'THE SAGE'--DECEMBER 2011

Klein's Floral & Greenhouses On-Line Newsletter

THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS:

Klein's Holiday Open House: December 2-4, 2011
The Perfect Gift: A Dane Buy Local Gift Card!

How to Care for Your Holiday Plants

Believe It or Not--Tulips Really Are Perennials!

Favorite Seed, Bulb & Plant Sources

Natural News: Mulch to Prevent Winter Injury

Our Very Favorite Squash Soup Recipes

Notes from Rick's Garden Journal-- from November 2011

- --Brazilian Button Flower
- -- Baking the Perfect Pumpkin for Recipes
- --Reblooming a Christmas Cactus
 Plant of the Month: Redtwig Dogwood

You Asked the Mad Gardener About Overwintering a Mandevilla

2012 Wisconsin Garden Journal Now in Stock Our "Mad Gardener" Is Ready for Your Questions

Product Spotlight: From Grasslands Road®--'Gifts That Inspire'

December in the Garden: A Planner
Gardening Events Around Town
Become a Fan of Klein's on Facebook
Join Klein's Blooming Plant or Fresh Flower Club
Delivery Information

The City of Madison Recycles Used Plastic Pots Related Resources and Websites

Plants Harmful to Kids and Pets

DANE BUY LOCAL GIFT CARDS

Klein's is proud to continue in our support Dane Buy Local. We've joined hundreds of other area businesses and civic leaders who are encouraging you to **buy local**.

The Top 5 Reasons for Buying Local:

- 1. Keep Madison original. We ensure that unique, one-of-a-kind businesses survive.
- 2. Enrich the community economy. Each time money is spent at a locally-owned business, the tax stays in Dane County to support local resources such as schools, parks, police and fire...and much more.
- 3. Provide more jobs. All together, locally owned independent businesses are our largest employer.
- 4. Ensure a solid foundation for local nonprofit organizations who serve us. Locally owned businesses give more.
- 5. Create good places to work: We want work life to reflect home town friendliness and familiarity. Treating our employees well is part of our community commitment.

(from the Dane Buy Local web site at www.danebuylocal.com)

Buy Local Gift Cards Are Now Available.

- •These gift cards can make great holiday gifts.
- •Can be purchased for any denomination from \$25.00-\$250.00.
- •Cards are available at any of the 5 branches of Home Savings Bank.
- •Any merchant who accepts VISA can accept gift cards.

Please contact Home Savings Bank at 282-6000 with questions or for a location near you. There's one just next door to Klein's at 3762 E. Washington Ave.

Visit the Dane Buy Local web site for a complete list with links to all participating businesses and organizations. <u>And</u> Please Buy Local!

THE MAD GARDENER

"Madison's Firsthand Source for Expert Gardening Advice"

Ask any of your gardening questions by e-mailing them to us at <a href="mailto:

Sorry, we can only answer those questions pertaining to gardening in Southern Wisconsin and we reserve the right to leave correspondence unanswered at our discretion. Please allow 2-3 days for a response.

Please note that our **Mad Gardener** is not only an expert gardener, but can answer all of your indoor plant questions as well.

DECEMBER STORE HOURS:

Holiday Hours

Monday thru Friday 8:00-7:00

Saturday: 8:00-5:00 Sunday: 10:00-4:00

Holiday hours run through Friday, December 23

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24--Open 8:00-4:00

Starting December 26:

Monday thru Friday: 8:00-6:00

Saturday: 8:00-5:00 Sunday: 10:00-4:00

Please note that we will be closed Sundays during January. Our first Sunday open will be February 5, 2012

New Year's Eve, Saturday, December 31--Open 8:00-4:00

Closed Christmas Day, December 25 & New Year's Day, January 1, 2012

To Top

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

December 2 thru December 4--<u>KLEIN'S HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE</u>. Enter a winter wonderland filled with holiday plants and gift ideas. Let us inspire you with our extensive collection of gift ideas and ornaments for all your decorating needs. Free refreshments on hand.

And check out our famous painted poinsettias. Poinsettia Painting is one of the hottest trends in holiday decorating. The past few Christmases we couldn't keep our eye-popping creations on the shelves. Ever wanted a blue poinsettia? Green Bay Packer themed? Or how about something elegant, sprinkled in glitter? The possibilities are endless. Have one of our greenhouse associates design and paint a unique creation for your own home decor or to suit any taste.

Early December--Order your beautiful poinsettias, blooming plants, designer gift baskets or custom-made centerpieces now for holiday gift-giving and guaranteed delivery. Early ordering ensures you top quality product for your home decorating and holiday party needs.

December 10--Full Moon

December 19 thru December 24--Stop in and check-out our in-store specials for any last minute gift-giving ideas. We still have a fantastic selection of homegrown poinsettias, blooming plants, houseplants, decorations and more. Shop early for the best section and we'll deliver anywhere in Madison or the surrounding communities thru noon on Dec. 24.

December 21--Hanukkah Begins

December 22--Winter Solstice

December 25--Christmas Day (Closed)

December 26--Kwanzaa Begins (runs through January 1)

December 26--The After Christmas 75% Off Sale begins at 8:00! Everything 'holiday' must go! This is a great time to plan for this week's New Years Eve party or to pick up some excellent bargains for next year's decorating. Poinsettias are perfect for adding instant color to your late season holiday party and are gorgeous in fresh arrangements.

December 26 thru December 31--Order your New Years Eve centerpieces and custom designed arrangements early!

January 1, 2012--New Year's Day (Closed)

'THE FLOWER SHOPPE':

Are you planning on giving a plant as a gift this holiday season? Klein's has all of your favorites:

Homegrown poinsettias and cyclamen, potted amaryllis and paperwhites, Norfolk Island pines and holiday cactus, in addition to potted hollies, cypress and Frosty Fern. We're often asked about care of these plants for after the holidays and for months or even years of continued enjoyment. We've shared many articles on how to care for these favorites in our past newsletters:

Amaryllis--from November 2009

@ http://www.kleinsfloral.com/cms/2009%20Newsletters/THE%20SAGE%20Nov%2009.pdf

Cvclamen--from December 2010

@ http://www.kleinsfloral.com/cms/2010%20Newsletters/THE%20SAGE%20December%202010.pdf

Holiday Cactus--from December 2009

@ http://www.kleinsfloral.com/cms/2009%20Newsletters/THE%20SAGE%20Dec%2009.pdf

Paperwhites--from January 2009

@ http://www.kleinsfloral.com/cms/newsletters/THE%20SAGE%20Jan%202009.pdf

Poinsettias--from December 2008

@ http://www.kleinsfloral.com/cms/newsletters/THE%20SAGE%20Dec%2008.pdf

Norfolk Island Pine--from November 2010

@ http://www.kleinsfloral.com/cms/2010%20Newsletters/November%202010%20Newsletter.pdf

For Frosty Fern care check out http://www.hendriksgreenhouses.com/care.php

Potted English holly and small decorated cypress trees are common holiday plants sold at nearly all garden centers, flower shops and most grocery stores. Both are generally considered seasonal gift items here in the far north and are usually disposed of after the Christmas season. They are not meant to be houseplants. Both can be hardy in the garden to Zone 6 and even Zone 5 if grown in optimum conditions, but even then with limited success. If grown in the garden, they must be grown in a very protected location. Even if they were to survive in the garden, both holiday cypress and traditional hollies are very susceptible to burn in our harsh winter winds; causing branch loss and die back. Many people have success growing plants in containers and then overwintering them in a cold and unheated attached garage during the winter months. Neither can be grown indoors year round. Both need a dormant period in order to thrive. For increased success, step both cypress and holly up into larger pots immediately after the holidays, water well and place in as cool location as you can find-- preferably just above freezing. In subsequent years and once established, plants can freeze lightly during the winter months. With time and energy, both potted holly and cypress can be enjoyed for many years to come.

I was given a mandevilla as a gift and had it outside in a pot all summer. It seemed very happy and grew to about 5 feet on a trellis and the porch rail. I've brought it inside for the winter, but don't have much room for it. Can I cut it back to about 6 inches?

Hi Glennda,

Yes, you can cut it back really hard. Don't fertilize it from now through February and keep it dryish; watering it thoroughly only once rather dry. Watering can be increased once it starts growing vigorously toward the end of winter. Keep it in as bright a location as possible through the winter--in a south or west window is best. It'll grow through the winter, but you'll notice that the new foliage will be pale and on the small side. It won't flower during the winter. Prune again about March 1 to get rid of any gangly growth. Watch for spider mites and mealy bugs. We suggest using a systemic pesticide every 5 or 6 weeks to keep pests in check through the winter--especially on plants brought in from the outside. Mandevillas are very long-lived so you should be able to enjoy your plant for years to come!!

Thanks for your question, The Mad Gardener

DID YOU KNOW...

... that in order for tulips to perennialize successfully, they need to be kept very dry while dormant during the summer months?

A very common question that we receive at Klein's both in the spring and again in the fall is which tulip varieties are best for perennializing for many years of enjoyment. In the springtime we all see large tulip patches (usually in red and/or yellow) lining the fronts of homes throughout the city. And while the fancier tulip varieties seldom last past a third season; deteriorating each year after their first bloom, there are many, especially heirloom, tulip varieties that truly perennialize when grown in the right conditions.

In the showiest and most perfect tulip displays, the plants are treated as annuals rather than perennials. The tops are pulled out immediately after flowering and the beds are replanted with summer annuals. New tulip bulbs are then replanted in the fall once the annuals have been removed.

In order for tulips to perennialize, one should take a completely different approach. First off, make sure to choose the right tulip varieties. Look for packages or varieties that say specifically that they are good for 'naturalizing' or 'pereniallizing'. See our list below for some of the more common and reliable choices.

Secondly, it's crucial to plant the tulips you'd like to perennialize in an area of the garden that gets little attention, stays dry and in an area where you won't plant annuals over them during the summer months.

Tulips are native to the areas around Turkey, Iran and the Caucus Mountains of southwest Asia. These climates are very dry and arid--especially during their hot summers. That's where the problem lies in most of our gardens. We tend to plant annuals over our fading tulips come May. Annuals require frequent watering during our summer months--the exact opposite of what tulips require. Under ideal conditions, tulips should remain bone dry during their summer dormancy. The added moisture from watering the annuals above causes bulbs to rot. That's the reason the best tulip patches are usually found among a homeowner's foundation plantings. It's usually along the foundation where we find the worst soil (usually gravelly backfill) and the driest, most well-drained conditions. The tulips couldn't be happier! Add a little neglect on the homeowner's part and perennial, rather the annual, plantings around the tulip bulbs and the tulips are in their ideal growing conditions.

In short, if you're wanting to perennialize tulips, we suggest interspersing them throughout your perennial beds, rather than planting them in an area planted over with annuals.

Tulip choices that work best for perennializing include most of the Darwin varieties and especially the 'Apeldoorns' and 'Impression' series. 'Apeldoorns' are the most common and come in red, yellow and bicolors. 'Impressions' are in pink, red and salmon, et al. 'Emperor' tulips and lily-flowering varieties also work quite well. Species tulips are a great choice, but are generally short and not meant for cutting. "Taller" choices include the gregiis (Red Riding Hood, Pinocchio) and the kaufmannianas.

NOTES FROM MY GARDEN JOURNAL--Tips and Observations from My Own Garden by Rick Halbach.

ENTRY: NOVEMBER 5, 2011 (Brazilian Button Flower)

As I pulled all of the remaining annuals from the garden today, I fail to understand why Brazilian button flower (Centratherum intermedium) remains under the radar in area gardens. This super-easy-to-grow annual is readily available in many seed catalogs, yet remains unavailable at garden centers. The bachelor's button-like blue flowers appear nonstop from mid-summer through a very hard freeze. In fact, mine are still in full bloom! I'm needing to pull them to get the beds ready for winter. The bushy plants are up to 2' tall and fit perfectly in any wildflower bed. Plants can be staked to remain upright; or allowed to sprawl among the surrounding plants. The fragrant, lobed foliage is very attractive on it's own and I've never seen this plant bothered by insect pests or rabbits. Butterflies love the puffy blooms. It tolerates both moist and dry locations and prefers full sun. No matter what weather we've had in any summer since I've grown Brazilian button flower, this plant has never failed me--whether hot and dry or cloudy and soggy. In addition, it self-sows, but not rampantly--just a few plants here and there throughout the garden. As a cut flower, they make a nice filler and hold up well in a vase. What more could a gardener as from any plant?

I sow the seeds (available from Park Seed and Thompson & Morgan) in late March for a mid-May planting into the garden.

ENTRY: NOVEMBER 27, 2011 (Baking the Perfect Pumpkin for Recipes)

It was time to throw away all of the remaining pumpkins at work yesterday (is that "punkin' chuckin'?") as we continue dressing up the store for the holidays and our upcoming Open House. Rather than composting them, I opted to take a few home to make myself some homemade puree for holiday desserts and soups. Homemade puree is a great alternative to canned packed pumpkin and the results in recipes is nearly the same. In fact, the only ingredient in most canned pumpkin is solely pumpkin--no added salt, color, preservatives, sugar or spices. I enjoy baking my own because it fills the house with the warming smell of roasting squash. After all, pumpkin is just another type of winter squash.

Making perfect pumpkin puree couldn't be simpler! I choose any pie pumpkin (or any pumpkin) up to 8 or 9" across. There are many, many ways one can cook a pumpkin for puree; including baking whole, steaming, boiling or microwaving. After trying them all over the years, I think I've perfected the process and with near perfect and consistent results.

I remove the stem, cut the pumpkin in half lengthwise and discard the innards (or save the seeds for roasting later). I then place the cut halves face down in a 9 x 13" or larger glass baking dish. I CAREFULLY stab each half 5 or 6 times with a sharp knife. I then put about 1/2" water in the dish and place the pumpkin in a 350° oven. I bake the pumpkin for at least 1 hour and usually about 1 1/4 hours until VERY tender, the skin darkens and the halves begin to collapse. Once I feel they're fully baked, I drain off the water and allow the pumpkin (still in the pan and face down) to cool a bit for easier handling--about 10-15 minutes. If fully baked, the entire shell should pop right off by hand if I try to lift one of the halves, leaving 2-4 cups per half (similar to one can) of perfect puree. If they're a little underdone, that's OK. I simply scoop out the cooked pumpkin like any other winter squash. It'll continue cooking later in any recipe you choose.

The cooked pumpkin can be used immediately or stored in the refrigerator for a few days. For long term storage, I put the pulp from each half separately into 2 plastic storage bowls, allow them to cool completely, cover them and freeze them. Once frozen (and to save freezer space) I pop the frozen puree into freezer bags. I've found that the frozen puree keeps very well for up to a year and becomes the pumpkin I use in next fall's recipes. The puree works equally well in soups and desserts. When adding the homemade puree to my recipes, I measure the homemade pumpkin by weight rather than volume. The pumpkin purchased in a can is tightly packed, whereas the homemade version is fluffier and filled with more air.

ENTRY: NOVEMBER 29, 2011 (Reblooming a Christmas Cactus)

The Christmas cactus in the living room is going into full bloom and with more blossoms than I've seen in the nearly 20 years I've had it. Mine is not one of the more modern upright varieties found everywhere. Instead, it's a cutting from a very, very old cascading type--the kind that grandma kept stashed (and neglected) nearly year round in a spare, cold and drafty bedroom upstairs in the farmhouse, brought down only in November and once the plant was loaded with hot pink flower buds. Though just a foot tall at most, my cactus nearly touches the floor with three foot long branches. The leaves on mine are rounded; not jagged like the types we carry at the greenhouse.

The key in getting mine to rebloom vigorously seems to be a combination of temperature and watering.

Once the holidays have passed, my cactus blooms sporadically into April. I keep it very dry and located near a cool north window. In May I move it outdoors to our screenhouse. Before we built the screenhouse, I'd place the cactus in a relatively shady location for the summer. Too much sun causes the leaves to scorch. In the screenhouse I no longer have the scorching problem, but my cactus no longer receives the benefit of summer rains. Therefore, I water it only with water collected from the rain barrel during the summer months. I truly believe that soft rainwater is one of the reasons my cactus thrives. I water the cactus rather freely during the summer months and only once the surface becomes dry to the touch. I feed the cactus with a dilute fertilizer every second or third watering.

The key to getting my cactus to rebloom comes as summer wanes. Starting in late August I cut back on the watering; allowing the soil to become nearly bone dry between waterings. I stop the fertilizing completely. I now leave the cactus outdoors in the screenhouse long after I've brought the rest of my houseplants inside for the winter-sometimes into late October. I watch the weather closely because the plant can't be allowed to freeze. Usually by mid-October the teeniest flower buds begin appearing on the tips of the leaves. Once moved indoors and into warmth, the buds develop quickly. It's not unusual to lose some flower buds and leaves as the plant adapts to its new surroundings.

To Top

<u>KLEIN'S RECIPES OF THE MONTH</u>--These are a selection of relatively simple recipes chosen by our staff. New recipes appear monthly. Enjoy!!

Last month, owner Sue Klein put out the word at work that she wanted/needed some squash soup recipes. Staff members came out of the woodwork with suggestions and tried-and-true family favorities. Here are a few we'd like to share with you for holiday get-togethers. Happy Holidays from all of us at Klein's!

SQUASH SOUP--A great way to use up a couple kinds of squash all at once. From the Orange Tree Imports Cookbook. Although the recipe lists specific squash, buttercup or hubbard can be substituted.

1 x 2 lb. butternut squash

1 x 2 lb. acorn squash

4 TBS. butter

4 tsp. brown sugar

1 medium onion, thin sliced

2 carrots, cut in half lengthwise (10 baby carrots)

5 cups chicken broth

1/2 tsp. ground ginger

1/2 tsp. ground mace

A pinch of cayenne

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut the squash lengthwise, scoop out the seeds and place, face up, in a 9 x 13" pan. Divide the butter and brown sugar evenly among the cavities. Place the onion and carrots in the pan around the squash. Pour in 1 cup of the broth and a bit of water. Cover with foil and bake for 2 hrs. Cool the squash a bit and scoop the flesh into a food processor. Process till smooth. Put the squash into a soup pot along with the 4 cups broth and the rest of the ingredients. Simmer 10 min. Serves 4.

INDIAN-SPICED SQUASH SOUP--This super-tasty and brand new favorite comes to us from the November 2011 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

1 cup chopped onion

4 cloves garlic, peeled

1 x 1 lb. butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1/2" cubes

1 x 8 oz. acorn squash, quartered

2 TBS. olive oil

1/2 tsp. pepper

2 cups water

1 tsp. curry powder

1/2 tsp. garam masala (Indian spice mix found in the spice aisle at all supermarkets)

1/4 tsp. ground red pepper

2 x 14 oz. cans chicken broth

1/4 tsp. coarse salt

6 TBS. Greek yogurt (optional)

2 TBS. honey (optional)

Preheat oven to 500°. In a very large bowl, toss together the onion, garlic, squashes, oil and pepper. Roast at least 30 minutes on a large, rimmed cookie sheet or jelly-roll pan or until the veggies are tender, turning once. Cool 10 minutes. Peel the acorn squash. In a large soup pot, combine the roasted veggies, water, curry powder, garam masala, red pepper and broth. Puree with a handheld immersion blender until smooth. Bring to a boil. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the salt. If desired, combine the yogurt and honey. Serve with the soup. Serves 6.

SQUASH AND KALE SOUP -- Unlike so many squash soup recipes, this soup has a savory, rather than sweet,

flavor. It comes to us from the Isthmus, November 2009.

1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed (about 4 cups)

2 leeks, sliced

1 bunch kale, chopped

1 TBS, butter

1 TBS, olive oil

6 cups water, broth of choice or a combination

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. pepper

nutmeg

roasted seeds (pine nuts, pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds)

Saute the leeks in oil and butter in a soup pot until tender. Add the squash and saute a few minutes. Add the water or broth, salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, 25-30 minutes until tender yet a little chunky. Add the chopped kale. Cook 10 minutes until tender, "yet vibrant". Serve topped with nutmeg and seeds. Delicious with a hearty bread!

SPIKED PUMPKIN SOUP--Think about it . . . bourbon, apple cider and maple syrup all together in this belly-warmer from the November 2005 issue of Cooking Light magazine.

1 cup chopped onion

1/2 tsp. minced ginger

1/2 tsp. ground cumin

2 cloves minced garlic

1 1/2 cups apple cider

1/3 cup bourbon

1/2 cup pure maple syrup

1 x 29 oz. canned pumpkin

1 x 14 oz. can chicken broth

2 cups milk

1 tsp. flour

1/2 tsp.salt

1/4 tsp. pepper

9 TBS. sour cream

3 TBS. chopped fresh parsley (optional)

Heat a Dutch oven on medium-high. Saute the onion, ginger, cumin and garlic in a little oil until lightly browned. Stir in the cider, bourbon, syrup, pumpkin and broth. Bring to a boil, reduce and simmer 10 minutes. Puree the mixture with a handheld immersion blender until smooth. Stir in the milk, flour, salt and pepper. Heat well, but do not allow the soup to boil, stirring often. Serve, topped with sour cream and parsley. Serves 9.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP WITH SHRIMP--Another brand new recipe and this one from the pages of Everyday

Food, October 2011.

4 TBS. butter

2 lbs. peeled and deveined shrimp, thawed

2 medium onions, diced

2 TBS. dried sage

1 x 3 lb. butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1/2" cubes

1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

6 cups chicken broth

coarse salt

1/2 cup sour cream

In a large Dutch oven, melt 2 TBS. of the butter on medium heat. Add the shrimp and cook until opaque, 6-8 minutes. Set aside in a bowl, covered with foil to keep warm and moist. Increase the heat to medium-high. Add the rest of the butter. Saute the onion together with the sage until tender. Add the squash, cayenne and broth. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer about 20 minutes. Season with salt to taste. Transfer 1/2 of the mixture to a blender. Add the sour cream and blend until smooth. Return back to the pot and stir in the shrimp. Serve hot. Serves 8.

To Top

NATURAL NEWS--

MULCH TO PREVENT WINTER INJURY

By Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor for the University of Vermont

Mulch is a standard form of winter protection for many shallow-rooted plants. While in summer it is effective in retaining soil moisture, preventing erosion, and controlling weeds, in winter it acts as insulation for the soil and plant roots.

Failure to mulch landscape plants and evergreen shrubs may lead to serious winter root injury. Alternate thawing and freezing of unmulched soil as temperatures warm during the day and drop at night may cause frost heaving in the spring. Freezing and thawing occurs mainly in the fall and spring, and in fall may keep perennials from hardening properly or cause injury to unhardened plants

Mulch retains soil heat and keeps it from escaping, which in turn protects root systems. Initially, the soil under mulch does not freeze as deeply, so plants will continue to absorb water. However, the soil will freeze eventually, so in the spring mulch doesn't help much with desiccation of foliage. Mulch helps evergreen shrubs go into winter with more moisture, so less damage will occur from drying out come spring.

While snow cover can provide good protection for plants, it's not possible to predict when, or how much snow, we will get each year. So, your best bet is to spread pine needles, straw, chopped leaves, wood chips, corn cobs, or other organic materials around the base of your landscape plants. All are effective although availability and cost may influence your decision as to what to use.

Keep in mind that you should avoid pine needles if you don't want acidic soil. Avoid weedy hay, using weed-free straw (or marsh hay) instead. Wood chips might take up lots of nitrogen when decomposed, so it's better if they are already composted, or use chopped or milled pine bark.

Regardless of the material you select, the rule of thumb for winter mulches is to apply a two or three-inch layer. Adding more not only wastes money but also may smother the root system, and possibly kill the plant, especially shallow-rooted perennials such as yarrow or bee balm. Some plants can withstand such abuse, but overmulching is often a leading cause of death to azaleas and rhododendrons, as well as ash, linden, maple, and narrow-leaf evergreen trees.

Pine bark and pine needles will pack down very little, so you probably won't need to add any more as the winter progresses. If you use straw, start with a four- to six-inch layer, as it will pack down to the desired final depth of two to three inches. You may need to add more throughout the winter to maintain that three-inch depth, especially if snow cover is sparse or nonexistent.

After applying the mulch, gently pull it away from the stems or trunks of the plants. Mulching too close to the trunk may provide optimum conditions for the development of cankers on the lower trunk or stems of woody plants. If this occurs, the damage cannot be reversed, and the plants die in a matter of seasons. It also will provide a home for mice, which can chew the bark and girdle the stems, resulting in the plant's death. Girdle means to remove a band of bark and cambium from the circumference of a tree or plant, which usually kills it.

Mulch fall-transplanted trees and landscape plants as soon as you've planted them. That's because the mulch is needed to keep the soil warmer and moister for as long as possible before the ground freezes to help the roots become established. For these plants, you might want to use mouse guards around trunks to prevent injury.

For established landscape plants, although many gardening books recommend mulching when the soil cools or is slightly frozen, I prefer to mulch earlier in the fall. This helps retain soil warmth, so roots continue to grow for a longer period, and plants can absorb more moisture to head into winter in better shape against drying out. Then in spring

you will need to remove the mulch from perennials or pull it away soon as snow goes and plants start to grow. For woody plants you can leave it on.

For years I've monitored soil temperatures under various mulches and of soil without mulch. I have found that by adding only a couple inches of bark mulch in the fall, you can prevent soil temperatures from moderating or fluctuating wildly by as much as 10 degrees F. So if air temperatures drop to below freezing overnight, soil temperatures might remain at 40 degrees F or above and roots will continue to grow.

If temperatures drop really low, like 10 degrees F overnight, soils might remain just below freezing or around it, so less hardened roots will not suffer damage in the fall as they otherwise would. Mulch is key in fall as perennials harden as the season progresses. So while they might take 20-degree F soil temperatures in midwinter, if such occurred in mid-fall it might kill them as they aren't fully hardened. That's why it is so critical to mulch early. If temperatures remain low in the fall for a few days, soil temperatures will drop more slowly on mulched soils, so wild swings in temperature are less apt to occur.

Source: http://www.uvm.edu/pss/ppp/articles/mulchwi.html

DECEMBER'S PLANT OF THE MONTH:

REDTWIG, REDOSIER, SIBERIAN, BLOODTWIG and COMMON DOGWOODS (Cornus alba, C. sericea and C. sanguinea)

This group of shrubs is among the showiest for the garden where winter interest is desired. All are known for their colorful stems that seem to glow when set against a background of snow. The most common are the native redtwig/redosier dogwoods (C. sericea) found throughout Wisconsin and nearly all of North America. Vast populations are seen in low, wet areas throughout the state and are easy to pick out during the winter months when their blood-red stems seem to burst from the barren landscape.

There is a lot of confusion when talking about the colorful dogwoods found at nurseries and garden centers. **Not all redtwig dogwoods are red and not all dogwoods with red twigs are redtwig.** For most gardeners, however, the term 'redtwig dogwood' has come to mean all of the colorful twiggy dogwoods; whether red, orange or goldenstemmed. The term 'redtwig' now encompasses related but different species from around the world and the hybrids of these species. While cornus sericea hails from North America, the extremely hardy and popular C. alba is native to Siberia into China. Common dogwood (C. sanguinea) comes to us from Europe and western Asia.

All three species prefer moist spots in the garden that are protected from the hot afternoon sun. All have creamy white flowers in late spring and early summer and all produce berries late in the season. Stems are usually harvested in late fall for indoor use and can be used either fresh or dried. The stems are commonly used outdoors in large holiday containers. Plants generally grow fro 3 to 8 feet depending on variety.

Some of the most common varieties and cultivars of each species include:

Siberian Dogwood (C. alba)--Alleman's Compact, Ivory Halo, Bloodgood, Bud's Yellow (golden-stemmed), Kesselringii. Prairie Fire and Siberica.

Redosier Dogwood (C. sericea-our native dogwood)--Arctic Fire, Baileyi, Cardinal, Fire Dance, Flaviramea, (golden-stemmed) Isanti, Kelseyi, Silver & Gold.

Common Dogwood (C. sanguinea)--Arctic Sun, Midwinter Fire, Winter Flame.

To Top

AROUND TOWN:

For neighborhood events or garden tours that you would like posted in our monthly newsletter, please contact Rick at (608) 244-5661 or rick@kleinsfloral.com or Sue at sue@kleinsfloral.com. Please include all details, i.e. dates, locations, prices, brief description, etc. Events must be garden related and must take place in the Madison vicinity and we must receive your information by the first of the month in which the event takes place for it to appear in that month's newsletter. This is a great opportunity for free advertising.

Dane County Winter Farmer's Market

Saturdays, November 12 thru December 17, 7:30-noon Monona Terrace

Saturdays, January 7 thru April 14, 8:00-noon Madison Senior Center 330 W. Mifflin

For details visit www.madfarmmkt.org

Olbrich's Garden's Bolz Conservatory Exhibit -- Treasures of the Rainforest

November 12 through March 18, 2012 Daily from 10:00-4:00, Sundays 10:00-5:00 In the Bolz Conservatory

The rainforests of the world are a tremendous natural resource for people around the world, including Americans. Many of the things consumed every day like fruits, vegetables, ingredients for medicines, and construction materials come from the rainforest. Scientists believe that's just the tip of the iceberg; there are countless species of plants and animals in the rainforests that haven't even been discovered yet! Discover various everyday products that originate in the rainforests and see the plants they come from up close!

Olbrich Botanical Gardens 3330 Atwood Ave., Madison 608/246-4550 or www.olbrich.org for details

Dane County Winter Farmer's Market

Saturdays, November 12 thru December 17, 7:30-noon Monona Terrace

Saturdays, January 7 thru April 14, 8:00-noon Madison Senior Center 330 W. Mifflin

For details visit www.madfarmmkt.org

Olbrich Garden's Holiday Express: Flower & Model Train Show

December 3 through December 31

Twinkling lights, festive poinsettias, tiny landscapes, and large-scale model trains: all aboard for Olbrich's Holiday Express! Using large-scale model trains, Olbrich's horticulture staff will showcase miniature landscapes among hundreds of colorful poinsettias. Members of the Wisconsin Garden Railway Society come from all over the state to show off their large-scale model trains. Relax with friends and family and enjoy holiday refreshments available for purchase in the lobby. Olbrich's Photo Depot also provides the perfect background for a holiday photo! Admission for Olbrich Botanical Society members is free. Admission to Olbrich's Holiday Express for the general public is \$3 for adults, and \$2 for children ages 3 to 12. Children 2 and under are free. Admission to the tropical Bolz Conservatory is included.

Olbrich's Holiday Express is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Olbrich will close at 2 p.m. on December 24, and will be closed all day on December 25 and January 1.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens 3330 Atwood Ave., Madison 608/246-4550 or www.olbrich.org for details

Rotary Botanical Gardens' Holiday Light Show

December 16-23 and December 26-31

Stroll Rotary Botanical Gardens (RBG) filled with 300,000 dazzling lights and fun holiday displays. Inside enjoy electric trains, local musicians, Santa visits, internationally themed activities and holiday shopping.

Tickets available at the door. Pre-event tickets available at the RBG Cottage Garden Gallery, at four M&I Bank Janesville locations and five Blackhawk Community Credit Union Janesville locations.

The Rotary Botanical Gardens Gingerbread Competition is a tradition that has grown into a remarkable display of creativity. Build a classic house, add in an international flare, or re-create a local landmark.

Doors open 5pm. Last ticket sold 8pm Admission- at the door \$5 adults (16 and up) \$3 youth (3 to 15)

Rotary Botanical Gardens 1455 Palmer Dr., Janesville, WI 608/752-3885 or www.rotarygardens.org

To Top

| DECEMBER IN THE GARDEN A checklist of things to do this month. |
|---|
| Pick up a copy of the 2012 Wisconsin Garden Journal at bookstores. |
| Mulch perennials to protect from the cold and prevent heaving. |
| Purchase marsh hay and rose protection. Wait till the ground freezes. |
| Mulch roses by mounding soil and wrapping, rather than using rose cones. |
| Keep birdfeeders full. Clean periodically with soap and water. |
| Make water available to the birds. Begin using a deicer as needed. |
| Plant bulbs for forcing and put in a cool location for 10-12 weeks. |
| Plant bulbs until the ground freezes. |
| Prep lawnmower for winter storage and snowblower for weather to come. |
| Mark driveways and sidewalks with stakes. |
| Finish garden cleanup to make spring easier and prevent pests. |
| Do any last minute raking to prevent smothering delicate plants or beds. |
| Spread fireplace ashes over beds to amend the soil. |
| Make sure clay pots are stored inside and dry to prevent cracking. |
| Place your used Christmas tree in the garden for added wildlife protection. |
| Have trees trimmedit's often times cheaper and easier to schedule. |
| Inspect stored summer bulbs like dahlias, cannas and glads for rotting. |
| Stop feeding houseplants and cut back on watering. |
| Inventory last year's leftover seeds before ordering new ones. |
| Make notes in your garden journal for changes, improvements, etc. |
| Wrap trunks of susceptible trees to protect from rodents. |
| Visit Klein'sit's green, it's warm, it's colorfulit's always spring! |

Some of our very favorite seed and plant sources include:

For seeds:

Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds @ www.RareSeeds.com or 417/924-8887
Burpee @ www.burpee.com or 800/888-1447
Harris Seeds @ www.harrisseeds.com or 800/514-4441
Johnny's Select Seeds @ www.johnnyseeds.com or 207/861-3901
Jung's Seeds @ www.jungseed.com or 800/247-5864
Park's Seeds @ www.parkseed.com or 800/845-3369
Seeds of Change @ www.seedsofchange.com or 888/762-7333
Seed Savers @ www.seedsavers.org or 563/382-5990
Select Seeds @ www.seedsavers.org or 800/684-0395
Territorial Seeds @ www.territorialseed.com or 888/657-3131
Thompson & Morgan @ www.thompson-morgan.com or 800/274-7333

For bulbs:

Brent & Becky's Bulbs @ www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com or 877/661-2852
Colorblends @ www.colorblends.com or 888/847-8637
John Scheeper's @ www.johnscheepers.com or 860/567-0838
McClure & Zimmerman @ www.mzbulb.com or 800/883-6998

For plants:

Heronswood Nursery @ www.heronswood.com or 360/297-4172
High Country Gardens @ www.highcountrygardens.com or 800/925-9387
Logee's Greenhouses @ www.logees.com or 888/330-8038
Plant Delights Nursery @ www.plantdelights.com or 912/772-4794
Roots and Rhizomes @ www.rootsrhizomes.com or 800/374-5035
Wayside Gardens @ www.waysidegardens.com or 800/213-0379
White Flower Farm @ www.whiteflowerfarm.com or 800/503-9624

Note: To receive every possible seed, plant or garden supply catalog imaginable, check out **Cyndi's Catalog of Garden Catalogs** @ www.gardenlist.com. Most catalogs are free and make for great winter reading!

To Top

BEHIND THE SCENES AT KLEIN'S--This is a sneak peek of what is going on each month behind the scenes in our greenhouses. Many people are unaware that our facility operates year round or that we have 10 more greenhouses on the property in addition to the 6 open for retail. At any given moment we already have a jump on the upcoming season--be it poinsettias in July, geraniums in December or fall mums in May.

IN DECEMBER:

- ---We're prepping the hundreds of poinsettias and holiday plants that go out for orders each day. After choosing the most gorgeous plants, we need to foil, bow and sleeve each order before loading into our vans for delivery to Madison's homes, businesses and churches.
- ---Tropicals for next summer sale continue to arrive. Our tropicals (such as bananas, colocasias, alocasias, xanthosomas, etc.) arrive now so we are able to get the best selection and are able to offer you substantial sized plants next summer.
- ---Hundreds of herbs for windowsill culture are thriving in the sunny, warm greenhouses. We have chosen only the best assortment for indoor growing and winter harvest. Choose from rosemary, lavender, parsley, thyme and more.
- ---We continue to plan and prepare for Wisconsin Public Television's Garden Expo at the Alliant Energy Center in February by sprucing up display pieces and potting up thousands of violas, primrose, cineraria, etc. for sale at the show. This is Klein's biggest annual event and our most important advertising.

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT—Each month we spotlight some product that we already carry or one that we've taken note of and plan to carry in the near future. Likewise, if you would like to see Klein's to carry a product that we don't currently, please let us know. Our goal is to be responsive to the marketplace and to our loyal clientele. If a product fits into our profile, we will make every effort to get it into our store. In addition, we may be able to special order an item for you, whether plant or hard good, given enough time.

This month's spotlight features: Products from Grasslands Road®--"Gifts That Inspire"

Visit Klein's this holiday season and see our amazing array of inexpensive and fun gift ideas from Grasslands Road®-one of the largest makers of gift, tabletop and party products in the world. Both whimsical and practical, Grasslands Road® has something for everyone on your gift list whether man, woman or child. We're carrying an eye-catching assortment of products for holiday decorating and entertaining. For the gardener on your list, Klein's offers a nice selection from Grasslands Road's 'In the Garden' division for outdoor decor and entertaining. For a peek into some of the items we're carrying visit http://www.amscan.com/catalogs/grasslands road/holiday traditions/

PERMANENT FEATURES--

KLEIN'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Have our monthly newsletter e-mailed to you automatically by signing up on the right side of our home page. We'll offer monthly tips, greenhouse news and tidbits, specials and recipes. . .everything you need to know from your favorite Madison greenhouse. And tell your friends. It's easy to do.

THE MAD GARDENER--"Madison's Firsthand Source for Expert Gardening Advice"

Ask us your gardening questions by e-mailing us at madgardener@kleinsfloral.com. Klein's in-house **Mad Gardener** will e-mail you with an answer as promptly as we can. The link is posted on our home page and in all newsletters.

We can only answer those questions pertaining to gardening in Southern Wisconsin and we reserve the right to leave correspondence unanswered at our discretion. Please allow 2-3 days for a response.

FACEBOOK

Klein's has joined the Facebook frenzy. Become a fan of Klein's by visiting us at <u>www.facebook.com.</u>. We continuously post company updates and new pictures

SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT

We offer a 10% Off Senior Citizen Discount every Tuesday to those 62 and above. This discount is not in addition to other discounts or sales. Please mention that you are a senior before we ring up your purchases. Does not apply to wire out orders or services, i.e. delivery, potting, etc.

RECYCLING POTS & TRAYS

The City of Madison will recycle rinsed out hard plastic pots and trays when brought to their drop-off locations at 4602 Sycamore Ave. and 1501 West Badger Rd. They do not accept light plastic or multi-celled packs. White plastic #5's are also not accepted in city recycling bins or at the drop-off sites. For more information call 267-2626 or visit www.cityofmadison.com/streets/RigidPlasticRecyclingDropOff.cfm

KLEIN'S "BLOOMING PLANT OR FRESH FLOWER CLUB"

Send or receive 3 month's, 6 month's or a whole year's worth of seasonal blooming plants or fresh flower arrangements and SAVE!!

There's no easier way to give gorgeous blooming plants or fresh flower arrangements, month after month. Each month a seasonal blooming plant or fresh arrangement will arrive on yours or a loved one's doorstep. You choose the start date and we'll make your special delivery the very same day each month.

For just \$75, \$150 or \$300, respectively, we'll send 3 month's, 6 month's or a year's worth of seasonal blooming plants--perhaps a bulb garden or azalea in the spring, one of our famous large geraniums or a tropical hibiscus in the summer, a chrysanthemum or Thanksgiving cactus in the fall or one of our homegrown poinsettias or cyclamen for the holidays and winter months. Selection of the blooming plant will be based on availability.

And for just \$90, **\$175 or \$350**, respectively, receive one of Klein's lovely fresh floral arrangements. All arrangements will be seasonal and will contain only the freshest flowers. All arrangements are **Designer's Choice**, but are sure to satisfy the most discerning lover of fresh flowers.

Prices include delivery within our delivery area. Enclosure cards will accompany each delivery if desired. For delivery details visit the "**Permanent Features**" section of our newsletter below. If your chosen delivery date happens to fall on a Sunday or holiday, we will deliver it on the next available delivery day. All regular delivery conditions apply.

Join our <u>Blooming Plant or Fresh Flower Club</u> by calling Klein's at <u>608/244-5661</u> or <u>888/244-5661</u> or by stopping in. We request that payment be made in full before the first delivery and prices do not include sales tax.

Klein's Floral and Greenhouses delivers daily, except Sundays, throughout all of Madison and much of Dane County including: Cottage Grove, DeForest, Fitchburg, Maple Bluff, Marshall, McFarland, Middleton, Monona, Oregon, Shorewood Hills, Sun Prairie, Verona, Waunakee and Windsor. Current delivery rate on 1-4 items is \$6.95 for Madison, Maple Bluff, Monona and Shorewood Hills, slightly more to the surrounding communities and for more than 4 items. We not only deliver our fabulous fresh flowers, but also houseplants, bedding plants and sundries. A minimum order of \$25.00 is required for delivery. Delivery to the Madison hospitals is \$4.95. Deliveries to the four Madison hospitals are made during the early afternoon. There is no delivery charge to funeral homes in the city of Madison, although regular rates apply for morning funeral deliveries to Madison's west side. Regular rates also apply for funeral deliveries in the surrounding communities.

Morning delivery is guaranteed to the following Madison zip codes, but only if requested: 53703, 53704, 53714, 53716, 53718 and Cottage Grove, DeForest, Maple Bluff, Marshall, McFarland, Monona, Sun Prairie, Waunakee and Windsor. We begin our delivery day at 8:00 a.m. and end at approximately 4:00 p.m. Except during holidays, the following west-side zip codes and communities can be delivered only during the afternoon: 53705, 53706, 53711, 53713, 53717, 53719, 53726, Fitchburg, Middleton, Oregon, Shorewood Hills and Verona. During holidays (Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, etc.) we are able to make morning deliveries to all of the above areas. We are not able to take closely timed deliveries on any holiday due to the sheer volume of such requests. It's best to give us a range of time and we'll try our absolute hardest. Orders for same day delivery must be placed by 12:30 p.m. or by 2:30 p.m. for Madison zip codes 53704 and 53714. We do not deliver to Cambridge, Columbus, Deerfield or Stoughton.

DEPARTMENT HEADS: Please refer all questions, concerns or feedback in the following departments to their appropriate supervisor.

Phone: 608/244-5661 or 888/244-5661

Grower, General Manager --Jamie VandenWymelenberg jamie@kleinsfloral.com
Assistant Manager--Jennifer Simon jsimon@kleinsfloral.com
House Accounts & Billing--Barbara Foulk barb@kleinsfloral.com
Delivery Supervisor--Rick Halbach rick@kleinsfloral.com
Owner & Manager--Sue Klein sue@kleinsfloral.com

To Top

RELATED RESOURCES AND WEB SITES

University of Wisconsin Extension 1 Fen Oak Ct. #138 Madison, WI 53718 608/224-3700 http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/ http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/

Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic Dept. of Plant Pathology 1630 Linden Dr. Madison, WI 53706 http://www.plantpath.wisc.edu/index.php

Insect Diagnostic Lab 240 Russell Labs 1630 Linden Dr. Madison, WI 53706 http://www.entomology.wisc.edu/

U.W. Soil and Plant Analysis Lab 8452 Mineral Point Rd. Verona, WI 53593 608/262-4364 http://uwlab.soils.wisc.edu/

American Horticultural Society http://www.ahs.org/

Garden Catalogs (an extensive list with links)
http://www.gardenlist.com/
also http://www.mailordergardening.com/
Invasive Species
http://www.invasive.org/

Friends of Troy Gardens Rm. 171, Bldg. 14 3601 Memorial Dr. Madison, WI 53704 608/240-0409

http://www.troygardens.org/

Community Gardens Division (Madison area)
Community Action Coalition
1717 N. Stoughton Rd.
Madison, WI 53704
608/246-4730
http://www.cacscw.org/gardens/

Madison Area Master Gardeners (MAMGA)
http://www.madison.com/communities/mamga/

Wisconsin Master Gardeners Program
Department of Horticulture
1575 Linden Drive
University of Wisconsin - Madison
Madison, WI 53706
608/265-4504

http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/

The Wisconsin Gardener http://www.wpt.org/garden/

Allen Centennial Gardens 620 Babcock Dr. Madison, WI 53706 608/262-8406

http://www.horticulture.wisc.edu/allencentennialgardens/

Olbrich Botanical Gardens 3330 Atwood Ave. Madison, WI 53704 608/246-4550 http://www.olbrich.org/

Rotary Gardens 1455 Palmer Dr. Janesville, WI 53545 608/752-3885

http://www.rotarygardens.org/

University of WI Arboretum 1207 Seminole Hwy. Madison, WI 53711 608/263-7888 http://uwarboretum.org/

University of Wisconsin-West Madison Agricultural Research Center 8502 Mineral Point Rd.

To Top

PLANTS POISONOUS TO CHILDREN:

Children may find the bright colors and different textures of plants irresistible, but some plants can be poisonous if touched or eaten. If you're in doubt about whether or not a plant is poisonous, don't keep it in your home. The risk is not worth it. The following list is not comprehensive, so be sure to seek out safety information on the plants in your home to be safe.

- •Bird of paradise
- •Bull nettle
- Castor bean
- Chinaberry tree
- Crocus
- Daffodil
- Deadly nightshade
- •Dieffenbachia (dumb cane)
- Foxglove
- •Glory lily
- •Hemlock
- Holly berry
- Indian tobacco
- •Iris
- Jimsonweed
- •Lantana
- Larkspur
- ·Lily of the valley
- Marijuana
- Mescal bean
- Mexicantes
- •Mistletoe
- Morning glory
- •Mountain laurel
- •Night-blooming jasmine
- Nutmeg
- Oleander
- •Philodendron
- Poison ivy
- Poison sumac
- Pokeweed
- Poppy
- Potato
- Privet
- •Rhododendron
- •Rhubarb
- Water hemlock
- •Wisteria

To Top

PLANTS POISONOUS TO PETS:

Below is a list of some of the common plants which may produce a toxic reaction in animals. This list is intended only as a guide to plants which are generally identified as having the capability for producing a toxic reaction. Source: The National Humane Society website @ http://www.humanesociety.org/

- Aconite
- Apple
- Arrowgrasses
- Autumn Crocus
- Azaleas
- •Baneberry

- •Bird-of-Paradise
- Black locust
- Bloodroot
- Box
- Buckeye
- Buttercup
- •Caladium
- •Carolina jessamine
- •Castor bean
- •Chinaberry tree
- •Chockcherries
- Christmas berry
- •Christmas Rose
- Common privet
- •Corn cockle
- Cowbane
- Cow cockle
- Cowsliprb
- •Daffodil
- Daphne
- •Day lily
- •Delphinium (Larkspur)
- •Dumbcane
- •Dutchman's breeches
- •Easter lily
- •Elderberry
- •Elephant's ear
- •English Ivy
- •European Bittersweet
- Field peppergrass
- Foxglove
- •Holly
- •Horsechestnut
- •Horse nettle
- •Hyacinth
- •Iris
- Jack-in-the-pulpit
- Jerusalem Cherry
- Jimsonweed
- •Lantana
- Larkspur
- Laurels
- Lily of the valley
- •Lupines
- •Mayapple
- •Milk vetch
- Mistletoe
- Monkshood
- Morning glory
- •Mustards
- •Narcissus
- •Nicotiana
- Nightshade
- •Oaks
- •Oleander
- Philodendrons
- Pokeweed
- •Poinsettia
- •Poison hemlock
- Potato
- •Rhododendron
- •Rhubarb

- •Rosary pea •Sago palm •Skunk cabbage •Smartweeds
- Smartweeds
 Snow-on-the-mountain
 Sorghum
 Star of Bethlehem
 Wild black cherry
 Wild radish
 Wisteria
 Yellow jessamine

- •Yew