ANNIES BELMONT BLOG

"Seasons Greetings Begin at the Front Door"

December 2009 *by Annie Plowman*

What kind of greeting are your guests receiving when they come up to your front door this holiday season? I'm a "Merry Christmas" gal myself but, aside from what you say, what is your front entry saying? Is it time for a new Welcome mat?

A few years back we did a little home renovation. The painter was young and cool with long hair and I was washing down my front door when he arrived. He remarked on how the front door is so very important on making that all important first impression. He was actually rather emphatic about the subject. I've never forgotten.

Some of you may have decided to hold on to those summer flowers that were looking so nice just a few weeks ago and now have melted glops of begonias leading up to your front door. It's time to bite the bullet and pull those puppies out. You can pick up a flat (36 plants) of pansies, primroses or cyclamen that are blooming nicely at your local garden center and still get change from your twenty. If you plant them about 10" apart, you can do about 25 square feet. Remember: Make sure the top 6" of soil is good, don't plant too deep and remember you will almost never need to water these winter months.

Nothing says "Happy Holidays" like a pot of dirt at the front door but, you'll have to trust me. Do you have empty or ugly pots on that front porch? Time to ditch those. Repot with some little ferns, cyclamen, ivy topiaries or some sort of pretty thing. If you aren't in the mood to re-plant the pots, hide them behind the shed somewhere. If you are repotting, be nice. Wash the pots and give them some nice new potting soil.

I love the scented jar candles in holiday scents. Some people can't tolerate them indoors or sometimes you get one that is just too strong to burn in the house. Regardless of those tolerances and intolerances, it seems you can't go wrong putting one somewhere safe near the front door. I have a sconce up high and usually light one about 15 minutes before company is expected.
What about that broken doorbell? You know… the empty hole people poke their finger into and nothing happens? Merry Christmas to you! It's been 12 years? If you can't fix it yourself, there's probably a qualified electrician out there who would appreciate the job. Let your fingers do the walking.

How about that litter box by the door or the planter the cats are using as one? It's right outside the front door? Nobody says anything, but they notice. You can fix that. If you are wondering, I have some work to do too. Most of this can be done in about 30 minutes. This is my check list:

1. Ditch the ugly pots and spiff up the ones that look decent.
2. Clean that front porch. Sweep every nook and cranny and wash down the front door.
3. Clean the cat hair off the doormat and move the cat food out of sight
4. Clean up cobwebs
5. Put a few more flowers along the front walk.
6. Hose the dirt (or anything funky) off the window screens. (People notice that)
7. Put a Holiday scented candle out by the front door to light when company comes.

Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy Holiday season and a Glorious Prosperous New Year!

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