

Christmas poinsettias need TLC to thrive

The poinsettia, or *Euphorbia pulcherrima* — whether red, white or pink — has become synonymous with Christmas.

The actual poinsettia flowers are yellow, small and inconspicuous. The colorful display is provided by the leaf-like bracts. These plants do best with good light exposure and a temperature of about 18 deg. C. Temperatures below 15 deg. C., drafts and allowing the roots to dry out can cause yellowing and dropping of the bottom leaves.

After Christmas, your poinsettia may be carried over to the next year. Rest the plant in a cool location and let the soil dry out — but do not let the stems become so dry as to cause shrivelling of the bark.

During the rest period, cut back the plant partway. After the rest period, place the plant in a larger pot, water and place in good light in a

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temperature of 18 - 20 deg. C. It can be placed outside by planting the pot in your garden. If you have kept your poinsettia from last Christmas, remember to bring it inside before it is subjected to a frost.

Poinsettias are photoperiodic, which means they are sensitive to the number of hours of light or darkness they receive. Poinsettias are short day plants, meaning they require a shorter day length to induce flowering.

In the first week of October, your plant should be subjected to long nights (short days). Flower buds will be formed if the plant is in darkness

for more than 12 hours, so each day at 5 p.m. place the plant in complete darkness until 8 a.m., then place it where it will receive its usual amount of sunlight. Temperatures during the long nights should be between 62 and 67 deg. F.

It will take approximately 10 weeks until the leaflike bracts will begin to change color. At this time the plant can be exposed to normal day length.

During the light treatment, the poinsettia should be watered when the soil surface becomes dry. Allowing the plant to wilt can result in leaf drop. Keep a good level of humidity indoors to prevent the leaf edges from drying. As with most plants, you should watch carefully for insect and disease problems and avoid drafts and excessive heat.

Ruth Friendship is the Horticulture Specialist with the Rural Organizations and Services Branch.

FWIC Convention was 'unqualified success'

Now that our FWIC Convention is over, we can look back and mentally assess it. There is no doubt that it was an unqualified success. The tremendous enthusiasm of all the delegates at the convention also came through in the comments on the evaluation sheets.

A convention of the size of ours with a daily attendance of from 1,100 to 1,300 delegates took a great deal of organization and involved the participation and co-operation of hundreds of people.

So, to all those who in any way contributed to its success —

- the planning committee who did an excellent job;
- all those who prepared and participated in the programs;
- the office staff who worked hard and long;
- those who prepared and those who set up all the outstanding displays;
- those who "manned" the displays;

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- those who sold sales articles;
- those who sent articles for the gift sales table;
- those who sold gift sales articles;
- those who gave the men such an enjoyable time during the programs;
- the members who prepared such delicious meals and offered warm hospitality for the Board and the bus loads on Ontario Day;
- the volunteers who "stood in the wings" waiting to be called if necessary and when called came so willingly and cheerfully;
- those who attended the convention as delegates or otherwise who of-

fered hand of friendship and good will to others and who will share their experiences and information with W.I. members at home;

- and to all of you who contributed in *any* way — THANKS.

Many, especially first time delegates, mentioned that FWIC now means much more to them than it did formerly and that they are looking forward to the next convention. That is one of the most important highlights in my opinion.

Before I close, I want to thank Ontario members sincerely for the wholehearted support they have always given me and for the warm-hearted expressions of appreciation in the presentation at the banquet of the provincial life membership and the bouquet of gorgeous red roses. You have been most generous and kind.

Bernice B. Noblitt is past president of the FWIC.