



Colorful and comfortable patio furniture like the sets above from White Rose Nurseries in Unionville will be big sellers. The furniture is

European in design and made in high impact plastic, making it rust resistant

## Color and durability big facts in selling new patio furniture

By NANCY HOSKIN  
The word in patio furniture this year is color and versatility. The brighter, the bolder, the softer, the delicate and the more useful the piece, the better it will sell. There are many outlets in Markham with a wide variety of pool and patio furniture, we've talked with two dealers: White Rose Nurseries and Sheridan Nursery. Ellen Winger, buyer for White Rose Nurseries, said that bright colors are in. Their proposed best selling colors for 1986 will be wedgewood blue, raspberry and sundog.

Pastels are also very popular, and according to Scott Baillie, outside retail supervisor at Sheridan Nurseries, the soft shades will sell enormously well again this summer after amazing success in 1985.

"Many people don't realize that patio furniture can be used in the winter too. It is very versatile. Set your set up in a solarium for example, or set up the chairs and table, storing the umbrella and chaise, in the basement using it as an entertainment table for games, said Mr. Baillie.

White Rose carries over a dozen styles of chairs with matching cushions, 25 styles of tables, along with chaise lounges and ottomans. They come in a wide variety of styles; some being stackable, others strapped and many with the option of purchasing cushions of all types.

Replacement cushions are available for both regular styled and redwood furniture. White Rose carries pads made from all types of substances, from foam to the more expensive terilene, adding a plush look to the furniture.

"Our basic concept is to give the

customer a large selection of patio furniture so they can mix and match, coming up with their own complete set to suit their needs. This way they're not tied to one particular set and can start a set gradually adding to it at any time," explained Mrs. Winger.

Sheridan Nursery carries four lines of top quality furniture, including Mallin and Swan. All sets or single pieces come with complete guarantees. Topping the list of popular pieces this season are the swivel rockers and the accessory pieces to complete an entire set, coffee and end tables and ottomans, Mr. Baillie explained.

"The hollofil cushion is very popular today, they're made to last longer and dry out faster when they get wet. You should treat the cushions on your set like you would any piece of furniture. Bring them in during foal weather and they'll last longer," said Mr. Baillie.

Sheridan carries an extensive line of accessories great for entertaining outdoors. Cutlery, plates, trays, glasses, serving bowls and even wine glasses, all out of acrylic are available. They last a long time and can be thrown in the dishwasher. Because they're not made of glass they're safe around the pool area, without the threat of breaking.

White Rose stocks accessories for their sets including Lazy Susans, placemats, table cloths and tea wagons. A popular selling item that can accompany a patio set or can be used in a different area of a yard are the old fashion park benches made from wrought iron with hardwood slats.

Both Sheridan and White Rose carry resin (high impact plastic) furniture. European styled, the pieces are non-rusting.

## It's time for a spring cleaning

By NANCY HOSKIN

Few people like doing it, but most of us like the results enough to justify one day of real spring cleaning — for the tangible reward of a clean home and the intangible feeling of accomplishment.

"You have to plan carefully after you've put aside time for spring cleaning," according to Danielle Volpe, partner in the Markham Molly Maid franchise. "The biggest mistake people make is that they try to do too much at one time. If you haven't time to tackle it in a day or two, fragment a week and go room by room.

Co-operation of the family is very important, suggests Barbara McNulty, Danielle's partner.

"Most homes are so large in this area that many women can't take them on by themselves, especially if they too are out working all day. The home belongs to the entire family and everyone can pitch in to help," Mrs. McNulty said.

You and a friend may want to team up to make the job go quickly and help the other out with each perspective home.

Here are several tips we compiled on how to get the best results in the least time.

1. Clean out clutter. Toss out old newspapers and magazines. If you haven't used something in three years throw it out. Give away clothes you haven't worn in years, or you can set these items aside for a summer garage sale. Reorganize closets, clean shelves, floors and cupboards.

2. To remove cobwebs, put a damp terrycloth washcloth over a broom, brushing out ceilings and corners.

3. Take down curtains and put them in the dryer with a damp hand towel, which will pick up dust, for five minutes on an air-fluff cycle. Remove immediately or they will wrinkle. Do the same with small area rugs. Fluff dry bedding — blankets, mattress pads, pillows — without the towel.

4. Before you hang up the curtains, clean the walls and woodwork with a damp cloth or feather duster or if you're really motivated wash them down.

5. To clean vertical blinds, put on a white cotton glove and run your fingers along the slats.

6. Wash windows, glass and light fixtures with cotton rags and a solution of one tablespoon rubbing alcohol to three parts water.

7. Vacuum couches and upholstered chairs.

8. Clean and polish wood furniture. Pull out drawers and vacuum or dust the casings.

9. Move furniture to center of the room, then, using the crevice tool of a vacuum clean edges of carpet and baseboards, then vacuum. For hardwood floors dust-mop with Endust before vacuuming. Wash no-wax floors with a mix of one tablespoon white vinegar to a gallon of water.

## Time now for repotting

By ELAINE GORDON

Generally, cacti/succulents don't require larger living quarters on a yearly basis like many other houseplants because they grow slowly and should be kept relatively potbound.

But, March through May are excellent months for moving on and to ascertain if upgrading one size is essential, the plant has to be carefully lifted and examined.

I wear old over mitts for protection when handling prickly cacti (as well as when cutting roses in the garden) and insert a chopstick or unsharpened pencil in the drainage holes to help release a reluctant soil ball. If the roots are in a pot shaped mass, a new residence is in order.

If roots don't fill the pot, clean the original container and place a layer of fresh cactus/succulent

soil in the bottom. Good drainage is essential. Carefully brush away worn-out soil around the roots with the trusty chopstick and return the plant at the level it was previously.

Trickle fresh mixture down the sides with a teaspoon and gently tamp it, adding more as necessary. I like to lightly dampen the new soil and wait about one week before watering. A plant in fresh soil doesn't require fertilizing for a few months.

I prefer keeping cacti/succulents in the old faithfuls — unglazed, clay pots, for several reasons. When a plant becomes top heavy (like a Jade Plant, for

example) it is inclined to tip over a plastic pot, but one made of clay has bottom weight for stability.

The early color blends well in a relaxed setting and this simplicity doesn't detract from a plant's natural beauty. Most importantly, clay doesn't retain moisture like plastic pots do because water evaporates through the porous sides. This benefits these plants because overwatering is probably their biggest enemy.

So, put the kettle on or perk a pot of coffee, insert a favorite tape in the tape deck, grab newspapers for dirt catching, paper towels in case the phone rings and start "operating."



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