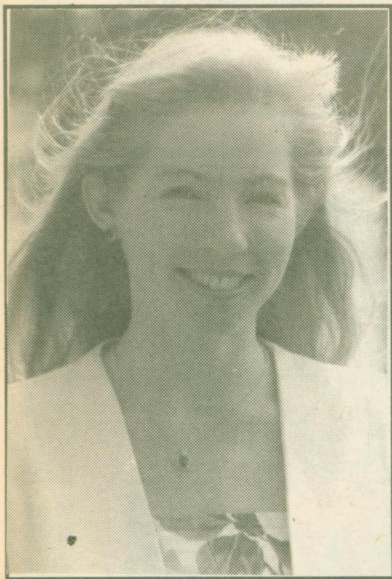


Garden Graces



bring interest to any size garden. They also range in color from dark green to blue to golden yellow shade. Juniper chinensis "blue alps" is a lovely blue green in color with a weeping form.

Pyracantha or firethorn is an evergreen shrub with contrasting bright red-orange berries that hang on over the winter until the birds get to them. This shrub can be espaliered or trained to climb up a wall as well. There are a few broad leaved evergreens but they must be planted in sheltered positions to keep them from looking ragged by the spring. Rhododendrons, hardy hollies and Mahonia or oregon grape all have shiny dark green leaves. If a male and female holly are planted together, bright red berries will furnish the plant for Christmas cuttings. Boxwood, arctic willow and lavender make lovely low evergreen hedges for herb gardens and borders.

A careful selection of deciduous shrubs can also provide year round interest. Viburnums have scented white flowers in the spring or summer, deep red to purple foliage in the fall and clusters of red berries that hang on over the winter. There are both yellow and red stemmed dogwood whose vividly colored stems stand out against the snow. The corkscrew hazel (Coryllus avellana contorta) has fantastically twisted stems that stand out after the leaves have fallen and yellow catkins early in the spring. Acer griseum or paperbark maple is a small tree with rich brown bark that peels off to reveal a cinnamon color beneath and Prunus serrula has a deep shining mahogany colored bark.

Planted in sheltered spots, early spring bulbs like species crocuses, snowdrops and winter aconites can begin blooming in late February and March. Planned carefully, the garden can be enjoyed in the winter for its patterns and silhouettes as much as in the summer for its flowers.

Grace Lockwood is a Georgetown resident.

Most of us think of gardening as a spring, summer and fall occupation and spend the winter dreaming of next year's season. However, a garden can be just as lovely in a more spare fashion in mid-winter if it has been designed well.

Planning a garden for year round interest is a true challenge in our climate but it can be done. It begins with the layout and structure of the garden and its permanent elements. These remain more or less the same year after year and form the bones of the garden. They become apparent in the winter when the garden is bare of flowering plants. Vertical elements include buildings, walls, fences, hedges, trees and perennial vines. The ground plan is formed by paths, border shapes, lawns, pools, patios and decks.

When designing your garden, several factors should be kept in mind. Structures such as gazebos, summer houses, fences etc. and plants must be in scale with the property size and the house. Large, heavy structures and plants will weigh down small property and make it look cluttered, whereas small plants in a large property will be lost. On a large property, plants should be planted in groups to give an overall mass effect for a greater visual impact. The style of the garden should also complement the house. Strong rectangular shapes, formal beds and pools, and architectural plants like yuccas, corkscrew hazels and clipped conifers look striking with a spare modern style home. A cottage style house on the other hand can be turned into a romantic setting with rose covered arbors, white picket fences and curving beds filled with traditional flowers. The owner must also decide how much time he/she has to spend in the garden. Hedges look wonderful in winter but need to be trimmed and fertilized regularly to keep them in top condition. Any shrub or tree that will outgrow its location will have to be pruned to keep it in bounds.

Winter flowering shrubs like the winter blooming jasmine are out of reach for us but there are several ways to bring color into the winter garden.

Conifers are an obvious choice. Ranging from small mounding plants for rock gardens and foundation planting to columnar junipers to towering pines, conifers will



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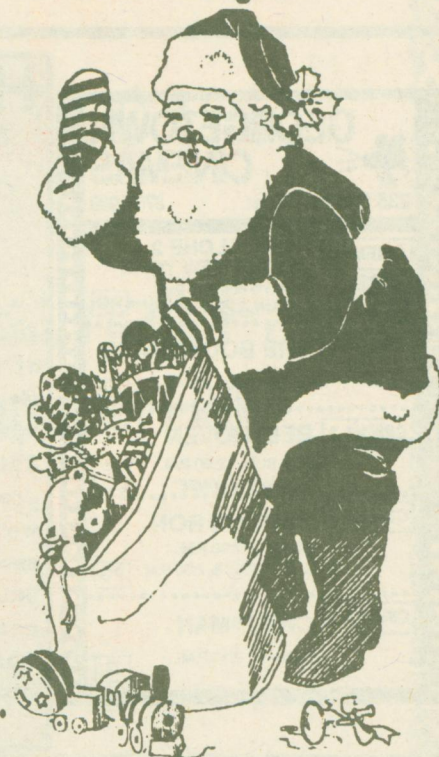
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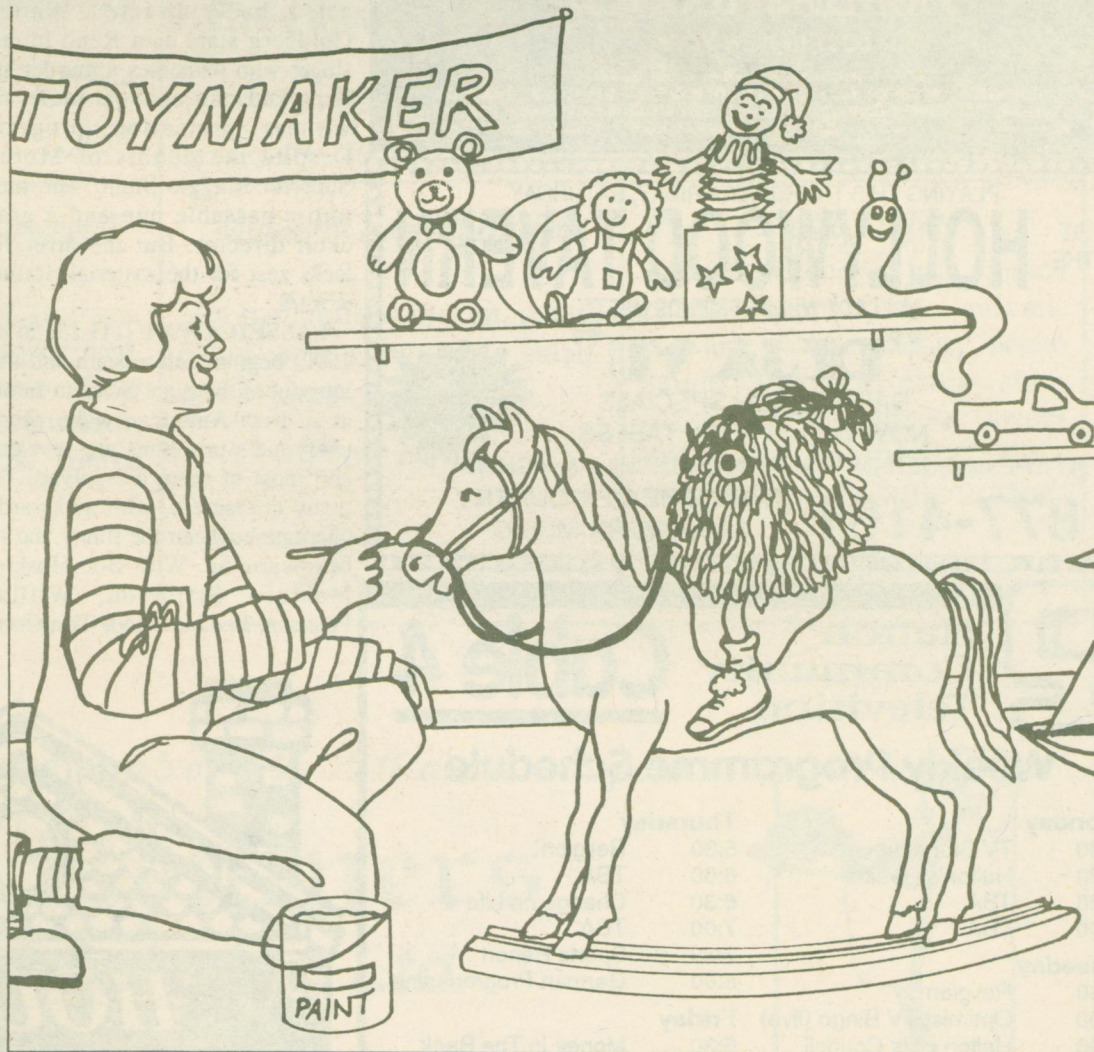
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