

Terrible tree envy hits

From Associated Press reports
 The Rockefeller tree has 20,000 lights festooned around its full and bountiful branches. I don't see my tree bearing ornaments this year, not even tinsel for that matter, but it shows promise.
 There is one larger difference between them, however. This is the last year for the Rockefeller Norway Spruce. It is the first Christmas for mine.
 It's in my studio apartment because the price of Christmas trees sky-rocketed

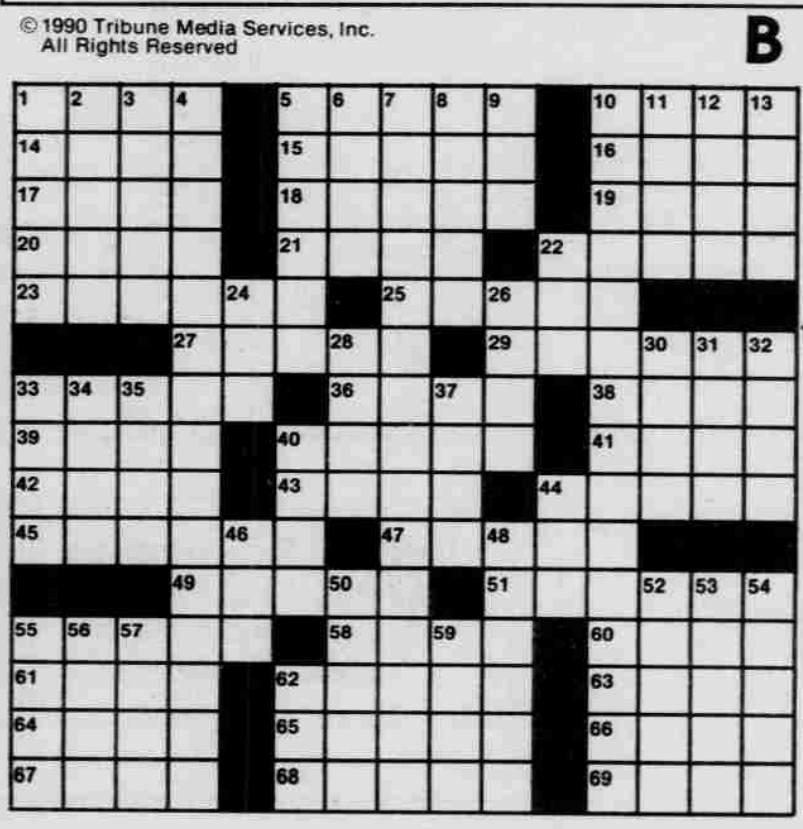
I thought of decorating one of my house plants, but somehow ornaments and lights on elephant ears jarred my traditional sensibilities. Instead, one evening I tuned in a local TV channel that plays Christmas songs and shows a decorated tree and a burning yule log. Then I watched "It's a Wonderful Life," and "Miracle on Thirty-fourth Street." That was my Manhattan Christmas.
 Come New Year's Eve I had no

parched tree to carry down to the basement and no trail of dried needles to be swept up. The maid liked that.
 But this summer I got a mailed offer of an infant Colorado Spruce for \$1 from the National Arbor Day Foundation in Nebraska City, Neb. I snapped it up.
 It arrived this fall with planting instructions, a spindly, helpless thing with

only the hint of life. After soaking its roots for about 10 hours I put it in a pot, watered it and watched intently. But nothing happened.
 Then ever so slowly it began to stir, like a baby yawning after a deep sleep. No baby gets closer attention. I check its damp soil three times a day, fight off the urge to water more than once a week. I talk to it a little like I talked to

my children when they were learning to walk.
 It occupies a prime spot in my studio apartment with southern exposure and a controlled climate. That should give it a long growing season.
 Christmas trees were always a part of my life. I even sold them as a kid in Detroit.

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen



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- B**
- ACROSS**
- 1 Mountain lion
 - 5 Distributed
 - 10 Worry
 - 14 Declare positively
 - 15 Campaign composer
 - 16 Regan's father
 - 17 Kind of gas
 - 18 Necessities
 - 19 Maneuverable
 - 20 Spy name
 - 21 Concerning
 - 22 Kind of club
 - 23 Drudges
 - 25 Peruvian
 - 27 Moral principle
 - 29 Fisherman
 - 33 Bamboo eater
 - 36 Cartographs
 - 38 Show great fondness
 - 39 Gen. Robt. —
 - 40 Painter Edouard
 - 41 Leftovers
 - 42 Cupid
 - 43 Turk. VIP
- DOWN**
- 9 Heavy wts.
 - 10 Astaire film
 - 11 Veritable
 - 12 Nobleman
 - 13 Deuce topper
 - 22 Forbid
 - 24 Gr. letter
 - 26 Players
 - 28 Muslim priest
 - 30 Traditional knowledge
 - 31 Major end
 - 32 R & R word
 - 33 Anjou
 - 34 Singer
 - 35 Gluck
 - 35 Gas light
 - 37 Around: pref.
 - 40 Simple
 - 44 Arlo to Woody
 - 46 Possess
 - 48 Fit snugly
 - 50 Poetry Muse
 - 52 Broadway musical
 - 53 Appraisal expert
 - 54 Bridge coups
 - 55 Mets' home
 - 56 Sermon subject
 - 57 QED word
 - 59 Fashion
 - 62 Spigot

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