



The Weeders' Digest

Wreaths Just in Time For Christmas!



Thanks to Courtney DeKalb-Myers and Donna Wright for offering a wreath class to our master gardeners! We had everything we needed including holly, nandina, cedars and all sorts of greenery, plus bows and all materials! All we had to provide was our creativity! What a fun class! More photos from the Wreath Class are located on pages 9—10.

Speaking in January *by Jo Ann Dysart*

At our January meeting we will hear from Michele Loudenback, Stormwater Specialist at Environmental Services. She will discuss projections on water availability in Norman (and/or Cleveland County) in future years and how that can impact all things—certainly it will impact due to climate change including gardening. The meeting begins at 10 but come early for snacks and conversation.

Don't Forget Dues and Hours!

Remember that your dues and your hours need to go to Nancy Logan by our January meeting. She will gladly take money and hours at our Holiday Party, too!

Inside This Issue

President's Posting	2	Garden Guru	12
Dues and Hours are Due!	2	The Recipe Box	13
Treasurer's Report	2	Unusual Christmas trees	15
Garden Gossip	3	Wreath Class Photos	9-10
Demo Garden Diaries	6-8	Upcoming Events	14
Photo Booth	3-5	Okies for Monarchs	11
Book Worm	11		



President's Posting

By Joan Barker

Thank you to Courtney for organizing the first "CCMGA Listening Session" on November 16th and to all the Master Gardeners who participated. Scarlett Kingsley, OSU's Evaluation Specialist, came down from Stillwater to facilitate the conversation.

The session was needed to address all the challenges that the CCMGA has faced during the past two years along with the moving of the Farmers Market from the Cleveland County Fairgrounds in the spring of 2022. Goals were developed and an individual skills assessment worksheet was filled out. We look forward to receiving feedback and working to attain the goals.

Also a thank you to the Master Gardeners who volunteered at the MG Information Table at the 5th Annual Meals on Wheels Holiday Marketplace at the Cleveland County Fairgrounds on December 2nd. We had several individuals express an interest in the 2022 Master Gardener class.

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year!

Joan



Time to Submit Dues and Hours

Dues of \$20 for 2022 and hours for 2021 must be provided to Nancy Logan by January 19th, our January meeting. You can pay at the extension office, by mail, or directly to Nancy at our December or January meetings. Your education and service hours can be emailed or mailed to Nancy. If you record your hours online, those hours will be provided to Nancy from the system so no action is required on your part. Remember that if you do not pay your dues or submit your hours on time, you will not be included in the 2022 CCMGA Directory.



Treasurer's Report

By Nancy Logan

Beginning balance as of October 31, 2021 is \$20,606.62. Income for the month is \$400 Tree Wizard Donation; \$125 Fair & Lawn Judging Stipends; \$20 2021 Dues Paid and \$940 2022 Dues for total of \$1485.00. Expenses include \$277.76 Demo Garden and \$227.60 Achievement Award Expense for total of \$505.36. Balance at November 30, 2021 is \$21,586.26, less budgeted expenses not yet reimbursed of \$10,398.80 and less reserve for greenhouse repairs of \$1,112.00, leaving funds in excess of budget at \$10,075.46.

Respectfully submitted, *Nancy Logan*



Winter has arrived! We are no longer working in the demo garden. For those nice days, check Teamup to see if anyone is there and you can join them. Nancy wanted me to remind you that the greenhouse is open every Thursday am so someone will be there those days. You can work your bed on those days if you wish. I think they come thru the back gate.

Merry Christmas!

Note: We are delighted that Kathi Farley has agreed to stay on as our Demonstration Garden Coordinator! Thank you, Kathi!



Photo Booth

By Nancy Logan



Top left, Wood Betony and right, Balloon Flower



Top left,
hydrangea,
Little
Lime,
right, pink
Verbena;
below,
phlox and
coleus.
Such beau-
tiful pho-
tos of flow-
ers from
Nancy's
garden!





Clockwise beginning with top left, Cone flowers, Pineapple lily and Variegated Bougainvillea.





Demonstration Garden Diaries *By Georjana Mauldin*

(These diaries are designed to familiarize readers with the various beds in the Demonstration Garden)

December Featured Garden - Herb and Zen Beds Bed Head: Vicky Nichols-Morris

If you are suffering from the winter blues, then call Vicky! Her enthusiasm for gardening will brighten your day, and get you right-as-rain and ready to garden again! Vicky is the Bedhead for the Herb bed and the Zen bed. They are just opposite each other, so she can keep a watchful eye on both of them.

THE HERB BED

Vicky has divided the Herb bed into four quadrants. The quadrants are: culinary; fragrance; medicinal; and tea. It can be difficult to divide an herb into a single quadrant, because herbs are very diverse. Many herbs can fit into more than one quadrant - like Lavender and Bay Laurel, etc. Not many gardeners want "beings" chewing on their plants, but not Vicky. She invites people to taste her plants like the mints, Stevia, all the culinary herbs like rosemary, etc.

Vicky suggested that if you want to learn more about herbs, ask her, and attend the various herb festivals held in Oklahoma. Here are just a few: Jenks Herb and Plant Festival; Herb Day at Brookside held at The Herb Shoppe in Tulsa; Herb Festival in Ponca City; and An Herbal Affair and Festival in Sand Springs. Not many of these festivals had their 2022 dates set online, but keep checking.

THE ZEN BED

When researching for a student paper a terrible student will go to the Merriam-Webster dictionary first for information - so Here it is: ZEN is a Japanese sect of Mahayana Buddhism that aims at enlightenment by direct intuition through meditation; and ZEN can be a state of calm attentiveness in which one's actions are guided by intuition rather than by conscious effort.

Vicky continually is working on this garden to soften it up to create a more Zen-like atmosphere. She added MiniClover this year to the base of the bed, which is very trendy now. Many people are planting this over their grass lawns. She plans to install some Japanese Silver Grass to soften up the cinderblock wall that is on the north side. This year she had placed some beautiful Japanese Maples to accent the garden, but they got a little too much sun. She will bring them back when the Soapberry Tree shades that are more. The bed is very welcoming with a little red bench for the passerby to enjoy. Stop in a take a Zen Moment to enjoy it.

Vicky sent me the following after our interview:

"Firstly, I am very grateful to so many for their encouragement and I am always open to suggestions, so do not hesitate to come by with your ideas. Much gratitude to Barbara Tunney who encouraged me to take over the Herb garden. Moreover, Barbara has always been there to answer questions and with whom I can share my ideas. Additionally, it was a joy to work with Sherry Andrusiak my first year as head of the Herb bed. Sherry contributed the self-watering pots that keep mints in check while at the same time well watered. She also donated the rustic wheelbarrow that holds the fragrant and delicious chocolate mint tour guides like to share with visitors.

This year has been very exciting for me as Judy Kautz kindly let me take over the Zen Garden for which I am very grateful. What a pleasure I have had trying out ideas in the Zen garden especially using Miniclover to create a lush low maintenance lawn. Finally, and with joy I report, Linda Fielder will be assisting me in both the Herb & Zen bed in the coming year!"



Demonstration Garden Diaries *By Georjana Mauldin*

More Information from Vicky Morris:

Vicky further said: "Tea hibiscus, my favorite herb of 2021! This was my first year growing, harvesting and drying hibiscus for tea. The following pictures include: the ripe pods before removing the brilliant red calyx, dried calyxes, saved seed pods and prepared tart & tangy



herbal hibiscus tea."

Vicky also noted: "Useful as a culinary herb, a fragrance, and medicinally, bay laurel takes center stage in the Herb bed. However, a hard freeze can kill this herb so in zones 7 and colder I feel it is good to take precautions. In this regard, I've had great success with securely wrapping bay laurel with row cover to overwinter."

"In this picture taken 11/30/2021, Judy Kautz' Japanese lantern and meditation rocks set the mood of the Zen garden. Additionally, the Miniclover continues lush and green even as grasses are turning brown with shorter days and fall weather."

"Thanks to Linda for assisting with pictures!"





Demonstration Garden Diaries *By Georjana Mauldin*

Learning Tools—The Dibble

(This segment is to highlight the various tools used in the Demonstration Garden)

DABELING WITH DIBBLES - WHO KNEW?

The Dibble - or Dibber - or Dibbler - or a stick like planting-device - has been used for seed planting probably beginning around the time that the nomadic tribes decided to settle down and have a salad. It has been used for centuries with very little modifications. It is a simple and effective way for planting seeds, seedlings, and bulbs. Its sharp point digs into the ground to make a hole. One inch markings for exact planting depth (up to 6 inches). There are many types of Dibbles used today.

THE SINGLE DIBBLE --- As implied by its name this is a simple hand-held implement for planting one seed or one transplant at a time. There are many forms from the wood stick to a turned cylinder, to ergonomic metal ones. If you're planting a row of seeds, the dibble can be drug along the soil to create a trench. To plant items that need a large hole like bulbs or seedlings, just poke a hole to the right depth and wiggle it back and forth to enlarge the hole.

DIBBLE BOARDS --- This is a multi-pronged board that can be used for planting in multiple celled plastic trays. This board can be square or rectangular to fit the trays perfectly. The pegs are arranged neatly in rows to match the area to be planted. This board is placed on the soil and pressed down to create the planting holes for the seeds. Voila! Perfect holes set into the planting medium ready for the seed. It can also be a linear piece of lumber with evenly spaced pegs running along its edge. It is used in making multiple holes in a straight line for row planting. One can quickly make straight, evenly-spaced holes for sowing seeds. It is rumored that home and garden guru Martha Stewart has used a homemade dibble board for planting.



DIBBLE BAR --- When you want to plant many seedling

trees (like pine seedlings) at a time use a dibble bar. It offers faster planting than a shovel. A dibble bar is often made with a metal shaft 4 to 6 feet long that has a pointed end - resembling a very narrow flat shovel. It is plunged into the ground, then swayed back and forth opening the soil, the seedling is dropped into the opening, and the next plunge will cover the previous planted seedling. You can plant about as fast as you can walk.

WHEELED DIBBLER or TWO PERSON DIBBLER --- as with any invention more is often better, so there are spiked wheeled dibblers that roll along the row making multiple holes. And wait there is more, there are two person dibblers that can be used across many rows and operated by two gardeners.

VIDEOS FOR MORE INFORMATION

FROM OKLAHOMA GARDENING To help with accuracy and speed in your seed planting Casey takes us through the process of building a dibble board to make seed plantable indentions in your seed starting mix.

<https://youtu.be/YtkyygISm1U>

FROM THIS OLD HOUSE—This Old House landscape contractor Roger Cook shares tips for using his four favorite gardening tools, five if you count his hands. <https://youtu.be/byOjlgBW8c>





Wreath Class Photos





Wreath Class Photos





Book Title: "Never Put a Cactus in the Bathroom: A Room-by-Room Guide to Styling and Caring for Your Houseplants"

Author: Emily L. Hay Hinsdale



If you want to read an informative and "funny" plant book, this is the one for you. I chuckled all the way through it. The author just has a way with words that make for a light and fun reading. Yes, you'll learn about indoor plants, and how to create an indoor paradise. You'll learn about the health benefits, and plant care tips. She will guide you through which herbs and veggies can be grown in your kitchen and other rooms. And yes, you'll learn why you should never put that cactus in your bathroom. This delightful book will offer lots of plant tips - and also a good chuckle. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.



Submitted by Linda Fielder

Happy Holidays!

Now that the monarchs have made their way to the mountain tree tops of Mexico, we're reflecting on their incredible cross-continental journey and unique overwintering habits. We've put together some fun facts that you can use to impress your friends and family during holiday dinners.

- The eastern monarch population will overwinter in the same 11 to 12 mountain areas from October to late March at elevations of 7,800 ft. to 11,000 ft. Burr! But these beautiful butterflies are able to stay warm by clustering close together with tens of thousands on a single tree.
- Monarchs that live west of the Rocky Mountains will overwinter along the Pacific Coast near Santa Cruz and San Diego roosting in eucalyptus, Monterey pine and cypress trees.
- Monarch butterflies are extraordinary aviators flying between 50 to 100 miles each day. The farthest distance ever recorded in one day was 265 miles. Take that ultra-marathoners!

We are so grateful for all you do to help monarchs and pollinators across Oklahoma. Have a wonderful holiday season and we will see you in the New Year!



HOLLY TREES

"Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly" is such a festive Christmas song. When I was a little girl, my daddy thought it would be a grand idea to deck the living room with a Holly Christmas tree. He cut down a fairly large tree in the woods, put it in a tree stand, and to tried to decorate it. What a fiasco with five kids trying to add tinsel, lights, and prized ornaments on that prickly tree. Well, the tree leaves promptly dried out and began to fall all over the floor, and then one day the sixth child in a 1950's baby walker, managed to pull the tree over. That tree went into the trash and daddy bought a live tree and we started redecorating.

The Holly (*Ilex*) genus consists of more than 400 species. Hollies offer a diverse range of plant characteristics. They can be deciduous or evergreen and vary from small (18 inches) to very large (over 50 feet). Most hollies require well-drained soil that is rich in organic matter and slightly acid. All appreciate mulch to deter weeds and keep the soil moist and cool. Hollies will grow in sun or part shade, but for the best berry production and most compact growth choose a sunny spot. Some hollies are self-fertilizing, but others are exclusively female and need a male plant nearby for pollination. Check with your nursery owner about whether the hollies you are buying need both male and female plants to set fruit.

Excerpts from Clemson University Fact Sheet Factsheet | HGIC 1066 |:

Japanese hollies are evergreen shrubs with relatively small, spineless leaves and black fruit. They are usually 3 to 10 feet high, with a similar spread and look more like a boxwood than a holly. They range from slow growing to relatively fast-growing and are a good choice for hedges. Japanese hollies tolerate severe pruning. Many cultivars are available. Some of them are: '**Helleri**', '**Convexa**', '**Hetzii**', '**Roundleaf**'.

Chinese hollies produce large, spiny leaves that are very glossy and dark green in color. Most Chinese hollies grow quite large, 10 to 15 feet. They are one of the few hollies that produce berries without pollination. Examples are: '**Burfordii**', '**Rotunda**', '**Berries Jubilee**'. American Holly (*Ilex opaca*): American holly is the traditional Christmas holly with large, spiny green leaves and bright red berries. American hollies grow into trees to 50 feet tall. Many cultivars exist. Among the best known are: '**Dan Fenton**', '**Jersey Delight**', '**Jersey Princess**'; '**Jersey Knight**' is the male pollen source, '**Merry Christmas**', '**Stewart's Silver Crown**', '**Yellow Berry**'.

English Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) is an evergreen tree with very spiny, glossy foliage and bright red berries. Cultivars with white variegated leaf margins are very distinctive. English hollies dislike poor drainage and low temperatures. Their growth rate is quite slow.

Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) is native from Long Island, New York to central Florida and west to Texas. In South Carolina it grows into a small evergreen tree, 3 to 15 feet tall and 3 to 10 feet wide. Female plants produce small red berries in large clusters. New growth has a purplish tinge, which turns dark green. Yaupon Holly tolerates wind and hot climates better than most evergreen hollies. Some cultivars are: '**Nana**' or '**Dwarf Yaupon Holly**', '**Pendula**'.

Possumhaw (*Ilex decidua*) is a deciduous small tree, 6 to 10 feet tall, with dark green, 3-inch leaves and orange to red berries, which last into winter or spring.

Inkberry (*Ilex glabra*) is an evergreen shrub, to 10 feet tall, with thick, spineless leaves and black berries. The dwarf form '**Compacta**' grows to 4 feet but can be sheared to make a 2-foot hedge.

Lusterleaf Holly (*Ilex latifolia*): is a slow-growing evergreen tree, to 30 feet tall. Leaves are 6 to 8 inches long (largest of all hollies).

Meserve Holly (*Ilex meserveae*) is a 6- to 7-foot, evergreen shrub that is very cold hardy.

Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) is a deciduous shrub, which unlike most hollies thrives in boggy soils. Plants grow 6 to 10 feet tall and female plants bear enormous crops of bright red berries that last all winter.

We have a Nellie Stevens taller than our home at the side of the house. Nellie R. Stevens' Holly: '**Nellie R. Stevens**' is a cross between English and Chinese holly. This fast-growing cultivar has excellent dark green foliage and large, red berries and makes an excellent specimen tree. (Pictured at left with berries.)





Pickled Beets

Ingredients

¼ cup water
1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
¼ cup white sugar
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
3 to 4 whole cloves (crushed)
1 15 oz can Libby's small whole beets

Heat to boiling, cover, simmer 5 minutes.

Cool, place in refrigerator in glass jar.

Keeps well.

Cranberry-Orange & Apricot Bread

Ingredients

2 cups flour
1 cup quick or old-fashioned oats (uncooked)
1 cup sugar
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda
¾ tsp salt
½ cup oil
2 eggs
1/3 cup water
½ cup orange juice
1 cup chopped cranberries
½ cup finely chopped apricots
1 cup chopped nuts
1 Tbsp grated orange peel

Heat oven to 350

Grease and flour bottom of 9 X 5 pan

Combine first six ingredients, mix well and set aside.

Beat oil and eggs, add orange peel, orange juice, and water.

Add to dry ingredients.

Stir in remaining ingredients.

Bake 1 hour 15 minutes or until wooden pick comes out clean inserted in center.

Cool 10 minutes then remove from pan. Cool completely be-

fore slicing. Serves 12.

This recipe is very festive for the holidays.



Upcoming Events

Submitted by Elaine Dockray

January 22, 10 AM – Noon: Workshop: Papercrete Planters. Myriad Gardens, Terrace Room. Learn how to turn paper and cement into sturdy, unique planters suitable for the Oklahoma elements. The workshop will discuss what papercrete is, the process to make it, and how to use it to design and create planters. You will leave with a self-made piece. All supplies included. Members \$35, Non-members \$40. Register by January 19 at Myriad Gardens website.

January 22, 10:30 AM – Noon: Winter Plant Identification. Will Rogers Exhibition Center, 3400 NW 36th St., OKC. Event ID: 43696. Let's go for a quiet walk in the gardens and discuss how to identify the shrubs and trees in the winter when they are not cloaked in their summer garb. Cost \$5. Register at parks.okc.gov.

January 29, 10 AM – Noon: Winter Pruning and Tool Care. Will Rogers Exhibition Center, 3400 NW 36th St., OKC. Event ID: 43697. In this class we will teach the basics of tree pruning and, while you are here, we will show you how to sharpen those tools of yours as well. You may bring one tool for us to sharpen for you. Dress for the weather as we will be heading outside for this hands-on class. Cost: \$5. Register at parks.okc.gov.

February 18 -21: Great Backyard Bird Count. Share Your Birds with Us! The Great Backyard Bird Count uses eBird, one of the world's largest nature databases. It stores more than 100 million bird sightings contributed each year and is used by professionals for science and conservation. Contribute to eBird and become a citizen scientist. Visit birdcount.org to learn more and participate.

February 26, 9 – 11 AM: Better Indoor Orchid Growing. Will Rogers Exhibition Center, 3400 NW 36th St., OKC. Event ID: 43609. Members of the Oklahoma Orchid Society will walk you through how to set up an effective growing area in your home or business. Cost: \$5. Register at parks.okc.gov.

May 7, 9 AM – 4 PM: OKC Flower and Garden Festival. Myriad Gardens, OKC. The annual Oklahoma City Flower and Garden Festival at Myriad Botanical Gardens Saturday, May 7, 2022, from 9 AM to 4 PM! This fun-filled event includes local vendors nestled in on the west side of the Gardens next to Mo's Carousel and the Children's Garden. The annual festival features an abundance of plants and more, sure to brighten up anyone's home. Visitors will find Oklahoma-grown herbs, perennials, annuals, native plants, culinary herbs, vegetable plants, flowers, produce, pottery, jewelry, wineries, succulents, ornamental grasses, milkweed, pollinator plants, wildlife habitat, and more.

Unusual Christmas Trees: Below, a dried flower Christmas tree. I was unaware of this creative way to use dried flowers. Submitted by Janelle Miller.

Right, many early Christmas trees seem to have been hung upside down from the ceiling using chains that were hung from chandeliers/ lighting hooks. From Judy Kautz



MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local Governments Cooperating. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, national origin, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. OCES provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

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Submit suggested articles for the newsletter not later than the **25th of each month** to Editor Elaine Dockray at rdsefd@aol.com

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For More Information Check out the updated Horticulture and Master Gardener sections on the Cleveland County Extension Office website. The address is www.oces.okstate.edu/cleveland.