

Gardening corner

Plants add to symbols, aroma of Christmas

BY LIZ DOUVILLE
For The Bulletin

For many years, holiday time was a hectic 45-day hustle and bustle. Anyone with a family doesn't need a review of the unending list. Then, before you know it, you've fallen into the "empty-nester" category.

These past two years of more restrictive living and travel has had its impact on many households not spending holidays together, including mine. Personally, I really have missed all the good holiday smells of cookies baking and the scent of a fresh-cut tree.

Over the past two years I have worked out some satisfying substitutes to come close to maintaining some semblance of tradition.

Instead of a tree for scent, I create a basket of mixed greens for a coffeetable and add in a few favorite ornaments. I always keep a colorful container filled with water on the hearth of the gas fireplace (for humidity). I added a bouquet of rosemary that I cut from the greenhouse. I also added some bay leaves to the water container on the hearth, hopefully they will release their spicy scent along with the rosemary. For the spicy, sweet smell of Christmas baking I always make the German Pfeffernusse cookies.

Little by little it is coming together to celebrate the seasonal symbols and the biblical links to Christmas. The more we know about some of the symbols puts more meaning into our celebration.

In Greek folklore, bay leaves were associated with honoring excellence or great courage. That is the origin of the Greek tradition of crowning herbs (including Olympic athletes) with garlands of leaves.

Garden tip: Bay, *Laurus nobilis*, is not hardy to Central Oregon. Bay could be grown in a container against a warm wall and then brought indoors for the winter.

Cooking tip: Toss a few bay leaves in boiling water to lightly flavor rice, beans or pasta as they cook.

Rosemary, *Rosemarinus officinalis*, symbolizes remembrance and is a culinary favorite. Legend has it that it will bring happiness for the

coming year to anyone who smells it on Christmas Eve. The symbolic meaning is remembrance, love, friendship and loyalty.

Garden tip: Rosemary is rated as a zone 7 plant. It is generally not hardy in Central Oregon, although more

hardy varieties are being developed. Rosemary could be grown in a container outdoors during the summer and brought indoors for the winter. The plant I have grown in an unheated greenhouse year-round.

Cooking tip: Rosemary's warm, earthy and pine-citrus flavor pairs well with beans, potatoes, tomatoes, spinach, peas, mushrooms, squash, lentils and eggs.

Sage, *Salvia officinalis*, has long been associated with immortality, health, and happiness. The Latin name, *Salvia*, means salvation.

Garden tip: Sage is easy to grow and is a good herb for over-wintering indoors.

Cooking tip: Garden sage, *S. officinalis*, is the best choice for cooking with just the right balance of pine, citrus and camphor. Purple, tricolor and golden sage are more sensitive to cold and often overpower dishes with their strong camphorlike flavor. The older leaves of garden sage harvested after plants bloom may be stronger in flavor and not as tender in texture. Their culinary value is still intact — just use less.

Thyme, *Thymus vulgaris*, is a popular seasoning used in French Creole and Cajun cui-

sines The herb is popular during the holidays included in dried flower arrangements, bouquets and potpourri. It is a symbol of bravery and is considered a manger herb. The story is that it was collected from the fields of Bethlehem, where it grows wild, and used to make a soft bed for Mary during the birth of Jesus.

Garden tip: Thyme grows well in Central Oregon. It makes a great ground cover in addition to being a popular culinary herb.

Cooking tip: Use your fingers to strip fresh leaves off the stem. Use fresh or dry. Fresh stems can be stored in a cup or vase partially filled with water. You can also wrap cut stems loosely in a damp paper towel and store inside a plastic bag in the refrigerator.

A few more holiday garden symbols to think about include the following:

Fir, juniper and spruce symbolize the living presence of the holy spirit, prayers ascending.

Holly symbolizes eternal life. Holly is also said to be the wood of the cross.

Musteltoe, *Viscum album*, is a true parasite of hardwood trees and is common in juniper trees in Central Oregon. It symbolizes peace, love and eternal life that springs forth in the midst of seeming death.

Pine symbolizes longevity, eternal and vigorous life. May you all have lots of pine in your life.

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Leaves of mistletoe with berries.
Submitted photo

Child care

Continued from P1

Heart of Oregon Corps since 2009 has offered a version of the program offering students construction training and hands-on volunteer experience building affordable housing in the region, but the new track is the program's first foray into another field.

The child and youth development track works largely the same way, according to Tanner Rohne, the program's trainer. After an intensive, two-week orientation, students will spend eight weeks obtaining key certifications that allow them to spend the next eight months applying those skills in the classrooms of local childcare providers.

"We want to give them the whole gauntlet of what the progression of youth go through from birth through 18. We know that child development never stops," Rohne said. "So we want to give them the tools needed to have an open mindset and a growth mindset to welcome learning and to push it and thrive in it."

After the first year in the program, students move into the child care workforce full-time and continue to receive goal-setting support and other YouthBuild resources for the second year.

The child and youth development track takes place out of Heart of Oregon Corps' Redmond campus. Participants receive a daily stipend starting at \$26 a day, plus an AmeriCorps educational grant of around \$1,600 at the completion of the program, Rohne said.

Around 425 students have gone through YouthBuild's construction program in

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Central Oregon, and 70% were employed after the program, according to Rohne.

Heart of Oregon had been considering other possible tracks — such as health care professions — for expanding the YouthBuild program, but Rohne said the community need was clearest in the child care workforce.

"We wanted to really bring in those early entry level positions to really get kids in the door and really see how heart-filled working with children really is," Rohne said.

"We feel that we have the ability to help pull on those heartstrings and really express and see the need to get qualified educators for our youth and our children."

The child and youth development track will launch at the end of January, and the nonprofit is in now accepting applications for the program. More information about applying is available online at heartoforegon.org/programs.

■ Bulletin reporter Bryce Dole contributed to this report.
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Redmond police officer enters DUII diversion

BY GARRETT ANDREWS
The Bulletin

The Redmond police officer arrested in summer for alleged drunk driving has resolved her case by entering a diversion program.

Hannah Copeland entered the alternative sentencing program in October and in exchange, the state dropped a count of reckless driving and one of reckless endangering.

Copeland was arrested by sheriff's deputies in August after crashing her Jeep on Cline Falls Road north of Bend.

Diversion is available in Oregon to people who have not been arrested for impaired driving within the past 15 years. If a person successfully completes diversion, no DUII conviction will be entered on their criminal record.

Copeland's diversion requirements include attending a victim impact panel, paying a \$450 fine, participating in a substance abuse evaluation and serving 12 months of supervised probation. An Intoxalock ignition device was installed on her car in October, according to court records.

Copeland was hired in 2000 by Redmond Police after completing training at the state police academy.

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