



An old terra cotta pot, brought back to life, is now home to Renee Shamosh's mistletoe ficus, *Ficus deltoide Moraceae*, which she propagated four years ago from a plant owned by former GCI star grower Mary Morrisett.



Terra cotta pots painted with blackboard paint can be labeled with chalk paint markers. Flat black acrylic paint works as well.

Creative Painted Pots

A fun winter activity is painting terra cotta pots to complement the plants and flowers you will be displaying indoors now and on your patio in the spring and summer—and giving them to friends and family as holiday gifts.



Pots with painted rims—plain or patterned—make an attractive grouping that will pick up and accentuate the bloom colors of flowering plants like pansies, African violets, and Cape primrose (*Streptocarpus*).

These plants were grown for the "Spectrum" horticulture class at the 2015 GCA Annual Meeting flower show. The judges awarded us a first-place ribbon as well as the Rosie Jones Horticulture Award for "An entry of exceptional visual appeal that reflects the spirit of growing with joy and enthusiasm."

See our winning planting at: <http://tinyurl.com/mtw9ulw>



HOW TO DO IT:



- 1.** Assemble clean terra-cotta pots (not plastic), good quality square-tipped brushes, small disposable white plastic plates to use as mixing trays, water, and acrylic paints in in tubes or jars from the art supply store. Michael's and Jo-Ann usually have good selections. Get your favorite colors, primary colors, black, and an extra-large tube or bottle of white. Interior house paint, like the Benjamin Moore color samples, is fine on wood, but can crack and peel off when terra cotta is left outdoors.
- 2.** Mix colors with a plastic spoon on a plate until no streaks show. The paint should be the consistency of very heavy cream.
- 3.** Pot rims usually require 2 – 3 coats. Watch for drips! Wipe off any drips or spatters with a wet paper towel. Note: Wear an apron because drips don't come off clothing.
- 4.** You can plan a pot grouping and mix up several paint colors that blend with each other, your decor, and the plants. Use a clean plastic plate and brush for each color.
- 5.** Painted rims are an easy way to bring out the beauty of flowers and make an ordinary pot special.

