



Master Gardener Thymes

www.lakelandsmastergardener.org

December 2008

December 11th meeting: Christmas Party

Our Christmas get together is Thurs., Dec. 11 @ 6:30, Tranquil UMC Fellowship Hall on Hwy. 10. Everyone is asked to bring an appetizer or sweet. The Social Committee will take care of the drinks. The occasion will be a social one, we will not be exchanging gifts this year. Linda

All bills for 2008 should be to the Treasurer for payment before Dec. 31. Louise Powell, 107 Crestview Dr., Greenwood 29649. 223.9393

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We still don't have a Vice-President for next year. According to our By-Laws, the Vice-President will serve a 3-year term, with the first year as Vice-President, the second year as President, and the third year as Past President. The Vice-President will preside at meetings in the absence of the President. Don't be shy, volunteer today. If you are interested in helping in this capacity, please contact Sandy Stachurski at drglenn7@embarqmail.com or give her a call at 229-7444 (office), 227-2769 (home).

DUES ARE DUE

Yes, we know it is early. Yes, this is a change. But, all dues for 2009 will need to be paid in full before December 31, 2008. The change has come so we will be able to have the directory completed and distributed by January 31, 2009. In the past, we haven't been able to have all dues paid and complete the directory

until the first quarter is over which gives us limited time to actually use the information. Dues can be paid to **Louise Powell** at the general meeting or mail your dues to her at: **107 Crestview Drive, Greenwood, SC 29649.**

If you are in the new class, your tuition covers dues for 2008, but you will be responsible to pay the 2009 dues.

Please keep in mind, if your dues are not paid by the December 31, 2008 deadline your name will not appear in the directory, nor will you receive any newsletters. We thank you in advance for adapting to this change.

59 years old and under	\$15.00
60+ years old	\$10.00
Married couples 59 and under	\$20.00
Married couples 60+	\$15.00
Lifetime Membership	\$125.00

Christmas Tree Safety Tips

A fire on any day seems bad, but a fire on Christmas seems to be the worst. Some 300 Christmas trees caught fire in one recent year, with electrical problems the most common culprit. Here's how to keep your tree green and your presents safe.

1. When you buy your tree, have the vendor make a fresh cut an inch from the bottom; this will help the tree drink.
2. If you buy your tree early and keep it outside, store it away from wind and sun, and keep the bottom in a bucket of water.
3. Make sure your lights are safe. If you need outdoor lights, make sure the ones you buy are

meant for outdoor use. Make sure your lights carry certification from a testing laboratory.

4. Don't use electric lights on a metal tree.
5. Discard any strings of lights that are frayed or broken. Christmas lights are cheap.
6. Unplug your Christmas tree before you leave or go to bed.
7. Don't buy a tree that is dry and dropping needles. To check for freshness, loosely grip the end of a branch and pull your hand over it. Only a few needles should fall off.
8. Make sure your tree stand holds plenty of water, and don't let it run out.
9. If your tree seems wobbly, center it in the stand more securely and redo the bolts or screws. Of if your tree stand is cheap, buy a larger, stronger one.
10. If you buy an artificial tree, make sure it is fire-retardant.
11. Keep your tree at least three feet from furnaces, radiators and fireplaces.
12. Try to position it near an outlet so that cords are not running long distances. Do not place the tree where it may block exits.
13. When Christmas is over or when the tree starts to drop needles, dispose of it. Don't leave it in your house or put it in your garage.
14. Keep a close eye on small children when they are around the tree; many small decorations and ornaments are sharp, breakable and can be swallowed

*Naval Safety Center

*

Rose Protection Tips for Winter

Submitted by Vincent Plotczyk

With Fall nearing an end and winter right around the corner it is time to get ready to protect roses from the winter weather.

When selecting roses, always select cultivars that are able to tolerate the coldest temperatures in your area. Check the USDA hardiness zone maps for information for your zone.

Keep plants well watered. Water deeply after the first frost but before the first freeze. Stop fertilizing and dead heading as this will slow growth and encourage dormancy. Prune out dead and diseased or damaged canes only. Remove any debris from around the plant that might harbor diseases. Heavy pruning should be done in the

spring. Mound soil over the base of the plant extending up to at least 12 to 15 inches. This soil should come from some place other than your rose bed so you do not damage the roots of your plant and your plant will have a better chance of surviving the winter.

When the mound is frozen, cover the mound with straw, leaves or compost at least a foot deep. This will help insulate and keep the soil frozen. Winter wind can be a real problem for climbing roses. Root damage can occur from the plant being rocked by the wind. Be sure to tie the canes to the trellis or you can tie the canes vertically to protect them from breaking. Also, cover the base of the plant with a foot of soil. In vary cold climates, climbers may need to be removed from the trellis and bent down and covered with mulch and soil. When removing climbers, be very careful not to injure or crack the stems.

Remember that healthy roses free of diseases, nutrient deficiencies, insects and drought damage will much more likely make it through severe winters.

References:

Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
Winter Protection for Roses: Everything You Need To Know by Angelina P. Chute
Urban Programs Resource Network, University of Illinois: Roses, Winter Protection
Roses for Dummies: Dummies.com

Simply amazing!!!

Submitted by Vicki Hedden

Before I turned 50 years old I decided to do what I've always wanted to do. I have eight flower beds, fruit trees and a vegetable garden that has produced so much in the beginning that we gave most of it away.

We loved sharing with friends and family and those in need.

Every one said oh you have a green thumb! Well I knew better. I wanted to know more about my soil and nutrients and why some plants did better than others.

I was at the Greenwood Mall one day and saw the sign up list for master gardener classes.

I had been there several times over the last years to buy planting guides and my most favorite book of all is canning and preserving.

This I love with a passion. Just ask Mr. Hodges how my yellow squash bread & butter pickles taste!

The master gardener class has taught me so much and then again I've learned the more I learn the more I don't know.

So in conclusion I just want to say to anybody interested in this class GO FOR IT! It was simply amazing.

I wish I could do it again.

Fig: a Christmas Tradition

*Submitted by
Dr. Uma Sridharan,
Lander University*

Just three and one half weeks to Christmas and soon the sounds of Christmas carols will fill the airways. One of the all time favorites among Christmas carols is "We wish you a Merry Christmas" Nearly all of us have sung or heard that song but what is the name of the fruit enshrined in that carol? Fig of course! Remember the lines that go "Now bring us some Figgie pudding'...."we won't go until we have some"? Figs apparently were brought to England by the Romans and the English liked them enough to include figs in their Christmas traditions. I have never eaten Figgie pudding in my life but I do enjoy both fresh and dried figs. If you happen to have space in your yard for just one more fruit tree, consider planting a fig tree. Figs are among my favorite fruiting trees in the Greenwood SC garden [I have planted three varieties in my yard] and here are some reasons why

Low Maintenance: Unlike apple, plum and peach trees which need to be sprayed with pre emergent and post emergent pesticides, fig trees require very little maintenance. They do not need to be sprayed to produce a good harvest and are very hardy and productive in SC. If you dislike chemical sprays (as I do) and feel good about eating organic fruit, then figs are a good choice

Nutritive Value: The mineral content of figs is supposed to closely resemble the mineral content of human milk [1], and that makes figs a very good food for all and especially young children and seniors. Figs have a particularly soft texture, and do not need to be skinned or seeded, which makes them very easy to consume even by someone with few or no teeth. Figs are rich in vitamins A, B1 and B2. Figs provide valuable fiber to our diet. Black

figs are particularly high in potassium. People who suffer cardiovascular damage due to hypertension are generally advised to reduce their salt intake as this increases their risk of hypertension. However, doctors from the Tokyo School of Medicine discovered that by supplementing the diet with potassium and potassium rich foods like figs, the negative effects of salt in the diet are reduced. [2] **Availability:** Fresh figs are difficult to find at the local grocers' shelves because figs have a very short shelf life. They have to be consumed soon after they are harvested; otherwise they have be dried or made into preserves. Figs are naturally sweet and can be combined very well into ice cream mixtures.

Tradition: If you are old fashioned and enjoy eating traditional foods then figs are a perfect food for you. Figs have been consumed by humans for several thousand years. Excavations show fig trees have been cultivated in the Holy Land for over 5000 years! Noah reportedly took dried figs and cuttings of fig trees into the Ark. [3]

Variety: Not all fig trees are large. There are a number of good varieties available for planting [4]. The Clemson HGIC highly recommends the Alma, Brown Turkey and Celeste. I like the Italian Honey Fig and Petite Negra Fig sold by Park Seed Company in Greenwood SC. The Petite Negra [5] is a dwarf variety that is supposed to grow only 6-8 feet tall (mine are just about a foot tall and already produce fruit] and 3-4 ft wide. This makes them suitable for growing in containers.

Bird: If you are bird lover, you should have a fig tree in your garden because birds love eating figs. If you are fig lover more than a bird lover, you may want to put a net over your fig tree to protect your fruit from the birds, or you can be like me and plant several trees so that there is enough fruit for the birds and your family.

Beauty and Skincare: Figs are rich in antioxidants so they help fight the damaging effects of the environment and the sun. Retailer *Bath and Body Works* offers a brown sugar and fig body lotion and body cream based on figs. The Vice President of Product Development for *Coty*, maker of The Healing Garden Organics said the company incorporated fig oil into a new line of products because of the natural humectants figs contain. Crushed fresh figs can be used to create a natural exfoliating skin treatment.

If you would like to try to make Figgy Pudding this Christmas, I found a good recipe for one on Wikipedia [6]

Merry Christmas, Joy and Peace to all!

Sources:

[1]

<http://www.fruitarian.com/ao/FruitOnly.htm#FIGS>

[2]

<http://cat.inist.fr/?aModele=afficheN&cpsidt=20032168>

[3] The history of the Fig in the holy land from ancient times to the present day: Economic Botany, Springer, New York,

<http://www.springerlink.com/content/28h654t4nl088322/>

[4]

<http://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheets/HGIC1353.htm>

[5] <http://www.parkseed.com>

[6] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Figgy_pudding

Carrot Weevil

(*Listronotus oregonensis*)

Vincent Plotczyk



Figure 1 - Whitney Crenshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org

The carrot weevil larvae (Fig. 1) are a legless grub with a brown head that tunnel into the root of the plant or directly into the carrot heart and cause serious damage to the plant.

The carrot weevil larvae become full grown in 3 to 4 weeks and will become the size of ¼ of an inch and be gray, dark brown or a coppery color with a hard shell.

The carrot weevil not only damage carrots but will also do damage to parsley, dill, celery, and parsnip in the spring to early summer.



Figure 2 - Alton N. Sparks, Jr., University of Georgia, Bugwood.org

The adult carrot weevils (Fig. 2) feed on leaves and petioles and will over winter in crop debris. Adult carrot weevils rarely fly, so they will not spread rapidly.

Steps to take to control the carrot weevil:

- 1) Remove crop debris to remove overwintering spots
- 2) Deep soil cultivation in spring to destroy grubs
- 3) Crop rotation
- 4) Chemical control

References:

Organicgardeninfo.com

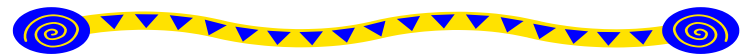
Department of Agriculture of Western Australia

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food & Rural Affairs

Garden Insects of North America by Whitney

Cranshaw

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Ricotta Cheese Cookies (Carol Bender)

Submitted by Chuck Bender

2 sticks butter/margarine (room temp)

2 cups sugar

1lb ricotta cheese

2 eggs, beaten

2 tsp vanilla

4 cups flour

1 tsp salt

1 tsp baking soda

1/2 tsp baking powder

Blend butter/margarine, sugar and ricotta cheese. Add eggs, vanilla, salt, baking soda and baking powder.

Add 1 cup of flour at a time. Mix well.

Bake at 325 degrees on a greased cookie sheet for 15 minutes or until light brown on the

bottom. I use well rounded teaspoon for the amount of each cookie.

Frost while warm.

Frosting: 1/4 cup butter/margarine
1 1/4 teaspoon vanilla (lemon or orange flavoring can be used instead of vanilla)
2 cups powdered sugar
warm water (I use 1-1 1/2 tablespoons)
Beat until smooth.

Frost cookies when you remove them from oven.
Remove to wire rack to cool. Enjoy!



THANK YOU!

As the year draws to a close I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the many Master Gardeners who volunteered their time during 2008. Spreading the word on good growing techniques, aiding individuals, presenting programs, providing long work hours for community projects, preparing programs for members and the public, helping the new class to complete a successful year are only a few of the many hours turned in or (not) this year.

The topiary project was fantastic for Greenwood and it emphasis on Horticulture before and during the festival of flowers. Thanks to all the MG's who helped with this untested project that made it a success. Our thanks too to all the volunteers who helped the Farmer's Market with the voucher distribution to Senior citizens. This program adds greatly to the success of our small market while helping to improve healthy consumption of fresh vegetables.

I want to thank all the Master Gardeners who supported Clemson extension on projects that serve other areas of need. Master Gardener support was critical to bringing a 4-H agent into the county, even though current economic conditions have stalled it temporarily. The organization of classes and support of Master Gardener's with Junior Master Gardener programs is greatly needed and appreciated.

The mall location has been able to operate and continue to give information to the public two days per week because of the help of many volunteers. Steve and I thank you for your help. Our 2008 Master Gardener class has just finished up with the help of many volunteers and the

Master Gardener Association which helped it to run smoothly.

I missed many others items that deserved thanks and praise in my listing, but all volunteer service has helped the Lakelands areas during 2008. My message is that your help is critical to Extension programs as we start a tough economic year in 2009.

I thank you and Clemson University thanks you as well as well as many citizens in the Lakelands.

James

PS Finish all your good work by turning in your hours for 2008. As budgets tighten every expenditure is looked at for it effect and merit. Volunteer hour numbers are critical to continued support of Horticulture education programs and projects.

James

Avoiding the Hibernation Syndrome of Gardening

Submitted by James Hodges

The period between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day is often a dead time for most gardeners. It shouldn't be because early spring planting will be on us before you know it. There are so many tasks that prepare you for next year and reduce the work overload come March in the Lakelands

Those cool season vegetable crops of February are only 60-90 days away. Many perennials will be popping their heads above ground by then too ready to be dug and divided. What are some tasks for the next 30-60 days that will reduce the stress of the season and give better results in the spring?

1. Wet leaves
2. Soil samples
3. Planting trees
4. Pruning trees and shrubs
5. Equipment maintenance
6. Year-end review

Don't wait too long to remove leaves from lawn grass areas, especially during wet periods. Don't waste leaves as a soil conditioner resource. Leaves can be cold composted into leaf mold in that backyard corner or added now to the garden spot for decomposition.

Get your soil samples done now for gardens and lawns so that any necessary liming can be

done soon. Fall applications of lime give time for the full effects of lime on the soil so that next year's grass and vegetable crops get its full benefit.

Since Arbor Day is always the first Friday in December in South Carolina, it seems obvious that planting trees at this time give them the best opportunity to adjust to transplanting before next July's hundred degree days.

A steady approach to pruning trees and shrubs on good weather days in December can help you avoid that rush to finish up this work at the last minute next spring.

The repair shops are empty of lawn mowers and weed-eaters in need of repair right now. No need to wait three weeks to get a repair done as the grass grows in April.

Take time to look at your garden and landscape looking for the good, bad and ugly that could use a little work for next year and make those plans today.

Garden Quote

Let no one think that real gardening is a bucolic and meditative occupation. It is an insatiable passion, like everything else to which a man gives his heart. Karel Capek 1931

**Lakelands Master Gardeners
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Greenwood, SC 29648**

Editor's End of the Year Thank You's

Submitted by Jean Anderson

This year has been a challenge to me. I've never edited a newsletter before. There were many false steps as I began the year. But as I learned my way through the process, I received so much encouragement, that the task was made much lighter. I want to thank all who sent a good word even when I made mistakes. And I especially want to thank all who contributed and thereby made the newsletter possible. Every time, like this month, that I thought I would not have enough to fill the newsletter, many of you have responded and put "wheels on my wagon." Overall, editing the newsletter has been fun, and I appreciate the privilege of doing it again in 2009.

**Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year to all.**



