



ON FREEP.COM

BLOG: Visit O Street Free Press writer Oneita Jackson's new blog offers an original, and sometimes radical, view of Detroit from a non-native who has embraced the city. Join

the conversation with her at www.freep.com

RUTH TO THE RESCUE

Find freebies on Web site

If you want a free NFL jersey, a free bottle of namebrand shampoo, or some other freebie, the folks at Frugal Living find it on the Internet at http:// **nojunkfree.com/**. It's fun to scroll through the wide variety of free items. - RUTH SPENCER, LOCAL 4 NEWS



TECH TIP Device puts photographers in the picture

With Quik Pod, you can take a picture and be in it, too. The handheld extendable tripod has a self-positioning mirror so you can easily frame your shots. Weighing less than 3.5 ounces, the pocketsize Quik Pod comes with a carrying bag, a hiking clip, a pocket clip and a wrist strip. It costs about \$25. www.quikpod.com

- DEBORAH PORTERFIELD, GANNETT NEWS SERVICE

SATURDAY JUMP START

OVERHEARD

"The American people have lost faith in the president's conduct of this war."

U.S. HOUSE SPEAKER NANCY PELOSI, D-Calif., after a war-funding vote that set a date to cease combat operations. STORY, 7A

IN TODAY'S FREE PRESS

A divided House passes troop withdrawal plan

NATION & WORLD, 7A

Students take faith, muscle to **New Orleans**

SPIRITUAL LIFE, 6C

Small touches have big impact at DIA theater

BUSINESS, 8A

Getting it straight

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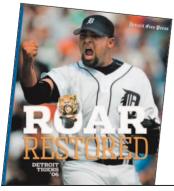
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NEWS2USE

Plot your plantings and expect to get dirty

If you're intimidated by gardening, it's probably because you don't know where to start. Believe me, it's deeper than going to a flower market, saying, "Ooh, that's pretty," and digging a hole in the ground or putting some dirt in a pot.

John Maybee, director of floral operations for Westborn Flower Market, understands how beginners can be overwhelmed, but he said that, when the threat of frost is gone, go ahead and get your

"I think it can be intimidating if you're looking at a garden and it's a garden that someone else has planted ... or something that's been overgrown," said Maybee, who has worked in the floral industry for 33 years.

Patio farming

If you lack space and time, try outdoor pots. "It's for people who want to try to get a feel for gardening," Maybee said. Patio farming uses "everything from herbs to designer vegetables. ... It makes a really beautiful combination on their patio, and a lot of things they grow can be used in cooking.'

Use big containers to promote the best root sys-

They don't have to weigh a ton. He said there are "wonderful lightweight polyresin materials that look like heavy terracotta or stone. It's great for people in apartments to use on their patios and decks.

Make sure your space offers the plants the sun or shade they need to thrive.

"People go out and buy these wonderful plants that they just think are beautiful, and they say, 'I bought everything for sun, and my garden is all in the shade,' "Maybee said.

Labels will tell you whether the plant will do well in the sun or shade.

In a small space, go for colorful, Maybee said. "Big splashes of color, bold color blocks are very popular."



News2Use is by Erin L. Hill, Free Press copy editor and staff idea for news you can use? E-mail it to elhill@free press.com or call 313-223-4666.

The return of coleus

"One of the plants that's really making a comeback from the Victorian era is the coleus plant," Maybee said. "It has an amazing variety that offers incredible colors from purple to lime green to oranges and yellows. They look very well in patio pots."

To get started with coleus, decide on a color theme. For example, lavenders, blues and purples are in the same color family and look great grouped.

Expect to pay about \$2.99 for smaller Coleus plants and up to \$15 for the larger ones. They're available by around the end of April.

What do you need?

The musts: the time to commit to your plant or garden, pots and space, proper fertilizer or good soil and of course, a water hose if you're planting out-

David Bargerstock, district manager for Davey Tree and Lawn Care in Mt. Clemens, recommends a hand trowel to dig small holes, Preen to prevent weeds (a gardener's best friend, he says), mulch to go over soil to conserve its moisture and Miracle-Gro fertilizer for annuals and vegetables.

For learning more, he said, "Tree & Shrub Gardening for Michigan" by Tim Wood and Alison Beck is a good book, "probably my first pick for the nov-



TOP: Blazin Rose iresine is a companion for Oompah coleus. NEXT: Tropicanna canna and Rustic Orange coleus provide hot colors. **BOTTOM:** Variety keeps the coleus popular with gardeners.

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