



BRING THE OUTDOORS IN

Simple but exquisite holiday decorating begins with a trip outside to pick up some nature. Then the fun begins.



ABOVE: Inspired by Danny and Wayne, Anne brings nature inside as she begins to decorate her home for the holidays.

LONESOMEVILLE POTTERY
Find LoneSomeVille Pottery at The Portland Art Museum and Pendleton Home (Southwest Broadway/Portland Airport).

Sign up on the mailing list: Lonesomeville.com, or on Facebook at LoneSomeville Studios for invitations to their "serendipitous" open garden events.

Anne Jaeger, writes *The Garden Gal* for *Just Out*. Anne was a hard news reporter and anchor at KGW and KOIN before turning to gardening full time. After that her award-winning garden shows appeared on both stations. You can now look for Anne's garden videos on the *Oregonian* newspaper web site: oregonlive.com/hg, catch her on Twitter @GardenGalTV, send her a suggestion via her web site: GardenGal.TV, or write Anne@JustOut.com.

To my eye, nobody does holidays like the guys at LoneSomeVille Studios. Now internationally known pottery makers, they've got artistry to die for. Of all the gardeners I've met, Danny Hills and Wayne Hughes have the most profound effect on my garden and aesthetics. Their Victorian home and garden in Southeast Portland are over-the-top in a completely natural way. Most of it has been rebuilt by hand, by one of the four men who live there. Let me just confess; I've taken a "bite (or two) outta their style" and tweaked ideas as my own. So why not pass on the gift? Like me, you'll see the art to their holiday decorating is accessible to all. It comes right out of nature. Holidays aren't constructed with a bunch of plastic and throw away junk; these decorations come from the earth's beauty. All it requires is picking up stuff off the ground and in the yard. How easy is that? Happy Holidays!!!

Anne Jaeger: What elements from nature are your favorite decorations?

Wayne Hughes: Well, first of all, the untrimmed noble fir tree in the front room can only be 9 feet tall but we get a 12 foot tree and cut off the lower branches to use as decorative touches around the house.

Danny Hills: Yeah, we like our tree untrimmed, like our men. Just as nature made 'em (laughing). Throughout the year, I stalk the neighborhood for (white) pine cones while on our dog walks and come home with bags full. We save them for our decorations, too.

WH: Then, to screen out our neighbors we planted holly trees judiciously on the property line. For Christmas we have plenty of holly, so we bring lots of that in. We replace the holly when it dries out. And for more color, we cheat and buy the bright red holly berries from Michaels craft store, because only the female holly makes berries. And they last longer.

DH: We use those berries, pine cones, holly and fir

boughs on every flat surface, with votive candles, on fireplace mantels and to top our display cases and grandfather clock.

AJ: You don't just start piling stuff up on a mantel; how do you get the balance right?

WH: Anyone here at the "Gay-mune" (what they jokingly call their communal home) can perfectly decorate a mantle.

DH: First, we wind the mini-light cords around the fir bows before putting it up on the mantle. No wire can show! The design is a simple triangle: make the center the highest point in the design and slope it down toward the ends. And remember to use enough stuff so it looks lush.

WH: BUT(!) unlike donuts MORE is not better when it comes to decorating a mantle. Do a little, stand back, do a little more, and then evaluate. Repeat.

AJ: Why is nature such a strong component your holiday decorating and pottery?

DH: You can't get anything prettier than nature. I'm always heavily influenced by nature. I interpret what I see into my style. Good example is the Deco Tulip Vase, (available at their Christmas open house) which evolved from a trip to Seattle. We came home and out popped the Deco Tulip Vase from my imagination. I wasn't even consciously aware of it.

WH: Nothing says Christmas like ponderosa pine. That's why you see the image on our plates and vases. It's funny, visitors pick up a piece of our pottery and they blurt out "Oh, this really speaks to me!" And I say "Silly rabbit, the pottery's beautiful, but it cannot talk."

AJ: I guess I'm hearing things, then. I'd love people to see your decorations.

WH: We're having a holiday open house: December 8th from 1 - 8 p.m., 5006 SE Long Street, Portland. We'll be completely "Holi-decked" out. \$