

# Family Living

## Consider Future Use of Live Christmas Tree

Many people prefer a live Christmas tree over a cut or artificial tree for ecological and aesthetic reasons. Before purchasing a live tree, consumers need to think about what they will do with the tree when the holidays are over, advised Bill Proebsting, professor of horticulture at Oregon State University.

Will you keep the tree in a pot and use it again next Christmas or will you plant it out in the yard? Certain types of evergreens work well as potted plants and others do best in the yard, said Proebsting.

Choose a slow-growing evergreen if you want to keep your tree living in a pot and use it as a Christmas tree again next year. Pines, cedars and spruce are slower growing, are easier to prune and keep looking nice in a pot longer than Douglas-fir, grand fir or noble fir.

If you plan on planting your living Christmas tree on your property after the holidays, think about how big a tree your yard can handle. A tiny Douglas-fir or Deodar cedar may grow into a 40-foot giant by the time your toddler goes to college.

Avoid planting trees too close to a house

because their roots may cause damage to cement foundations. If your space is limited, Proebsting recommends purchasing a slow-growing spruce or pine. Consult with your local nursery for particular species recommendations.

Whatever the choice, a living evergreen tree should be kept indoors no longer than a week, advised Proebsting. A warm house will cause the tree to lose hardiness and it may begin growing.

"The major problem with a living tree is leaving it inside too long and having it break dormancy," he said. "Then it is vulnerable to cold damage when you put it outside."

While the tree is inside, water it sufficiently and keep it away from sources of heat such as wood stoves, radiators and heating duct outlets. After the holidays, plant it outside as soon as possible if the weather is moderate.

"If you are planning on planting the tree out in the yard, it is better to get it into the ground right away," said Proebsting. "Its roots are more vulnerable to freezing if it is still sitting in the pot."



The Oregon Ballet Theatre Presents The Imperial Russian production of *The Nutcracker*. The Nutcracker will be performed at the Portland Civic Auditorium, December 11-27.

(Photo by J. David Straub)

## Providence Family Medicine welcomes new clinic manager

Vanetta Abdellatif recently joined Providence Family Medicine as clinic manager for the Gateway and North Portland clinics. Abdellatif has a broad background in health care management. She will be utilizing her skills to manage both clinics with special concern for the care and treatment for the underserved population. Some of her special duties will include supervision, financial management, marketing and advertising, as well as quality assurance.

Providence Physician Services and Development employs family physicians, internists, pediatricians and nurse practitioners. Clinics are located in the north Portland, southeast Portland, Wilsonville, Newberg and Sherwood.



Vanetta Abdellatif

## Tips for "fresh cut" christmas tree safety

A freshly cut, green Christmas tree is a beautiful sight. But it is also a potential fire hazard if not properly cared for. The importance of keeping the tree as fresh as possible while it's in the home can't be overemphasized.

Bill Proebsting, Oregon State University professor of horticulture, shared some tips on keeping your cut Christmas tree safe:

- Supply plenty of water. If the tree is to be stored for some time before being moved indoors, stand the tree trunk in a container filled with water. If the tree is to be displayed immediately, set the trunk in a tree stand that is designed to hold water.
- Saw one-fourth to one-half inch off the bottom of the tree trunk before placing the tree in the stand, to allow the tree to take up water.
- Keep your tree stand filled for as long as the tree remains in the home. Check it daily, especially the first few days after it is cut.
- Do NOT add bleach to your Christmas tree water, stressed Proebsting. Last year, some media reports recommended that a

bleach solution be used. This is a bad idea, he said.

"Unfortunately, this recommendation to use bleach is incorrect and potentially dangerous," said Proebsting. "Bleach can quickly kill cut Douglas fir. The dead trees then become fire hazards. Generally, the best way for keeping trees fresh is to re-cut the base of the tree and place it in water. Well-watered trees should remain fresh for three or four weeks."

- Locate the tree away from heat sources and away from doors in the home. In the event of a fire, the tree could block escape from the room.

- Keep the Christmas tree room cool. The cooler the room temperature, the longer the tree will stay fresh in the house.

- Turn your tree lights off when not around the tree.

- Do not burn candles on or near the tree.

- Avoid overloading electrical cords.

- Make sure your home's smoke detector is working properly and keep a portable fire extinguisher handy just in case.

## Holiday Light Festival

Arc Lights will illuminate the Aloha campus of the Arc of Washington County. The Light Festival began November 28th - the first night was in honor of the Beaverton Kiwanis - who donated the land and building for the Arc in 1959.

"This is our way of giving back to the community that has given so much to us," remarked executive director, Dr. Ted Brandhurst. The display is designed for vehicles to tour the campus taking in the visual splendor of the Arc Lights. The Light Display will be shining brightly Thursday - Sunday through the holiday season ending December 28th. There is no admission charge to view the Festival of Lights. Entry to the Arc Lights will be from 185th Ave. in Aloha. For directions call The Arc at 649-6110; or look to the illuminated sky near Aloha High School.

The following businesses made the Arc Lights possible: Platt Electric, Pacific Lamp Wholesale, SAFECO, Pacific One Bank, and Bales Thriftway.

## TimeSmart

### Ask Carolyn

**Q.** Recently my children made pizza in the oven and spilled cheese on the inside. I bought a spray-on oven cleaner but it states not to use it in a continuous cleaning oven. Now when we use the oven it smokes enough to set off the smoke detectors in the house! Can you help me with this predicament?

**A.** Get rid of that cheese mess with a steel wool soap pad, (like S.O.S. or Brillo). Don't worry about ruining the finish. Steel wool won't remove the porcelain coating used in continuous cleaning ovens. After you have removed the cheese, rinse completely with water because any remaining soap becomes a big brown soap stain when the oven heats up again. In the future, put some heavy-duty aluminum foil on the second rack to catch the spills. But, don't cover the rack entirely because you need room for the air to flow.

Do you have a home management question? Why not ask an expert—Whirlpool Home Economist Carolyn West. Write to her at: Ask Carolyn, Whirlpool Brand Appliances, Whirlpool Corporation, Benton Harbor, MI 49022. You just might see your question answered in an upcoming column.



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