in order and go back to work. Good luck.

You can obtain a booklet of the first 52 Organizing columns by sending a long, self-addressed envelope with 65 cents postage and a \$5 check payable to Organizing Techniques, 6165 Worthington, Birmingham 48010.



condo queries Robert M. Melner

Q: I was driving my car in a condominium development recently and was struck by one of the maintenance vehicles apparently operated by the condo association. I was badly hurt, having broken my right arm and having suffered facial cuts and scars. I have not consulted with an attorney yet, but I understand that no-fault may preclude me from getting "pain and suffering." Am I restricted because of the fact that I was on private property in a condominium?

A: The fact that you were injured on a private drive of a condominium development does not preclude you from pursuing your legal rights for damages sustained in the auto accident against those people responsible for your injuries.

Normally, in an automobile accident you would have a claim against the driver of the vehicle who was negligent in hitting you, presumably, as well as the owner of the vehicle.

You may also have a claim depending on the facts and circumstances against the person who designed the road and/or maintained it, if that had anything to do with the cause of the accident.

Based on your question, it appears that the driver of the maintenance vehicle was responsible for the accident.

It also appears that you have sustained "serious injuries" that might take you beyond the threshold necessary to establish your rights to "pain and suffering" and other damages beyond the no-fault remedies.

You are best advised to seek legal counsel to explain all of your rights to you, to investigate the case and, if necessary, to prosecute the claim against all entities and/or people responsible.

Robert M. Melner is a Birmingham attorney specializing in condominiums, real estate and corporate law. You are invited to submit you topics that you would like to see discussed in this column, including questions about condominiums, by writing Robert M. Melner, 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 407, Birmingham 48010. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.

WeedBlock Company helps keep gardening easy

weeder's guide

Earl Aranson

Easy Gardener produces Weed-Block, a durable plastic landscape fabric designed for homeowner and professional weed control.

According to Grandy, the non-woven, polyethylene geotextile ("vispore") is easy to cut, will not unravel, and controls 95 percent of normal weed growth, including nearly all broadleaf weeds and most grasses.

"It lets 95 percent of the water through," he said, "conserving soil moisture, dramatically reducing the need for supplementary watering."

WeedBlock reduces day-night temperature fluctuations and maintains lower daytime soil temperatures even in extreme summer heat. Grandy said, resulting in healthier, less-stressed plants.

"WeedBlock has no weak spots to break or tear and will tolerate 500-percent elongation or stretch," he said.

Its strength and give make it especially useful under heavy mulches, such as stone or gravel, and in areas that get heavy traffic, he said.

ANOTHER WATER-SAVER is Easy Gardener's Cloud Cover, an anti-desiccant (anti-transpirant) that, when applied to plant leaves and stems, reduces water loss by up to 80 percent, depending on temperature, humidity and wind, Grandy said.

"Their primary purpose," Grandy said, "is to prevent damage and stress from water loss and associated problems due to heat, sun, wind, frost and severe cold."

"They are used to protect nursery transplants from shock for fast recovery, to reduce water loss in landscape plants, especially evergreens in winter and summer, and all garden and container-grown plants in hot, dry weather or in storage."

"They are especially helpful for

hanging baskets and potted plants, which tend to dry out fast, and for carrying plants better through your vacation absences."

Cloud Cover, a clear, non-sticky film, extends the indoor life of Christmas trees and wreaths. Organic, non-toxic and biodegradable, it prolongs the effectiveness of insecticides, fungicides and animal repellents; protects plants from salt spray, de-icing chemicals and air pollution; and helps protect certain plants from insect-borne fungal diseases.

Easy Gardener also produces Floating Gro-Cover, a clear fabric so light it can be put on top of growing plants; Tomato Gro-Bags, pale-green plastic covers that fit over tomato cages, protecting plants from cold and insects; and Super-Mulch, with thousands of tiny perforations that allow water to penetrate to roots in vegetable and flower gardens.

For more information, write: Easy Gardener, P.O. Box 21025, Waco, Texas 76799.

Earl Aranson is the garden writer for Associated Press.

'Mounting' public resistance to use of toxic chemicals, especially pesticides and herbicides, has caused a few farsighted manufacturers to develop alternative products.'

— Dick Grandy

Old West Side is house tour focus

A historical potpourri of architectural variances will make for an interesting old house tour sponsored by the Ann Arbor Old West Side Association.

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, the Old West Side Neighborhood provides tour goers with a pleasant Sunday afternoon in a setting once typical of the turn of the century Midwest.

This year's tour, noon to 6 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 17, will include six houses and one commercial property.

Tickets are \$3 for seniors; \$4 in advance and \$5 on the day of the tour. Advance tickets are available at a number of Ann Arbor businesses. Names are available by calling 665-0091 or 662-2187.

Oldest house on this year's tour is the classic Old West Side home of Dave and Denise Gilbertson, 537 Second, featuring a wraparound porch complete with swing and

flowering geraniums. It was built in 1893 by Frederick D. Radtke Jr., a carpenter who outlived three wives and stayed in the house until just a few years before his own death in 1968 at age 93.

NEWEST HOUSE ON THE tour is a 1931 Tudor with double-peaked roof, first lived in by German immigrants John and Bertha Buehler, and now owned by Dave Seaman and Helen Zyman, at 615 S. Seventh.

Built during the Depression, when those who could afford to build at all could get quality work and materials, the house includes many features that were state of the art for the time, including coved ceilings, stuccoed interior walls, laundry chutes (Zyman's favorite), and an ironing closet now used for splices.

A 1918 bungalow, now owned by Marilyn Williams and

Janice Ware at 111 W. Washington, began as family headquarters for the Prekett family, proprietors of the well-remembered Sugar Bowl restaurant.

Three brothers from Greece opened the restaurant in 1913. Originally, all three lived in the house, but it eventually it became the home of Charley Prekett and his bride. The new owners have decorated the house with pieces of art acquired over the years, most demonstrating their Southern origins, such as baskets of cotton, or their interests, especially relating to the women's movement in which they are active.

Tour headquarters are the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, at the corner of W. Jefferson and Fourth streets. Free shuttle bus service will be provided. Buses will make a continuous loop and will stop at each house to pick up passengers approximately every 15 minutes.

Homearama is under way

Homearama, the annual public showing of new idea houses built especially for public display by members of the non-profit Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan, is currently under way with expanded viewing hours.

In the Hills of Oakland subdivision, on Adams Road just north of Dutton north of Rochester, Homearama will be open 3-11 p.m.

Monday through Friday, and noon to 11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Admission is \$5 per person. Discount coupons, good for Monday through Friday only, are available at Detroit Edison and First Federal of Michigan. They are also available at AAA metro Detroit offices.

The event runs through Sunday, Sept. 24. Ample free parking is available.

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