



Hinton Around the Yard & Garden

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER
by Adrian C. Hinton,

USU - Utah County



**GREETINGS FROM
THE COUNTY AGENT**



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I trust that you all had a very Merry Christmas and are ready for a fantastic New Year. Notice I didn't say a frantic New Year. Last year we had a very long, cool and very moist spring that brought about many unusual problems/conditions for the plant world. Don't forget that we sponsor Fruit Tree Pruning Demonstrations the end of February. Sign up if you'd like to see one or host one by calling 851-8460, ext. 0.

As we get ready for the spring planting season, let's be prepared for the worst but hope for the best.

We here at USU Extension wish all of you the very best and safest New Year.

TIMELY TIPS FOR JANUARY - FEBRUARY

by Paul Wilkey,
Advanced Master Gardener & USU Assistant Horticulturist



1. Stop by our office and get a fact sheet on how to care for your new poinsettia, Christmas cactus or amaryllis.
2. Watch for environmental problems with your houseplants. Don't over water. Be sure they receive adequate sunlight. In colder months, heat from furnaces, heaters, stoves, etc. can harm plants. You may have to place plants on pebble beds or simply "mist" them every few days.
3. Fertilize indoor plants.
4. Transplant root-bound plants.
5. Buy one or more exotic house plants. Test your skills on growing them. Orchids may be easier than you think to grow.
6. Pick up or order 2006 seed catalogs. Start making selections that fit your garden plans.
7. Make an organized plan for your vegetable garden. Be sure to include an extra row or two for the local food bank or the local farmer's market.
8. We will (depending on participation) be holding various gardening classes on a monthly basis. Watch future editions of this newsletter and local newspapers for more information. To help us in this program, drop by the office and tell us your interests.
9. Very important—if you're dealing with snow and ice on walkways and driveways, **do not** use salt to clear the way. This can have drastic consequences to lawns, shrubs, etc., in the days to come.



The Master Gardener Corner

Greetings:

As we begin this new Master Gardeners' year, I would like to wish you all the best the New Year has to offer.

First, a reminder to those who have not paid your dues, please do so. Our paid membership list is the only way we have to notify you about up-coming events, such as classes, parties, etc. Your dues are \$13 and that includes your subscription to this bulletin.

For your information, the officers meet once a month at our Board Meeting. This is not a closed meeting just for officers. If you feel that you might have some good input to better our organization or disagree with something we are doing, or not doing for that matter, you may visit our meeting to express yourself. If you would like to attend give Betty or Trish a call at the office (851-8463) to get the schedule.

Another program we will introduce this year is a once-a-month project. This means we will have a gardening class or other function every month for the coming year. Many of these classes will be mandatory for the current Master Gardeners class, but previous graduates are encouraged to attend also.

Some of the planned events include guest speakers, new places for field trips, etc. An example is when we schedule our tour of Temple Square we will try to incorporate a tour that same morning of Red Butte Gardens. Some of these tours will have additional costs for entry. So, the more who attend the better the price. Other events may mean we have to charter buses. This too will mean additional cost, but in large numbers of participation these can be kept to a minimum.

For all proposed events it will be necessary to call the office to make a list of all who plant to attend. A lack of interest will constitute a cancellation of the project. I will get a yearly schedule out of each of you as soon as possible. Some dates will be approximate. You will have at least one month of actual dates prior to the function.

If you would like to send me information or a personal note, you may do so by writing to:

Utah State University Extension
Utah County
Attn: Paul Wilkey
100 East Center St., Suite L600
Provo, UT 84606

I appreciate all of your aid and good will and look forward to an exciting and wonderful year.

Happy Trails, Paul Wilkey,
MG President

Master Gardener Fall Social

The Master Gardener Fall Social was a huge success! We had a record number turn out—over 150 were in attendance. We hope that you had as much fun as we did. The food was spectacular!

The door prizes were abundant and we'd like to thank everyone who so generously donated to our association:

- * Laura Kay's Garden Center
 - * Julie Clifford
- * Sunroc of Springville
 - * Harward Irrigation
 - * Jill & Steve Petersen
 - * Phyllis Grant
 - * Paul Wilkey
- * Mike Caron/Utah State University Extension
 - * Spanish Fork City
 - * Carpenter Seed
- * Timpanogos Best Western Inn/Tina West
 - * Dennis Tolman
 - * IFA
 - * Tom Hill

Special thanks to everyone who helped out and who brought such delicious food that made the Social even more memorable. See you there next year!



**Hinton Around
the Yard and Garden**

LANDSCAPING WITH TREES



Landscaping is a natural and beautiful way to keep your home more comfortable and reduce your energy bills. In addition to adding aesthetic value and environmental quality to your home, a well-placed tree, shrub, or vine can deliver effective shade, act as a windbreak, and reduce overall energy bills.

Carefully positioned trees can save up to 25% of a typical household's energy for heating and cooling. Computer models from DOE predict that just three trees, properly placed around the house, can save an average household between \$100 and \$250 in heating and cooling energy costs annually.

During the summer months, the most effective way to keep your home cool is to prevent the heat from building up in the first place. A primary source of heat buildup is sunlight absorbed by your home's roof, walls, and windows. Dark-colored home exteriors absorb 70% to 90% of the radiant energy from the sun that strikes the home's surfaces. Some of this absorbed energy is then transferred into your home by way of conduction, resulting in heat gain inside the house. In contrast, light-colored surfaces effectively reflect most of the heat away from your home.

Landscaping can also help block and absorb the sun's energy to help decrease heat buildup in your home by providing shade and evaporative cooling.

Shading and evaporative cooling from trees can reduce the air temperature around your home. Studies conducted by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory found summer daytime air temperatures to be 3° to 6° F cooler in tree-shaded neighborhoods than in treeless areas. The energy-conserving landscape strategies you should use for your home depend on the type of climate in which you live.

Buildings and Trees— Natural Partners

Deciduous trees planted on the south and on the west will help keep your house cool in the summer and allow sun to shine in the windows in the winter.



Orientation of the house and surrounding landscaping has a large effect on energy consumption. A well-oriented, well-designed home admits low-angle winter sun to reduce heating bills, rejects overhead summer sun to reduce cooling bills, and minimizes the chill effect of winter winds. Fences, walls, other nearby buildings, and rows of trees or shrubs block or channel the wind. Bodies of water moderate temperature but increase humidity and produce glare. Trees provide shade, windbreaks, and wind channels. Pavement reflects or absorbs heat, depending on whether it is light or dark in color.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

Note: Be sure NOT to plant trees too close to the house or fence. Roots can be a big problem as the years go by. Consult with your local Extension agent for more information.

Upcoming Events

Utah Green Conference

South Towne Convention Center
Sandy, UT
January 23-26

*Pick up registration information at USU Extension office.

Utah State Horticultural Association Annual Field Day, Convention & Banquet

for Commercial Fruit Growers
Field Day in the Payson/Santaquin areas, Jan. 23

Convention at the new Health and Justice Center
Room 1600, 151 South University Ave., Provo
January 24-25

Banquet at the Southridge Farms' Red Barn in
Santaquin, 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday evening, Jan. 24.

Questions? Call 801-851-8463.

Got Vinca? by Jenny Allgrunn, MG

Vinca major, sometimes called periwinkle or myrtle, is an attractive plant that grows easily. If you've had in your yard for several years, you may have noticed that is a Jekyll and Hyde plant. You might even begin to curse it as it invades the rest of your perennial bed and keeps popping up in new places. There are actually three forms of this plant, all with great garden value.



Vinca major. Notice the stem which is ready to wander out and find a new place to establish roots.

Vinca major: This is the aggressive one. It is distinguished from *Vinca minor* by a larger leaf and a tendency to send out rooting stems. It forms a mound up to a foot or so tall. It is a nice plant for a slope or other area where it can be the only kid on the block. It has a shiny green leaf that stays nice looking much of the year. (The shiny leaf is also resistant to herbicides, so it is difficult to spray out if you don't want it somewhere.) In the spring it has pretty purple-blue flowers. There is a variegated version that is not as aggressive. In fact, it may not even be winter hardy. Either is a nice plant, just be careful where you put it.

Vinca minor: This is one of my favorite ground covers. It has a smaller leaf and is a smaller plant than *Vinca major*. Twenty-five years ago I planted several hundred of these in my front yard. They filled in and still look great year round. They are xeric and stay green through the winter. They have not spread out of the area in which they were originally planted. My *Vinca minor* has stayed about six inches tall. They have nice purple-blue flowers in the spring. There is a white flowering form that appears to behave the same way.



Vinca minor. This is the well-behaved, smaller leafed vinca. It roots from underground.

Vinca rosea: The Sunset Western Garden Book lists this as *Catharanthus roseus* or Madagascar periwinkle. This is the cute little *Vinca* that nurseries sell as annuals. The book implies that it may winter over under the right conditions and that it may also reseed. I haven't seen it do either. It has nice phlox-like flowers in a variety of white, pink, bright rose and combinations of these colors. Interestingly, it doesn't come in purple-blue. I've noticed that it is the first in a container to holler, "Water me!" The leaves curl sideways and look pitiful. However, a drink perks them right back up. It also has a nice, shiny dark green leaf.



Vinca rosea. This has an upright growth and is sold as an annual.

Bird Droppings Cause Pollution



Exposure to pollutants is a well-publicized threat to birds' survival. But birds themselves may be spreading contaminants into the environment—through their droppings. The northern fulmar is an Arctic seabird that lives on cliffs atop Canada's Devon Island. The birds eat a diet of plankton and fish from the surrounding ocean and deposit their droppings into freshwater ponds. Jules M. Blais, associate professor in the biology department at the University of Ottawa, and colleagues have found that the pond sediments contain high levels of mercury, hexachlorobenzene, and other organochlorine compounds. The droppings may be a significant source of contamination in the Arctic ecosystem.

Howard Deer, USU Extension Pesticide Specialist

Malathion Risk Assessments Available

EPA is announcing the availability of its revised human health risk assessment and its ecological risk assessment for malathion, a cholinesterase-inhibiting organophosphate insecticide. Malathion is used on a variety of agricultural commodities, home ornamentals, vegetable gardens and lawns, and for wide area treatments such as public health mosquito control, fruit fly control and boll weevil eradication programs. Malathion is also used as a head lice treatment. EPA has also further characterized the potential risk from malaoxon, a more toxic compound that is formed when malathion residue is chemically converted under certain environmental conditions.

Links to the malathion Federal Register notice, risk assessments and related documents are available at www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/op/malathion.htm.



Improving Family,
Resources & Health

CLOSE TO HOME

by Judy Harris, USU Extension Agent in Utah County

Good News/ Bad News

Many credit cards are increasing the minimum monthly payment from the current 2 - 2 1/2 percent to 4 percent of the balance. Consumers must pay at least the minimum payment to avoid costly penalties.

The bad news for consumers who could barely find enough money to pay the 2 percent minimum will now have to find additional money just to make the new minimum payment that is 4-5 percent of the balance.

***"\$2,000 paid off
at 2% of the currently monthly balance
would take 27 years to pay off..."***

The good news is that paying 4 percent of the balance (down to a minimum monthly payment of \$10) will pay off the debt sooner and the consumer will pay less interest. The following samples are all at a 17% interest rate.

\$2,000 paid off at 2% of the currently monthly balance would take 27 years to pay off and cost \$4,019 in interest. If the \$2,000 debt were paid off at 4% of the monthly balance, the debt would be paid in 3 years and 3 months with an interest cost of "only" \$1,020.

\$5,000 paid off at 2% of the monthly balance would take more than 40 years and would cost over \$11,000 interest. If the \$5,000 were paid off at 4% of the monthly balance, the debt would be paid in a little more than 12 years with an interest cost of "only" \$2,666.

If your New Year's resolution is to get out of credit card debt, then this change will help you reach your goal.

Cooking Class

Chinese Cuisine



Come join us and **Chef Meihao Xiao** of **China Wok Restaurant** (Spanish Fork and Highland) for a Chinese cooking class filled with tips and recipes for some of your favorite Chinese foods and several of Chef Xiao's specialties.

Chef Xiao was raised in Fujian, China, and learned the art of Chinese cooking in New York City. Dishes you will learn to make and taste include:

Beef & Broccoli
Home made dumplings
Lemon Chicken
China Wok Chicken
Sweet & Sour Chicken
Chinese Fried Rice

All these recipes will be made using Chef Xiao's unique recipes, and he makes everything from scratch.

When: **January 19**

Where: **100 East Center, Utah County Admin. Bldg., Room L600, Time: 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Cost: \$5.00**

Seating is limited for both classes. To register with a Visa/Master or Discover card, call 801-851-8460, Ext. 0, or mail a check for \$5.00 to USU Extension, 100 East Center, Room L600, Provo, UT 84606.

Cooking Class

A Taste of Italy

Chef Lennie Belvedere of **Ottavio's Ristorante** will be hosting a cooking class with recipes from Italian old world cuisine. Known for using the freshest ingredients and imported pastas, Chief Belvedere will share some of his favorite recipes with you from main dishes to dessert. Dishes you will learn to make and taste include:

Penne Pomarodo
Chicken Marsala
Cannoli (Italian pastry with cream filling)

When: **February 8**

Where: **100 East Center, Utah County Admin. Bldg., Room L600, Time: 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Cost: \$5.00**

♥ Seeking Extraordinary Marriages ♥

YOU CAN HELP US FIND WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR! That’s right - as Valentine’s Day approaches, you can help be a matchmaker by connecting the Utah Commission on Marriage with happily married couples from all over Utah. The Commission is conducting its fifth annual recognition of noteworthy marriages in conjunction with **Marriage Week USA (February 7-14, 2006)**. This year’s categories include Gold Medal Marriages, Longest Married Couples, and Valorous Military Marriages. The Commission will select nominated couples to be recognized at the annual Utah Celebration of Marriage. All nominees, along with selected winners, will receive a letter of congratulation. Winners will receive free tickets to the February 4 conference and will be honored at that time.



♥ GOLD MEDAL MARRIAGES ♥

A Gold Medal Marriage is one that is healthy and enduring, for better or worse, through thick and thin, through time and experiences. A Gold Medal couple need not have been married for a long time. But Gold Medal Marriages exemplify durability, diligence, and devotion above and beyond the ordinary.

♥ LONGEST MARRIED COUPLES ♥

We’re also looking for nominations for recognition of Utah’s longest married couples. The Commission wants information about Utah couples, still living, that have been married 70 years or longer. Please include a brief description of when or how the couple met; interesting facts about their lives; challenges they faced as a couple; what has been most rewarding about their marriage; and what their secret is for a happy, successful marriage.

♥ VALOROUS MILITARY MARRIAGES ♥

This year many married couples find themselves separated by the duties associated with a nation at war. Yet, despite thousands of miles of separation, a military marriage can thrive and be strengthened. Do you know of a military couple that’s weathering the storms of war with courage, fortitude, and love? Let us know by nominating them, because the Commission wants to honor these special people!

HOW TO NOMINATE A COUPLE

Nomination forms may be downloaded from www.utahmarriage.org or may be obtained by calling the Commission office at 801-526-9317. Please mail submissions by January 6, 2006 to: Utah Commission on Marriage, PO Box 140608, Salt Lake City, UT 84114-0608.

The following information should be included regarding each couple: Name, address, phone number, and marriage date. Also needed is the name, address, and phone number of a contact person.

Nominating a couple for the Gold Medal Marriage, Longest Married Couple, or Valorous Military Marriage should be easy: Utah has a higher percentage of married couple families than any other state. *Cicero, the Roman orator, said, “Marriage is the first bond of society.”*



Fallacy: Eating after 8 p.m. causes weight gain

Fact: What and how much you eat affects weight control, not when you eat it. If you maintain a balance between the total amount of calories you burn, it doesn’t matter how late or how early you have your meals or snacks.

The myth warning against late night eating probably stems from the tendency of people to overeat late in the day. Late nights are also when some people indulge in “mindless eating” while watching TV. High calorie chips, cookies and ice cream are often snacks of choice.

Suggestions to combat late night calorie bingeing:

- ✓ Eat regularly throughout the day, including breakfast.
- ✓ If more than 4 hours lapse between meals, have a snack to prevent ravenous hunger later.
- ✓ To keep your mind away from food, occupy your hands while watching TV, for example by sorting coupons.
- ✓ Select fresh berries, grapes or fruit salad

WARNING...New Credit Card Scam

Note, the callers do not ask for your card number, they already have it.

This information is worth reading. By understanding how the VISA and MasterCard Telephone Credit Card Scam works, you'll be better prepared to protect yourself. One of our employees was called on Wednesday from "VISA" and I was called on Thursday from "MasterCard."

The scam works like this:

Person calling says, "This is (name), and I'm calling from the Security and Fraud Department at VISA. My Badge number is 12460. Your card has been flagged for an unusual purchase pattern, and I'm calling to verify."

"This would be on your VISA card which was issued by (name of bank)."

"Did you purchase an Anti-Telemarketing Device for \$497.00 from a Marketing company based in Arizona?"

When you say "No," the caller continues with, "Then we will be issuing a credit to your account. This is a company we have been watching and the charges range from \$297 to \$497, just under the \$500 purchase pattern that flags most cards. Before your next statement the credit will be sent to (gives you your address), is that correct? " You say "yes."

The caller continues - "I will be starting a Fraud Investigation. If you have any questions, you should call the 1-800 number listed on the back of your card (1-800-VISA) and ask for Security. You will refer to this Control Number. The caller then gives you a 6 digit number. "Do you need me to read it again?"

Here's the IMPORTANT part of how the scam works. The caller then says, "I need to verify that you are actually in possession of your card." He'll ask you to "turn your card over and look for some numbers." There are seven numbers; the first 4 are part of your card number, the next 3 are the Security Numbers that verify you are the possessor of the card. These are the numbers you sometimes use to make Internet purchases to prove you have the card. The caller will ask you to read the 3 numbers to him.



After you tell the caller the 3 numbers, he'll say, "That is correct, I just needed to verify that the card has not been lost or stolen, and that you still have your card. Do you have any questions?" After you say no, the caller then thanks you and states, "Don't hesitate to call back if you do," and hangs up.

You actually say very little, and they never ask for your card number. But after we were called on Wednesday, we called back within 20 minutes to ask a question. Are we glad we did! The actual VISA Security Department told us it was a scam and in the last 15 minutes a new purchase of \$497.99 was charged to our card.

Long story short—we made a real fraud report and closed the VISA account. VISA is reissuing us a new number.

What the scammers want is the 3-digit PIN number on the back of the card. Don't give it to them! Instead, tell them you'll call VISA or MasterCard directly for verification of their conversation.

VISA told us that they will never ask for anything on the card as they already know the information since they issued the card!

If you give the scammers the 3 Digit PIN Number, you think you're receiving a credit. However, by the time you get your statement you'll charges for purchases you didn't make, and by then it's almost too late and/or more difficult to actually file a fraud report.

What makes this more remarkable is that on Thursday, I got a call from a Jason Richardson of MasterCard with a word-for-word report of the VISA scam. This time I didn't let him finish. I hung up! We filed a police report, as instructed by VISA. The police said they are taking several of these reports daily.

They also urged us to tell everybody we know that this scam is happening. Please pass this on to all your family and friends. By informing each other, we protect each other.

*Douglas I. Anderson, P.E., Research Project Manager,
Utah Department of Transportation*

Upcoming Classes

- Chinese Quisine with China Wok Restaurant* 5
- A Taste of Italy from Ottavio's* 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Greetings from the County Agent* 1
- Timely Tips for January - February* 1
- Master Gardener Corner* 2
- Landscaping with Trees* 3
- Upcoming Events* 3
- Got Vinca?* 4
- Bird Droppings Cause Pollution* 4
- Malathion Risk Assessments Available* 4
- Good News/Bad News* 5
- Chinese Quisine sponsored by China Wok Restaurant* . 5
- A Taste of Italy sponsored by Ottavio's Ristorante* 5
- Seeking Extraordinary Marriages* 6
- Facts & Fallacies* 6
- Warning...New Credit Card Scam* 7

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
SERVICE
UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Utah County Office
100 East Center, Rm. L600
Provo, Utah 84606

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PRSR STD
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
PROVO UT
PERMIT # 268

**It's time to renew if your
expiration date is 1/2006**

Counteracting Kids' High Cholesterol Counts



High cholesterol levels in children can affect their health later in life. Researchers tested blood cholesterol levels and recorded foods eaten by 1,182 children when the children were third graders and again when they were in fifth grade. Total blood cholesterol closely correlated with the amount of fat that the young people consumed.

The researchers noted that reducing the amount of saturated fat that children eat, increasing the amounts of fruits and vegetables they are served, and encouraging them to exercise should help keep their cholesterol counts at healthy levels. An article in the *April 2002 Journal of the American Dietetic Association* (vol. 102, pp. 511-517)



This newsletter is an educational effort of the Utah County office of Utah State University Extension, 100 East Center, Room L600, Provo, UT 84606.

The phone for USU Extension is 851-8460. If you do not have a touch tone phone, stay on the line and the receptionist will help you. With a touch tone phone, at the greeting press the number of the desired subject:

- 5) garden, yard, trees, insects
- 2) food, finances, clothing, housing
- 3) pastures, field crops, dairies
- 4) 4-H and youth



Please check

If the date on your mailing label says 1/2006 it is time to renew your subscription. Make check payable to "Utah State University" and mail to address above. Send \$3 to renew for 1 year (6 issues).

Utah State University Extension is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and educational organization. We offer our programs to persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability.