



The Express

VOLUME II ISSUE I

Winter 2005

Our Mission

The mission of the Olympus Garden Club is to promote and support the love of gardening, floral arranging, landscape design, horticulture, plant research and environmental improvement by providing education, resources, networking and leadership opportunities to our members and the community.

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Literacy Project Winter Gardens Without Soil

Sprouting is the easiest way to provide yourself with a constant supply of fresh, nutritious vegetable food with a minimum of time and effort. "Sprouts" are the very beginning growth of a seed.

In 3000 B.C. bean sprouts were an important part of the Chinese diet and they still are today. Sprouts are tasty and crammed full of vitamins, trace elements and minerals. The fats and starches in seeds are changed into vitamins, sugars, minerals and proteins.

This is good news for weight watchers and the seeds' transformation

Ten Quick Questions on Nutrition Facts

How much do you know about the Nutrition Facts panel that appears on food labels?

Try your hand at the following ten questions and see how much you know.

- 1) The Nutrition Facts panel on the food label tells you the calories, serving size and the amount of various nutrients such as total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and dietary fiber per serving.
- 2) The information on the Nutrition Facts food panel is based on a single portion, or serving of food.
- 3) The Serving size must be listed in both metric units and common household units.
- 4) The servings per container shows the number of servings given in a package of food.
- 5) The calories per serving tells you the total number of calories in a single serving of a particular food.
- 6) The calories from fat tells you how many of a particular food's calories come from fat.
- 7) The nutrition information on the Nutrition Facts panel can help you compare similar foods.
- 8) Getting in the habit of checking out the Nutrition Facts panel can help you make better food choices.
- 9) Raw fruits and vegetables may have nutrition information printed on their packaging, or on pamphlets or posters displayed near the food.
- 10) Plain coffee and tea are not required to carry nutrition labeling.

R. Murray
Ans. on pg. 6

makes them easy to digest.

This method requires a quart size glass jar, a piece of cheese-cloth cut to cover the bottle, a rubber band to hold the cheese-cloth in place and of course seeds or beans.

You should buy the organic seeds or beans at a health food store and you might start with mung beans or alfalfa seeds, but you have many types to choose from.

Don't ever use seeds from seed packets as they are often treated with stuff you don't want to ingest.

Here is a simple way to get started.

First, gather your material: Glass jar, cheese-cloth, rubber band, beans or seeds and pick through the seeds or beans carefully, place them in the glass jar and fill with water to soak overnight.

Next, drain off the beans or seeds, wash them in fresh cool water, and drain off the rinsing water. Cover with cheese-cloth using rubber band.

Place the jar on its side in an area with good ventilation and out of direct sunlight. Every morning and evening remove the cheesecloth, rinse the seeds in fresh water, replace the cheese-cloth before you drain off the rinse water.

In two to five days you will get alfalfa, or mung bean sprouts that are white in color.

Many different grains, beans and seeds, can be sprouted and the time they take to ripen varies from as little as two days to as many as eight. Most people use them in salads but they're great in soups, (right before serving), in stir-fries, breads and more.

Now you're ready to experience the fun of growing a winter vegetable garden. You can always buy sprouts but they cost a lot more and won't be your own home-grown.



Robert Florin

President's Message

This past season gave various club members the opportunity to take part in some new and fascinating projects.

Members traveled to Overlook Farm in Massachusetts with Just Food, where they participated in workshops and tours arranged by Heifer International's North East Regional offices.

These workshops included aquaculture, animal care sessions and the exchange of information between farmers and city folk. There were about 75+ participants, not including the farm animals.

There was a tour of the global village, a demonstration area with buildings and animals showing how people live and sustain themselves in different parts of the world.

Another rewarding project was the building of the rainwater harvesting system at the Carlton Bears Community Garden. The system included plumbing to catch rainwater from an adjacent rooftop, a 1000 gallon cistern, a streambed, waterfall and catchment area for the runoff during winter months.

Representatives of different groups including Olympus, volunteered their time and labor and the project was completed after three separate work events. The garden plans to employ a drip irrigation system to supply the various garden plots with the stored water.

We visited Longwood Gardens in Kenneth Square, PA during their Chrysan-

themum Festival and attended many of the activities on the schedule for the day.

Finally, members gathered in December to jointly create a holiday potpourri, with aromatic ingredients supplied by each member in attendance.

The results were spectacular and everyone left with samples in personalized sachets and crafted containers.

In 2005, I hope that you will join us as we continue to spread our wings in your community.

Robert Florin, President



News

We purchased a tent with the donation from Faye Yarbrough of California to shelter us from sun and rain when we are out in the community.

Featured Plant Vanilla

Botanical name:

Vanilla planifolia

Pronunciation:

van-IL-uh plan-ee-FOH-lee-uh

Common Name: Vanilla

Native to: Mexico & Central America

Which tropical plant do you find the most exotic or romantic? For some, it is the orchid. Not only does the vanilla orchid fall into this category, it has economic value beyond gracing our tables and bouquets with its beauty and fragrance.

The pure vanilla extract that we include in our recipes comes from, believe it or not, an orchid. The extract is derived from these vanilla beans, which are the cured dried fruit of this rare, exotic, epiphytic vine that can grow to more than 300 feet.

Vanilla is the only member of the world's largest plant family that we use

as food and its yellow-white flowers produce these long slender beans/pods at maturity.

The Totonaca people of the Gulf coast of Mexico were probably the first people to cultivate vanilla in forest plantations. The process from bean to extract, powder or essence is lengthy and highly labor intensive.

The entire process of vanilla cultivation, pollination and harvesting is done by hand, without using machinery, chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Vanilla flowers are self-fertile, but incapable of self-pollination without the aid of an outside agency to either transfer the pollen from the anther to the stigma or to lift the flap or rostellum, then press the anther against the stigma. The only time this can be accomplished is during the

morning of the one-day the flower is open. Unless pollination occurs, the flower drops from the vine the next day. Usually, women and children who are quick with their hands pollinate from 1,000 to 2,000 flowers per day.

Vanilla flowers appear 3 years after the vine is planted and the beans must remain on the plants for nine months in order for them to fully develop.

When harvested the beans have little or



Vanilla Bean

no fragrance. After harvesting, they are scalded, then fermented, then dried and then aged for 3 months. After this curing process, the familiar fragrance becomes fully developed and the beans are ready for processing

(Continued on page 3)

Women and children pollinate 1,000 to 2,000 flowers per day

Olympus Garden Club Word Scramble

Cold	M	X	X	M	N	S	V	M	M	D
Cider	F	F	C	I	D	E	R	F	N	T
Fir tree	F	H	G	D	R	T	X	L	B	T
Frost	Z	T	J	L	T	A	V	J	T	O
Holly	Z	C	M	V	B	K	Z	Q	D	J
Ice skates	L	N	J	V	Y	S	Z	L	X	V
Leaves	E	W	I	L	Y	E	O	K	K	L
Shovel	V	E	L	V	X	C	Q	V	V	F
Sleet	O	O	B	L	W	I	N	T	E	R
Snow- flakes	H	S	Q	L	D	K	C	C	D	O
Storm front	S	N	O	W	F	L	A	K	E	S
Winter	D	J	W	R	Z	K	T	F	N	T
Wreath	S	J	L	E	A	V	E	S	L	C
	L	J	T	A	Z	E	T	H	L	C
R. Murray	E	E	R	T	R	I	F	H	T	C
see pg. 6	E	M	J	H	V	P	N	W	T	V
	T	N	O	R	F	M	R	O	T	S
	G	S	M	W	J	Z	Z	X	T	B
	C	V	M	E	O	J	D	N	N	D

(Vanilla—continued from page 2)

into the many forms of vanilla that we recognize.

The beans are ground to form vanilla powder. The powder retains its flavor when exposed to heat and thus is favored in baking. Vanilla extract is aged from 2 to 6 months and contains 35% alcohol. If the alcohol content is less, it is considered a flavoring. The essence is double the strength of the extract. If you are fortunate enough to get hold of the raw beans, they impart the best flavor.

Now you know why it is the second most expensive spice in the world, next to saffron.

There are over 100 varieties of vanilla but only two types are used commercially – the Bourbon and Tahitian varieties. Until the nineteenth century Mexico was the worlds largest producer of vanilla. Madagascar and, before this most recent tsunami, Indonesia had usurped that position. Vanilla was

(Continued on page 6)

Tip Time

Did you remember to turn off the water to your outdoor hoses and sprinklers? Do that now to avoid having to replace busted hoses and pipes in the spring.

When bringing new houseplants home from the store, be sure to protect them from the cold with a few layers of plastic.

If you forgot to water your house plants and they die, add them to the compost pile instead of throwing them in the garbage.

Did you forget to plant your bulbs? There is still hope. Bulbs need three months of cold to grow successfully in the spring. If you can still dig in the ground and you are willing to brave the cold you can still plant late spring bulbs now. You can also force them if they did not dry out by planting them in containers with tips above the soil. Store the containers in the garage until they start to grow, then

give them some light. Bring them indoors to a cool area to decorate when buds start to form.

Now is the time to leave food and water out for the birds. Place feeders away from the windows to prevent the birds from flying into the glass.

Stake and tie up the branches of your evergreens to help support them if the branches become too heavy with snow or ice. Lightly brush off snow from snow laden branches with a

broom. Protect evergreens from drying winter winds by wrapping them with burlap.

Sharpen those pruners and loppers so that they will be ready for your spring pruning of roses and other trees and shrubs.

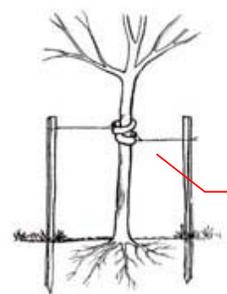
Start thinking of planting your favorite

cool season vegetables. You can start planting, green vegetables and other cool season annuals as early as March.

If you are not planning on installing a new lawn, apply pre-emergent weed control to the lawn in late February to early March.

Trees that move with the wind grow stronger. If trees were planted in your neighborhood last year and they are still wrapped or tied with wire to stakes, be a friend and cut them off this spring.

Wood ash raises the pH of your soil over time. Check the pH of your soil if you burn wood in the fireplace, then add the ashes to your garden.



Cut off Guy wires this Spring

Did you forget to plant your bulbs? There is still hope.

The City Farms: Growing Food and Opportunity in NYC

Just Food is a non-profit organization that addresses regional farm and food issues by working to build a more just and sustainable food system in New York City. This means, for example, that family farmers make a fair profit for their efforts, and all people have access to affordable, healthy food. It also means that farming and gardening techniques focus on the ecological methods that protect nature's resources, as well as the urban and rural people who live off these resources.

In both town and country, Just Food fosters new marketing and food-growing opportunities that address the needs of small and medium family farms, urban gardeners, and NYC neighborhoods. Through training, leadership development and organizing efforts, we build diverse partnerships to advance dialogue and action on farming, hunger and nutrition.

Just Food's City Farms program works to increase food production, marketing and distribution via community gardens throughout NYC. Our partners contribute their expertise in horticulture, marketing, garden preservation, leadership development, and emergency food relief. Together we provide training materials, workshops, and networking opportunities to enable NYC communities to grow more food!

Here are some City Farms (TCF) program highlights from the 2004 growing season:

- TCF held our annual **Training of Trainers program**, a teaching methodology whereby each learner is considered a teacher who can go on to teach new found skills to others. Community gardeners attend this training program and go on to teach community based workshops throughout the city. Eleven community garden trainers made up our extension series in 2004. Collectively they taught 30+ workshops this year and were compensated by Just Food for their time and skills. Ena Nemley, Maureen O'Brien, Solita Stephens and Cecile Charles-King are the newest trainers in TCF's extension service. All of whom de-

serve a special thank you for their enthusiasm, innovation and dedication.

- We also distributed **TCF Toolkit**. This toolkit is comprised of over 70 tip sheets focusing on ecological production methods and touching on everything from planting calendars to soil care to season extension. This toolkit also contains a resources directory linking community gardeners to over 100 relevant agencies and organizations. Although this toolkit was developed specifically for city farmers in New York, most elements are useful to hobby gardeners, urban farmers and organic growers everywhere.

- The City Farms provided technical assistance to establish **Urban Farm-stands** at four community gardens sites, three in the Bronx and one in Brooklyn. All markets served communities that have poor access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables and the three in the Bronx participated in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). FMNP, incorporating both the **WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program** and the **Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program**, was first established in 1992 by Congress to

provide better access to fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC recipients and Seniors, and to expand the awareness, use and sales at farmers' markets.

As an Olympus Garden Club member, you have already taken a productive step toward building a stronger gardening network for NYC. By learning about other projects and supporting each others' efforts we can only make our individual projects stronger. Many Olympus Garden Club members are already working with City Farms. Stay Involved!!

For more information on 2005 workshops, TCF Toolkit, urban farm-stands or other aspects of Just Food please contact Kathleen McTigue at Just Food, 212-645-9880 x13 or kathleen@justfood.org

Kathleen McTigue,
The City Farms Program Manager, Just Food



Fresh Food

OLYMPUS GARDEN CLUB

Membership Application

Hello,

Are you a gardener?

Do you have a love for plants?

Do you want to learn about gardening?

Would you like to be able to share your gardening triumphs and desolation with a group of fellow enthusiasts?

Do you want to participate in our efforts to improve our neighborhoods?

Would you like to help us create programs to enhance the lives of seniors, young adults and children?

IF YOUR ANSWER IS YES TO ANY/ALL OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, THEN PLEASE, BECOME A MEMBER.

MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO HELP US WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND TO PAY ANNUAL DUES.

Our membership dues are \$30.00 annually for adults and \$5.00 for youth. We have many activities scheduled throughout the year.

We are anxious to have you join us and welcome your participation.

Membership benefits include monthly educational gardening lectures, state, district and club newsletters, garden tours and personal enrichment.

Please see our attached Fact Sheet.

Fill out the application below and mail with your dues or bring it with you to our next meeting.

Application for Membership

New Member Youth Member Membership Renewal

President
Robert Florin
Garden Volunteer
Horticulturist,
Community Gardener

Vice-President
Cecile Charles-King
Master Composter, BQLT board
member, Community Gardener

Treasurer
Johanna Willins
Co-Founder
Master Composter, President of
Herbal Community Garden

Executive Director
Solita Stephens
Founder
Horticulturist, Master Composter,
Educator/Lecturer

QUESTION S:
info@olympusgardendub.org

WEBSITE:
<http://www.olympusgardenclub.org>

Dues: \$30.00 Annually

Last name		First name	
Address			
City		State	Zip + four code
Home Telephone Number		Work Telephone Number	
Fax Telephone Number		Cell Telephone Number	
E-Mail Address		Best Time To Call <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM	
INTERESTS/SPECIALTY		Mail Completed Application and Annual Dues of \$30.00	
		Solita Stephens Post Office Box 531 Uniondale, NY 11553	
		Make Checks Payable To Olympus Garden Club	

Easier Said Than Done

Diet!
 Exercise!
 Eat Healthy!
 Lose Weight!
 Satisfy!
 Satisfy
 Mother, Father
 Brother, Sister
 Husband, Friend?

BACK UP!
 Me First,
 They come next
 Leave!

Leave him....her
 That job
 No Good for You!
 Stop!

Stop the Drinking,
 Drugging, Abuse!
 The Violence!
 The Conflict!
 The Guilt!

Say No!
 Walk Away!
 Kiss off Stress!

Give Love,
 Share Joy,
 Embrace Self!

Reach for Your Star
 Catch it and Dance

Easier said then done,
 But.....NOT Impossible!

Many gardeners have discovered that the many aspects of gardening contribute to the resolution of many of the above mentioned issues.

Personally, I have found that my anger and frustrations miraculously disappear any time I am sitting or working in the garden.

Other people find weeding, pruning and even watering helps them to resolve these sometimes overwhelming concerns.

Gardening is therapeutic. Won't you join us and garden?

S. Stephens



(Vanilla continued from page 3)
 cultivated domestically for the first time in the middle of the 19th century by Edmond Albius, a slave who lived on the French island Reunion, near Madagascar. Albius was the first to manually pollinate the vanilla flower. Hernan Cortes, a famous navigator, was the first to discover and bring back the vanilla plant to Europe.

Vanilla has culinary, medicinal, ornamental and economic value. It neutralizes the heat in peppers and enhances the sweetness in fruit. It is used as an air freshener and in some instances it is even used as a pesticide. Can we as gardeners ask for more from this one plant? Amazing!

S. Stephens



Reuse! Recycle!



Here is a great recycling idea for you to use. We saw it at Heifer International's Overlook Farm in Rutland, Ma.

Use your old freezers and refrigerators as your cold cellar to store your root vegetables such as potatoes and turnips.

It is another way to extend the season and continue to eat fresh through the winter.

Safety First! Secure it with a padlock, if it doesn't have a lock.

Olympus Garden Club
 P.O. Box 531
 Uniondale, NY 11553

Our Monthly Meeting Schedule

February 10, 2005
 Subject: Propagation

March 10, 2005
 Subject: Vegetable Garden Planning

April 14, 2005
 2004 A Picture Review

Please check our website calendar for last minute changes.

Nutrition Quiz Answers:
 Questions 1-10 All answers are True.

Website: <http://www.olympusgardclub.org>
 Contact us: info@olympusgardclub.org

Editor: S. Stephens
 Assistant Editors:
 A. Cushion & E. Villanueva

Word Scramble Answer

M F F Z Z E E V O H S S S E E E E E C
 X F H T C N W E O S N J J E M N S V
 X C G J M J I L B B O O W T T R J O M
 M I D L V E V L L W R E A T H R W E
 N O R T B Y Y X W D E Z A Z R V F J O
 S E T A K S E O I K E K V E I P M Z J
 V R X V Z Z O O N C A T E T F N R Z D
 M F L J O L K K V H C K F S H H W O X N
 M N B T D X K V E D D E N L L T T U T
 D T T O J V L L E R O S S E E C C C V S B D