

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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**To:** rickmorin@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Paul Parent Garden Club News - Happy Thanksgiving!

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Edition 11.47	Paul Parent Garden Club News	November 24, 2011
	<p align="center"><b>FEATURED QUOTE :</b></p> <p>"Gardening is a way of showing that you believe in tomorrow." ~ Old saying</p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p> <p><b>Wreaths are back for the holidays--and better than ever.</b> All wreaths will be made in Maine to your order, to insure freshness. Wreaths are double-faced with fresh picked balsam fir, and are not machine-made.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here for more information and pictures!</a></p>	<p align="center"><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 align="center"><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>Regular Phone Hours:</b> Mon.-Sat. 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
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<p align="center"><b><i>The Living Gift of Poinsettias</i></b></p>		
		
<p>Poinsettias are a wonderful worldwide holiday tradition. In fact, next to a Christmas tree, nothing else says Christmas quite like poinsettias. Displayed alone or in groups, they can add a festive splash of color to every décor. From a centerpiece on a holiday table to a miniature plant decorating the corner of an office desk, to a colorful hanging basket that can brighten any room, the poinsettia is the perfect holiday gift.</p> <p>So how did poinsettias become so popular at Christmas--and where do they come from? According to Mexican legend, a poor Mexican girl named Pepita who could not afford a gift to offer to Christ on Christmas Eve picked some weeds from the side of a road. The child was told that even a humble gift, if given in love, would be acceptable in God's eyes. When she brought the weeds into the church and laid them at the feet of the Christ child, they bloomed into red flowers with beautiful leaves, and the congregation felt they had witnessed a Christmas miracle.</p> <p>Poinsettias are native to the tropical forest at moderate elevations along the Pacific coast of Mexico and some parts of Guatemala. They are named after Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first United States Ambassador to Mexico, who introduced the plant in the U.S. In 1825. The poinsettia was a gift to President John Quincy Adams for the White House from the Mexican government.</p>		

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**Where can I find Paul on**

Poinsettias have come a long way from their humble beginnings. For years only variations of red flowers were propagated and grown. But now there are hundreds of color varieties available ranging from traditional shades of red, pink and white to burgundy, peach, striped, flecked and hand-dyed varieties.

Poinsettias are easy-going, and with proper care can last long past the holiday season. Just remember this plant is tropical and does not like the cold. Make sure it is wrapped when you leave the garden center. This will prevent chilling of the foliage. If it is cold, preheat the car before placing the plant in it. Do not stop on the way home to run additional errands and leave in the car unheated, or in a day or two most of the leaves will drop from the plant because they were chilled. If the plant pot is covered in foil, make sure it does not fill with water or the roots will rot--be careful. It's a wonderful plant for the holidays and makes a great Christmas present.

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Nothing is more beautiful in the garden than a large display of cyclamen. They are among the best fall-blooming plants. You can use them in pots on tables, by the front door, or planted in a nice shady spot outdoors before the frost arrives. They are great for atriums.

The flowers resemble a butterfly fluttering above the plant. The foliage is in the shape of a heart and they grow in a mound over the pot. There are miniatures varieties for small spots and the common larger plants for the table or garden. The foliage color can be green to silver and every combination in-between. The flower color ranges from white to pink, red, lavender and some multi-colored. Some varieties can also have frilly flowers or smooth edges. Hint: a great gift plant for someone with a cool home during the winter.

#### **A few notes on growing cyclamen:**

##### General:

- Try to keep water away from the crown area (they can get crown rot).
- Do not bury them too deep; keep the top of the tuber just slightly above the soil line.
- Keep your plants well fed; feed every couple of weeks while they are in full leaf.
- Pull out the stems that have gone by. Hint! Bend the stem down towards the foliage and quickly pull the stem out. It will snap free from the plant. Never leave old flower stems on the plant as they will rot and kill some of the leaves next to them.
- Pick a few flowers to go into a bud vase. They are lovely and last quite well.
- As the flowers begin to fade, gradually allow the plant to dry out for 2-3 months; do not feed during this time.
- Resume feeding when new growth appears. Repot at this time in a container 2 inches larger.



##### Outdoors:

- Cyclamen like cool weather (that's why they make great winter-bloomers). That means outdoors in a shady to semi-shady spot. If you have a spot that is full shade in summer and gets more light in cooler weather, that is ideal.
- Make sure they are planted in a well-draining area.
- They like cool weather--but not severe cold. Some are hardier than others are, but all need some protection against cold. These plants are bulb-like and will not survive outdoors during the winter. They must be brought indoors for the winter and they will bloom most of the winter for you. Great in mixed containers for the front step also. Try planting with flowering kale and cabbage.



##### Indoors:

- Pick a cool spot. Make sure they have good air circulation, but keep out of cold drafts. Also heating vents where hot and dry air can dry plants quickly. Hot forced air will force the plant to

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send all flower buds into bloom all at once. Cool temperatures spread out the flowering time over many week indoors.

- High humidity, especially during winter, is very important. Try putting the cyclamen on a tray of water with a layer of pebbles to form a shelf for pot to sit on. Don't put the cyclamen itself in the water. You want humidity around the plant, not soggy soil.
- Let the cyclamen have plenty of light in winter; sunburn is rarely a problem. In summer keep it in indirect light.
- Repot when the tuber fills the existing pot; it's best to repot it while it's dormant. Use a pot just a little larger than the old pot.

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## CHOOSING AND DISPLAYING A FRESH CUT CHRISTMAS TREE

There is nothing that says Christmas quite like the fragrance of a fresh cut Christmas tree. Somehow, scented candles and air fresheners just do not have the same natural aroma. Selecting and bringing home a fresh cut tree is just a natural part of the holiday tradition. Fun for the whole family.

You can get the most out of your holiday tree by following a few simple guidelines.

When selecting your fresh cut tree, bend a few needles and smell for fragrance. The stronger the smell, the fresher it is. Branches should be flexible, not brittle. Branches should have some "PITCH" on them and it should be sticky. Pick up the tree a few inches and bounce the cut end on the ground. A few needles will fall if the tree is fresh. If many needles fall, choose another tree.

Make sure to get the right size tree so you do not have to do a lot of pruning. Measure the height of your ceilings and the width of the space you plan to display your tree in, before you go to the nursery. Remember that a tree does not need to be perfectly even if displayed in a corner. A good nursery will make a fresh cut on the base of the tree for you so you will not have to when you get home.

Once you bring the tree home, place the tree directly in the tree stand and add water so it can start drinking at once. The fresh cut will help the tree take up water more easily. Display your tree away from heat sources such as heater vents, fireplaces, stereos and television sets, which can promote premature drying. If you are NOT going to set up the tree when you get home, place the tree in a bucket of water to prevent the fresh cut from drying out and the sappy pitch from filling the water tubes in the tree. Your garage is a perfect place to store the tree.

If you think that waiting to select the tree later in the month is better than early in the month, you are wrong. Most Christmas trees are cut at the same time and the sooner you get the tree out of the SUN and WIND the better. Get it home out of the snow and your decorating will be much easier. Use a Christmas tree preservative like **Vacation** to keep the tree as fresh as it was before you brought it into the house

Above all else, make sure you only use Christmas lights with a UL seal of approval. LED lights produce little to no heat and this alone will extend the life of the tree. You will love LED lights, and the cost to use them is **much** cheaper. Inspect your lights each year for excessive wear such as frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking before putting them up. Never use candles near a tree. Remember to turn lights off before going to bed or when unattended.

Finally, make sure to use non-flammable decorations on your tree. Now sit back and enjoy the BIGGEST arrangement in water you will ever have in your house! Enjoy the fragrance.

Have a safe and Merry Christmas!

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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**

If I have *Poa pratensis* growing in my yard, what am I growing?

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**This Week's Prize:**

**Wilt-Pruf®**...The Safe Way To Reduce Moisture Loss When Plants Are Under Water Stress due to:

- winter kill
- windburn
- drought
- transplant shock



[Click here for more information about Wilt-Pruf.](#)

**Last Week's Question**

What flowers were used in a nursery rhyme about the Bubonic Plague?

**Last Week's Winner:**

Linda Cipro

**Last Week's Answer:**

Posies (Posies are actually a small bouquet of flowers and herbs - not a particular flower - bad question - our apologies).

**Last Week's Prize:**

Wilt-Pruf®

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:

# Chocolate-Pumpkin Pie



### What You'll Need:

#### *Graham Cracker Crust:*

- 2 cups graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup butter, melted and cooled
- 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice (or cinnamon)
- 2 Tbsp. cocoa powder
- 1 Tbsp. sugar

#### *Filling:*

- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 15-oz. can pumpkin purée (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/3 tsp. ground cinnamon (or pumpkin pie spice)
- 1/2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1/4 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. freshly ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 Tbsp. espresso powder
- 2/3 cup milk

#### *Ganache:*

- 1 pint (2 cups) heavy cream
- 12 ounces quality semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 2Tbsp. butter
- 2 Tbsp sugar

### Step by Step:

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- Stir all crust ingredients in a 9 or 10 inch pie plate; press wet crumbs uniformly against bottom and sides.
- Bake 12-15 minutes, until golden brown. Set aside.
- Turn up oven to 425°.
- Whisk eggs, pumpkin, brown sugar, cocoa, cinnamon, allspice, cloves, nutmeg and salt until lumps are completely gone.
- In a separate bowl, dissolve espresso powder in vanilla extract and milk. Combine with other wet ingredients, beating until silky smooth.
- Pour mixture into cooled pie crust, baking 15 minutes at 425°. Reduce oven to 350° and bake about 30 minutes more, or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean and the filling jiggles slightly.
- Cool completely on a wire rack.
- In a microwavable 2 qt. bowl heat cream at 50% power until bubbles form at sides.
- Remove and add chocolate all at once. With a *clean whisk*, begin gently stirring in center of bowl. As chocolate melts, continue gently and evenly stirring until all chocolate is incorporated and no lumps remain, 2-4 minutes.
- Fold in sugar; when incorporated, fold in butter until mixture is glossy. Allow ganache to rest loosely covered on counter until slightly thickened.
- Spoon ganache onto cooled, baked pie. Tap pan against counter to remove air bubbles so surface is glossy and smooth.
- Store in refrigerator, allowing to come to room temperature before serving. Refrigerate

leftovers promptly.

Yield: 8-10 servings



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