

# How to keep your Christmas tree fresh

Greener, fresher Christmas trees make prettier and safer indoor decorations. A freshly cut tree is preferred because it keeps its color longer and is less of a fire hazard while in the home. Buy a cut tree with a high moisture content if possible.

Try these methods for determining the moisture content of the tree:

- Break a small branch between your fingers, if the branch breaks easily, chances are the tree, or that part of the tree, is too dry. Don't buy a dry tree because of the high fire risk in the home.

- Tapping the tree trunk on the ground can indicate the tree's vitality. If an abundance of needles drop from the tree, a good part of the tree may be dangerously dry.

- Needles that bend and cannot be easily pulled from the tree's branches are a good

indication that the tree is fresh.

- If more than an hour has elapsed since cutting, the tree base will need to be re-cut. This exposes fresh tissue that will readily accept 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. Purchase tree stands with large water reservoirs.

- After putting the tree indoors, fill the stand with water and keep it filled for as long as the tree remains in the home. Some tree stands hold only a small amount of water, so be certain to fill these stands several times a day.

Precautions to keep your tree fresh and safe should include locating the tree away from heat sources that would

dry the tree out quickly; being certain the tree is placed away from doors – in the event of a fire, the tree could block escape from the room; the cooler the room temperature, the longer the tree will stay fresh, consider lowering the thermostat a few degrees; and if the tree is tall, consider stabilizing it with guy wires to the ceiling and wall, thin wires are usually adequate and are almost invisible.

Source: *Chal Langren, OSU Christmas Tree Specialist*

# Rainier tree lighting on Dec. 12

Rainier will hold its fifth annual Tree Lighting Celebration and Holiday Decorating Awards on Saturday, December 12, at

City Hall, starting at 5:00 p.m.

The Rainier Chamber of Commerce and the City of Rainier invite the community to bring the kids and enjoy the holiday spirit with friends and neighbors.

There will be caroling, hot cocoa and cookies, door prizes from area merchants and prizes for the best decorated business and residence. And, Santa will be on hand to light the tree.



# Vernonia: Rising Over Adversity, cont.

From page 8

fish, raft, kayak, and catch crawdads, can become so destructive. It is also hard to imagine moving from this community where residents and visitors camp and picnic along the Nehalem River and Rock Creek during summer months; where bikers, horse back riders, and walkers enjoy the serenity of the path around the mill pond and along the linear trail; where Washington Grade School gymnasium is packed with family and friends as youngsters present their annual holiday program; where bas-

ketball and football games are major community events; where volunteers raise money and present a fabulous display of fireworks each July 4th following a parade of mostly youngsters and animals; where loaded log trucks are a major part of every parade; where a salmon festival, celebrating the return of salmon to their spawning grounds, is held annually; where a week-long Art in the Park holds lessons for children; where the residents have shown, time and again, their ability to work together to overcome enormous obstacles; and

where there is a group called "Vernonia Pride" which works, year-around, to make Vernonia truly a place where residents can take "Pride".

Some residents have left Vernonia, with the population hovering around 2300 at present (2009). Most have remained and are working on ways to continue enjoying the blessings of living in this little "pocket in the woods" while exploring options to ensure that the proximity to lovely Rock Creek and the meandering Nehalem River will no longer be a curse to the community.

# Assure holiday food gift safety

From page 14

banana or zucchini) in canning jars. Although similar "canned" breads may be available in gift shops, there isn't a research-based safe method for making them at home.

Be wary about low acid home-canned food gifts that

may not have been processed correctly. Meats, fish, vegetables and poultry must be canned in a pressure canner to be safe, and up to date canning instructions must be used.

Source: *Carolyn Rabb, Oregon State University*

# Honor roll announced for VHS

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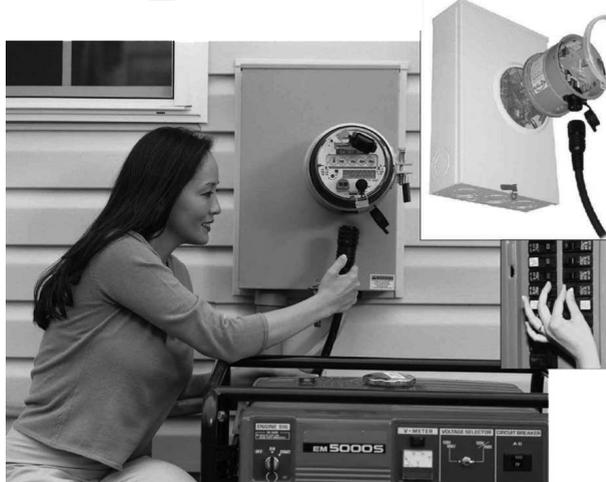
Honors, 3.25-3.49 – Alex Barber, Calvin Barnes, Klara Breil, Kelsey Brown, Genesis Castro, Jayme Due, Wayne Fogel, Mackenzie Frantz, Nora Hieronimus, Christopher Levenseller, Rebecca Levenseller, Emily Mitchell, Parker Roach, Preston Roach, Daniel Shaw, and Paul Whiteman.

Honorable Mention, 3.00-3.24 – Jacob Barnes, Robert

Cochran, Kaylee Dalebroux, Shylo Dooley, Jed Douglas, Zachery Dyer, Mandi Hartford, Brandon Herd, Ethan Johnston, Kendrick Leaverton, Courtney Paden, Makayla Roach, Sven Sandstrom, Sara Stern, Mckenzie Tarkalson, Kendra Thompkins, Charels Tungwenuk, Damian Vifquain, Christopher Watrous, and Tyler Young.



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