

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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Edition 11.01	Paul Parent Garden Club News	January 6, 2011
	<p><b>Quotation of the Week:</b></p> <p>"We may think that we are tending our garden, but of course, in many different ways, it is the garden and the plants that are nurturing us." — <b>Jenny Uglow</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Empty Box]</p> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Miracle-Gro® Potting Mix</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feeds plants up to 6 months.</li><li>• No mixing, no measuring!</li><li>• Enriched with MicroMax® nutrients for more blooms and more color!</li><li>• Rich, organic materials help improve drainage and airflow.</li><li>• Wetting agent disperses water to prevent dry spots.</li></ul> <p>Ideal for all kinds of container or potted plants.</p>	<p><b>Gifts for the Gardener</b></p> <p><a href="#">Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</a></p> <p><b>Contact Information:</b></p> <p><b>E-Mail:</b> <a href="#">Click to contact us.</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p><b>Fax:</b> (207) 985-6972</p> <p><b>Address:</b> Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p><b>Phone Hours:</b> Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
		<p><b>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</b></p> <p><a href="#">Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</a></p> <p><b>A Customized Gardening Tour of Ireland</b></p> <p>Join us for a journey to the beautiful gardens of the Emerald Isle.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here for more information.</a></p> <p><b>Have a Look Around Our Website:</b></p> 

needs.

Consider incorporating Boston ferns in your clean-air indoor garden; they are full and lush and work equally well in pots or hanging baskets. Also consider the maiden-hair fern. It thrives on high humidity, and is the perfect choice for placement in a bathroom. Just remember to keep your ferns in indirect light, whether inside or out, and place their containers in pebble-filled trays, adding water into the tray until it just covers the pebbles; do not over-water.

In the language of flowers, the **spider plant** represents an offer of elopement. An amazingly easy-to-care-for plant, it takes a lot of effort to kill the "airplane plant." It has proven quite effective in the absorption of chemicals that include formaldehyde, xylene, benzene, and carbon monoxide. It likes medium to bright light, isn't fussy about excess humidity, and prefers cool to average temps, while tolerating warmer conditions.

Another indoor plant that does equally well outside when the weather warms up, it's perfect for a hanging basket. This fast-grower sends out "babies," or spiderettes which are plantlets on long stalks. To propagate, set the plantlet, while still attached to the mother plant, on the surface of a pot filled with a soilless potting medium, using a bent paper clip to hold it in place. Once it begins to root, sever it from the mother plant. If plantlets on your spider have already begun to develop roots, simply sever and pot them in soil. One mother plant can lead to many other plants!

**Golden pothos**, aka **devil's ivy**, is practically impossible to kill. It will grow under nearly any conditions, either as a climber when trained around a wooden stake, or in a hanging basket. You have probably seen it trailing along the perimeter of office cubicles, where it thrives with only fluorescent lighting. Another of our favorite air purifiers, it removes formaldehyde from the atmosphere, and sets the standard for neglect-tolerant plants. In fact, about the only thing that will kill a pothos is over-watering; a shallow root system makes it susceptible to root rot. This is somewhat ironic, as your home can sport a plethora of pothos by simply placing clippings in water, and in about a week roots will begin to form. When a plant is fully rooted, pop it into a pot of potting soil, and keep it evenly moist.

We've started you out with some of the most reliable houseplants that will not only provide you with healthier air, but are also easily moved outside during warm weather. Now it's up to you to exploit these easy-to-grow beauties so that you may find yourself forever surrounded by a garden.

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## Keeping Houseplants Healthy in Winter

Keeping your houseplants healthy during winter months may seem difficult. Light from windows is reduced, days are shorter and humidity may be lower due to heating. But by making a few changes, you can help keep your houseplants healthy.

### Keeping things light

In winter, your plants receive sunlight for less time and in less intensity. Houseplants native to rainforests that are used to lower light will be fine with that, but most plants need more light. Try to move your plants near a brighter window (S/SW exposure) to get them more sunlight.

If you have no brighter windows (due to shade trees or apartment living), you might want to consider the purchase of plant lamps that are designed to provide the full spectrum light your plants need. They can be mounted under shelves, over plants or on specially-designed plant stands. Leave them on about eight hours a day, and they'll give your plants the light they need. Consider using the newer LED lamps. They are a bit more expensive, but they use less energy and are more efficient for producing the part of the spectrum that is needed by plants. In short, you aren't wasting your energy (and money) producing excess heat or light in spectra that your plants don't need.

### Temperature

Most plants do not do well when subjected to rapid fluctuations in temperature. Keep them away from hot air sources and cold drafts alike. Run ceiling fans on low if the house is closed up. Fans break up stagnant air; that's healthier for both you and your plants.

### Humidity

Some symptoms of low humidity are brown leaf tips and wilting. Low humidity makes your plants work harder to get moisture from the air and soil, as well as keep what they have inside.

One way to give your plants some extra humidity is to put a layer of pebbles in the bottom of a tray and fill the tray with just enough water to cover the bottom of the tray (below the top of the pebbles). Place potted plants in the tray.

### Other Tips

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Fertilizing should be done less often for most plants in winter.

Give your plants a good washing. Dirt, dust, grease, and other particles can settle on leaves. Dirty leaves can't absorb as much sunlight as clean ones. Gently wipe clean the leaves with a soft sponge or cloth dipped in plain tepid water. Sturdier plants can even be given a quick shower in the bathroom with tepid water.

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### What does soil pH measure?

#### **Answer:**

Soil pH indicates how acid or alkaline a soil is. In technical terms, it is a logarithmic function of the hydrogen ion concentration [H<sup>+</sup>]:  $pH = -\log [H^+]$ . Got all that?

In simpler terms, a pH of 7.0 is neutral. Below that number is acidic, above that number is alkaline. The scale is progressive too. A pH of 6.0 is ten times more acid than a pH of 7.0; a pH of 5.0 is 100 times more acid than a pH of 7.0, and so on.

You can test your soil pH with a simple pH test kit.

- To modify or correct acidic soils you need to apply lime.
- To modify or correct alkaline soils you need to apply soil sulfur or aluminum sulfate.

Most plants prefer soil slightly on the acidic side of 6. Use a lower pH for acid-loving plants like blueberries, rhododendrons, azaleas, and ferns.

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Join Paul Parent for a garden tour of the Emerald Isle! **Only 8 seats remain!**

Tour includes the Cliffs of Moher, Connemara National Park, Brigit's Garden, Muckcross Gardens, Bantry House & Gardens, Kilravock Garden, Garnish Island, Annes Grove Garden, Lakemount Gardens, Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre, Heywood Gardens, Powerscourt Gardens, Dublin Castle, Dillon Gardens and much more.

[Click here for details.](#)



Are you looking for a great gift for a gardener (or yourself)? This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy. This journal, *autographed personally by Paul*, makes a perfect gift for gardeners. The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder.

#### Also included:

- 8 tabbed sections
- 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...
- Weather records page
- 6 three year journal pages
- Insect & diseases page - 3 project pages
- 3 annual checklist pages
- Plant wish list page
- 2 large pocket pages
- Sheet of garden labels
- 5 garden detail sheets
- 5 graph paper pages for layouts
- 5 photo pages, each holding four 4x6 photos in landscape or portrait format

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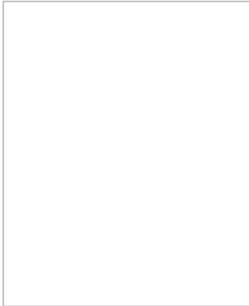


**This Week's Question:**

A general once wrote, "I will not move my troops without onions." Who was he, and why wouldn't he budge without onions?

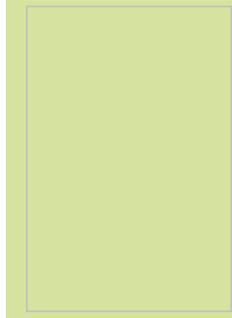
[Click Here to Answer](#)

**This Week's Prize:** *Healthy Garden, Healthy You*, by Milo Shammass



Milo takes us through a storytelling journey of soil health, plant health, animal health and how they directly relate to human health.

**BONUS:** 100 easy-to-grow plants, their growing instructions, and their direct human health benefits and disease prevention properties.



**Last Week's Question:**

In the traditional New Year's song, Auld Lang Syne, there is the following line: "And pou'd the gowans fine." "Pou'd" means pulled; Burns was talking about pulling flowers. We know gowans by another name--and many of us have picked them--what is that name?

**Last Week's Winner:**

Jack Harvey

**Last Week's Answer:**

Daisies

**Last Week's Prize:**

*Healthy Garden, Healthy You*, by Milo Shammass

One winner per question - we choose winners from the list of those who answer correctly. Winners must be newsletter subscribers. We'll ship you your prize, so be sure to put your address in the form in case you win!

**FEATURED RECIPE**

**Double Tomato  
Bruschetta**



**What You'll Need:**

- 6 Roma (plum) tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes, packed in oil
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, stems removed
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 French baguette
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

**Step by Step:**

- Preheat the oven on broiler setting.
- In a large bowl, combine the Roma tomatoes, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, olive oil, vinegar, basil, salt, and pepper. Allow the mixture to sit for 10 minutes.
- Cut the baguette into 3/4-inch slices. On a baking sheet, arrange the baguette slices in a single layer. Broil for 1 to 2 minutes, until slightly brown.
- Divide the tomato mixture evenly over the baguette slices. Top the slices with mozzarella cheese.
- Broil for 5 minutes, or until the cheese is melted.

Yield: 12 servings



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