



BETWEEN THE ROWS
WENDY SCHMIDT

Symbol of the season: poinsettia

One holiday tradition enjoyed by many is the purchase of a poinsettia for decoration. The poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd.) is named in honor of Joel Poinsett, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico during the early 1800s. The poinsettia is native to Mexico.

Select a poinsettia with crisp, healthy foliage and bright bracts (the colored leaves). Its cyathia (the true flower which is tiny and yellow and in the center) should be tightly clustered and just starting to shed pollen. One should avoid plants with insect or disease symptoms. Wilted or yellowing leaves often foretell of root diseases.

Home care of your poinsettia should include a bright location away from cold drafts. Temperatures of 60 degrees nights and 72 degrees days along with high humidity will prolong bract color.

Water when the soil surface is dry to the touch. They don't like wet feet. Discard water that might collect in a saucer placed under the pot. If the pot is foil covered, make a drain hole in the foil.

Finally, contrary to the belief of some, poinsettias are NOT poisonous. Extensive testing conducted by Ohio State University resulted in a clean bill of health for the poinsettia.

There are many colors available now. The traditional red is still a favorite of most people.

CHORES

- Overwintering geraniums like bright light and cool temperatures. Keep soils on the dry side.
- If you are planning to have a live Christmas tree and plant it after the holiday, dig the planting hole before the ground freezes.
- Mulch and cover the backfill soil from the hole so it remains dry and does not freeze.
- Spray the tree with anti-transpirant to reduce needle moisture loss.
- Store the tree outdoors in the shade away from wind until the last minute. Don't allow roots to become dry.
- Living trees should be set up in your coolest room. Don't keep indoors for more than one week. Then plant promptly.

If you have garden comments or questions, please write to greengardencolumn@yahoo.com. Thanks for reading!

Exploring the Hassett Building's rich history

By Ginny Mammen

The next building at 1108 Adams Ave. has the historic name of Siegrist Jewelry on the National Register of Historic Places. However, some interesting individuals were involved and a number of events occurred prior to this being the home of that particular business.

According to a Sanborn Map there was a "Dry Goods and Millinery" store there in 1893. So we know the building was constructed prior to that date. But who built the building? The 1903 City Directory lists "Mrs. H. M. Hassett-Dry Goods and Millinery-Adams Ave between Depot and Chestnut." The next clue comes from The Observer in October 1910 when it reported that the Hassett Building at 1108 was purchased by William Siegrist for \$5,000.

See **Hassett** / Page 2B



Gretchen McKay/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette-TNS

Homemade cheese and spinach ravioli in a lemon butter sauce comes together quickly.

HOMEMADE PASTA? IT'S NOT A PROBLEM

■ This pasta dough is easy to make, and perfect for molding into ravioli filled with cheese

Gretchen McKay
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Homemade pasta might seem like a job for experienced cooks, but the truth is anyone can do it if they're willing to practice.

This dough is super easy to stir together, and even easier to work with. Just be sure to let it rest for at least 10 minutes so the gluten strands relax and create a strong, pliable and roll-able dough.

Once you've got the hang of rolling out dough, either by hand or with a pasta machine, ravioli should become your specialty. The dumplings can be filled with any combination of cheese, meat and/or vegetables. If you get a system going and make several batches at a time, you'll always have pasta in the freezer for dinner.

These ravioli are filled with cooked spinach and ricotta, with a hint of lemon zest to make them bright. They're finished in a simple sauce of lemon olive oil, butter, a little more zest and a sprinkling of fresh basil.

- For dough**
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
 - 1 cup very hot water
- For filling**
- 12 ounces baby spinach

- 1 cup whole-milk ricotta
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 egg whisked with a little water

- For sauce**
- 1 tablespoon lemon olive oil
 - 2 tablespoons butter
 - 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
 - Shredded basil, for garnish

Combine flour and water in a large bowl. Stir to combine into a large ball. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at least 10 minutes.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add spinach and cook just until it turns bright green, about 15-20 seconds. Drain, and when cool, squeeze dry between paper towels and then chop.

Combine ricotta, egg, parmesan, chopped spinach, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper and lemon zest in a medium bowl and stir to combine.

To form the ravioli, cut dough into 4 evenly sized pieces. (It should be slightly sticky.) Add extra flour as necessary for rolling. Form each

piece into a 2-by-6-inch rectangle. Recover the dough with the plastic wrap.

Lightly dust work surface and a rolling pin. Working with 1 piece of dough at a time, roll dough into a 4-by-12-inch rectangle. Place 6 rounded teaspoons of filling about 1 inch apart down the center of the dough. Fold dough over the filling. Brush egg wash on sides of dough and in between the filling. Press down around the edges of each of the ravioli with your fingertips.

Cut ravioli into small squares with ravioli press (It will automatically seal at the same time). Or cut into small squares with a knife and press down around the edges again with your fingertips to seal. Place finished ravioli on a baking tray and continue forming remaining ravioli.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add half the ravioli and cook until the ravioli float, stirring occasionally, about 3-4 minutes. Drain into a large bowl and cook the remaining ravioli.

Meanwhile, melt butter with olive oil in a large saute pan. Add melted butter to bowl with cooked ravioli along with shredded basil, lemon zest and remaining salt and pepper. Gently toss to coat and serve immediately.

Serves 4-6.