

**Emergency Services
Centre - 3333**

University

Avocados to petunias raised by one-man operation

Greenhouse home for exotic, common plants

Contrary to popular belief, there is no marijuana growing in York's greenhouse adjacent to the Farquharson Life Sciences Building.

But if you're in the market for avocados, petunias or something from cactus corner, you will likely find them growing under the meticulous care of greenhouse supervisor Denes Kiss.

That's not to say you can phone and have one delivered to your residence room or office, but they are there to look at. Kiss said plants were given out at one time, mainly for offices, "until the (biology) department found out its budget was being spread all around the campus."

Now with tighter controls, the budget is directed at maintaining the three essential services the greenhouse provides — production of live specimens for examination by students in science and related courses; providing an area for research by faculty members and graduate students under controlled conditions; and allowing for demonstrations of varieties of unusual plant life for students, visitors, and University employees.

Kiss doesn't have as many specimens or as much help as he would like, but at the moment is responsible for the handling, feeding and spraying of 1,500 plants of 100-odd varieties.

He also looks after the maintenance and operation of four growth chambers, dark cabinets for seed germination, a potting room, stores area, cold bed on the outside wall of the greenhouse, and miscellaneous equipment for temperature, lighting and humidity control.

One-man operation

In short, he runs a one-man operation that could probably keep three men busy under normal working conditions.

Claiming that servicing the classrooms is his primary responsibility, Kiss expressed dissatisfaction with the way decisions affecting the operation of the greenhouse have been reached in the past.

Calling himself a "laborer with no power" of decision-making, he cited an example of a researcher who secured permission to move 12 flats, or trays of plants, into the glassed enclosure with the stipulation that no spray or insecticide be used.

The result, he said, was that these flats "disturbed the whole operation of the greenhouse" as it swarmed with flies and aphids coming off the unsprayed plants.

"All the material sooner or later went to the garbage. I finally got permission to clean out some of the greenhouse and now the flies are close to being controlled."

He now feels more confident his advice will be heeded, and appears encouraged by his relationship with the Greenhouse Committee under the chairmanship of biologist Michael Boyer.

Laziness cited

But the thorn still in his side is an unwillingness on the part of graduate students and faculty members to get involved in the physical care of their plants.

"Someone is always happy to get something from the greenhouse," he said, "but they're lazy about taking care of it. They just throw pots back here dirty sometimes."

"I try to keep everything in top shape, but for example this morning I moved out part of the material that's been left in the greenhouse. The graduate student has got his degree, but when you need him to lift something or help, well ..."

But things are improving, he said, with more students coming independently of class hours to visit the greenhouse.

"A Hungarian says: 'For a good wine you don't need any advertising.' And people making a visit (here) must somehow be satisfied, because they are coming back. They are passing the word from one person to another."

"If people see (a mess) they won't come back, but if they come in and it's somehow attractive — I don't want to say good — they will come back again."

Because of thefts of plants, pots and chemicals, the greenhouse is now locked when Kiss is not there. But "if somebody wants to come in I'll be around somewhere."

He doesn't like the idea of locking the doors, feeling it "would be better to improve the morale of the people", but thinks that this too, will improve as time passes.

University in baby stages

"This is a new modern university. It's in the baby stages and time will



The cactus (above) and caladium (below, left) are two of the 1500 plants of 100 species that form York's greenhouse collection. Denes Kiss,

greenhouse supervisor, has noted an increase in the number of visitors who come just to take a look.

improve it, but now it's somehow mixed up."

Kiss is a trained agriculturalist who fled Hungary following the 1956 uprising. With a master's degree in agricultural science, he was manager of a state-run farm on the Yugoslav border before being transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture three years prior to the

uprising.

Starting work in Canada as a farm laborer at 23 cents an hour was not easy for the man who spent four years as a prisoner of war during the Second World War.

But he decided when he arrived that "if they have no use for my training, all right, I'll use my energy."

Now four years at York, Kiss spent five with the University of Guelph and several with the Metro Works Department in Toronto, mostly as a laborer. He has also worked as a salesman, chauffeur and gardener.

"Now," he said, "I am happy when I am with my roses." He has 160 bushes in his home garden.

Odds & Sodds

Pre-Christmas concert

McLaughlin College is presenting an informal pre-Christmas concert of South Indian Classical music, in McLaughlin Junior Common Room, Monday, December 13, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The artists featured are Jon Higgins, vocal, Trichy Sankaran, mridangam, and Helen Mogford, tamera. Everyone is welcome.

Early Music Quartet

The Early Music Quartet (fur frühen Musik), internationally renowned performers and recording artists, will give a lecture demonstration today at 2:00 p.m. in Room 202, McLaughlin College. The entire York Community is invited to this event which is sponsored by the Program in Music.

Special Senate meeting

The Senate will meet in Special Session at 2:30 p.m., Friday, December 10, in the Senate Chamber (S915), the Ross Building, to consider a revised Report from the Senate Committee on Tenure and Promotions. Due to space limitations, tickets must be obtained from Room S945, the Ross Building.

Walrus contest

The Walrus, Stong College's Student Newspaper, is holding a "Centre Page Contest" which is open to all York students. Poetry, photography, graphics, etc. are acceptable. Entries must be sent to Room 327, Stong College. Each issue of the Walrus will include the best entry submitted prior to its publication. A first prize of \$50 will be awarded for the best "Centre Page" of the year. For further information call 635-3095.

Student dance concert

Students from York's Program in Dance will give a Student Dance Concert Thursday and Friday, December 16 and 17 at 8:30 p.m. in Burton Auditorium. The concert will be an exposition of the students' progress to date. There is no admission charge.

Quote of the week

Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves.

— William Pitt — 1759-1806

University holiday schedule

University Offices will be closed on Friday, December 24th, Monday, December 27th, and Friday, December 31st.

Scott & Steacie Libraries:

Friday, Dec. 24
Sunday, Dec. 26
Monday, Dec. 27
Friday, Dec. 31
Saturday, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1

open until 5:00 p.m.
regular hours
regular hours
open until 5:00 p.m.
closed

Leslie Frost Library:

Monday, Dec. 20 to Thursday, Dec. 23
Tuesday, Dec. 28 to Thursday, Dec. 30
Friday, Dec. 24 to Monday, Dec. 27
Friday, Dec. 31 to Sunday, Jan. 2

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
closed
closed

Osgoode Hall Library:

Wednesday, Dec. 22
Thursday, Dec. 23
Tuesday, Dec. 28 to Thursday, Dec. 30
Monday, Jan. 3 to Friday, Jan. 7
Friday, Dec. 24 to Monday, Dec. 27
Friday, Dec. 31 to Sunday, Jan. 2
Saturday, Jan. 8 & Sunday, Jan. 9

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
closed
closed
closed

Tait McKenzie Building:

Friday, Dec. 24 to Monday, Dec. 27
Friday, Dec. 31 & Saturday, Jan. 1

closed
closed

Proctor Field House:

Friday, Dec. 24 to Monday, Dec. 27
Friday, Dec. 31 to Sunday, Jan. 2

closed
closed

Toronto Dominion Bank:

Thursday, Dec. 23 & Thursday Dec. 30
Friday, Dec. 24, Tuesday, Dec. 28, Wednesday, Dec. 29 & Friday, Dec. 31
Saturday, Jan. 1 & Monday, Jan. 3

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
closed

