

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 9, 2010 3:05 PM
To: rickmorin@earthlink.net
Subject: Paul Parent Garden Club News - December 9, 2010

Please click here to read newsletter if not displayed below: <http://paulparentclub.com/news/10/49>

Edition 10.49	Paul Parent Garden Club News	December 9, 2010
	<p align="center">FEATURED QUOTE :</p> <p>"Youth is like spring, an over-praised season more remarkable for biting winds than genial breezes. Autumn is the mellow season, and what we lose in flowers we more than gain in fruits." ~ Samuel Butler</p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p> <p>Wreaths are back for the holidays--and better than ever. All wreaths are 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 align="center">Click here to order online.</p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p> <p>Still looking for a great gift for a gardener? This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy. This journal, <i>autographed personally by Paul</i>, makes a perfect gift for gardeners. The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder.</p> <p>Also included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 <p align="center">Click here to order online.</p> <p align="center"><input type="text"/></p>	<p>Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p>
		<p>Contact Information:</p> <p>E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p>
		<p>Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p>
		<p>Fax: (207) 985-6972</p>
		<p>Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p>
		<p>Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
		<p>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p>
		<p>A Customized Gardening Tour of Ireland</p> <p>Join us for a journey to the beautiful gardens of the Emerald Isle.</p> <p>Click here for more information.</p>
		<p align="center">Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <p align="center">Home About Paul Paul's Recipes Newsletter Archives</p>

When thinking of Christmas plants or cut greens, there is no better plant than holly. With its shiny green leaves and red berries, holly contains all the colors of the holiday. Because the holly bears fruit and stays green all year, it is considered a Christian symbol of immortality. One legend is that the holly hid Jesus from Herod's soldiers during the flight to Egypt and holly was thereafter blessed with green leaves all year.

To insure good luck your holly had to be burned, not thrown away. Some legends held that the berries of the holly were once yellow and that the wounds of Christ on the cross stained them red. In early Yule celebrations, holly represented the male and ivy the female. Whichever type was brought into the house first was said to rule the house for that year.

One Pennsylvania tradition from Scotch and Irish settlers held that if holly was brought into the house in fair weather, the wife would rule. If it was cut in stormy weather, the man would be the master of the house for the coming year. But, if holly was allowed to stay up until the New Year, bad luck would stay with the house.

American holly was used as a holiday plant from early days in our country. George Washington, in fact, decorated the white house in Philadelphia with this native plant. He loved this plant so much he planted many holly types at his home at Mount Vernon. You can still see them today.

Because the holly plant is so beautiful and hardy in many areas, it became popular all over the country. This year let's decorate our homes with natural plants and enjoy the tradition, for they are part of our history

If you purchase holly plants this year from the nursery, keep them outside or on a cold porch. The holly is dormant, and if you bring it inside it will wake up within the warm house and start to grow. Then, you put it outside for the winter after the holidays or it will die. Keep potted plants on the shady side of the house outside during the winter or in the garage or tool shed.

The best holly for most all of New England is a new hybrid called "Blue" holly. These plants are a cross of the wild American holly that lives everywhere south of Boston and the English holly, usually found on the west coast but numerous on Cape Cod. American holly is hardy, with dull green leaves and small red berries. English holly is not as hardy but has shiny green leaves and large red berries. American holly will grow to 25 feet tall and the English around 15 feet tall. The blue is more a bush type and grows wonderfully as a sheared large bush on the corner of your home. As a cut branch, English holly must go inside or the berries and leaves will turn black with very cold weather, but they are great in a vase of water. American and blue holly will tolerate the cold and do well outside all winter in addition to indoor use.

It is the time to visit your local nursery to select your fresh-cut Christmas tree. Most of us take the Christmas tree for granted each year, buying it and decorating it without much thought. This year I want you to know the story of the Christmas tree; it will change how you see your tree.

This is a once-upon-a-time story. It starts far away in the mountains of Germany, where the tradition of bringing a evergreen tree into house for Christmas began. The evergreen tree was brought into the house to ensure health and happiness through the season and the spring greening of Mother Earth. As people emigrated to other parts of the world they took the tradition with them and the popularity grew.

In America the tree grew from a table tree to a full-size floor-to-ceiling tree. As its popularity increased each year, problems rose due to unrestricted cutting of the tree in the forested areas. Conservationists warned then-President Theodore Roosevelt that if he did not act fast, the nation's forests would be depleted in just a few years. By 1900, roughly half of our timber had been cut--not, of course, all for Christmas trees. The topsoil was washing away and many birds were approaching extinction.

Fearing that our great forests would be destroyed, the President banned the Christmas tree from his home and urged everyone to do the same. Unfortunately for the President, his two children did not listen to their father and smuggled a tree into the closet of their room. As punishment for their deeds, the children were sent to the office of the National Forest and Parks Service to hear the explanation of the problem. To the President's surprise they came back with a plan that would help thin the forest selectively and save the tradition of Christmas trees. New conservation practices helped to relieve the strain of the tree shortages, and the forests were saved from unnecessary destruction.

Some years later, his cousin President Franklin D. Roosevelt had a farm in Hyde Park N.Y., and in an effort to encourage soil conservation he experimented with growing Christmas trees commercially. He chose land that was too stony to farm, too steep to plow or otherwise unsuitable for cultivation crops. The project was a success and he encouraged others to do the same.

The Christmas tree farmer became a American hero. Tree farming helped relieve the pressure on our forest, preventing erosion of our soils, helped prevent the extinction of some wildlife and created thousands of new jobs on land unsuitable for farming. The Christmas tree of today is possible because of two children, Archie and Quentin Roosevelt, who wanted something badly enough to work for it and their father, who helped make it possible. So you see, there is more to our president than the teddy bear and the Rough Riders.

By the way, the state of **Maine** was the home of the Christmas tree for America. The first Christmas trees sold in Boston came from Maine--and many still do. Maine had the best growing conditions, soil and climate for the balsam fir tree. Then and today the balsam fir is the number one selling Christmas tree in America from Maine to Florida and west to California. The tree has everything we want for the house--fragrance, color, hardiness, shape and affordability.

Subscribe to our newsletter!

[Click here to subscribe, unsubscribe or change your address.](#)

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

-
-



-
-
-
-
-

One of the most beautiful evergreen trees for the South is the Norfolk Island Pine. For those of us that live in the North this plant is a wonderful indoor plant. It was discovered by the early explorers who were searching the South Pacific Ocean for new lands. Yes, the one and only Captain Cook made it possible for us to enjoy this plant in our homes today. In the wild, it grows to almost 200 feet, but in our home, just to the ceiling.

As a potted tree, it will grow in a room with a lot of light and if you put it in a corner it will grow slanting towards the light, so keep it near a window and turn it periodically. House temperatures 60 to 70 degrees are best; it also needs good air circulation. It will tolerate 50 degrees during the winter as long as there is no draft from the door or windows.

Water as needed and keep soil moist but not wet. Be sure there are drainage holes in the pot to help drain excess water. If you see lower branches turning brown and falling from the plant, cut back on the water. Feed monthly with Neptune's Harvest or Miracle-Gro fertilizer. If you often forget to feed, use Osmocote spring and fall. This plant loves humidity. During the winter, when the heat is on, mist the foliage daily. If you can, fill the saucer the pot is on with stones and add water daily; it will help greatly.

Repot every 2 to 3 years or when you notice that the roots are beginning to fill the pot. Use a light-weight potting soil--never soil from the garden. Drainage is the key to success.

If the plant droops and needles drop off, it could be that the room is too hot and has poor air circulation. Do not place other plants around this plant--it likes room to grow and no competition for air and light.

If the plant loses lower branches, they will not be replaced by the plant, as it's a tree.

The Norfolk Island Pine will make a great tree at Christmas for apartments, or for people who do not like the mess that cut trees make. Decorate with LED lights, as they create NO heat on the branches, and add a few red bows.

When spring arrives and it is safe to put out your flowers, place the tree in a shady area on your porch or deck for the summer. They have few bugs and disease problems. Enjoy!



Attention: anyone who receives an amaryllis as a gift over the holidays...don't throw that bulb away the minute the flower stalk becomes withered and ugly! With a little coddling, you can enjoy the same beautiful blooms next year.

After the blossoms shrivel, cut the flower stem 1 inch above the base with a sharp knife. Continue to water and feed the remaining bulb regularly, and provide plenty of light. Amaryllis can be planted outdoors - pot and all - in partial shade and then into full sunlight during the summer.

For Christmas blooms next year, bring the plants into the garage in late September and place the pots on their sides. Cut off all water. This gives the plants a couple of months to rest before preparing to bloom again during the holidays.

In November, remove any dead leaves and replace the top couple of inches of potting soil. Resist the urge to pot up, as amaryllis like being jammed into a small space; there should only be about 1" between the bulb and the pot. Thoroughly water, place in a sunny window indoors and wait until growth emerges.

Once a flower bud becomes evident, continue watering when soil becomes dry, and make sure the plant is receiving plenty of sunlight. Water well during blooming, but put the plant in a less bright spot to help the flowers last longer. Then, when the flowers begin to fade, it's time to start the whole process over again.

If you're in USDA hardiness zone 7b or warmer, amaryllis can also be grown outdoors like any other flowering bulb, although many of the Dutch hybrid types will not do that well. Just make sure the soil is well-drained and rich in organic matter. Space bulbs about a foot apart and barely cover the bulb tops with soil. Select a sunny spot in the garden that receives some shade during the afternoon hours. Avoid placing the bulb where it will dry out excessively; a light layer of mulch will help retain moisture and keep the bulb from overheating in hot weather.



Join Paul Parent for a garden tour of the Emerald Isle!

Tour includes the Cliffs of Moher, Connemara National Park, Brigit's Garden, Muckross 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.

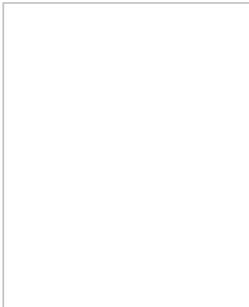
[Click here for details.](#)



This Week's Question:

The Carolina Cherry laurel (*Prunus Caroliniana*) has some very dangerous leaves, an effective defense against leaf-chewers. What makes them dangerous?

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.



[Click Here to Answer](#)

Last Week's Question:

What is the flower of the month for December?

Last Week's Winner:

Robert Pelletier

Last Week's Answer:

Narcissus (daffodils).

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



Microwave Oven
Peanut Brittle



What You'll Need:

- 1 1/2 cups dry roasted peanuts
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1 pinch salt (optional)
- 1 tablespoon butter

• 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

• 1 teaspoon baking soda

Step by Step:

- Grease a baking sheet, and set aside.
- In a glass bowl, combine peanuts, sugar, corn syrup, and salt.
- Cook in microwave for 6 to 7 minutes on high (On 700 Watts--adjust for your microwave as necessary); mixture should be bubbly and peanuts browned.
- Stir in butter and vanilla; cook 2 to 3 minutes longer.
- Quickly stir in baking soda, just until mixture is foamy.
- Pour immediately onto greased baking sheet.
- Let cool 15 minutes, or until set. Break into pieces, and store in an airtight container.

Yield: 16 servings



[click here for a printer friendly version of this page](#)



© 2004-2010 Garden Partners LLC All Rights Reserved. [Privacy Policy](#). All materials contained in this site are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published, or broadcast without prior written permission of Garden Partners, LLC. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content. Would you like a newsletter like this for your nursery or garden center? Please feel free to look at what we have to offer and contact us for your [garden center marketing](#) solutions.