

Many states beautify their highways

As we drove through Pennsylvania and New York recently, I remembered the beautiful roses we had seen blooming along the roadsides in another season. I could just imagine the display they and the many rhododendrons would soon make. Then, driving southeast through New Jersey, forsythias were blooming profusely along the turnpike. The heathers also will make a wonderful scene when in bloom.

Many states have gotten on the bandwagon since Lady Bird Johnson began the highway beautification project several years ago. In our own Michigan, a drive along our highways and byways is a delight when flowering fruit trees — apples, peaches and cherries — are in bloom. And I always love to see the tiger lilies. I attended a symposium on pesticides in San Francisco last month. The California poppies were absolutely at their peak.

Many organizations are planting flowers and shrubs along America's highways and they are to be commended.

Now, back to that California trip. The symposium was a dialogue and exchange of ideas among representatives from Dow Lane, Monsanto and Ortho, and garden communicators from across the nation. A lawyer explained our liability as communicators and a representative from the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) clearly explained the whys and wherefores of labeling.



down to earth

Marty Figley

These chemicals companies are as concerned about the environment as we are, and are constantly trying to inform and educate the public about how to use their products. For the present, it is recommended that you purchase only the amount of chemicals you will need for a season and follow label instructions to the LETTER when using and disposing of them. These companies have 800 phone numbers if you have questions or comments. I will report in more detail at a later date. If you have any ideas on this subject, please direct them to me at the Birmingham Eclectic, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, 48069.

Our destination early in the year was coffee convention. I learned that the coffee bean, when growing in its native countries, generally 100 miles north and 100 miles south of the equator, resembles a cherry when on the tree. After the harvest the "fruit" is dried, then opened to reveal two coffee beans inside each one. Enjoy this beverage and think of the journey the beans have made to reach your table.

I just received a catalog from Shepard's Garden Seeds, 6118 Highway 9, Felton CA 95018 (\$1) which

was recommended when I was in that state. The catalog includes recipes as well as other information. The year Shepard's is offering selections of seeds in a special packet, i.e. The Herbal Tea Collection, The Nasturtium Collection, so the gardener can try several varieties. I'm going to order today.

HomStyLes Publishing and Marketing Inc. (which publishes several

magazines) is sponsoring a landscaping contest for amateurs. Perhaps this is your time to reap rewards for your hard efforts. The prizes are worth going for. The contest is open to all homeowners who have designed the landscaping themselves and have performed most of the work. Projects completed in '90 or '91 can be entered. Contest closes Nov. 15.

For rules, call 1-900-370-4000 (a \$2 call). To order by mail send a SASE with \$1 in postage to HomeStyLes '91, 8500 Normandale Lake Blvd., Suite 1200, Bloomington, MN 55437. Good luck, let me know if you win.

Marty Figley is a Birmingham-based Advanced Master Gardener



'Threepenny Opera'

Catherine Coscarelli (left) is Jenny Diver, Michael Guimet is Macheath and Pam Evans is Polly Peachum in the Hilberry Theatre production of Brecht and Weill's musical "The Threepenny Opera," in repertory through Saturday on the Wayne State University campus in Detroit. For ticket information, call 577-2972.

This program isn't an average dance recital

"This is not a dance recital!" said Rose Marie Gregor, director of the Birmingham Ballet and Jazz School. She was referring to the school's musical dance production to be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday at Groves High School Auditorium. Reserved seats are \$9 and general admission is \$6. Tickets are available at The Community House, 380 S. Bates Street in downtown Birmingham.

"The production is 'Under the Big Top,' a circus ballet set in the Victorian era. It will be witty, whimsical and gorgeous. Everyone will enjoy the performance," said Gregor. The Birmingham Ballet and Jazz

School has been a part of The Community House for 27 years. It is dedicated to the serious student who is willing to learn self-discipline. One hundred and fifty students from age 5 through adult will perform in this two-hour production, which is held biennially.

Joanne Danto, artist-in-residence, will open the performance with an eight-minute classical ballet concert. Instructor Gayla Gregor Morris will feature her electric jazz dancers. Beautiful costumes and the circus theme will be carried throughout.

For information, call 476-0876 or 478-8053.

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