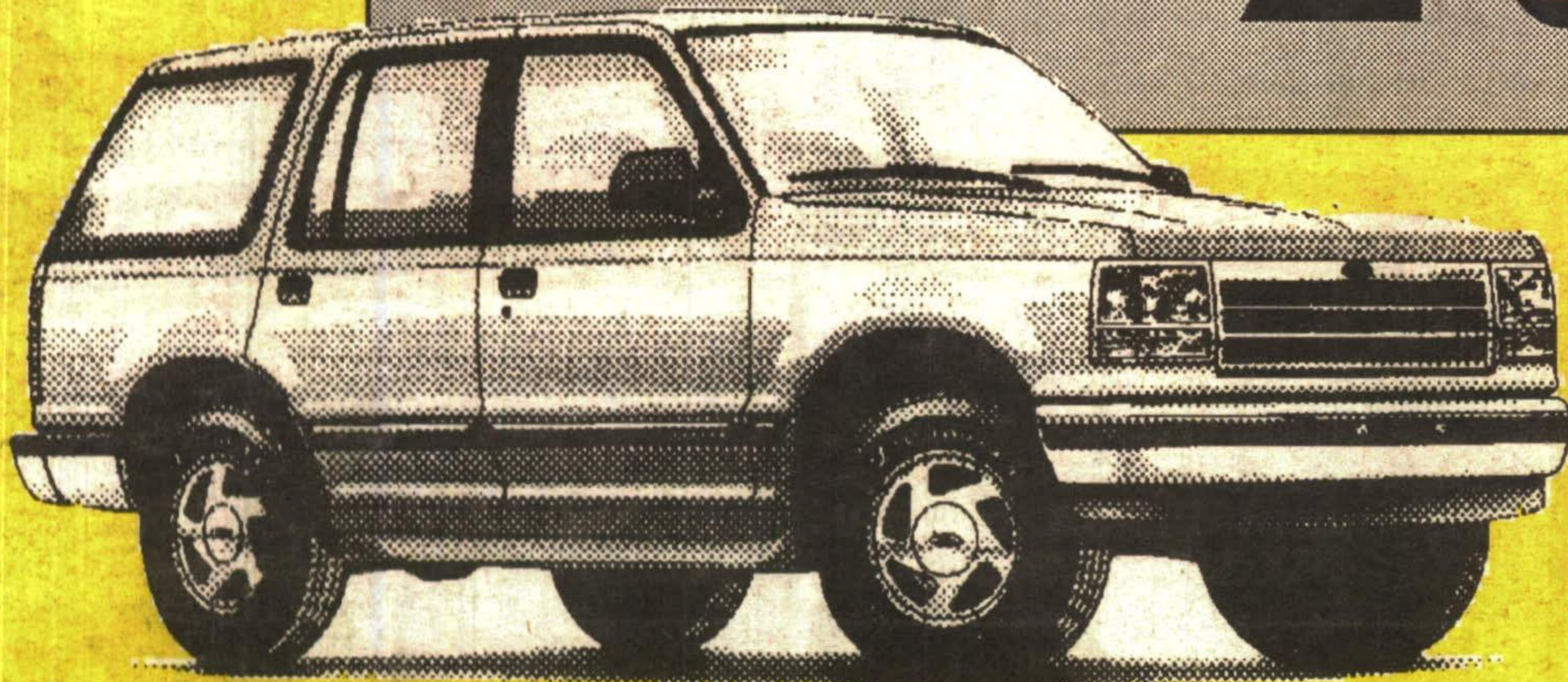


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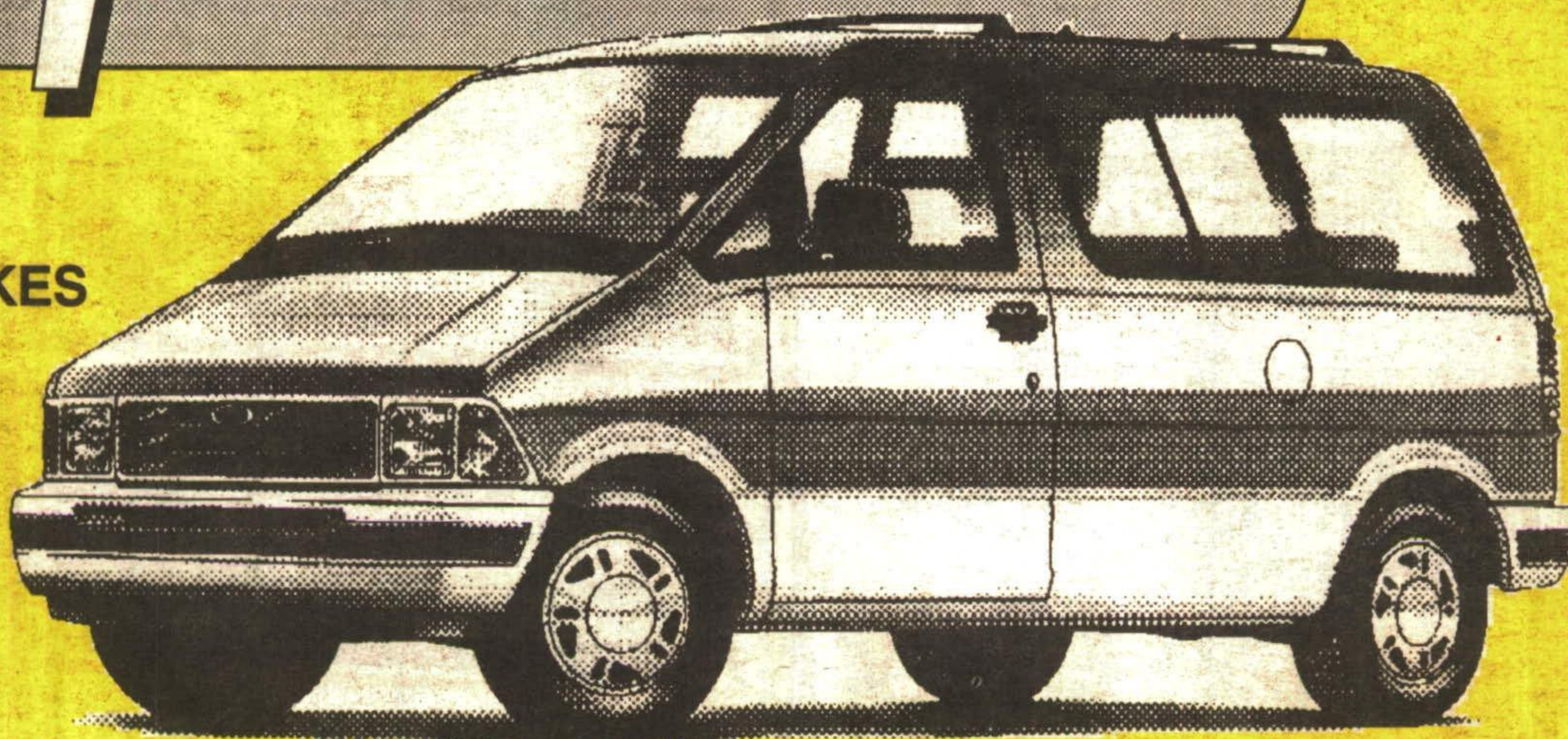


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WINTERIZING ROSES

Your prize winning hybrid teas, floribundas and grandiflora roses require special protection for the winter. The purpose of this is to insulate and protect the graft union and canes from the low cold winter temperatures and drying winds which constantly rob the plant of moisture. The most important part of the plant to protect is the base around the grafted portion.

The best time to winterize your roses is after several heavy frosts have defoliated the bushes. It can be a mistake to cover roses too early in the season. Field mice may move into the winter covering and damage the plants by eating the bark. The best solution to this is to delay winterizing the bushes until later in the season.

Before starting, remove any leaves that are still hanging onto the plant. Then apply a thick layer of mulch around the base of the plant. A mulch made of dry tree leaves works well. Then cover the plant in 1 - 1.2 - 2 feet of dry soil. Plastic, reusable rose collars makes the job quick and easy. It is a strip of perforated heavy plastic that snaps together into a open-ended cylinder. This is slipped over the plant and filled up with mulch and / or soil. It holds the material neatly around the plant yet permits drainage as well. If you store the soil or protective material in an area where it won't freeze, you can winterize your roses easily once the ground is slightly frozen.

Climbing roses can withstand most winters but they do much better the following season if they are taken down from their trellis and laid on the ground. Cover the entire plant with straws or leaves. Tree roses are another special situation, the area to be protected is at the top of the stem. They can be dug up and laid into a 2 foot trench for the winter. In spring it can be replanted in an upright position.

Each week Christine Cole of Tuitman's Garden Centre and Landscaping, Highway 25, 1 mile south of Acton, 853-2480, will be presenting helpful tips and information to assist you in creating your garden show-place!

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