

A small case of Spring Fever

Monday, April 16, 2012 9:29 AM - Last Updated Wednesday, February 27, 2013 3:22 PM

They say you live and you learn. Boy, is that ever true.

My husband got Spring Fever a few weeks ago. The temperatures were record-breaking and he was itching to get started. He came home with a cherry tomato, a Better Boy tomato and two strawberry plants in hanging baskets. They looked great. The strawberry plants already had several berries a piece and each had their share of blooms.

He carefully nurtured them until he could get the cherry tomato in a pot and later put the larger one in the ground. One of the strawberry plants even gave him a juicy, ripe berry. He said it was delicious and much better than store-bought.

Then came the chilly nights. The plants came in each night and were placed back outside in the morning.

Another round of warm weather and the big tomato went in the ground.

Then came the chilly nights. Frost warnings! "Make sure you take those plants inside," the weatherman said.

In came the strawberries and the cherry tomato. The big guy was on his own. My husband carefully placed a bucket over him the first night and then took it off in the morning before he left for work. So far, so good.

The second night it got even colder. The bucket went back on. The next morning, my husband took it off before he went to work. The results were a little less than satisfying. I guess the temperatures took a little more daylight to rise and the big guy was a goner.

Not to be discouraged, my husband quickly replaced him with "Sampson." A few days later, we took a trip together to look at solar yard ornaments and there they were: the season's flowers. They were so pretty with their vibrant petals and soft green leaves. I just had to have some. And you know within a couple of weeks they'll all be picked over and showing wear and tear. Their like bathing suits in March or mitten in August — you gotta get 'em while the gettin's good.

A small case of Spring Fever

Monday, April 16, 2012 9:29 AM - Last Updated Wednesday, February 27, 2013 3:22 PM

So begonias, petunias, dianthus and more came home with us.

Then came the chilly nights. The pretty flowers were relegated to the garage with no sun. Saturday came and so did the warmer temperatures and I set about potting them — two boxes, two pots and the ceramic boot were filled. I put them on the porch and when my husband came home, he noticed they looked a little lonely. So back to the garden center we went and came home with more. I potted until I couldn't see anymore because it was dark outside.

I have to admit it felt good to fill those pots with the rich, dark potting soil and arrange the flowers just so.

They were all watered and placed on porch with the first bunch. Much better, my husband said.

Then came the chilly nights. All the flowers and plants came inside into the mud room. The washer and dryer tops were both full, the counters were full and the boot took residence on a kitchen counter. They stayed in for three days until Friday at lunch. Temperatures are forecast to be in the 40s at night for the next several days so, for a little while, the danger has passed.

I've got news for those plants — they better put on their big girls pants and tough it out. They are officially on their own as far as the temperature goes. I've got spring fever and they belong outside on the porch soaking up the sun and getting big and gorgeous. It's their job.

And as for my friend who has a bet with someone there will be one more trackable snow:
Phhhhhht!