

Plant associations select winners

The Perennial Plant Association has chosen *Leucanthemum 'Becky'*, a single white daisy with a bright yellow center disc, as the 2003 Perennial Plant of the Year.

"These flowers are very versatile in that they can be used in borders, containers, or in naturalized areas," said Steven Still, PPA executive director. They are also excellent for cutting.

The plant grows 2 to 3 feet tall and doesn't require staking. This robust, clump-forming winner stands up well to heat and humidity; in fact, it loves the sun. Moderately fertile, well-drained garden soil suits this plant that is hardy in zones 4-9.

It begins flowering in late June and if deadheaded, flowers into late August and September.

When necessary, this pretty daisy can be divided in spring or autumn.

The selection of *Leucanthemum 'Becky'* landmarks the 14th year of this program.

The Perennial Plant of the Year Program helps consumers select plants that perennial industry experts find to be outstanding and easily grown." Still said.

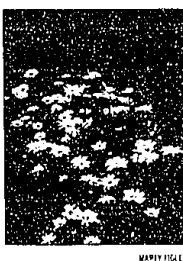
"The homeowner can have real confidence that the Perennial Plant of the Year will grow well in the garden."

Local garden centers and many mail-order perennial nurseries will have this plant for the 2003 season.

When you plan a garden with daisies, pair them with some of the following: a deep yellow daisy, a purple-blue Siberian iris, Lady's mantle, blue oat grass, or Asiatic hybrid lilies.

FROM AAS

All-America Selections also has some new plant varieties



The Perennial Plant Association has named *Leucanthemum 'Becky'* as Perennial Plant of the Year.

that may be of interest. There are so many, I'll highlight just a few.

The blooms of Gaillardia "Sundance Bicolor" are mahogany red and yellow. The growth habit suggests it would be perfect in a native garden.

It is an AAS bedding plant award winner, as is Dianthus Fl. "Corona Cherry Magic." The magic is in the unusual colors of the single flowers - cherry red, lavender, or a mosaic of these two colors, with stripes or flecks. It's great for patio containers or window boxes. Try it with dwarf conifers or tropical foliage plants.

Three AAS Flower Award winners are:

■ Agastache "Golden Jubilee" has golden foliage that attracts bees to lime-green on the lower leaves.

It is relatively pest-free, requires no pinching or pruning, and does well in full sun or partial shade.

Lavender-blue spikes are borne at the top of the plant that attract bees. The leaves have a strong mint aroma when lightly crushed; use them for flavoring tea.

■ Rudbeckia Hirta "Prairie Sun" has single daisy flowers of gold and primrose yellow. This is the first rudbeckia with this pattern and a lime-green central cone.

This is best grown as an annual that may winter over. The tall flowers are excellent

cut flowers with long, strong stems.

■ Petunia Fl. "Blue Wave" is a trailing annual capable of spreading its vigorous stems 3 to 4 feet in one season. The blue, trumpet-shaped blooms continue throughout the growing season.

A Mediterranean-type Melon Fl. "Angel" is a winner in the vegetable category. It ripens early and has excellent flavor.

The flesh is white, firm and sweet. Like all melons, "Angel" requires bees for pollination. As it matures, the color will change to creamy yellow, a signal that the melon is ready to harvest.

GOLD MEDALIST

The AAS Gold Medal Flower Award winner is an ornamental millet Fl. "Purple Majesty," a new-to-the-garden plant. This award is the most prestigious honor given to a plant.

This beauty grows from 3 to 5 feet tall when mature and isn't fussy about soil, as long as it's warm.

Another desirable trait is the spike that appears golden with pollen then changes to shiny purple when the seed matures. The spike, when immature, can be used for floral arrangements; the seed spike can be used as bird food or outdoor decorations.

If grown indoors, the leaves will be green and the plant may not be as tall. Direct sunlight induces purple leaves. Wait until the soil is warm and it's warm outdoors before setting this millet in a sunny garden spot.

For a list of sources for seeds and/or plants of 2003 All-America Selections winners, send your name and address to me at The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009. You can also access the AAS Web site: www.all-american-selections.org.

Marty Figley is an advanced master gardener based in Birmingham. You can leave her a message by dialing (334) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. Her fax number is (205) 644-1314.

Seminars, gardens featured at Ford Field Home & Garden Show

Discover the newest and best ways to make your home more beautiful, functional and comfortable at the Ford Field Home & Garden Show Feb. 20-23.

The event marks the first home and garden show at the new home of the Detroit Lions, but two full-time homes and hundreds of home and garden exhibits will take the place of football players and fans for a few days.

"Showgoers will see hundreds of top name, quality products and services for the family, home and yard," said Mike Wilbraham, show producer with Showspan, Inc.

"Visitors to the show will find everything under the sun and all under one roof. Top name, quality products and services for your family, home and yard will provide the inspiration homeowners need with spring just around the corner. Experts in the field will divulge secrets and various seminars will instruct."

Exhibits will cover the gamut

in home improvements and new homes. Take time out to stroll through the show's beautiful gardens and landscapes and enjoy water features and thousands of blooming annuals and perennials.

There will be seminars on building, remodeling, do-it-yourself projects and home decorating.

Experts will share tips on home renovations, maintenance and landscaping.

At the show, Carol Reed, The Router Lady, will demonstrate woodworking tools and skills; Glenn Haeg, newspaper columnist and America's Master Handyman, will cover "What's New and How To" in home improvement; Chris Angus Campbell and Robert Garlough will teach regional American cooking; Jeff Ball, as seen on NBC's "The Today Show," will explain how to get "Beautiful, Green and Easy Lawns" and Nancy Serling, garden columnist, will focus on potted plants and "What's New-Tools, Techniques and Fabulous Plants."

ShowSpan also produces the Michigan Home & Garden Show March 6-9 at the Pontiac Silverdome.

FORD FIELD HOME & GARDEN SHOW

When: Feb. 20-23

Where: Ford Field

Hours: 3-9:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 20; noon to 10 p.m., Friday, Feb. 21; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 22; and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23.

Admission: Adults, \$7; children (6-14), \$3; children five and under, free. Advance tickets available online. Weekday adult discount admission coupons are available at Speedway.

For more information, call (800) 328-6550 or

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ON DISPLAY

The following contractors and businesses are among the exhibitors with booths or displays at the Ford Field Home & Garden Show, which opens today at 3 p.m.

Lars David, Clarkston (residential decking)

American Discount Heating, Farmington Hills (heating and cooling)

J & E Installation, Farmington Hills (doors and windows)

Miles Bradley Building, Farmington Hills (decks and gazebos)

Affordable Dry Basement Co., Livonia (basement waterproofing and referral service)

Bath Fitter, Livonia (acrylic tubs and surrounds)

Blue Dot Services of Michigan, Livonia (heating, cooling and plumbing supplies)

Brink's Home Security, Livonia (burglar alarm systems)

Cabinet Clinic, Livonia (kitchen remodeling)

Renovated by Anderson, Livonia (windows)

Signature Awnings, Livonia (awnings)

Thermal Sash, Livonia (replacement windows, patios, steel and storm doors)

Rainbow Recreation of Michigan, Northville (play systems, swing sets and basketball hoops)

Elite Crete of Michigan, Orion Township (concrete restorations, architectural finishes)

Mark J. Baldwin, Plymouth (landscaping services)

Booms Stone Co., Redford (granite, marble and limestone countertops)

Liberty Total Comfort,

Redford (furnaces and air conditioners)

Replacement Window & Siding, Redford (windows, siding and doors)

Quality Window Sales, Rochester (windows and patio doors)

Heartland Sunrooms, Spas and More, Southfield (patio glass enclosures)

Premium Protection, Southfield (security systems)

The Closet Organization Co., Sylvan Lake (closets, home offices and storage)

Bathtub Liners of Michigan, Troy (liners and shower walls)

Everdry Waterproofing, Troy (basement waterproofing)

West Construction, Troy (residential construction)

Wilcox Brothers Irrigation, Troy (irrigation components)

Coy Construction, Walled Lake (construction services)

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King	\$597/set	King	\$697/set

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Full	\$447/set	Full	\$597/set
Queen	\$597/set	Queen	\$697/set
King	\$797/set	King	\$897/set

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TROY 32301 Stephenson Hwy. 32301 Stephenson Hwy. 1-800-668-MATS

ROCHESTER WATERFORD 2123 ROCHESTER RD. 1-800-579-MATS

ROYAL OAK 2222 Woodward 1-800-929-MATS

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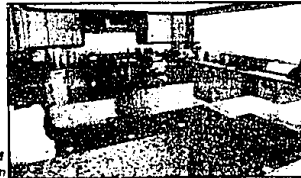
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