

The Wild Iris

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE....

I hope that all of you enjoy our great newsletter! There is now an opportunity for a few of you to enjoy it even more, by spending a few hours each month helping to get it ready for publication! If you have some computer experience and would like to help, please contact a board member or Liz Hamilton-Alumbaugh . Liz has worked on the newsletter for as long as I have been a member and she also volunteers her time and expertise to be our Webmaster. She would be delightful to work with and helping out would be a fun way to contribute to the club and to get to know the members!

The Club is also in need of a treasurer, if you have some computer skills and if you like to write checks with other people’s money, this might be the job for you! Gina, Grace, Lynn and I are looking forward to welcoming a new Board Member! Please contact one of us if you are interested.

Lucy Ginley, President

NOVEMBER 8, 2011 “THERE ARE NO STUPID QUESTIONS ”

There are no stupid questions! Please bring your gardening questions, dilemmas, mysteries, and horror stories to the November meeting where our esteemed panel of real live high altitude gardeners will kindly listen and gently share their hard won expertise with all of us.

Meet at the Fire & Rescue Station on Bergen Parkway at 9:30 am.

Remember to bring your plants, cuttings, pots etc. for the World Gardening Table...And in keeping with being green, your own coffee mug.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

EGC Club News.....	2
Meet the Board	3
Minutes	6
Green Event	7

2011-2012 OFFICERS

- President—Lucy Ginley
- Vice President/s— Lynn Dimmick & Grace Coveyeau
- Secretary— Gina Kokinda
- Treasurer— Open
- Member Emeritus—Louise Mounsey

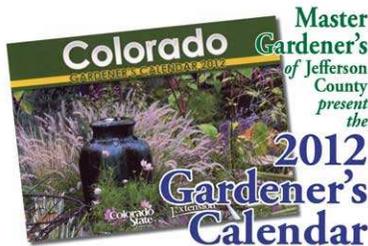
NEW MEMBERS

Rachel Johaneck

BIRTHDAYS

No birthdays in November!

2012 GARDENER'S CALENDAR



From the Master Gardener's of Jefferson County.

Only \$13.00 + \$2.25 for USPS shipping

...for a year filled with education and tips for outdoor and indoor

gardeners. You'll find sources and information on spring and fall planting, winter care and summer harvesting of flowers and vegetables. There is space to follow your gardening activities from planting to enjoying the fruits of your work. You can follow the lunar cycles, be prepared for holidays and make note of those important events. This calendar is available for purchase at these locations:

Jefferson County Extension Office

15200 W. 6th Ave.
Golden, CO

Timberline Garden Center

11700 W. 58th Ave.
Arvada, CO

O'Toole Garden Center

1404 Quail St.
Lakewood, CO

SPRING BLOOMING BULBS

It can be challenging to even think about next spring now. However, if you enjoy early spring color, fall is the time to purchase and install bulbs. These fantastic spheres are allium, which come in a variety of sizes from petite to Globe Master, an impressive 40" tall/10" wide stunner.

Allium are in the onion family and are deer and elk resistant. They bloom early to late spring, start out a vibrant purple, turn a vivid green, and finally they dry to a beautiful shade of straw. This form looks great indoors added to your fall arrangements.

Visit Sundance Garden Center if you prefer to plant your own, or contact Sundance by Design (303.670.8211) if you would like them to design and install a customized bulb planting.



UPCOMING AREA CRAFTS FESTIVALS

MOUNT VERNON COUNTRY CLUB ARTISAN, CRAFT AND TRADE FAIR

Mount Vernon Country Club is proud to announce its first annual artisan, craft and trade fair.

November 7th 11:00am – 7:00pm

November 8th 9:00am – 2:30pm

Location: Mount Vernon Country Club.

MT. EVANS HOME HEALTH AND HOSPICE CALENDAR RECEPTION

Unveiling of the 2012 "Seasons of Our Mountains" Calendar benefiting Mt. Evans Home Health and Hospice.

November 10th, 2011 from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Location: Evergreen National Bank in Downtown Evergreen
RSVP 303-674-6400

11TH ANNUAL ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR

The two day gift fair features hand-made crafts, jewelry, textiles, and some food items. All the funds raised from the sale of these gifts go to the charities.

November 12th & 13th, 2011 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Location: Evergreen Lutheran Church Highway 73

WINTERFEST

This long-standing Evergreen tradition is designed especially for holiday shoppers by featuring 100 carefully selected artists, many local, who create their wares by hand.

November 12th from 9:00am to 4:00pm.

Tickets are \$2 for adults; children and students are free.

Location: Evergreen High School.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA & MRS. CLAUS

Kick off the holiday season with Breakfast with Santa & Mrs. Claus.

November 26th, 9-11:00am

Location: Evergreen Lake House. Buffet provided by Tin Star Catering. Seating is limited. Tickets will be available November 1st. For more information, visit

www.DowntownEvergreen.com

FAMILY OPEN HOUSE

December 3rd, 12-5pm

Children's activities, refreshments, and of course, great holiday shopping for everyone on your list!

Location: Center for the Arts Evergreen





POINSETTIAS— FACTS & INFORMATION

by S.E. Newman and B. A. Edmunds—(CSU Extension)
<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/garden/07412.html>

Quick Facts...

- Select plants with uniformly green foliage and no lower leaves missing.
- Poinsettias need moderately moist soil; water thoroughly whenever the soil feels dry to the touch.
- Ideal temperatures are 60F to 70F.
- Poinsettia plant parts are not edible, but they are not poisonous when eaten.
- Those whom are sensitive to latex, may develop a rash when handling poinsettias.

History and Description

The Aztecs cultivated the poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) in Mexico long before Europeans came to the Western Hemisphere. It was cultivated in Oaxatepec, which is now the Mexican state Morelos. The poinsettia was prized by Kings Netzahualcyotl and Montezuma and its indigenous name was Cuetlaxochitl. The Aztecs used the bracts for a reddish-purple dye and the latex to counteract fever. The plant also played a part in midwinter celebrations representing purity and blood sacrifices. It was widely planted in gardens.

Franciscan priests during the 17th century near Taxco observed the plant blooming during the Christmas season. They incorporated the plant into the Fiesta of Santa Pesebre nativity procession. They used the concept of blood sacrifices from Aztec tradition to have the poinsettia represent the blood of Christ to Catholics and Christians. Poinsettias bloom naturally in October signaling the coming of Christmas.

Joel R. Poinsett, a botanist and the first U.S. minister to Mexico under President James Monroe in 1825, sent some plants to his home in South Carolina. He shared his finds with other plant enthusiasts. December 12 is National Poinsettia Day and recognizes Poinsett's contribution to the holiday season.

Many people have been instrumental in establishing poinsettias as a house plant and holiday tradition. The Paul Ecke, Sr. originally grew poinsettias as a cut flower in the Hollywood and Beverly Hills area in the 1920s. After moving to Encinitas, CA, the Ecke family focused on field grown poinsettia mother plants, which were shipped throughout the country via railroad box cars. Paul Ecke, Jr. took poinsettias to the next level in the 1960s through media promotions, specifically the Tonight Show and the Bob Hope Christmas Specials. This constant effort ensured that poinsettias were as much a part of the holiday season as evergreen trees, Christmas cards, and caroling. It was at

(Continued on page 5)



this time that the Ecke family moved from field production to greenhouse production, which created the need for improved cultivars.

Active breeding of the poinsettia began in the 1950s in an effort to develop cultivars that would retain their leaves and bracts for a longer period. Early breeding efforts included those of Mikkelsen of Ohio (Mikkelsen series), the Heggs of Norway (Hegg series), as well as those of the Ecke family (Eckespoint series). The Fischer family, a German breeder, has also contributed many cultivars to the poinsettia tradition. These breeding programs focused on stronger stems, leaf and bract retention, multiple branching, earlier blooming, and color variation.

Modern cultivars are now bred to last longer in the home, bloom earlier, and require fewer resources for production. This translates into more color selections and better quality plants for consumers. Poinsettias are available in a vast array of colors from red to white, pink to burgundy, and with many variations in between including flecks of color on contrasting backgrounds.

Selection

Poinsettias do well in the home and keep their color until mid-March. The showy red, pink, white, yellow, bicolored or speckled modified “leaves” are called bracts. With proper light and temperature, they accumulate the anthocyanin pigments that give them their color. The flowers (cyathia) of the poinsettia are in the center of the bracts. Male and female parts are present, along with a yellow-edged nectary with sweet, fragrant nectar.

Poinsettias come in many colors and forms. New selections appear every year. Choose a plant with uniformly dark green foliage. However, cultivars with lighter colored or mottled bracts typically have lighter green foliage.

Plants with pale green, yellow or fallen leaves generally have a root disease problem, have been overwatered, had an excessive dry period, or received limited fertilization. Bracts should be well developed with little pollen showing on the flowers.

When outside temperatures approach 35F, be sure the plant is well wrapped or sleeved before transporting. Low temperatures, even for short periods, can damage leaves and bracts. Remove sleeves promptly to prevent epinasty, a downward bending of the petioles, which are the slender stalks that attach the bracts to the stem.

Cultural Requirements

Poinsettias thrive on indirect, natural daylight -- at least six hours a day. Avoid direct sunlight, as this may fade the bract color. If direct sun cannot be avoided, diffuse the light with a shade or sheer curtain. To prolong color, keep plants out of traffic areas and protect from cold drafts and excessive heat. Ideal temperatures are 67F to 70F during the day and 60F to 62F at night. Remove damaged or diseased leaves.

Poinsettias require moderately moist soil. Check plants daily and water thoroughly whenever the soil feels dry to the touch. Plants in clay pots require more water, while those in plastic pots are easily overwatered. Apply water until it runs out the drainage hole. However, do not allow poinsettias to sit in standing water. If the container is wrapped with foil, remove it when watering or make a hole in it for drainage. Discard any collected water in the drainage receptacle.

A poinsettia does not require fertilization while it is in bloom. However, to maintain green foliage and promote new growth indoors after the holidays, apply a balanced all-purpose house plant fertilizer once per month. Always follow the directions on the fertilizer label.

Reflowering

To “reflower” poinsettias for the next year, strictly follow these simple steps. After a plant has passed its stage of usefulness, usually by late March or early April, remove the bracts and part of the stem. This cutting back can be done any time through mid-July, depending on the desired final size and shape of the plant. Leave three or four leaves on each remaining stem.

During late spring and early summer, move the plant to the next larger size pot. Use a well-drained potting medi-

um, preferably heat-pasteurized. Use any well-drained soil, such as a blend of equal parts sphagnum peat moss, vermiculite and/or perlite. Thoroughly mix 1 tablespoon of treble superphosphate fertilizer (0-46-0) in each gallon of soil mix. Apply a slow release fertilizer to the soil surface.

Prune tall growth at approximately six-week intervals to keep the plant well formed. The last pruning or pinch before flowering should occur in late August. The poinsettia is a naturally woody plant that easily can be trained into many shapes during summer pruning. Consider a poinsettia tree, hanging basket or other artistic creation. Just remember to heed the last pinching date and the darkness requirement to achieve your masterpiece by the holidays.

Indoors, place the poinsettia in a bright area where the temperature will remain constant. Water as needed and fertilize with a complete fertilizer every two to three weeks. During the summer, the plant may go outdoors in a partly shaded area. After the danger of frost is past in the spring, and minimum temperatures reach 55F, place the plant on the patio or sink it into the ground. It prefers a well-drained, slightly shaded location (see Figure 1). Turn the pot once a week to prevent roots from growing through the drainage hole. Bring plants into the house when night temperatures are colder than 55F (approximately September 1 in Colorado).

Poinsettias are short-day photoperiodic plants. This means they set buds and produce flowers as the autumn nights lengthen, blooming naturally during November or December. To flower and develop colored bracts, a poinsettia must receive as much sunshine as possible during the day. Starting about October 1, it also needs at least 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness each night at temperatures between 60 and 70F. Stray light of any kind (street lights, pool lights or lamps) could delay or entirely halt the reflowering process. The dark treatment should last until color shows in the bracts (approximately Thanksgiving). Some modern cultivars may show color as much as two weeks before Thanksgiving. Continue fertilizing and watering to encourage good growth.

Disease and Pest Control

Many pests can infest poinsettias. Wash off insects with mild soap and water, using a sponge or gentle spray. Mealybugs and whiteflies may require pesticide application or removal of infested plant parts. To remove mealy bugs, apply ordinary rubbing alcohol with a cotton swab.

Cold, moist soil temperatures encourage root diseases. If lower leaves start turning yellow and fall off, a root rot condition may exist. Apply an all-purpose fungicide (usually available at garden centers) as a soil drench. The milky sap that exudes from a poinsettia when damaged is called latex and is not the result of any insect or disease infestation.

Poinsettia Not Poisonous

In a 1995 poll funded by the Society of American Florists, 66 percent of the respondents held the false impression that poinsettia plants are toxic if eaten. Research at Ohio State University in 1971 showed that rats fed unusually high doses of poinsettia plant parts were not adversely affected. The POISINDEX® Information Service, the primary resource used by most poison control centers, states that a 50-pound child would have to eat more than 500 poinsettia bracts to surpass experimental doses. Based on the rodent tests, accepted by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the commission denied a 1975 petition filed by a New York citizen demanding that poinsettia plants carry caution labels that indicate they are poisonous.

Like other non-food items, poinsettia plants are not edible and are not intended to be eaten. Poinsettias are a member of the Euphorbiaceae family of plants. Other economically important species in this family include: The cultivated rubber tree *Hevea brasiliensis*, Manioc or cassava (*Manihot*), and Castor bean (*Ricinus*). With its close genetic ties to the rubber tree, which is where natural latex is derived, those who are sensitive may also be sensitive to the latex from poinsettias. If eaten, parts of all plants may cause varying degrees of discomfort, but not death. Keep plants out of reach of small children.

Although commonly assumed to be poisonous to animals, Poinsettia plants are not harmful to household pets unless the leaves and bracts are eaten in very large quantities. Some cats that chew on the leaves may salivate and can vomit if the leaves are swallowed. Since cats and puppies frequently chew on new plants introduced to the home, it is prudent to place the plants out of reach!

MINUTES—OCTOBER 10TH 2011

Meeting called to order at 9:40 by president Lucy Ginley.

Committee leaders were asked to wait until the next meeting to present reports unless it was timely.

Past members Andrew Pierce and Jean Todd passed away recently. The club will send cards.

Louise Mounsey shared that she had attended the memorial service for Sandy Ball. The Club delivered a plant to Ken Ball, Sandy's widower.

Karen asked if anyone needed to be assigned to a garden. Everyone knew where they were going.

Paul Luzetski said that he had CSU Gardener's Calendars for sale to benefit Master Gardeners.

Linda Ringrose reported on the potential cutbacks to the Jefferson County Libraries and gave information about upcoming meetings and website, savejeffcolibraries.org.

We adjourned at 10:10 to work in our assigned gardens until approxi-

IN REMEMBRANCE

Evergreen Garden Club member Jean Todd passed away recently. Jean was President of Evergreen Garden Club with Meredith Bossert from 2005 -2006. Jean moved to Evergreen with her family in 1994 from CA and joined EGC pretty quickly soon after moving here, she then moved to Steamboat in 2006 to be with her daughter and grandson. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association or the Rollingstone Respite House in Steamboat Springs.

HOSPITALITY BITES

The hospitality team for November 2011 is as follows:

Katherine Boylston, Jo Powers, Chris Gray, Ruth Alford, Arlene Fitterer, Diana Aldridge.

Please would you arrive between 8:45 & 9:00 am to help set up the room and be prepared to stay after the meeting for clean-up. THANKS!

2011—2012 OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

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OPEN

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(303) /674-4695

EVERGREEN GARDEN CLUB

The Wild Iris is a free monthly publication for members of the Evergreen Garden Club.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month from Sept. to June at Fire & Rescue Station on Bergen Parkway at 9:15 am. All are welcome.

For membership information please contact Dwight Gilliland at (303) 679-1846 or email: Members@EvergreenGardenClub.org

Newsletter Contributions are due by the 20th of each month to Editor@EvergreenGardenClub.com

Newsletter Editor & Website www.EvergreenGardenClub.org

DID YOU KNOW?

From the website at <http://TheRichlawnCompany.com>

Did you know – Slugs love beer? – It is true, if you have a slug problem put some light colored beer in a saucer and place a few strategically around your plants. In the morning you will have a number of dead (or drunk) slugs.

Did you know - The plant life in the oceans makes up about 85 percent of all the greenery on Earth.

FILM SCREENING

WOMEN IN THE DIRT, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS SHAPING OUR WORLD

Santa Fe Film—Premiere November 10, 6 PM The Screen at 1600 St. Michael's Drive, Santa Fe, NM hosted by the Santa Fe Botanical Gardens .

Women in the Dirt is about the groundbreaking work of seven landscape architects. Their projects combine awareness of architectural and landscape principles, concern with sustainability, safety and beauty. The scope of their work ranges from private homes to vast public projects.

More Info: <http://womeninthedirt.com/>

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