

The Green Times

All the News That's Fit to Plant

The Newsletter of Monongalia County Master Gardeners,
Vol. III, No. 4, October, November, December, 2003

Dig, Dig, Dig

It is bulb-planting time again. Here are some helpful hints.

- How many? Figure the square footage of the bed you wish to plant with bulbs. Determine four large bulbs per square foot (e.g., hyacinth, narcissus, etc.) or nine small bulbs per square foot (e.g., crocus, galanthus). Here's an example: a 10' x 5' bed would accommodate 200 large bulbs planted 6" apart or 450 small bulbs planted 4" apart.
- How deep? A good rule of thumb is to plant twice the diameter of the bulb deep. For instance, if your bulb is three inches around, then plant it about six inches deep; if it's two inches around, then plant it four inches deep.

Daffodils and Narcissi for One-of-a-Kind Bouquets

John Scheepers, Inc. explains why you never see daffodils or narcissi in mixed bouquets of flowers: "It is because once cut, they secrete a glue-like substance that in effect seals the stems of other flowers so that they cannot drink water."

Growing Gifts

I know a hostess who sends her Thanksgiving guests home with paper-white Narcissus bulbs and instructions to put them in a pebble-filled pot with water. The result: flowers for the December holidays and an interesting floral experience for the whole family!

BTW (By the Way)

The holidays remind us of holiday greenery. Mistletoe is the state flower of Oklahoma—do you have any kissing cousins in Tulsa?

Chocolate Alert

The cacao tree was given the name *Theobroma* "food of the gods" by the Swedish botanist Linnaeus in 1753. The plant is native to the equatorial American forests. It grows in a narrow band within 18 degrees north and south of the equator from South American and the Caribbean to west Africa, east Asia, and the islands of New Guinea and Vanvatu with Africa growing 70% of the world's crop.

Chocolate Alert Continued . . .

Global demand has farmers producing record cacao crops. Pests, disease, and soil exhaustion are constant threats. An article in *Discover* magazine, August 2002, discussed the problems at length. Sustainable farming and bio-diversity—good ideas and practices for all types of growing—are well laid out there.

Some of the experts protest cacao is an “orphan crop.” It is under-researched and certain varieties of the cacao bean may be lost. The fragile beans provide the subtle flavoring of the finest chocolate. Industry funding for research projects is sorely needed.

Is this important to our economy? Imported cacao is essential to an \$8.6 billion domestic confectionary business that also sustains the country’s dairy and nut production. 20% of our dairy products go into candy production as well as 20% of our peanuts and 40% of our almonds. The USDA is earmarking \$40 million for cacao research as of 2002. Visions of sugarplums indeed!

Classified Advertising

Personal. Have you paid your \$15 dues to keep your membership in the Mon County Master Gardeners current? Have you sent in your service and education hours?

MASTER GARDENER OFFICERS AND CONTACT NAMES FOR 2003-04

President	Neva Gocke	Certification	Linda Saus
Vice President	Ed Hawkins	State Representative	Neva Gocke & Linda Hildebrand
Secretary	Bobbie Hawkins	Garlow House	Neva Gocke
Treasurer	Viera Trapp	Historian	Tim Klus
Education	Frank Saus	Baskets	Kerr Crosby
Program	Darlene Fogarty Patricia Miller	Projects	Kay Beamer

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2003 CALENDAR

Local Master Gardner Meeting, 6:30 p.m. <i>Presenter: Mary Lucille DeBerry</i> <i>Bring a photo of your garden and a pencil!</i>	October 1
Farmers Market Every Saturday at Seneca Center	Ending in October
Local Master Gardner Meeting, 6:30 p.m. <i>Poinsettias</i> <i>Presenter: Sue Taylor</i>	November 5
Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. <i>The Adventures of Lewis and Clark: An exhibit of plants that were encountered and collected.</i>	October 12 forward
Local Master Gardner Meeting, 6:30 p.m.	December 3