

# THE TILLAMOOK THYMES

The Tillamook Master Gardener Association  
December 2018



*The President's Corner*  
*December 2018*  
*Karen Sarnaker*



As the end of this year draws near and the holiday season approaches, my tenure as President also ends. A new year will soon begin with new, vital and extremely capable leadership.

This year has been challenging and worthwhile. I appreciate the support, nurturing and patience that so many Master Gardeners have extended to me as President this past year. I am thrilled that Cammy Hickman, as President Elect, will take over the reins and move us forward to exciting new experiences and ideas.

I have also enjoyed being the Thymes Newsletter Editor, looking forward to reading all your wonderful submissions before blending them into a document for your pleasure in reading. Starting in January 2019, our very own Deborah Lincoln has agreed to be the Thymes Newsletter Editor. Please send your submissions to Deborah by December 20<sup>th</sup> to [dslincoln@gmail.com](mailto:dslincoln@gmail.com).

The Tillamook Master Gardeners Association is like a garden. To keep it fresh and alive, one needs to add new plants, trim and prune the old, nurture and care for each plant so they grow into beautiful blossoms, fruits and vegetables. Build our garden of love. Paint it with beautiful plants and trees and nourishment. Warm it with the warmth of our spirit, our love and our hard work. Most importantly, Make Our Garden Grow.

I sincerely wish you Happy Holidays!

## CONTENTS

P 2 – Karen's Korner  
P 4 – Awards Banquet  
P 5 – A Wrinkle in Thyme  
P 7 – Neal's Compost Pile  
P 8 – Poem by Karen  
P 9 – Favorite Recipe  
P 10 – Garden Hints  
P 11 – Executive Board  
P 11 – Calendar of Events

*"The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." ~ Gertrude Jekyll*



*Karen's Korner*

by  
Karen Keltz

*Amaryllis*

I've been having fun in this holiday season looking at gardening catalogs and deciding what I might want to choose as gifts for my gardening friends. There are tools, like a hori hori knife (Did you know "hori" means "dig"?), a jagged edge shovel (regular or short-handled) for sawing through difficult areas, or a hand-held slanted hoe. Gardeners like clothing, such as gloves, hats, and clogs. The fleece-lined gloves I received for my birthday have been perfect for dealing with after-freeze murky slop. Since pruning season starts in February, a gardener can always use pruning tools. I never turn down a chance for another clipper, because I'm always leaving one someplace I've been working and then I forget where that was. Other ideas are giving an experience, such as a nursery tour, or a specific garden, a special nursery gift certificate, or a trip to pick out a beautiful pot or other garden accessory.

Any of those are good gift ideas but one thing I always choose for my friends and myself — because you always have to get yourself something, too, right? — is an amaryllis bulb or two or three. There are so many gorgeous variations in blooms and the pots to grow them in. Who doesn't appreciate some flowering beauty inside when outside can be so bleak? An amaryllis bulb or bulbs of Paperwhites, are not expensive gifts, but they give so much at a time when we need them.



Amaryllis bulbs take about 6-8 weeks to bloom, so if they're started late in October or early in November, they might be ready by Christmas. A lot of wise people buy more than one bulb and then stagger their arrivals and so have their lovely blooms to regard for a great, long time. Each blossom can last for two weeks and one bulb will produce more than one flower.

If you get a boxed bulb for a friend, you might consider also buying a good, sturdy pot because often those plastic pots fall over once the stem grows long. Also, get some stakes so you can help keep the stems upright. The boxed bulbs come with instructions to tell you how to plant the bulb—in the potting mix with the nose end up, leaving about half of the bulb exposed at the top. It is recommended to immerse the bulb in lukewarm water for an hour before potting it up, in order to encourage the formation of roots. (I didn't know that!) Water sparingly at first and then once you see the green shoots, you can increase the amount of water and light you give your plant. However, make sure your bulb isn't sitting in water, because that causes the roots to rot.

I recently learned that you can plant bulbs in stones instead of potting mix. Your container should not have a drainage hole in this case because the roots wouldn't be able to reach water to drink. Again, you have to water mindfully, so that the water level is just below the bulb, reaching the roots only. A see-through container is a good idea in order to see where the water level is. Stems of bulbs grown this way are usually shorter than normal.

After our amaryllis blooms, there is always the question, "What do we do with the bulb now?" Last year, I just stuck the bulb, pot and all in the garage, in the dark. I presumed it would die since I never even watered it, but darned if it didn't start shooting up again. I knocked the pot over repeatedly while doing garage chores, stuck the bulb back in the pot and added soil again and the leaves just kept growing. Those buggers are determined! Some people just set the bulbs outside and feed them whatever they feed the rest of their plants and let their long leaves form.

What the mindful gardener is supposed to do, I just read, is cut down the stalk after the blooms are spent and continue to water the planted bulb. Fertilize it once a month and plant it in your flower bed. In September, bring the pot and bulb inside and quit watering it. Let the foliage dry up. (Hey, I can do that, no problem. I do that all the time with indoor plants by accident!) Store in a cool dark place with no water or fertilizer for 8-10 weeks. In mid-November add some fresh soil and start re-watering. If you started now, a couple of weeks later, you'd still probably have a nice bloom by Valentine's Day.

Last year I wrote about how I adopted my friend Sherryl's idea of planting three tulip bulbs in a nice pot and giving that as a Christmas gift. My friends LOVED that idea and sent me photos all spring long of their gorgeous tulips blooming in their pretty pots. If you've done the tulip thing and want to do something different this year, then why not gift Paperwhites?

I was given a plastic pot of bulbs last Christmas, but most people plant their bulbs in a glass container filled with stones. The instructions for that are to press the bulbs into the stones nose up and leave some of the top of the bulb exposed above the stones. When planting in stones, use a container without drainage holes, otherwise, the water will drain out immediately and won't provide a benefit to the roots. Fill the container with water just up to the base of the bulb. Put in a well-lighted area but not in direct sunlight. Paperwhites are difficult to get to rebloom another year so you can throw your bulbs in the compost when they've finished blooming.

One problem I had with my Paperwhites was that they got so tall before they bloomed that they fell over and then they quickly lost their charm. To make the stems shorter and more sturdy, you can change instructions a bit. Once the roots begin growing and the green shoot on top reaches about 1-2", pour off the existing water. Replace the water with a solution of 4-6 % alcohol. Continue to use the alcohol solution for future watering.

Caveats: Don't confuse "proof" with "percentage." To determine what percentage alcohol you have, divide the proof in half. Therefore, an 86 proof bourbon is 43% alcohol. Way too much. Your Paperwhites need only 4-6 %, remember? You can use any hard liquor or rubbing alcohol. NOT wine or beer, because they are too high in sugar. Those are for people drinking, not plants. You will have to do some MATH to get the different concentrations of alcohol down to 4-6 %. To convert your alcohol of choice to 5 % alcohol, just divide the percentage alcohol by 5 and then subtract 1. That will tell you how many parts water to mix with your 1 part alcohol.

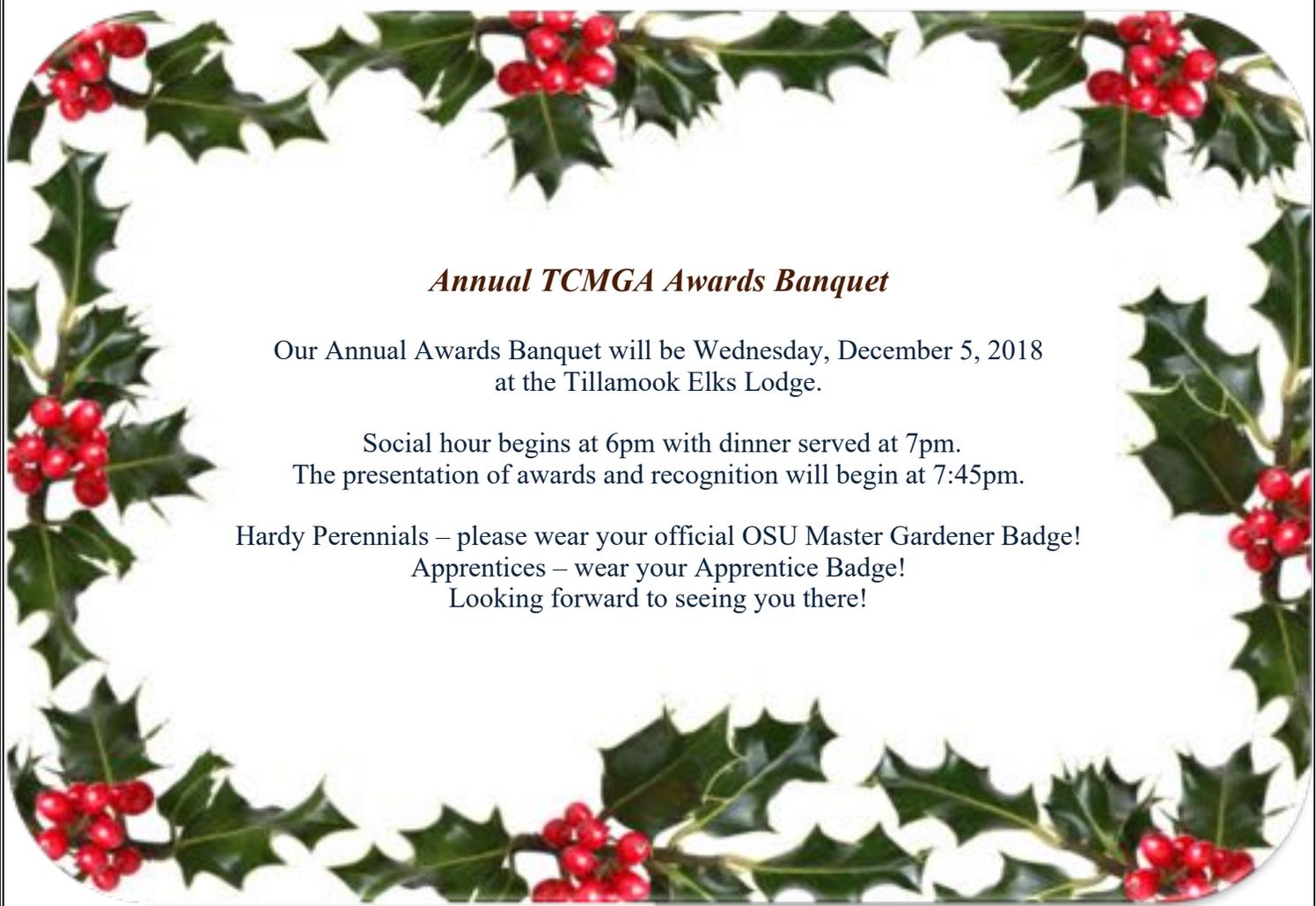
Conversion Chart:

10% alcohol: 1 part water to 1 part alcohol  
15% alcohol: 2 parts water to 1 part alcohol  
20% alcohol: 3 parts water to 1 part alcohol  
25% alcohol: 4 parts water to 1 part alcohol  
30% alcohol: 5 parts water to 1 part alcohol  
35% alcohol: 6 parts water to 1 part alcohol

One more cute idea I saw today, especially if your gift recipient loves herbs, is to buy a cute pot with a larger than normal circumference, and then plant 4-5 different herbs that can be used in cooking—parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, etc. (You can even sing the song when you give the pot!) That swath of green on your kitchen counter can keep you thinking positive all through the winter.

With any of these bulb or herb ideas, a gardener doesn't have to stop gardening just because the weather outside is nasty. There will always be something lovely to look forward to when skies are gray. That's a great gift to give someone you love!

Any facts presented here came from The Curious Gardener blog at Womanswork.com.

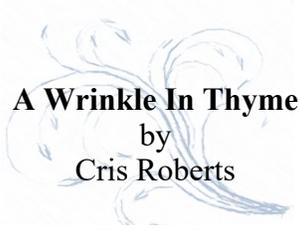


***Annual TCMGA Awards Banquet***

Our Annual Awards Banquet will be Wednesday, December 5, 2018  
at the Tillamook Elks Lodge.

Social hour begins at 6pm with dinner served at 7pm.  
The presentation of awards and recognition will begin at 7:45pm.

Hardy Perennials – please wear your official OSU Master Gardener Badge!  
Apprentices – wear your Apprentice Badge!  
Looking forward to seeing you there!



**A Wrinkle In Thyme**

by  
Cris Roberts

*Missing You*

I wandered through our woods today  
where tender scenes of yesterday  
had lodged within the fallen leaves,  
their dryness stirring in the breeze.

They fell before a late-year wind  
brought forth from East and North of Bend,  
it's cooling, stirring, moving shute  
had ruffled moss and tender root.

Of alder, maple, hemlock, spruce  
conferring in this winter ruse  
the maple was the last to fall  
and covered mossy grass and all.

But those still perching on the branch  
were loosening their clinging stance  
and tumbling to the earth below  
to take their place in Autumn show.

I felt the stir of memories  
while strolling through our woodland trees;  
some glad, some sad, some yet to form,  
for we had journeyed winter's storm.

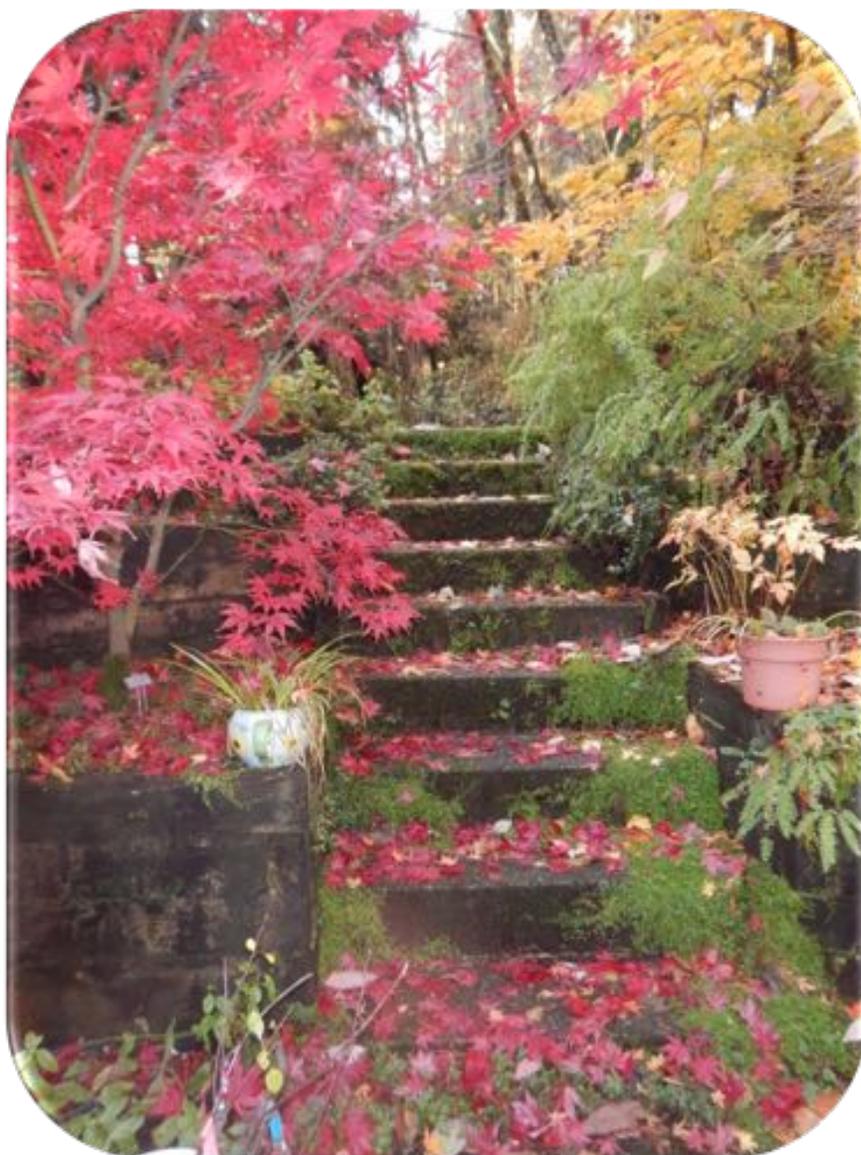
These woods we'd played and frolicked in.  
We'd raised our children in this wind.  
We laughed and cried and carried on  
from budding spring to winter gone.

They went too fast, those days we shared  
And I was not so well prepared  
when you were called to winter's end,  
my darling husband, mate and friend.

When East winds blow in times of life,  
they loosen grief and unlock strife  
allowing healing to resume  
in fallen leaf and humus tomb.

While wandering through our woods today  
those tender scenes of yesterday  
were stirring more than fallen leaves  
in fragrant mossy, morning breeze.

They'd woken up a still-sore heart  
that overslept at Autumn's start  
and as I stretched and breathed  
I knew I was not over missing you.



*Neal's Compost Pile*

by  
Neal Lemery

*Mosses – Desirable and Beneficial For Our Gardens*

This time of year, the moss in my landscape is doing well. This is their time to thrive. And, so easy to grow! Just bring on the Oregon mist.

Moss, known to the more scientific folks among us as bryophytes, “add distinction to the larger scene. ... They grow occasionally on bizarre materials...colonize crevices in masonry...and soften the otherwise geometrical wildernesses of roof tiles with their rounded cushions.” (OSU Botany 465 publication, Spring 2000).

The leaves of moss are only one cell thick, they have no true roots, flowers, or fruits. Instead of seeds, they have spores. While they seem like the oddballs of the plant world, bryophytes are actually the largest group of plants.

Mosses depend on water to reproduce, allowing sperm to swim to the egg, and eventually produce windblown spores. Spores, unlike seeds, are single celled. Under a microscope, moss is a tangled mass of branching green filaments. From the filaments spring tiny leaf shoots. A moss plant can be either male or female, with the male organs being sausage shaped and female organs being bottle shaped.

Mosses also asexually reproduce by specialized structures that readily detach and are dispersed by wind and water, and then settle down if there's sufficient moisture.

I know you can jumpstart a planting of moss by putting moss and buttermilk in a blender, then pouring the “smoothie” over a rock, log, or other place you want moss to grow. But, my moss gardens are created without my interventions nor non-traditional uses of kitchen appliances.

Unlike other plants generally, mosses obtain most of their nutrients from the air (dust and rainwater), rather than soil. They have a low need for nutrients, and this allows them to grow in places where other plants struggle. *Polytrichum* moss, however, feeds from the soil, but they are the exception.

Mosses are tough, and are well adapted to survive periods of drought, and even if they are completely dry, they are still alive. Bring on some mist or a rain shower, and they are back in business. They also seem to do best in low light, and moderate to low temperatures, and, of course, moisture.

Moss is a “bioindicator” of air pollution, and they are quite susceptible to airborne toxins and gasses. They are good stabilizers in bare soil, and are relatively resistant to herbicides. Some species, such as *Funaria hygrometrica*, do well in recently burned areas, such as burn piles or slash burns.

They are champions at hydrobuffing, which means they absorb and slow down runoff and stream flows after storms. Contrary to myth, they do not pry apart roofing materials and cause leaks, as they don't have true roots.

Another fun moss-related word is *cyanobacteria*. These little guys live in mosses and convert the nitrogen in the air to the form of nitrogen that is fertilizer for other plants.

Peat moss (Sphagnum) is a popular garden additive, as it increases water storage in sandy soil, improves soil structure and aeration in heavy soils, and improves retention of nutrients.

Moss gardens enhance traditional gardens in China and Japan, and moss gardens are gaining popularity in the United States. In my garden, the style is often unintentional, but prolific.

Other plants related to mosses are liverworts and lichens. Liverworts trail along the ground in ribbon-like branch formations. When they thrive, they can create a water barrier on the soil surface and should be broken up in container gardening.

Lichens are a “mutualistic association between a fungus and an alga or cyanobacteria.” (McCune and Whitbeck, *Living in the Land of Mosses*, Pacific NW PNW) They don’t damage their host plants, but simply use trees and shrubs as growing surfaces. They can come in a variety of colors and shapes.

My intentional and not so intentional moss gardens are doing well this time of year. They are busy doing their bioindicating and hydrobuffering and being the attractive bryophytes they are.

McCune and Whitbeck, *Living in the Land of Mosses*, Pacific NW PNW  
*Living With Mosses*, (OSU Botany 265, Spring 2000)



*After the Big Freeze*

Welcome  
From the garden of  
Limp, dead, and bedraggled,  
Withered anthers everywhere.  
Moldy, slimy, dahlias, blackened, and slipping,  
A hydrangea hedge of browned blooms,  
Sunflowers, heads hanging  
On dehydrated stalks  
Penitents supplicating the sun  
That deserted them.

How shall the gardener make it through  
This wasteland until January’s daffodil and crocus?

I’m pinning my hopes on  
The white-bloomed fothergilla,  
Pink blooms of hellebore and heather,  
The scent of edgeworthia  
And one green gardenia at the end of the walk.

--Karen Keltz 2018

**OUR FAVORITE RECIPES**  
from  
**Breakfast Casserole Recipe**

**Prep Time:** 15 minutes

**Cook Time:** 28 minutes

**Total Time:** 43 minutes This breakfast skillet goes from the stove to the oven in one pan.

Note: it helps to have bacon, onion and bell pepper chopped prior to beginning recipe.

**Servings:** 6 slices

**Ingredients**

1 lb 4 medium potatoes (Recommends yukon yellow potatoes)

5 strips bacon sliced into strips

1/2 medium onion finely diced

1 medium bell pepper seeded and diced

1-2 Tbsp olive oil to saute 6 large eggs

1/4 cup sour cream

1/2 tsp salt

1/8 tsp black pepper

1 1/2 cups mozzarella cheese divided diced tomatoes chives, or avocado to garnish

**Instructions**

1. Peel and grate potatoes then squeeze dry with several paper towels. Set aside.
2. In an oven safe heavy 10" skillet (I prefer cast iron), Saute 5 strips diced bacon over med/high heat 2-3 min then add diced onion and bell pepper. Sautee 7-10 min, stirring occasionally or until golden brown. Remove from pan.
3. Heat 1-2 tbsp oil over medium heat in the same pan. Once oil is hot, add grated potatoes and saute total 7 min, flipping a few times. Do not season. Spread potatoes evenly over the bottom and remove pan from heat.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together 6 large eggs, 1/4 cup sour cream, 1/2 tsp salt and 1/8 tsp pepper. Stir in sauteed onion, bell pepper and bacon, along with 3/4 cup cheese.
5. Pour egg mixture evenly over potatoes. Sprinkle 3/4 cup mozzarella cheese over the top. Cover loosely with foil and bake at 350 F for 25 min. Remove foil and broil 3-4 min or until top is golden. Slice and serve with garnish if desired.

Copyright © 2018 Natasha's Kitchen

**DECEMBER*****GARDEN HINTS FROM YOUR OSU EXTENSION FACULTY  
for  
Western Oregon***

“The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices.”

Preventative pest management is emphasized over reactive pest control. Always identify and monitor problems before acting and opt for the least toxic approach that will remedy the problem. The conservation of biological control agents (predators, parasitoids) should be favored over chemical controls.

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options (insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides — when used judiciously). Recommendations in this calendar are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact our local Extension office at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/tillamook/>.

**Maintenance and Clean Up**

- Do not walk on lawns until frost has melted.
- Spread wood ashes evenly on vegetable garden. Use no more than 1.5 pounds/100 square feet/year. Don't use if the soil pH is greater than 7.0 or if potassium levels are excessive.
- Protect new landscape plants from wind. Use stakes, guy wires and/or windbreaks as needed.
- Yard sanitation: rake leaves, cut and remove withered stalks of perennial flowers, mulch flowerbeds, and hoe or pull winter weeds.
- Turn the compost pile and protect from heavy rains, if necessary.
- During heavy rains, watch for drainage problems in the yard. Tilling, ditching, and French drains are possible short-term solutions. Consider rain gardens and bioswales as a longer-term solution.
- Check stored flower bulbs, fresh vegetables, and fruits for rot and fungus problems. Discard any showing signs of rot.
- Tie limbs of columnar evergreens to prevent snow or ice breakage.
- Make sure that landscape plants in protected sites receive water regularly during the winter.

**Planting/Propagation**

- Good time of year to plant trees, and landscape shrubs.

**Pest Monitoring and Management**

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Check for rodent damage around bases of trees and large shrubs. Remove weeds to prevent rodents from using them as hiding places. Use traps and approved baits as necessary.
- Avoid mounding mulching materials around the bases of trees and shrubs. The mulch might provide cover for rodents.
- Monitor spruce trees for spruce aphids. Treat if present in large numbers. Read and follow pesticide label directions.

**Houseplants and Indoor Gardening**

- Protect poinsettias from cold, place in sunlight, don't let leaves touch cold windows; fertilize with houseplant fertilizer to maintain leaf color.
- Monitor houseplants for adequate water and fertilizer. Water and fertilizer requirements generally are less in winter.

**TCMGA EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Elected:**

President: Karen Sarnaker  
 Past President: Neal Lemery  
 Vice President: Sarah Ostermiller  
 Treasurer: Larry Goss  
 Recording Secretary:  
   Cammy Hickman  
 Corresponding Secretary:  
   Betty Lyons  
 Historian: Jake Lyons  
 OMGA Representative:  
   Linda Stephenson  
 OMGA Alternative:  
   LeRoy Satter  
 Class Representatives:  
   2016: Arla Ayers  
   2017: Jerilee Henderson  
 Extension Agent: Joy Jones

**Appointed Committee Chairs**

Audit: Cammy Hickman  
       Terri Southwick  
 Awards: Karen Sarnaker  
 Banquet: Cammy Hickman  
 Budget: Larry Goss  
       Karen Sarnaker  
       Sarah Ostermiller  
 Communication/WebMaster/  
 Grants Committee: Neal Lemery  
       Deb Lincoln  
       Nika Van Tilburg  
 Publicity: Cammy Hickman  
       Neal Lemery  
       Tabitha Bettencourt  
 Community Pruning Day:  
       Barb Casteel  
       Evelynn VonFelt  
 2018 Garden Tour:  
       Karen Sarnaker  
 Hospitality: to be filled  
 Membership: Sarah Ostermiller  
       Jerilee Henderson  
 Mentors: Linda Stephenson  
 Nominating Committee:  
       Neal Lemery  
       Karen Sarnaker

Picnic: Linda Stephenson  
 Plant Clinics:  
   Tillamook Farmer Market:  
     Marilyn Perl  
   North County Plant Clinics:  
     Mark Kuestner  
   South County Plant Clinics:  
     Tim and Pam Burke  
 Plant Sale: Jodi Derrick  
 Projects: Sarah Ostermiller  
       Neal Lemery  
 Scholarship: Neal Lemery  
 Volunteer Coordinator:  
   Sarah Ostermiller

**Standing Committees**

Learning Garden:  
   Linda Stephenson  
*Thymes* Newsletter Editor:  
   Karen Sarnaker  
*The Tiller* Newsletter Editor:  
   Laura Swanson  
 (Editor appointed by the Agent)

**Special Projects**

Gardening Day Camp: Joy Jones  
 O.Y.A: Evelynn VonFelt  
 Native Plant Garden Coordinator:  
   Marilyn Perl



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**DECEMBER 2018**

**DECEMBER 5**                   **AWARDS BANQUET, 6:00PM @ ELKS LODGE**

**DECEMBER 19**               **BONSAI CLUB, TPUD MEETING ROOM, 6PM – 9PM**

**DECEMBER 20**               **THMYES DEADLINE**