

Weed Patch
Slow Life
In Some
Truly Dry
Times

BY LINDA WUEBBEN
P&D Correspondent

Compared to our cornfields, my garden looks pretty lush. It's much easier to water my small area and the hoses were pumping every week either on the garden vegetables or several rows of sweet corn over the summer — sometimes



Linda
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every day. Such is life in a dry year. Even watering doesn't relieve the stress of the heat, those long, blistering hot days in the bright sunlight. Despite the dry, hot summer

days, we have been eating tomatoes from those early-bird tomato plants I bought back in March. I have canned pickles and the carrots look promising. There are plenty of onions to use for fresh and in pickle recipes. We did enjoy some sweet corn although it didn't seem quite as sweet as other years and I have picked egg-plant and cabbage to enjoy.

I have discovered gladiolas must not like wet feet. The last two years were disappointing. I didn't have many glads covering my counters. Not so this year. I have three vases all around the house and love the splash of color. My Four-O-Clocks are withering because they are the border of the west edge of the garden and the water doesn't quite reach them.

The celery plants I decided to try again have hardly grown, but I have a sweet potato plant which is threatening to take over the cabbage and egg-plants. I have never planted one or seen one grow in a garden so this is an experience. I am told digging them is another experience. We'll see.

If I don't hit the garden before 9 a.m., there's a good chance I won't be working out there. Bob really is the caretaker and it has given him something to do this summer when there wasn't alfalfa to windrow or bale or much else to do.

We are in the middle of an endless summer chore — silage cutting. After the first week, I realized why silage cutting used to take so long years ago. The years were dry ones, too. The first week we had to replace three tires and I'm sure it's because of the heat and dry ground. The equipment tries to move across the field picking up the short, rubbery stalks and the volume is not what it has been in recent years. Last year, we cut 20 acres to make a pile for the livestock we had and this summer we cut 100 acres.

There is really no reason to leave the corn crop in the field — there won't be a crop to harvest. It's amazing how the tide can turn and how fast. I think our rain shut off last August so we have had one year of drought. I wonder if there will be another. I just checked www.zavadii.org, our official weather site for the Crofton area, and since Jan. 1, we have had about 10 inches of precipitation which is about 10 inches short of what we usually average.

So making the noon day meals for the neighbors was bittersweet this year. When I took over the cooking job from Bob's mom, there were three generations around the table — the older neighbor men, Bob and then their children and ours. This summer I enjoyed the first fourth-generation farmer and even though he is only six years old, he already knew the drill and when the silage cutter broke down, he was right there watching the repair job. No greater training than that.

As I write this, it's early August. And as I look out my living room window, all I see are dried stubs of corn stalks. Bob thinks it looks better than the sad, dried corn stalks that barely grew to five feet if that. I don't. I think it looks like winter is just around the bend. Maybe it is. I heard locusts singing on June 4 and 90 days later will be Sept. 4. But everything seems to earlier this year.

So, are you ready for winter?? Wonder if my cardinals are!



LEFT: Connie Zimmerman of Yankton received 2nd Place in her Best of Show Design entry in the Flower/Vegetable Show sponsored by Yankton Town & Country Garden Club. RIGHT: Zimmerman's single hydrangea Specimen category entry received 2nd Place in the Horticulture Division among tables of fresh flowers, fruits, and vegetables.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Flower/Vegetable Show Brings Out The Best

For the Press & Dakotan

"I had half my entries finished at 6 a.m. today," said Connie Zimmerman of Yankton, beating by several hours the noon entry deadline for the Flower / Vegetable Show held at the Yankton Community Library in late July.

Open to the public, the show was sponsored and awarded by the Yankton Town & Country Garden Club. Club members also entered plants.

"I was frantically running around," Zimmerman said. "My husband thinks I take on

too much at the last minute. With the drought, I wanted to help out the entries."

As a boost to all procrastinators, Zimmerman had four of her seven entries selected for consideration in Best of Show and two second place awards this year.

"Being in the show is a lot of work but rewarding," Zimmerman said. "I've loved flowers all my life. I got it from my mom and grandpa, her dad. Our kids are gardeners. Gardening is fun to see the results."

As she prepared for the show, she thought about the design categories, re-

sources around the house, flowers in bloom now, and how to make her entry unique. She didn't plan designs ahead.

"It just comes to me," she admitted. It doesn't work out for winners every time.

"I forgot to leave leaves on my purple rose specimen," she said. According to rules, that resulted in a lower ribbon.

Nonetheless, Zimmerman has been a member of the club for eight years and she participated in the show every year. "I do get excited for the show."

"Our club co-sponsors the Mighty Mo and Art in Bloom with Yankton Area Arts, maintains the flowerbeds at the Territorial Capitol Building at Riverside Park, and have an annual plant sale each April. We see gardens and nurseries for fun.

"You don't have to raise ribbon-winning flowers to be a member; just be interested in gardening and willing to help out with the projects."

For more information on the Yankton Town & Country Garden Club, contact club president Betts Pulkrabek at 605-463-2206.

Dorm Life Expands, Though The Rooms Remain Small

BY DEBBIE ARRINGTON
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SACRAMENTO, Calif. — It may be small (and shared). But for at least one academic year, for thousands of college students, it's home.

Over generations, the dorm room hasn't gotten bigger. But the amount of must-have stuff — including technology — that needs to squeeze into that space has morphed into a much longer list.

"All our rooms now have Wi-Fi access and satellite TV packages," said Peggy Luers, coordinator for housing administration at California State University, Sacramento. "That was not an option when I was in school."

Luers, who has been in charge of Sacramento State's dorms for 22 years, expects 1,600 students to start moving in on Aug. 24, including about 1,000 freshmen.

"Students need to be aware that the space they're moving into is probably smaller than they're used to — and they're sharing," Luers said. "Don't bring everything all at once. You don't want a crowded room. You need a place to study."

In Sacramento State's residence halls, the average room size is 11 by 15 feet; that's only 165 square feet. Including a full meal plan, housing costs each student \$9,750 to \$10,230 for the academic year.

The rooms come furnished with extra-long twin beds, desks and chairs. There are closets and a little drawer space.

The challenge is to make that spartan room feel like home.

"We want them to be comfortable. They have a place to bring out their personality, but they also should use some common sense," Luers said.

And follow the rules. Each college has its own variations of dorm do's and don'ts with some constants. No nails in the walls. No painting. No pets (except maybe fish).

But that leaves plenty of decorating options.

Major companies have taken notice, fulfilling dorm needs as part of their teen marketing. According to retailers, the average incoming college freshman will spend more than \$900 this year to outfit his or her dorm room.

For example, Bed, Bath & Beyond partnered with Sacramento State to create sample dorm rooms for prospective students and their parents to tour. Target carries XL twin bedding and Room Essentials foldable furniture. Tuesday Morning made dorm living key to its back-to-school push.

Catering to this youth market, Pottery Barn recently opened its first West Coast PBteen store in Westfield Galleria at Roseville, Calif. The store also offers the PBdorm line.



RANDY PENCH/SACRAMENTO BEE/MCT

Late summer brings a scramble for college-bound parents and their soon-to-be-freshmen as they rush to put together essentials for a first dorm room or other first home away from home.

"The PBdorm line is a little more sophisticated," explained Nancy Guettier, vice president of visual merchandizing for Pottery Barn Kids and PBteen. "The colors are more muted; a lot of plum and gray. (The brand) offers a smart, savvy solution to college life."

At the new PBteen store, soon-to-be college students can literally see themselves in dorm room settings. A digital design center allows them to put together their own combinations and share them with friends on video screens.

Dorm life means laundry. (PBteen offers cloth laundry bags with instructions printed on the outside.)

Said Luers, "My advice to parents: Teach your teens how to do laundry before they arrive in the dorms."

Because linens may look alike, distinctive patterns or colors can help roommates tell items apart. PBteen also offers a monogram service for its linens.

Bedding and towels start the list of must-have dorm items. Pillows (especially an oversized back-rest variety) are a plus.

"Your bed is not only a bed, but also your couch and study spot," Luers said.

Most dorm rooms come in basic off-white. Area rugs are another way to add a splash of color and personalize its small space.

For friends who stop by, more seating is appreciated. That's where beanbags and collapsible chairs come in.

"The Hang-A-Round chair, for example, can be folded up and put in the closet or under the bed," Guettier said. "And it comes in lots of fun fabrics such as 'Furlicious,' a sheepskin-look fake fur.

Lighting is important, particularly for study time. Consider task lights for desks or clip-on fixtures for reading in bed.

To keep clutter under control, maximize the dorm room's small space with organizers, another product area that's expanded greatly in recent years.

"Organization is key," Luers said. "Use that space, including under the bed and in the closet."

Said Guettier, "You're challenged by space. When you want to study, it's better to clear the clutter. You can put everything in its place. These products are both stylish and functional."

On the walls, poster putty and removable adhesive allow students to put up decorations and practical bulletin boards without messing up the paint. For example, PBteen's Style Tiles allow for mix and match of chalk, dry erase and cork boards to fit any wall.

A well-equipped dorm room needs a mini-fridge, microwave and television, but not two. That's another area where technology comes in.

Said Luers, "Students have access to so much more information now. They can go on the Internet and communicate with their roommates before they arrive.

"In years past, you didn't know anything about your roommate until you got here," she added. "Now, you can coordinate colors if you want

to. You avoid duplication. That means less stuff that Mom and Dad will have to lug back home with them."

DORM ROOM 101

- Read the rules. Every college has its own handbook for student residents. Get a copy (most schools have it online) before you buy.
- Start with the bed. Most dorms provide extra-long twins. That means you'll need XL twin sheets (preferably two sets — they'll last longer). Other standard twin bedding (such as blankets, quilts and duvets) will fit the XL beds. You're not the first one to use that mattress, said Ross Manning, senior marketing officer of Tuesday Morning. Get a good mattress pad.
- That bed will get double duty as a couch. Get pillows that can be used as backrests. An oversized body pillow is a good option.
- When shopping for linens, get two sets of towels. Label or monogram linens to avoid roommate confusion later.
- Make the most of your space, Manning said. That includes under the bed. It's perfect for storage. At California State University, Sacramento, the height of beds can be adjusted, allowing for bigger items under those XL twins.
- Organize from the beginning, said Nancy Guettier, vice president of visual merchandizing for Pottery Barn Kids and PBteen. By giving everything its own place, you get more space.
- Make room for school supplies and a place to study with a good task light. After all, that's why you're here.
- Think vertically. Claim the space on the walls. Use hanging storage in the closet. Get stuff off the floor and the room will seem larger.
- You'll need a good power strip. Outlets are limited. Your gadgets will need a charging dock, too.
- Use gel stick-ups for hanging items on walls. Poster putty or sticky hooks are other no-nails options.
- The item most students forget when they move into the dorms? Coat hangers. Other must-have basics: Laundry basket, detergent,

shower caddy and shower shoes. • Bring something that reminds you of home, such as a family photo.

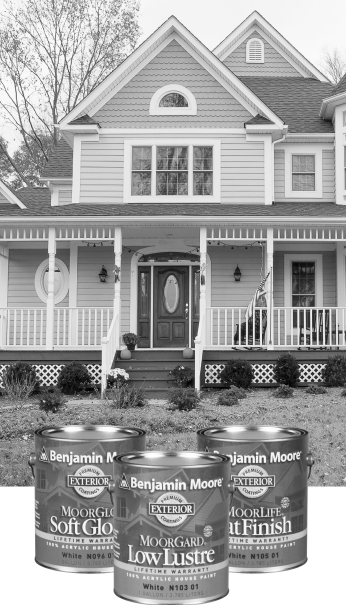
• Don't bring everything. Think of your dorm space as the size of a small bathroom. Leave the futon at home.

• Don't try to stock up supplies for an entire academic year. You won't have enough room for that much bottled water and shampoo.

• Make room for snacks as well as items for in-room dining such as plates, cups and silverware. Sacramento State has mini-fridges for rent for its dorm rooms, or students can bring their own. (There are size restrictions.)

• Small microwave ovens are another popular option for in-room dining, but no items with heat coils are allowed. Forget the deep fryer.

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