

PETALS

**LOVELAND GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER
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December 2018**

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our December potluck; a great opportunity to visit with friends and meet new members. As usual there will be no speaker and no business meeting. Please remember to bring a dish to share. We will also be doing our traditional gift exchange. Participation is optional. If you would like to participate, bring a wrapped, garden related gift, approximately \$10 in value and get ready for some fun, especially when the "stealing" begins. For those who are new, the rules of the exchange will be explained in more detail at the meeting.

Thank you to Penny Kragie and the crafters for creating many beautiful Christmas ornaments and a spectacular tree that is on display in the Loveland Library. The money raised from the sale of the ornaments will go toward the purchase of trees for public spaces in Loveland.

I hope you have a wonderful and safe holiday. Barb

NEXT MEETING / HOSTS AND PROGRAM

December 19, 2018 10:00, POTLUCK – bring a dish to share (we now have 40 members) and a wrapped garden-related gift (\$10.00) to exchange. This is a time for fun and conversation with no formal meeting

Hosts: Linda MacArthur, Ellen Fernandez, Carol Bergersen

BIRTHDAYS IN THE CLUB

Carol Bergersen 12/4	Carol Hulse 12/14
Michael Walter 12/19	Betty Hill 1/1 Ellen Fernandez 1/12

EVENTS IN NORTHERN COLORADO December-13 ~ December-13

Dec. 12 "Floral Design with Evergreens and Berries" by Heather Sturtz & Copeland Florist & Greenhouse in Boulder; Time: 1 pm.; Free, does not include materials; Bring or purchase a container; Call 303-442-6663 to register.

Dec 14 Barb Near reminds us of our first plant sale meeting,

scheduled for Friday, at 1:00 in the church library. Everyone is welcome. Please remember the church is not open on Friday. I have a key and will get to the church a few minutes before the meeting. Carl would like me to lock the building once everyone has arrived. I will keep the door open for a while after 1:00. If you are late and find the door locked, give me a call on my cell (248-921-4571), and I will come and let you in.

Ongoing to Dec. 24 **Holiday Gift Market Harlequin's Gardens, 4795 N. 26th St. in Boulder; Time: 10 am - 5 pm on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays; Gifts for gardeners and non-gardeners; 303-939-9403**

Ongoing to Jan. 1 **Garden of Lights The Gardens on Spring Creek in Fort Collins; Time: 5 - 9 p.m.; Fee: \$5 suggested donation per adult, \$2 per child, ages 2 and under free. Enjoy lights, shopping for gifts, entertainment and more. Weekend nights include additional features; See www.fcgov.com/gardens for details.**

Ongoing to Jan. 1 **Blossoms of Light Denver Botanic Gardens, Time: 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. nightly; Thousands of holiday lights adorn the trees and plants; refreshments available for purchase; Entertainment on selected evenings; Fee: Advance purchase at reduced rates, prices higher at the door; See www.botanicgardens.org for details; 720-865-3501**

THINGS TO DO IN YOUR GARDEN THIS MONTH

- * Prune overgrown trees and shrubs for shape and strength. Several websites show you how. Brush snow off trees and bushes. Added weight can weaken branches.
- * Check soil around perennials for heaving. Push plant back gently. Mulch. Cut back any that are more than 18".
- * Check you favorite nursery or CSU extension for upcoming classes and workshops.
- * **Care of Living Christmas Trees: Avoid keeping the tree indoors too long. Preferably, living trees should stay indoors no more than five days, with seven days the maximum. Be sure the root ball stays moist. Do not let it dry out. Use only small lights that are cool-burning. Keep the tree away from sources of heat such as heater vents, the fireplace, T.V., etc. You may keep the tree in the garage for a few days prior to bringing it indoors and also after removing it from the house. Be sure to keep it watered at all times.**
- * Christmas cactus plants are in bloom this month. These plants prefer cool temperatures (70 * during the daytime and in the 60's at

night), bright, indirect sunlight and moderate to light water. Fertilize plants monthly with a liquid fertilizer when they are not in bloom. For fullness pinch them back in June. In order to re-bloom they require 12 hours of darkness each night in the fall.

* Check soil moisture of shrubs and trees by sticking a screwdriver down 2 inches a few inches from the trunk. If the blade feels dry set bubbler at the base of the plant until the root ball is evenly moist.

GARDEN HACKS

The most important tool in the garden is either a mobile phone or an alert system. If you were to fall in the garden and couldn't get up, a tool for communication would be essential. Having a communication device will ensure that you can get the necessary assistance if needed.

There are a number of specially designed gloves that can improve your grip and protect your hands while you work. Some gloves have extra padding in the palm and finger joints that can improve grip, and cause fewer calluses and blisters.

Kneepads and garden seats can also protect your knees and save your back when working close to the ground.

In addition, garden kneeling benches are very versatile. They can be used in both the elevated position as a seat or flipped over for a kneepad and handles to assist is getting up.

There are ergonomic tools that can help protect your wrists by reducing the bending and twisting wrist movement that often comes with digging and weeding. Ergonomic long handled pruning tools and handsaws with longer or telescopic handles are easier to grip and provide more accessibility to hard to reach branches.

Paint all of your garden tools with a bright color making them easy to locate.

A single hole punch will make seed shopping easier when you put favorite seed species packets on a key ring.

Most garden jobs involve moving things, and the right equipment can make it easier to carry your tools and move heavy or large items. Little wagons are the perfect gardening tool to roll out to the garden for those who like to have their tools by their side. A bucket, especially one with the canvas insert that slips around any five-gallon bucket, is wonderful to keep your tools nearby and organized. Wheeled plant stands aren't just a good option for

gardeners with chronic pain, but for all gardeners eliminating the need to haul heavy potted plants from place to place.

To help make your watering chores a little easier, use lightweight garden hoses; soaker or drip hoses that can be snaked throughout the garden; and hose chests that can automatically rewind themselves. Attachments that are of value to any gardener include: on/off valve at the hose end, extension nozzles, water breakers, and easy to use lever controlled water faucets. An easy brass coupler can be a huge asset in the garden.

A garden hose wand is light weight and easy on fragile hands. It may be worth the investment to install automatic or trickle irrigation systems in permanent planters or beds.

Use what you have and share excess – especially tools. (LGC Plant Sale?)

Rent “expensive” or once a year tools; or share with others doing the same task.

Knowledge can be a tool – read, discuss and search websites for information to make any job easier and more rewarding.

Clean, fix and sharpen tools

Continue composting – no animal product of any kind, except egg shells (washed)

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE GARDEN

