



Among Amy Neugebauer's hardy discoveries, l to r, potted zinnias, myrtle bush, 'Bob Hope' camellia and neighbor Marilyn Bullen with a rose bush given to her by retired Chronicle garden editor Kathy Huber when Kathy spoke to the Lakewood Garden Club

CUTTINGS FROM THE GARDEN FOR INDOOR ENJOYMENT

By Amy Neugebauer CFD, TMF

People love talking about their gardens and rightfully so. Every garden is a labor of love. A love of nature, a love of beauty and a love for the world we live in. No wonder people with whom I spoke emphasize using organic products for insect repellants, fertilizing, etc.

Growing up in Southern Indiana, I was accustomed to a yard full of daffodils, iris, and roses, even lilies of the valley. Lilacs grew wild on the side of the road. My mother and aunts prided themselves on always having cut flower arrangements in the house. My paternal aunts provided flowers for the church every Sunday.

Moving to The Woodlands in 2004 was a challenge. Long months of intensive heat "killed off" most flowers I planted. I grew tired of covering my special plants during winter freezes. A diagnosis of skin cancer (treatable) has kept me out of the sun.

So I have learned what local gardeners know. Shade is your friend. Plants that will survive this heat include hibiscus, camellias, roses, and marigolds to name a few. Our neighbor Nancy Wells points out, "It is ok to move a



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plant to another location in your garden." Lucy Harrell says perennials need to be divided every 2-3 years, in the fall or early spring. Marilyn Bullen also says you can't expect a plant to keep blooming if you don't "deadhead it".

Mulch is important. Raking leaves and pine needles into flowerbeds is an organic way to protect the soil and your plants.

Both Marilyn and Nancy do a lot of gardening using pots. Consistent watering is a must. They both suggested a sprinkler system that provides water for each pot to ease the watering process.

Both succulents and herbs grow easily in a garden. Both are trending right now, so incorporate these in your indoor arrangements. Geraniums, dianthus, marigolds, roses, lilies, hyacinths and tulips all work well for cut arrangements.

Marilyn speaks highly of her shrimp plant's delicate blooms. She has two types, green blooms and coral blooms that work well for indoor arrangements.

Finally have fun with greens!! The truly durable aspidistra and variegated pittosporum are super to use for indoor arrangements. Ferns also work well. And let's not forget the truly hardy asparagus fern. Wear gloves for this one, but it drapes down a vase beautifully.

Create a tablescape. Try arrangements in groupings. Most importantly, have fun!!