

Happy Holidays Everyone!

While the natural world outside lays fallow, we are invited to retreat and dream of spring. The icy winds and roads encourage us to take shelter for a while, to limit our orbit and look within ourselves. Amid the holiday bustle lies a unique opportunity for reflection and introspection. A chance to sit beside the fire and just be here, right now and nowhere else.

*SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT
ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT ...*

Perhaps, we will experience the kind of peace that comes with a silent night, the wonder that arrives on a holy night. Perhaps this season, when all is calm, all will be bright ...

DECEMBER 14 GARDEN CLUB MEETING:

Day: Second Wednesday of the month - September through May

Time: **Arrive at 1:00PM** *NOTE: THIS IS AN EARLIER TIME THAN USUAL AND JUST FOR THE DECEMBER MEETING*

Location: Our Savior Lutheran Church
745 Front Street South
Issaquah

Program for December Meeting: There will be no speaker as this is our traditional special meeting to celebrate the holidays.

Everyone will bring snacks:

Last names beginning with A - L will bring SAVORY treats

Last names beginning with M - Z will bring SWEET treats

Now is the time to breakout grandma's special holiday treat and share it with everyone

Garden d'Light Tickets: With our membership to Bellevue Botanical Garden, the club receives 4 tickets tickets. It is a group ticket for 4 people (not individual tickets). There will be a raffle at the December 14 meeting so bring your wallets!

At the meeting there will also be a time for sharing holiday traditions you have in your family and/or some special craft item you do around this time of year. It will be an informal meeting and time to share with one another and get to know some hidden talent we all hide ...

BRIEF REPORT FROM NOVEMBER 9 GARDEN CLUB MEETING:

Presenters were Gordon Polson and Alison Johnson ... per their own description it was the "British Show". They were both informative and entertaining as they talked about the BASIC PROPAGATION.

For those of you that were unable to attend here are a few factoids from their talk:

Propagation is defined as causing a plant (or animal) to reproduce itself. They talked primarily about taking cuttings. There was caution given that one year you might get almost 100% success and the following year nothing may seem to go right.

Cuttings are used to maintain specific characteristics, known as cloning. Another reason to do propagation is cost ... it's far less expensive than grafting or tissue culture. It is an ideal way of increasing your stock for your own use or to give copies of your plants to a friend.

Types of cuttings - Softwood, Greenwood, Hardwood, Leaf and Root are the main groups.

When can cuttings be taken - Depending on the variety, they can be taken almost the whole year round, with exception of a few weeks in early spring. Watch for leaf bud break and when you see it, make a mark on your calendar 6 weeks in the future. That is when you can start. Whenever you take cuttings, if they cannot be treated and planted immediately, they should be sealed in a plastic bag and kept in a cool place.

Hormone rooting compounds come in several different preparations - Liquids, Powders and Gels. Liquids are best as you can modify the strength to meet your needs. Powders need to be in solution and have a tendency to decrease in strength as they age. Gels are expensive!

Alison then went through how to create and use a Forsythe Pot for rooting of cuttings. If interested see Lois for a copy of the handout (I have a couple of extra but can visit a copy machine if more are needed).

Other things discussed at the meeting:

A GIANT THANK YOU is owed Joy for all the hard work that she did on creation of the Yearbook for 2022 - 2023! They were passed out at the meeting. If you didn't get one please see one of the co-presidents ...

Garden Therapy: Joan will call the Rehabilitation Center and see when and if they will be ready for us to resume this activity.

Growing Great Gardeners: Dianne reported that FINALLY there has been word from Issaquah Elementary and they are ready to reinstitute this project. Dianne has shared all six of her lesson plans including educational materials and guidelines for providing garden related snacks at each session. A PTSA member will be leading the efforts to repair the beds and renew soil and gravel walkways with the help of a gentleman from the Issaquah Hatchery. They will use funds budgeted from our club, PTSA as well as a \$500 grant. Great job Dianne!

Spring Plant Sale: We discussed the possibility of having a one day plant sale in the spring either at Joan's house or in the church parking lot (if allowed). It will require as much set-up as a longer sale so chairpersons will be needed as well as lots of manpower for set-up and take-down. Stay tuned ...

DATE FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

Garden d'Light - Saturday November 26 to Saturday, December 31. Open every day except Christmas from 4:30PM - 9:30PM. Individual tickets are \$8.00/adult and are date and time specific so be aware of this when ordering your tickets. Parking is \$5.00. It's an amazing light display and well worth attending!

2023 SAVE THE DATES:

February 27, 2023 - Next GMM which will be a presentation of crafts by attendees. There is no competition but you are encouraged to reserve a space on the table to display your craft and at the meeting you can either share a bit about what you do or you don't have to speak if you don't want to. Think out of the box ... we all have crafts we do! To reserve a table contact Gale Baullinger ... email: gale5904@aol.com

March 3 & 4, 2023 - Whidbey Gardening is sponsoring a seminar entitled "Gardening with Purpose - Beauty, Bounty & Benefit". Early registration opens January 15 - 20, 2023 and the website is now open - WhidbeyGardening.org

April 17 - 20, 2023 - Pacific Region Convention 2023 "Going Green - Together". It will be held at the Embassy Suites in Lynnwood. You can attend for a day (or more) and not even have to spend the night! There will be tours, workshops, speakers and entertainment ... stay tuned for more details.

September 22 - 24, 2023 - District Flower Show, Bellevue Botanical Garden

April 24, 2023 - Arbor Day Celebration at Bellevue Botanical Garden. This year ELWD has been asked to provide new trees for the large planters in front of BBG. For clubs to donate to this effort they need to submit a check to Gale Baullinger.

EDUCATION CORNER:

To help prepare you for your holiday floral decor here are a couple of tips and tricks to keep your Paperwhites from flopping over and some interesting information about Poinsettias:

The secret to well-behaved paperwhites:

Here's a seasonal tip from the archives of Growing for Market.

The paperwhite narcissus is a popular bulb for winter forcing, but often the stems get so tall they flop over before the plant has finished flowering. New research reveals an unexpected solution to the problem: watering with alcohol.

William Miller of the Flowerbulb Research Program at Cornell University found that paperwhites watered with dilute solutions of alcoholic beverages will be one-third to one-half shorter, with flowers as big and long-lasting as usual.

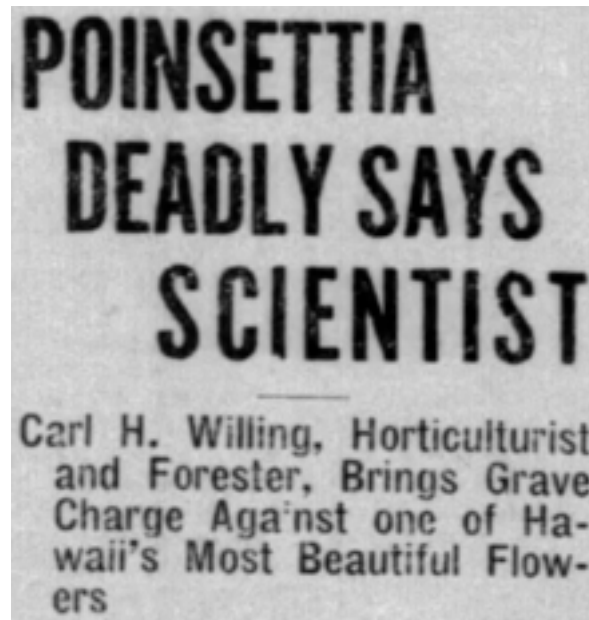
Miller suggests planting paperwhites in stones, gravel, marbles, glass beads, etc., as usual. Add water as you normally would, then wait about one week until roots are growing and the shoot is green and 1-2 inches above the top of the bulb. At this point, pour off the water and replace it with a solution of 4-6% alcohol made from just about any hard liquor such as gin, vodka, whiskey, rum, or tequila. To get a 5% solution from a 40% distilled spirit such as the aforementioned, add 1 part liquor to 7 parts water. Do not use beer or wine, as the sugars will cause problems for the plant. And don't exceed the 6% alcohol solution as any more may be toxic. If you don't have liquor in the house, you can use rubbing alcohol, which is 70% alcohol, and may be diluted at the rate of 1 part rubbing alcohol to 10 or 11 parts water.

Use the alcohol solution instead of water for further irrigation of the bulbs. The plants will start to show effects within just a few days.

Researchers aren't sure why the alcohol stunts the plant's growth, but suspect it is simply water stress, in which the alcohol makes it difficult for the plants to absorb water.

POINSETTIA TOXICITY:

Toxicity[[edit](#)]



Newspaper headline from the [Honolulu Star-Bulletin](#) (1913) wrongly alleging that poinsettia is deadly

Poinsettias are popularly, though incorrectly, said to be toxic to humans and other animals. This misconception was spread by a 1919 [urban legend](#) of a two-year-old child dying after consuming a poinsettia leaf. In 1944, the plant was included in H. R. Arnold's book *Poisonous Plants of Hawaii* on this premise. Though Arnold later admitted that the story was hearsay and that poinsettias were not proven to be poisonous, the plant was thus thought deadly. In 1970 the US [Food and Drug Administration](#) published a newsletter stating erroneously that "one poinsettia leaf can kill a child", and in 1980 they were prohibited from nursing homes in a county in North Carolina due to this supposed toxicity.

An attempt to determine a poisonous dose of poinsettia to rats failed, even after reaching experimental doses equivalent to consuming 500 leaves, or nearly 1 kg (2.2 lb) of sap. Contact with any part of the plant by children or pets often has no effect, though it may cause nausea, diarrhea, or vomiting if swallowed. External exposure to the plant may result in a skin rash for some. A survey of more than 20,000 calls to the [American Association of Poison Control Centers](#) from 1985–1992 related to poinsettia exposure showed no fatalities. In 92.4% of calls, there was no effect from exposure, and in 3.4% of calls there were minor effects, defined as "minimally bothersome".^[4] Similarly, a cat or dog's exposure to poinsettias rarely necessitates medical treatment. If ingested, mild

drooling or vomiting can occur, or rarely, diarrhea. In rare cases, exposure to the eye may result in eye irritation. Skin exposure to the sap may cause itchiness, redness, or swelling. It can induce [asthma](#) and [allergic rhinitis](#) in certain groups of people.

As always, if you have questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to any of the three co-presidents ...

Happy Holidays!