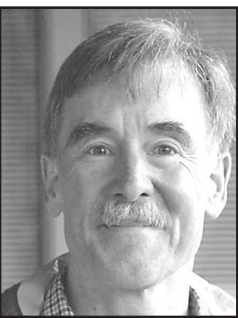


Can You Dig It?

By Chip Bubl, Columbia County
Extension Educator Agriculture/Staff Chair



KEEPING CHRISTMAS TREES FRESH

This one is simple. It's the water. If you keep your tree from running out of water, it will last for a long time in all but the driest homes. When you get your tree, especially if it's from a lot, cut the base at least one inch. Place the tree in warm water and don't let it ever go dry. Buy a tree stand with a large reservoir, because in the first few days, the tree will take up quarts of water. There is little evidence that any of the preservatives have much of an impact on the longevity of the tree.

Trees you cut at a Christmas tree farm may come with a few insects that thought they were going to go through winter hidden in the tree. Once your tree is inside, they wake up and start to wander around. Gently collect them and take them outside. If you find a queen yellow jacket (a rather large version of the standard yellow jacket) emerging, either carefully get her outside or eliminate her. They can sting and don't like being awakened from their winter slumber.

WINTER WATER FOR THE BIRDS

A lot of us feed birds in the winter. Yet how many of us think to provide those birds with water? As easy sources of water freeze in cold weather, birds may have trouble finding the water they need. Birds use the water not only for drinking and bathing, but as a source of water-borne foods such as insects and algae.

Bird lovers can help by providing shallow puddles or bird baths. The containers should be from one to three inches deep, preferably with gentle sloping sides. The surface of the bath should be rough so the birds can

get sure footing.

Place flat rocks at water's edge to allow birds a place to rest or drink from. Make sure cats cannot reach the watering area.

Keep water thawed by adding warm water as needed. There are even some birdbath heaters available at specialty stores. Hummingbird feeders can be brought inside in the evening and put back out the next morning to give our year-round hummingbirds a little extra warmth.



FOR GARDENERS

What might a gardener like to see under the Christmas tree? Here are a few suggestions.

- Nice gardening gloves, esp. the flexible kind that thorns won't penetrate.
- Gardening knee pads.
- Plant markers for people who forget where they plant bulbs and perennial flowers
- We love tools!! Some favorites include: high quality tools, esp. spading forks, hand pruners, cool special shovels, cast aluminum hand tools and the like
- A no kink hose (if there truly is such a thing).
- A gardener's journal, which might convince us to keep the records of those varieties that produce tasty tomatoes or great green beans

- A neat birdhouse or bird feeder

- A gift certificate to a favorite garden store or seed company

OSU MASTER GARDENER™ CLASSES

Master Gardener classes will start in Clatskanie in early March and wind up in late May. We will meet on Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Topics will include vegetable gardening, plant problem diagnosis, growing fruits and berries, weed identification and management, botany for gardeners, plant propagation, insects in the garden and home, and other gardening related topics. Students completing the classes will be expected to pay back about 50 hours of volunteer work on community horticulture projects. Cost for the program is \$75.00. For more information or to get an application, contact the Extension office at 503 397-3462.

FREE NEWSLETTER

The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called *County Living*) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed to you. Call 503 397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can find it on the web: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/> and click on newsletters.

The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

Contact information for the Extension office:
Oregon State University Extension Service – Columbia County
505 N. Columbia River Highway (across from the Legacy clinic)
St. Helens, OR 97051

Church Directory

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

Carl Pense, Pastor
850 Madison Avenue, Vernonia
503 429-1103

Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Larry Gibson, Pastor
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St., Vernonia
503 429-8301
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Sabbath School 9:30 a.m.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Wayne and Maureen Marr
662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia,
503 429-0373
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

359 "A" Street, Vernonia
503 429-4027
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
960 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia
503 429-8841

Mass Sunday 12:00 Noon
Religious Educ. Sunday 10:30 a.m.

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

957 State Avenue, Vernonia
503 429-6790
Sunday Worship 9:45 a.m.
Children's Church (Blast!) 10:15 a.m.
Nursery 10:15 a.m.
High School Youth 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Prayer 6:00 p.m.
Preschool: Open House soon

VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sam Hough, Minister
410 North Street, Vernonia
503 429-6522
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.
(meets in Youth & Family Center)
Home Group Meeting throughout
the week at various locations

PIONEER BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

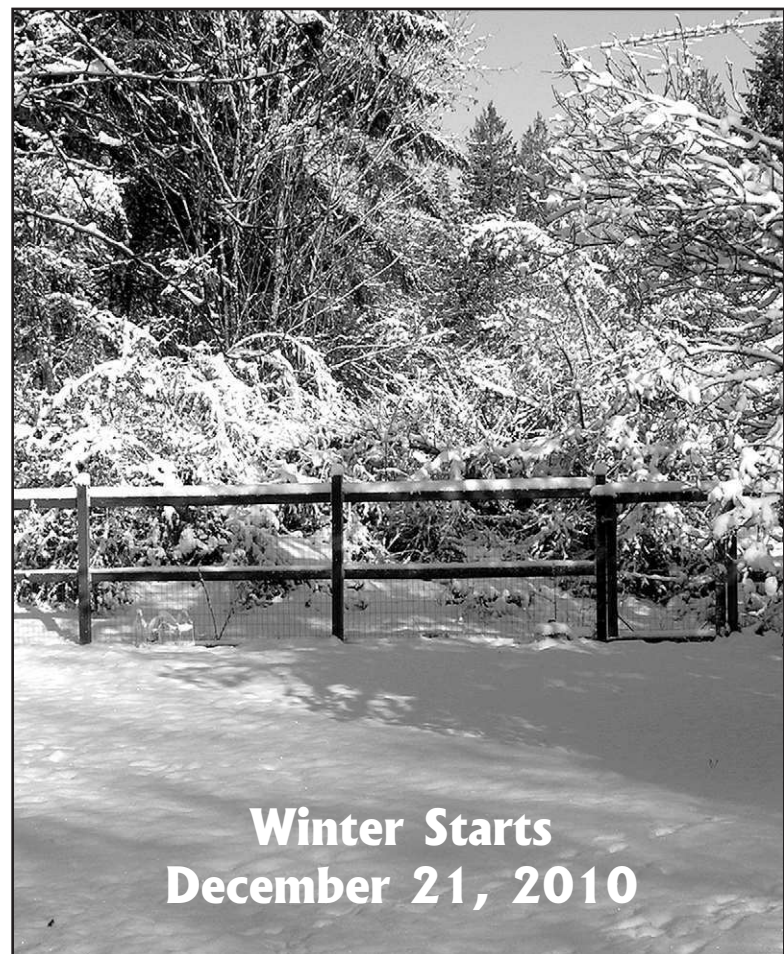
John Cahill, Pastor
939 Bridge Street, Vernonia
503-429-1161
www.pbfalive.com
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Thursday Prayer 7:00 p.m.

NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH

Gary Taylor, Pastor
Grant & North Streets, Vernonia
503 429-5378
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Nursery available
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Marc Farmer, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street, Vernonia
503 429-7151
Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.
Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.
Relief Society, Priesthood and
Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.



Winter Starts
December 21, 2010