



Evergreen Garden Club

The Wild Iris

Volume 17, Issue 4 December 2004

A Word from the President...

Inside this issue:

Club News	2
Minutes	3
Garden Fence	5
Horticulture	7

EGC 2004-2005 Board Members

President:

Tricia Scott

Vice Presidents:

Karla Briggs

Beth Feldkamp

Secretary:

Joan Reynolds

Treasurer:

Lori Lapp

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 Church of the Hills, Buffalo Park Rd, Evergreen at 9:15 am. All are welcome.

For **membership** information please contact Lori Lapp at 303-838-8360 or membership@evergreengardenclub.org

Newsletter Contributions are due by the 20th of each month to Kathi Grider at 303-670-6909 or wegriders@speedtrail.net

Newsletter Editor & Website
Liz Hamilton liz1001@earthlink.net
c

Dear Members,
All the leaves are gone and the snow is falling outside...perfect time to write a holiday message to all of you! It is our resting time from our outdoor gardens. When I moved here, I was told that I needed to become more of an indoor gardener because of our short outdoor season - so I became more interested in indoor plants than I used to be. So I thought that our last month's meeting was so appropriate for all of us.

Congratulations to Beth and Karla on our tour to Fantasy Gardens! It was so wonderful and fun to all ride together and get a chance to visit. We all enjoyed the orchids seminar and felt more confident about growing orchids after it! As a club we purchased the video on growing orchids. At our next meeting anyone who wishes to borrow the video will get their name put in a hat and we will make out a list in the order of the drawn names- the only fair way we can do it!

At our next meeting we plan on having a lunch provided by the club

and we are asking those who offered to provide food to do some desserts for the meeting. We will be doing holiday wreaths, swags or centerpiece decorating. Please remember to bring all your own supplies and any tools you will need. There will also be a cookie exchange for all those who want to participate. You will need to bake 1½ dozen cookies to take part in it. And as if that isn't enough fun...we are also asking anyone who makes crafts of any sort for sale to bring them along and we will set up a mini craft fair! Bring those check books!

In closing I wish for all of you a wonderful holiday season with your friends and family. I also send out a wish for all of you to have good health and lots of happiness in the year ahead!

See all of you soon!
Tricia

Membership Meeting - December 14, 2004

Glue Guns and Pinecones

<p>The tradition continues...we will create wreaths, swags and floral arrangements to decorate for the holidays. Bring containers, garden materials, ribbons and</p>	<p>ornaments to enhance your creation. No need to check your glue gun at the door, we will remain armed and dangerous for the entire morning.</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

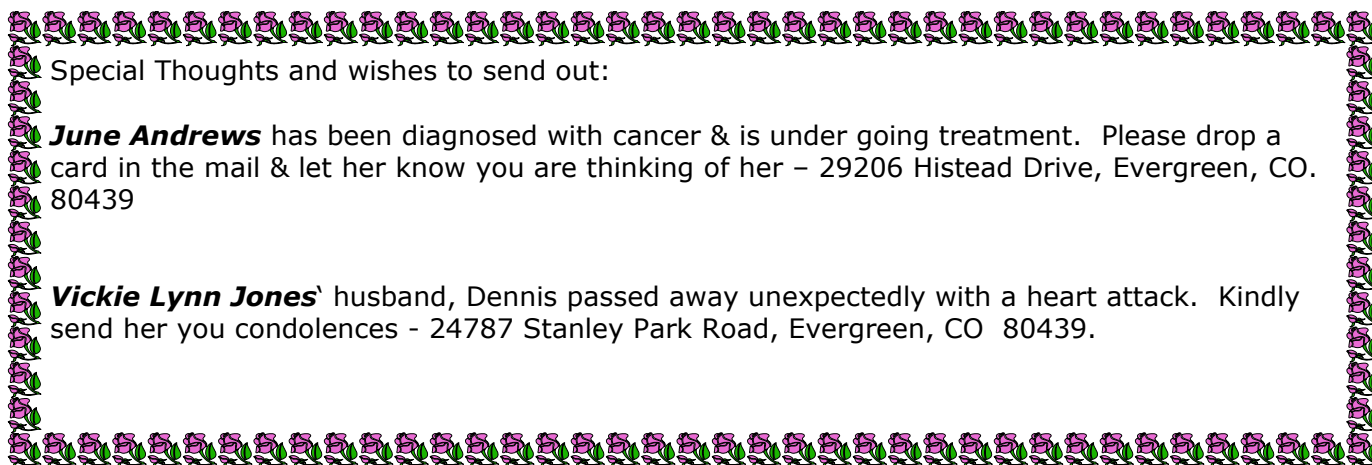
(Continued on pg.2)



Garden Club News

(continued from pg. 1)

We will have a cookie exchange, and a holiday lunch provided by the club. See you at 9:15 at Church of the Hills on Buffalo Park Rd. Remember to bring your plants and cuttings for the World Gardening table, and your coffee mug. See you there!



Special Thoughts and wishes to send out:

June Andrews has been diagnosed with cancer & is under going treatment. Please drop a card in the mail & let her know you are thinking of her – 29206 Histed Drive, Evergreen, CO. 80439

Vickie Lynn Jones' husband, Dennis passed away unexpectedly with a heart attack. Kindly send her you condolences - 24787 Stanley Park Road, Evergreen, CO 80439.

Bits & Pieces



Stumped for creative holiday ideas for the next meeting? Lowe's has some great suggestions at www.lowes.com then click on Holiday living.

Note: Smith & Hawken's website at www.smith-hawken.com has a great "About Orchids" page plus detailed information on the care and feeding of orchids (including care by variety). For those of you who made purchases at Fantasy Orchids, the website might serve as one more resource to help you be successful as an orchid fanatic!

DID YOU KNOW? During midwinter festivals in ancient Rome, evergreen branches and garlands were brought indoors, to serve as symbols of enduring life and to ensure a fruitful year.

Minutes of the November 9, 2004 Meeting

After touring the Fantasy Orchids Greenhouse in Louisville, Co, and attending an incredibly informative class on orchids, President Tricia Scott called a brief business meeting to order. Treasurer Lori Lapp was not present, but Tricia assured us that we do have money. Secretary Joan Reynolds explained that the Mountain Hope Cancer Center is recycling ink cartridges. There is a basket in the library upstairs at the Church of the Hills or see Joan.

Tricia announced that Beth Feldkamp had been visited by a Boy Scout selling Holiday Wreaths for \$18. A signup/purchase paper was circulated that had to be returned the next day. Tricia reminded us that we are 'on our own' to bring wreaths or greens for whatever we choose to decorate at the December 13 meeting. She reminded us to not forget ribbons, trims, ornaments, scissors, wire and wire cutters. She also advised against using a hot glue gun for any wreaths that will be displayed outdoors.

An optional cookie exchange will take place this year at the December meeting. Anyone who wishes to participate is asked to bring 1 ½ dozen cookies- one half dozen for sampling and a dozen for the exchange. Don't forget containers for the dozen you'll be taking home!

Lori Lapp had advised the board at the last meeting that we need to keep our assets below \$10,000 or the club will be required to do additional reports to the IRS since we are not an official non-profit organization. Tricia reported that the board had suggested upping our donation to the scholarship fund and also providing the meal at the December meeting. Nickie Meinert suggested that we 'adopt a family' for the holidays or make donations to the food bank at ECHO. Tricia asked any members that wish to help out to bring canned food or non-perishables to the December meeting.

Tricia noted that we need to form committees for the Garden Tour 2005 at the December meeting. She asked each member to think about how they can contribute and where they can fit in. We will be sending out questionnaires soon to the selected garden owners.

Karla Briggs had come up with yet another wonderful suggestion to have each garden owner advise us of their favorite annual, perennial or biennial that they can not do without. Each plant would be featured and we would give out information regarding these plants as well as advising the local nurseries of them in case they wished to be purchased by our tour guests. Tricia also reported that the board had agreed with her to have a banner made to hang over Evergreen's main street advertising the garden tour. It would be made so that the dates could be changed for each tour. Those in attendance seemed to like the idea.

We continued eating our yummy lunches and shopping before the vans took us safely back to Evergreen.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Reynolds

The Christmas Cactus

(Information gathered from Purdue University Horticultural Dept.)



Since Grandma's day, the Christmas cactus has been a favorite houseplant. It's not unusual for a single plant to be passed down from generation to generation because they're long-lived, rather easy plants to grow. The brilliant flowers it produces is a wondrous gift to behold each holiday season.

Hybridization over the past century has resulted in the introduction of many new varieties of Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter cactus.

These plants are members of the Zygo-cactus family, most of which are native to Central and South America. Although these plants are called cacti, they are truly different in all aspects from the common desert cactus. These plants, called epiphytes, are found in the same environments as orchids. They are most often found in the forks of tree limbs where they grow in decayed leaves and other natural debris that accumulates there. Since they are tropical cacti, their cultural requirements are totally different from true cacti. So here are a few ideas on how to care for them and the steps to follow to get them to bloom.

Most blooming plants will keep their blossoms longer in cooler temperatures. Keep the plant in a well-lit location away from drafts from heat vents, fireplaces or other sources of hot air.

Watering seems to be the source of most problems with the Christmas cactus. The plant is a tropical type cactus and is not quite as drought tolerant as the name implies. However, it is a succulent plant and can store a reasonable quantity of water in the leaves. Water thoroughly when the top half of the soil in the pot feels dry to the touch. Discard the excess water, then do not water again until the top half becomes dry. The length of time between waterings will vary with the air temperature, amount of light, rate of growth and relative humidity.

Well-drained soil is a must for Christmas cactus. Use a commercially packaged potting mix for succulent plants or mix your own by combining two parts plain potting soil with one part clean sand or vermiculite. Pruning your Christmas cactus after blooming will encourage the plant to branch out. The Christmas cactus is easily propagated by taking short Y-shaped cuttings of the stem tips. A well-tended cactus will reach unmanageable size in time. To root cuttings for new plants, cut back shoots from the tips, cut at the second joint of each tip. Place cuttings in a moist peat and perlite, or peat and sand mixture. Water sparingly at first to prevent rotting of cuttings. After two or three weeks, water as you would any other cutting. When cuttings are rooted, pot them in a very loose mixture of good potting soil.

How to get your Christmas cactus to flower

These plants are easy to grow but are sometimes difficult to get to bloom. Flowering is related to day length and night temperatures. The temperature range for flower bud development is 55 to 60 degrees for a six week period. If temperatures remain in this range they will develop buds regardless of day length. If temperatures get above that range, the plant will need 13 hours of uninterrupted darkness each night. This can be done by placing them in a completely dark room, or covering them for the recommended time, or longer, each night with a dark piece of cloth. Or just keep the plants in total darkness like a closet till buds develop. For holiday blooms this usually means in late September to mid October.

During flower bud formation, stop fertilizing and only water enough to keep the leaves from becoming shriveled. Once buds do form then you can keep the plant in normal light and temperatures. Keep it evenly moist and fertilize every other week with a mild fertilizer solution.



Over The Garden Fence *By Karla Briggs*

GARDEN CLUBS

Wherever I travel I look for evidence of a community garden club. I keep an eye out for a patch of petunias or baskets of flowers hanging from light-poles. Some cities and towns are brimming with flowers. Vail and Breckenridge are two places in Colorado that are known for their ravishing displays of plants, while other places require a bit of looking to discover the treasures planted within. I love visiting Cheyenne, Wyoming in the summer to see the plantings at their municipal properties because all the plants are lovingly grown in Shane Smith's solar greenhouse. Shane wrote the "bible" for greenhouse growing. My copy is dog-eared and dirty with use.

I like gardens with signage that designates which organization or company is responsible for the garden that I am viewing. Sometimes the signs are as interesting as the plants. Several years ago, Tupper and I traveled to the city of Bucharest, Romania. The city is broken, struggling to recover from its years of communist rule. Everywhere I looked, I found drained fountains and patches of dry and neglected earth. Rounding a corner, I finally saw them: the hunched over figures of the women I immediately connected with. I saw few faces, mostly rear-ends of the Bucharest Garden Club busily weeding a small but proliferating bed of annuals. They chatted and laughed, seeming to not notice the destruction all around them. They propped themselves up with one arm on their leg while weeding with the other hand. They would occasionally stand to stretch their backs and view their progress. An old length of garden hose was dribbling water on the areas that were weeded and occasionally a woman would relocate the hose to the next section of garden bed. The temptation to join them was great. They were speaking a language and doing work that I love. I was lonesome for my own dirt, plants and people. But I just observed and hoped for the best for the gardeners and their city.

Garden clubs, in my estimation, are a valuable part of any community. They provide places of respite and beauty for everyone to share, hometown people and visitors alike. They plant living tributes to members of the community that have passed on. They provide examples and education of regional horticulture. They "spruce up" an otherwise dreary street, parking lot or strip mall. They show a community's pride in their living environment and give a big how-do-you-do to everyone that passes by. By virtue of their courage to bear their rear-ends to the viewing public, they are an example of hard work and humility.

We in the Evergreen Garden Club do good work. We are fortunate that our community appreciates and values the work that we do. For more than three decades, the women and men of our community have given back to the place they call home. For me, being a part of the Evergreen Garden Club is a hoot. Being a part of the world's garden clubs is an honor.

Peace,
Karla



Poinsettia Facts

- Poinsettias are native to Mexico.
- The Aztecs called the poinsettia Cuetlayochitl.
- Chile and Peru called the poinsettia the "Crown of the Andes."
- Poinsettias are part of the *Euphorbiaceae* family. Many plants in this family ooze a milky sap.
- In nature, poinsettias are a perennial flowering shrubs that can grow to ten feet tall.
- The showy colored part of poinsettias that most people think are the flowers are actually colored bracts (modified leaves).
- The flowers or cyathia of the poinsettia are in the center of the colorful bracts.
- Poinsettias have been called the lobster flower and flame leaf flower.
- Poinsettias are not poisonous.
- A study at Ohio State University showed that a 50 pound child who ate 500 bracts might have a slight tummy ache.
- A fresh poinsettia is one on which little or no yellow pollen is showing on the flower clusters in the center of the bracts.
- Poinsettias represent over 85 percent of the potted plant sales during the holiday season.
- Ninety percent of all poinsettias are exported from the United States.
- Poinsettias were introduced into the United States in 1825 by Joel Poinsett.
- Poinsettias are commercially grown in all 50 states.
- California is the top poinsettia producing state.
- December 12 is **National Poinsettia Day**.
- The Paul Ecke Ranch in California grows over 80 percent of poinsettias in the United States for the wholesale market.
- Ninety per cent of all the flowering poinsettias in the world got their start at the Paul Ecke Ranch.
- There are over 100 varieties of poinsettias available.
- \$220 million worth of poinsettias are sold during the holiday season.
- Seventy-four percent of Americans still prefer red poinsettias; 8 percent prefer white and 6 percent pink.
- Eighty percent of poinsettias are purchased by women.
- Eighty percent of people who purchase poinsettias are 40 or older.
- Poinsettias are the best selling potted plant in the United States.
- Poinsettias are the most popular Christmas plant even though most are sold in a 6 week period. The cost of a poinsettia is determined by the number of blooms.

Poinsettia Care

(From the University of Illinois Extension)

The length of time your poinsettia will give you pleasure in your home is dependent on (1) the maturity of the plant, (2) when you buy it, and (3) how you treat the plant. With care, poinsettias should retain their beauty for weeks and some varieties will stay attractive for months.

- After you have made your poinsettia selection, make sure it is wrapped properly because exposure to low temperatures even for a few minutes can damage the bracts and leaves.
- Unwrap your poinsettia carefully and place in a sunny window. Keep the plant from touching cold windows.
- Keep poinsettias away from warm or cold drafts from radiators, air registers or open doors and windows.
- Ideally poinsettias require daytime temperatures of 60 to 70°F and night time temperatures around 55°F. High temperatures will shorten the plant's life. Move the plant to a cooler room at night, if possible.
- Check the soil daily. Be sure to punch holes in foil so water can drain into a saucer. Water when soil is dry. Allow water to drain into the saucer and discard excess water.

Fertilize the poinsettia if you keep it past the holiday season. Apply a houseplant fertilizer once a month.

*The snapping of pitch from a burning log,
The faint scent of pine filling the room.
Flames leaping about as if it were a ballet
Performing for its audience.
The soft, comforting glow of candlelight,
Bringing with it serenity and quiet thoughts.
~Linda Christensen*

Evergreen Garden Club
PO Box 1393
Evergreen, Colorado 80437
www.evergreengardenclub.org



Denver Botanic Gardens Schedule of Events [www. botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)

Blossoms of Light at Denver Botanic Gardens

6 to 9 p.m. nightly December 3, 2004 - January 23, 2005

Every December, Denver Botanic Gardens turns into a winter wonderland as it is blanketed in over 900,000 colorful lights illuminating the plants and hardscapes throughout the gardens. Highlights on the 2004/2005 path include artistic displays in the Japanese Garden, Rock Alpine Garden and Shady Lane. Romantic and popular kissing spots, ornate balls of mistletoe hung in the most romantic spots throughout the Gardens, will also return.

Indoors in Gates Lobby Court, seasonal plants will be on display including cedar, creeping fig, variegated fruit trees and white poinsettias. Each night includes special seasonal entertainment including bell choirs, carolers, dancers and holiday Celtic music.