



**NICOLE HACKETT
GARDEN GIRL**

Spruce up your garden for the holidays

December is about family, friends and the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. With so much living to do, it seems odd to make time for your garden. But as they say, a gardener's work is never done. The fall has brought us a little rain and mostly sunshine, even some warm days. This was confusing for all the perennials and several of the deciduous plants.

First of all, water your yard and garden every four days. This should be enough water for even your lawn. Increase your length of watering time to 15 minutes each station. Longer watering time encourages deeper roots.

If your perennials and roses look as if they need more water, remember that the leaves fall off rose bushes and tilt down before they fall. Perennials that have winter dormancy will have the same look. Let them rest. No need to feed or give extra water – it's sleeping time for them. They are kind of like bears.

Lawns may turn brownish as the weather cools. This is more obvious on lawns that

have had little spring and summer fertilizer. So, feed your lawn. You can use a fall and winter food, a lawn food with a pre-emergent or a weed and feed product if that is all that you have available. You can insure that your lawn stays green by applying iron. Even healthy lawns should have iron applied this time of year.

Citrus needs more care, too. Give a dose of 0-10-10 and apply iron at the same time. It is also a great idea to use a product such as Wilt Stop or Cloud Cover to prevent dehydration of leaf and stem during the frosty days ahead. Apply once a month as great insurance. Meanwhile, spread the fall-

en leaf debris around the base of citrus as mulch. The fallen leaves will help shelter the roots to prevent drying out. Eventually, they will break down, creating a fertilizer.

In fact, it's a great idea to spread fallen leaves around the bases of all shrubs, trees and perennials. If you do not like the look, add some bark to the top. This is creating a layer and adding to the health of the plants and the soil.

Azaleas, camellias and rhododendrons need a dose of 0-10-10 as well as iron. Spray these plants with Cloud Cover or Wilt Stop. The leaves will look shiny and healthy. Fallen leaf debris spread around the base of these types of plants breaks down and creates acid

the plant's fertilizer of choice.

Fruit trees such as peach, nectarine, cherry and apple need their first dose of dormant oil and fungicide. The oil helps control the insects, and the fungicide is used to control peach leaf curl and other blights. These types of fungus are only controlled during the winter months, so if you had any blistered, curled or black leaves this past summer, you'll need to treat now, in late January and a third application just before the buds break.

If you are looking to install any annual color, now is the time to replace lobelia with violas or pansies. Begonias and impatiens should be replaced with cyclamen, and if

you want something different, pick up some nemesia. This beauty will bloom through the winter, straight through June. It looks tender, but the family is quite hardy.

Perennial installations are OK now as well. Some winter bloomers can only be found at this time. Hellebores are commonly called the Christmas rose. This hardy perennial makes a great gift for the gardener on your list.

Even in December, there is still much to do. Bundle up and get to work.

Nicole is the Garden Girl at R&M Pool, Patio, Gifts and Garden Contact her with questions, comments or suggestions at gardengirl@claytonpioneer.com

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Club News

CLAYTON BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

It has been a busy year for the CBCA, with the group sponsoring several successful fund-raising events.

The year was kicked off with the Art & Wine Festival, followed closely by the Clayton Classic Golf Tournament. In the fall, the group put together Oktoberfest. In December, CBCA decorates downtown and also hosts Pictures with Santa and Dessert with Mrs. Claus.

With the money raised, the organization was able to make several donations to worthwhile causes. CBCA provided scholarships to six students and contributed more than \$4,000 in money and school supplies for

needy students.

Additionally, CBCA adopts families for Christmas and members provide gifts for these families. This year, 13 families were adopted. With the money from the Festival of Lights, food is provided for their Christmas dinners.

In the spirit of giving, the club is providing \$2,000 to Christmas for Everyone to help needy Contra Costa families. Before the year is out, CBCA will be donating money to Diablo View Middle School for fencing for the special education students' garden. And the list goes on.

For more information about the CBCA, call Sue White at 672-2272.

Travis Credit Union gives \$1,000 to CBCA for VESTIA program



The Clayton Business and Community Association was the recent beneficiary of Travis Credit Union's corporate giving policy when Travis donated \$1,000 to the CBCA for the VESTIA program.

"We believe in giving back to the community," said Travis President and CEO, Patsy Van Ouwkerk. "We're big on financial literacy and this donation fits right into that."

The money will be used to buy backpacks and school supplies for local children that can't afford them.

Pictured above are Travis Director Curt Newland, Van Ouwkerk and CBCA members John Rubiales, Joan Culver and Jim Lawrence.

Improved financial reporting tops Fossan's 2007 CBCA achievements

CBCA president Mike Fossan begins his second term this month as president of the local business and community association.

Describing his first term as "interesting, challenging and rewarding," Fossan is quick to credit his fellow board members with a long list of accomplishments.

At the top of his list of goals for the year was to achieve more transparency in the club's financial affairs. Fossan worked with CBCA treasurer, Pete Peterson,



to come up with a new format for the monthly financial report to the membership, as well as establishing a comprehensive list of policies and procedures. Fossan plans to bring in an independent accounting firm in 2008 to perform an audit of the organization's books and records.

One of the toughest challenges, Fossan noted, was to get more positive recognition for the organization, which donates thousands of dollars every year to local charities, schools, scholarships and

community needs. "The community is more aware now of all that we do," Fossan said. The board is also working toward streamlining their interaction with the city. In an effort to build "cohesiveness," the CBCA and the city are working together to develop a master plan for events, especially the Art and Wine Festival in the spring and the Oktoberfest in the fall.

Looking forward, Fossan hopes that the city will match the CBCA's offer to donate \$10,000 to bring concerts to the park and a farmers market to downtown. "If the city

matches us, we can bring 17 concerts to Clayton next summer."

The CBCA has also pledged \$60,000 to landscape "daffodil hill," the area below the city's monument sign at Marsh Creek and Clayton Roads. Fossan expects this project to begin in January.

Other officers and board members are First Vice President of Programs – John Rubiales, Jr., Second Vice President of Membership – Mike Williams, Treasurer – Pete Peterson, Secretary – Wendy Lowe. As past president, John Rubiales, Sr., also sits on the board.

Mavericks

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