

LA CROSSE
FLORAL

2900 Floral Lane
 La Crosse, WI 54601

"The GIANT Greenhouse by the Bluffs"

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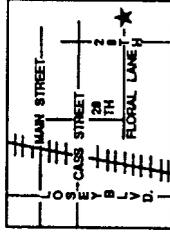
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HOURS

Mon - Fri 8:00am - 5:30pm
 Sat 8:00am - 5:00pm
 Sun CLOSED

Special Valentine Hours

Sunday, February 13th - 11:00am - 4:00pm



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Roots and Shoots

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DR. GREENTHUMB

When the seed catalogs come in the mail, it's very tempting to look at the beautiful pictures and want to order new and different plants or seeds. A word of caution! Order in small quantities and test them first. If something is a very good variety, your local greenhouse or garden center probably will have them in the spring. Call us – we may be testing them now. If you've had success with plants purchased through the Sunday supplements in the newspapers, I would like to hear about it. Most of the time, the plants are small, quality poor, price not really less expensive, and varieties may not grow well in Wisconsin.

The lower light levels the last few months have slowed the growth of your indoor plants. Care should be taken not to over water them. Be sure any gift plants have holes through the bottom of the foil so excess water can drain away.



Feed your Christmas plants a half strength fertilizer every one to two weeks.

Stored Amaryllis bulbs should be brought up and watered. If they need repotting, use a pot one inch larger in diameter than the bulbs.

When you are done with the Christmas tree, put it outside next to the bird feeder to protect the birds from the bitter cold.

The Kalanchoe plant, which is in season now, is a thick-leaved succulent. It is ideal for warm, dry homes with its long-lasting bright rose or orange flowers. It will re-bloom if pruned back and kept in a room with 14 hours of darkness until the buds appear.



The next best thing to a trip to Florida, is to visit our greenhouse on a cold, but sunny day in January. The warmth and moisture, tropical plants, and bright colors are just the ticket to drive away the "Winter Blahs." Try it, you'll like it!!!

Grower To Grower

I was asked more than once this fall, how to prune a hydrangea. People seem to be perplexed about how to prune. The three most common reasons for their confusion are – 1) The plants dead-looking appearance in winter - 2) Its failure to bloom in summer – and 3) It's a shrub-it must need pruning. Hydrangeas can handle pruning; however, pruning it at the wrong time may cause a lack of flowers. Pruning, on the other hand, can also improve a shrub's vigor and increase the size of the flowers. Knowing whether your shrub blooms on old or new wood will help you make the cuts at the proper time.

Hydrangea paniculata and hydrangea arborescens, both zone 4 types, bloom on new wood. Some examples of these are the Endless Summer Series, Limelights, PeeGees, and Blushing Brides. Because they need to grow and set bud the same year they bloom, new wood bloomers generally start showing blooms a little later in the season. A bloom period of midsummer to the first frost is normal. To get larger flowers, cut them all the way back to the ground. This technique has a few drawbacks. It may cause weaker stems and lead to flopping heads. To alleviate this problem, leave a framework of old growth at a height of 18-24 inches. These will provide



support for the weaker new growth and larger flower heads. It's best to prune hydrangeas in late fall as they go dormant, or attend to them before they wake up in the spring. Many folks like the winter interest that the dried flower heads provide.

I'd like to address one other frequently asked question; how to keep slugs from eating hostas. Slugs have been a problem the last several years due to the excessively wet summers. There are many good chemical solutions. Slugs can go dormant when the summer is dry, but then become active again when conditions become wetter. Slugs can take up to 2 years to become adults. One way to fight slug populations is to choose the type of hosta to grow. Blue hostas have naturally thicker leaves and are more resistant to slug damage. There are small, medium, large, and extra large types of blue hosta. Thinner leaves and smaller plants are more easily devoured by slugs. Resist the urge to divide too soon as hostas take 3-5 years to reach adulthood.

There is no such thing as the perfect garden. You'll never get rid of every bug, weed, or disease. But gardening is to be enjoyed. There are ups and downs that go along with gardening. I hope these few suggestions will help you to enjoy your gardens a little more this year.

TRENDS

Gardening Trends have been indicated for 2011. They are:

Gardening With A Purpose - While the Gulf Coast area is not a newsworthy subject anymore, the effect of the BP oil spill is causing Americans to take measures to protect and conserve our natural resources. According to a recent National Gardening Association survey, nine in ten households want to manage their lawns and gardens in an environmentally friendly way. They are choosing eco-friendly products over toxic chemicals. At La Crosse Floral, we too have changed in what we offer you – carrying organic brands such as Neptune's Harvest, Dr. Earth, and Fox Farms.

Eco-scaping - More Americans are turning their lawns into sustainable landscapes by using the right plants for their areas, thus requiring less water and pesticides. Native plants play an important role by providing homes for wildlife and beneficial pollinators such as butterflies, bees, and birds. Grasses play a huge role in eco-scaping. They are both easy to maintain and come in so many shapes, forms, and heights to accommodate every gardener.

Edible Ornaments – There is an increased interest in small fruit-bearing shrubs, like berries, and smaller containerized trees. We have noticed more folks asking about blueberries in particular, and hope to have some to offer in May. Blueberries are such a SUPER fruit and food. Many gardeners say vegetables they grow themselves are less expensive, with better taste, quality and nutrition. Another SUPER veggie is the orange bell pepper.



Sustainable Containers – This has more to do with what is IN the container, rather than what the container is made of. For people like The Little Sprout, who only container garden, pots full of a blend of herbs and vegetables are both convenient and fresh. Look at perennials in a different way – put them in pots to enjoy all summer – long as possible drought tolerant choices when you wish to have low maintenance.

Succulents – HUGE HUGE trend, even if you aren't into the "green-roof" sustainable trend. When you first see these available to purchase, I think you may be turned off by the fact that they are more money than, say, a petunia. But, if you know how they are so easy to

care for, how long-lasting they are, and how little water they need (think 3 week summer vacation and they're FINE when you get home), you might be tempted to give them a try. You can even bring them indoors for winter and put them back out again the following summer. Easy, Easy, trend.

Indoor Gardening – Houseplants are hot again! The fact that our younger gardeners love orchid plants is proof-positive that indoor gardening is "IN". You hardly need to turn on HGTV to see that houseplants provide a design element to any home. Coupled with the fact that they also clean indoor air of volatile organic compounds and provide oxygen – these are SUPER plants!

Growing up – This trend is just beginning. You will see it first in larger cities where vertical walls of edibles for restaurants and homes will emerge. Vertical gardens are already popular in Europe. Climbing plants can be used to provide privacy, screen eyesores, and draw the eye upward to create the illusion of space. A few trendy bars in the Las Vegas area have already tapped into this trend.

Urban Farming - If you do not know what CSA stands for (community-supported agriculture), and what they entail – ask your friends. Chances are, you already have some of your circle of friends who have bought into CSA's. CSAs provide fresh produce, meat, eggs, cheese, etc. from thriving farms. In addition, like-minded GenY'ers are joining together to plant herbs, exotic spices, and unusual vegetables and share their edibles with the "tribe." It is a modern version of the "potluck" dinner. The chance to connect over the food they grow and eat creates a bonding experience. Go figure!

New Urbanism – Central to this trend is a commitment to the environment and connecting neighborhoods. It involves collecting rainwater, creating walkable streets, offering a diversity of shops, homes, and apartments with less turf and more plants. It encourages a better stewardship of the Earth.

I'm sure there are some of these Trends for 2011 that you are already involved in. Unlike color trends, gardening trends are much more easily embraced. With outdoor gardening, you can simply replant. How easy!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

I'm going to enjoy these 3 months! YIPPEE

JANUARY

8th (Sat)
National Man-Watcher's Day!
13-22nd (Thurs-Sat)
"Winter is a Bear"
29th (Sat)
National Corn Chip Day

FEBRUARY

14th (Mon)
Valentine's Day
22nd (Tues)
Be Humble Day
24th (Thurs)
National Tortilla Chip Day

MARCH

14th (Mon)
National Potato Chip Day
26th (Sat)
FREE Repotting Day
28th (Mon)
"Something On a Stick Day"



DID YOU KNOW

Approximately 1 billion Valentine's Day Cards are exchanged each year, making Valentine's Day the second most popular card-sending holiday after Christmas. (2.6 million). About 85% of all Valentine's Day cards are purchased by women. In addition to the U.S., Valentine's Day is celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia.

THEME DAYS

WINTER IS A BEAR – Thurs, Jan. 13-Sat. Jan 22



This is a warm and fuzzy time during which we offer **30% OFF** our Houseplants. Come into the toasty warm greenhouse to find plants to fill the empty hole left by your Christmas Tree. Bring in your own Teddy Bear to receive an **additional 10%**! Our Houseplants do not go on sale very often. Stop in to see what is new for spring in our lovely Gift Shop. It is always warm at La Crosse

Floral – no matter how cold it is outside! And, we will wrap your plants for the ride home.

Refreshments will be served.

VALENTINE'S DAY – Mon. Feb 14th

Because the holiday is on a Monday this year, we will be open on Sunday, February 13th from 11-4pm. Flowers are truly the language of love – they can say what words can't.

Love yourself this Valentine's Day – Buy yourself even just 1 flower.

FREE REPOTTING DAY – Sat. March 26th 8am-4pm

This is an immensely popular day! It is held at a time of year where it is usually safe to bring in your plant without wrapping it; however, if it is chilly – throw a bag over it. We will repot, **FREE** soil and labor, **one** plant up to a 12" diameter, per customer.

You may bring in a pot of your own or purchase a pot (container) from us. We will also have Houseplants on sale this day. This is definitely the "Spring Cleaning" day for your plants.

Maybe you simply need advice – **WE'RE HERE!** 😊



10 WAYS TO STAY WARM THIS WINTER

- 1) Snuggle up with a pet or loved one in a soft, cozy blanket.
- 2) Crank up the oven and make a yummy meal.
- 3) Light some candles or a fireplace (whether real or not) the ambiance makes it seem warmer.
- 4) Sip a hot cup of tea, cocoa, mulled wine or a toddy.
- 5) Boil some water or use a humidifier – humid air stays warmer longer than dry air.
- 6) Grab a book, glass of wine, and take a nice warm (not hot) bubble bath.
- 7) Layer your clothing – you can always add or lose a layer.
- 8) Dress the bed with flannel or fleece sheets.
- 9) Go around the home inside and out and check for and remedy any air leaks.
- 10) Eat lean protein and complex carbohydrates such as whole grain foods and foods high in fiber.



Red Velvet Cupcakes

Although many folks don't need to be "Gluten-Free", the Little Sprout is among the 1 in 120 folks that have Celiac Disease. It is not simply an allergy – rather, it is an auto-immune disease with serious consequences which left unchecked, may result in death. So, even though you may not need a Gluten-Free Recipe, this one is simply yummy and easy to make. Plus, it's lovely for a Valentine's Day Treat.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1 Betty Crocker Gluten-Free Yellow Cake Mix
(in regular aisle at store) | 3 Eggs |
| 1 3.9 oz. pkg. Jello Instant Chocolate Pudding | 2/3 C. Milk (I use 1%) |
| 1 Stick Butter, softened (not melted) | 2 Tbsp. Red Food Coloring |
| 8 oz. Sour Cream (I use Lite) | Cupcake Liners |



Heat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients together. Fill regular sized cupcake liners about ¾ full. You will get anywhere from 18-24 cupcakes, depending on your filling of liners. Bake 16-20 minutes, until toothpick comes out clean. Do not over-bake. Cool a few minutes and remove liners from pan.

Basic Cream Cheese Frosting

- | | |
|---|---|
| 8 oz. Cream Cheese (I use 1/3 less fat) | 3 Cups Powdered Sugar (I use a little more) |
| 5 Tbsp Butter, softened | Pinch of Salt |
| 2 tsp. Vanilla | |

After cupcakes are cooled, frost with Cream Cheese Frosting. I sprinkle with glitter flakes. Remember to store in fridge as frosting is a cream cheese type. Set out shortly before serving - and listen to the *oohs and aahs!*



TERESA'S PIECES

Hi folks! Hope everyone is happy, healthy, and staying warm!

The art and culture of Bonsai can help us develop a deeper appreciation for the natural world and for our fellow human beings. Bonsai require patience, creativity, responsibility, diligence, and awareness. However, don't let this discourage you – it is not always easy yet can enrich your life with beauty and inspiration.

Bonsai is the art of containerizing, miniaturizing, and styling plants, combining art with horticulture.

The three types of bonsai are as follows:

Tropical - These trees make excellent indoor Bonsai. They don't tolerate temperatures below 45 degrees. Above 60 degrees is preferred with plenty of sunlight. Tropicals are often referred to as "indoor" Bonsai meaning they adapt well to year-round indoor growth, but prefer being outdoors in summer. Some varieties include Schefflera, Bougainvillea, Ficus, Buttonwood, and Jade.

Subtropical - The sub-tropic regions give us some excellent varieties of trees and plants for Bonsai. Brush Cherry, Podocarpus, Olive, Pomegranate, Myrtle, and again, Jade, and some varieties of Azalea, Myrtle, and such are in this category. Some of these leafy trees produce stellar displays of delicate, colorful leaves, fruits and flowers. Like Tropical Bonsai, they can do well indoors and prefer to go outside in summer.

Temperate - Temperate Bonsai are those which qualify as neither exclusively indoor or outdoor trees. They are somewhat winter hardy but will not tolerate extreme cold. Some varieties considered temperate are Camellia, Crape Myrtle, Boxwood, and Azalea. Most are woody evergreens with smooth bark, and many will produce flowers and fruit. Conifers such as Cypress and Juniper love the lower indoor temperatures of winter.

No single watering schedule can be applied to Bonsai. Every Bonsai needs to be checked daily for water. Never let the plant get too dry, or sit in water. Keep evenly moist.

All Bonsai need adequate light. The amount and duration varies from one species to another. A warm bright window is ideal. It is almost impossible to supply too much light especially in winter when sunlight is weaker. A grow light of some type may be needed; arrange the plant so the tops of the trees are a few inches from the bulb. Remember that whether the tree is in real or artificial light, it, like all plants, needs to be rotated a quarter turn every one to two weeks toward the brightest light for even growth.

Bonsais need warm, humid conditions. A constant

temperature of 65 degrees or warmer is best. Make sure it's not near a heat source. A small tabletop fan can be set up for circulating the warm air.

During dry winter months, using a humidity tray helps maintain the humid atmosphere crucial to tropical and subtropical Bonsai. Place pebbles on the tray and add just enough water to reach the top of the pebbles, then placed the plant on the tray making sure the bottom of the container is not in direct contact with the water. Mist your tree frequently.

FEED ME, FEED ME! As always, I recommend Neptune's Harvest Fish Fertilizer (Neptune's Fish and Seaweed Formula works well also) using a weaker concentration. A half-strength solution of any 10-10-10 fertilizer can also be used. In winter, Bonsai only need to be fed about once a month. When it is actively growing (usually in spring through early fall) every two weeks is suggested. Make sure soil is moist before applying liquid fertilizers and never feed a sick, weak, or stressed tree.

Bonsai are susceptible to the common houseplant pests and diseases. Keeping your tree clean and healthy prevents these problems. Removing dead leaves from the plant and from the topsoil and gently "showering" down the foliage once a week discourages ugly-buglies and diseases. Look closely at the plant – abnormal leaf drop, sticky foliage, and visible insects indicate a definite problem, and need to be addressed ASAP! Give the tree a shower of lukewarm water to wash away insects, then spray it with insecticidal soap. You may need to reapply the treatment once a week for 2-3 weeks. Fungus and other diseases can affect both foliage and roots. Leaves will appear yellow, brown-spotted, sooty-looking, or deformed and shriveled. Roots will appear black, mushy or slimy, and break easily. Spraying with liquid copper fungicide (or using a dust containing copper) will remedy the problem. Don't mist the tree while it's recovering. Keeping Bonsai outside during summer helps strengthen it and make it more pest resistant.

La Crosse Floral is your Bonsai Headquarters for plants, fertilizers, soil, humidity trays, insect and fungus control products, and Chinese Mud Men and figurines to create your scene! With the purchase of your Bonsai, you receive an all-inclusive survival guide to help you continue to enjoy your plant for many years to come.

Peace-Out!



The Little Sprout

Have any of you thought of when Easter is this year? I bet you haven't even given it a thought. Well – put the date of April 24th on your calendar. That's right – April 24th! I will already be thinking of geraniums and tomato plants. Did you know that the date on which Easter falls is determined by cycles of the moon?

Easter is timed to coincide with the Sunday that follows the first full moon after the vernal equinox (March 21). As such, that means it can fall anywhere between March 22nd and April 25th. The name for this holiday comes from much older times whose customs we are now not that familiar with. Many old religions had a Spring Goddess, a special deity who breathed life back into the world, encouraging growing things to grow and living things to mate. She went by many names. The Scandinavians called her Ostra, the Anglo-Saxons, Eastre, and those that lived in the region that is now Germany knew her as Eastre. (source: snopes.com)

Lilium longiflorum, the Latin name for Easter Lily, is native to Ryukyu Islands of southern Japan. For many, the beautiful trumpet-shaped white flower symbolizes purity, virtue, innocence, hope, and life – the spiritual essence of Easter.

The Easter Lily industry is an American success story. Prior to 1941, the majority of the Easter Lily bulbs produced were exported to the U.S. from Japan. World War II eliminated the dependence on Japanese-produced bulbs. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, the source from Japan was cut off. As a result, the value of lily bulbs skyrocketed. The Easter Lily Bulbs at that time were called "White Gold". By 1945, there were about 1,200 growers producing bulbs up and down the Pacific Coast, from Vancouver, Canada to Long Beach, California. Today over 95% of all bulbs grown for the potted Easter Lily market are produced by just ten farms from Smith River, California up to Brookings, Oregon. The area is known as the Easter Lily Capital of the World. Although post-war Japan tried to ship bulbs, they have never been able to come close to

the quality of the healthy U.S. grown bulbs, and thus- never regained any significant market share. Interestingly – Hans Zoerb, my Grandpa – worked together with Vic Ball (of the Ball Seed Co.) to grow Easter Lilies prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor. So, in 1942, La Crosse Floral *had* Easter Lily plants to sell when most of the United States had none.

The Easter Lily Capital is accessible only by a narrow and winding coastal highway banked by magnificent Redwood Forests, overlooking the spectacular scenic Pacific Ocean. I don't know if there is truth involved in this story or not, but I like thinking of it: It has been said that when the semi trucks, loaded with crates of heavy Easter Lily bulbs, leave the farms, that they hide under the Giant Redwoods until the weigh stations are closed. This way, they will not be overweight with their loads and can head down the highways with their bulbs.

Bulb harvesting takes place each year in the fall. A commercial-sized bulb often starts as a small, baby bulblet growing underground on the stem of its mother plant. When the mother plant is harvested, the bulblet is carefully removed and planted in another field.

One year later, the bulblet, now called a yearling, is dug up again. The yearling is planted in a new field for another full year of cultivation and specialized care to allow it to grow into its full potential, maturity, and status as a commercial bulb. Commercial bulbs are then graded – we can purchase what are referred to as 7/8, 8/9, 9/10, and 10/11. The numbers correspond to both the size of the bulb *and* the total number of flowers minimum that will be produced from the bulb. Obviously, the larger the bulb, the more costly the resulting plant. I always appreciate that these can be planted outside for continued years of enjoyment. Lilies like their roots in the shade and their heads in the sun. So, do provide a mulch to help cool the roots. For winter preparation, add more mulch such as hay, then remove the mulch in spring to allow new shoots to come up.

(History Source: Easter Lily Research Foundation)



BARB'S BLOOMS "A History Lesson"

St. Valentine

Every February 14th, nationwide, and in other places of the world – candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones – all in the name of St. Valentine. Who is this mysterious saint, and where did these traditions come from?

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the law, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentines' actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured.

According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl, who may have been his jailer's daughter who visited him during his confinement. Before his death he wrote her a letter which was signed, "From Your Valentine," an expression that's still used today.

Although the truth behind the Valentine Story is sketchy, the legend certainly emphasizes his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and certainly a romantic figure. It is no surprise that by the Middle Ages, Valentine was one of the most popular saints in England and France.

St. Patrick of Ireland

Apostle of Ireland, born in Kilpatrick, Dumbarton, in Scotland in the year 387.

There are many stories of St. Patrick, but I lean towards this one...

His parents were Calpurnius and Conchessa, Romans living in Britain in charge of the colonies.

As a boy of 14 or so, he was captured during a raiding party and taken to Ireland as a slave to herd and tend sheep. Ireland at this time was a land of

Druids and pagans. He learned the language and practices of the people who held him.

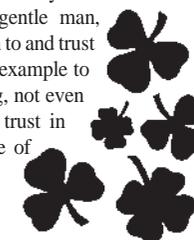
During his captivity, he turned to GOD and prayer. Patrick escaped at the age of twenty after having a dream from GOD in which he was told to leave Ireland by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britain where he reunited with his family. He had other dreams in which the people of Ireland were calling out for him and he knew that he needed to preach the word of GOD. He began studying for the priesthood, and was ordained by St. Germanus – whom he studied under.

Later, when Patrick was ordained a bishop, he was sent to take the Gospel to Ireland. He preached throughout Ireland, and with his disciples, began building churches, and converting thousands. Kings, their families, and entire kingdoms converted to Christianity when hearing Patrick's message.

Patrick worked many miracles, wrote of his love for GOD in Confessions, and preached and converted all over Ireland for forty years. After years of living in poverty, traveling, and enduring much suffer – he died on March 17, 461. He died at Saul, where he built his first church.

St. Patrick adopted the shamrock as a religious symbol, noting that the three leaves represented the Holy Trinity of Christianity. As he spread the Christian doctrine across Ireland, the shamrock became the symbol of his work. He was so loved that St. Patrick's Day was named for him. The shamrock has since become Ireland's National symbol and can be found on stamps, emblems, national crests, and government buildings. It represents Ireland, but can be seen all over on St. Patrick's Day.

Patrick was a humble, gentle man, whose love and total devotion to and trust in GOD should be a shining example to each of us. He feared nothing, not even death, so complete was his trust in GOD, and of the importance of his mission.



Garden Glossary

MOON GARDEN – A garden of white flowers and foliage designed to be visible all evening. A place to sit and enjoy the transition from day to night.

CEMETERY ROSE – An often-abandoned rose found in an old cemetery. These usually turn out to be an Old Rose (introduced before 1867). Most are shrub roses and only 13% have been named.

FLOWER FACTS

25% ... Roughly the percentage of all prescription medicines in the United States that are derived from plants.

Mission

To provide quality floral products and floral related services to businesses and people of all income levels in the Coulee Region. To help improve the quality of life in an environmentally friendly manner.