

## The week ahead

**TUESDAY**  
**HEALTHY LIVING**

**GIFT GUIDE:**  
We'll share staff and local expert picks on everything from fitness gear to health products

**WEDNESDAY**  
**TASTE**

**COOKIE CONTEST:**  
See the winners and get their scrumptious recipes

**FRIDAY**  
**HOME**

**STOCKINGS TO STUFF:**  
New designs to hang from the mantel with care

## Today on dallasnews.com

### Cookie contest

**Vote:** Choose your favorite Cookie Man! See the finalists and text us your pick, or make your choice online. Voting ends at 11:55 p.m. Saturday.

dallasnews.com/food



### Show us your holiday lights

**Online:** We want to feature photos of homes and businesses in Dallas-Fort Worth decked in holiday lights. Want to be part of our interactive map? E-mail a photo of the house or shop, along with the street address, city and ZIP code. Please include your name and phone number (not for publication) in case we have a question.

tellus@dallasnews.com

## HOME

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# Spray, vacuum screens to stop bug infestation

I would love to open my windows in autumn, but an insect infestation covers the window screens during that season. If I open the windows, these minuscule black bugs can make their way through the screens. Power washing the screens doesn't work because the bugs return.

S.F., Grand Prairie

Try spraying the screens with orange oil diluted at a rate of 2 ounces per gallon of water. This should help repel the bugs.

Vacuuming the screens to remove the bugs also will help to reduce future generations. Be sure to clean the vacuum cleaner immediately (preferably outdoors), and put the debris and bugs into a sealed plastic bag in the garbage.

I am having trouble with beavers disrupting water and nourishment to my garden. They have left my beets, carrots, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants alone, but have gnawed off the roots of everything else. They ate a whole pattypan squash. I have tried putting hot pepper and ammonia in the beaver tunnels, but it is not working.

D.M., Fort Worth

Beavers are tough to control.

### ORGANIC ANSWERS



HOWARD GARRETT  
home@dallasnews.com

The only repellents that may help contain predator urine. Wildlife experts should be able



William Wilson Lewis III

To control beavers, the only repellents that may help contain predator urine.

to help you with traps and advice.

I rent a house with a large live oak in the back yard. The tree's root flare is not visible, and the owners have installed a flagstone patio underneath the tree.

The tree appears to be stressed, and many small suckers have sprouted in the soil. I also see a round grayish fuzzy spot on the underside of each leaf that falls from the tree.

I want to help this tree, but I'm not its owner.

L.S., Dallas

The only thing that would help long term is the removal of the extra soil around the trunk and root flare. The owners may listen and help if you explain the problem.

### RESOURCES

**ONLINE:** www.dirtdoctor.com for free organic-program handouts

**RADIO:** KSKY-AM (660), Saturday 11 a.m.-noon and Sunday 8-11 a.m. www.ksky.com.

**MAIL:** P.O. Box 140650, Dallas, TX 75214

## CHORES



Netherlands Flower Bulb Information Center

For constant color and fragrance in winter, force paperwhites every two weeks.

# Force a little spring with paperwhites

By RICK ROSEN  
Staff Writer  
rosen@dallasnews.com

For cheerful, sweet-smelling flowers indoors this time of year, paperwhites are hard to beat. Many gardeners grow them as gifts for the winter holidays, presenting bulbs when they have developed buds.

Unlike many spring-blooming bulbs, paperwhites (*Narcissus tazetta*) don't require a chilling period before planting. Most people force the blooms in late autumn and winter; forcing simply means making them bloom on your timetable rather than nature's.

Because paperwhites need only 2 to 3 inches of room for roots to grow, almost any container will do, as long as it has drainage holes. Traditionally, shallow pots are used. You can plant them in good potting soil, pebbles or marbles; you even can grow them hydroponically.

Here are the steps for forcing paperwhites:  
■ In soil, pebbles, marbles or other media, plant the bulbs wide bottoms down with the top inch or so of each bulb exposed at the top.

■ If planting more than one bulb in a pot, which makes a lovely display, plant the bulbs almost shoulder-to-shoulder.

■ Add water so that the soil is moist but the

bulbs aren't soaked. If planting them in a layer of rocks or marbles several inches deep, add enough water to barely come in contact with the bottom of the bulb. Once the bulbs put out white roots, the water level should not touch the bulb at all.

■ Place the pot in a cool but sunny spot. Once the bulbs have produced budding shoots, move them to a bright location out of direct sun. (Too little light and too much heat cause lanky stems and leaves that collapse.)

Flowers should appear in three to five weeks. To have constant color and fragrance in winter, start a new batch of paperwhites every two weeks. When the blooms of older bulbs are fading, newer ones will be blooming. Once paperwhite bulbs have been forced into bloom, coaxing them to rebloom in the garden is hardly worth the effort. At the least, it takes several years for forced bulbs to build up the energy to bloom again.

Paperwhites are sold at most garden centers. (The bigger the bulb the more flowers it will produce.)

'Ziva' is the best-known type of *N. tazetta*. Some gardeners find their fragrance musky and off-putting while, for others, it wouldn't be Christmas without their overly sweet perfume. There are newer, purportedly less-odiferous types such as 'Inbal' and 'Ariel'.

### PAPERWHITE CHOICES

TYPE	ZIVA	NIR	INBAL	ARIEL	WINTERSUN
AVERAGE WEEKS TO BLOOM	3-4	3-4	4-5	3-5	3-4
AVERAGE FLOWER STEMS/BULB	1-2	2.5-3	2	2-3	2-3
AVERAGE FLOWER SIZE	2-2.5 inches	10 percent larger than Ziva	10 percent larger than Ziva	10 percent larger than Ziva	2-2.5 inches
FRAGRANCE	Strong and musky	Strong and musky	Lighter and less musky	Mild	Lighter and less musky
AVERAGE HEIGHT	15-16 inches	14-16 inches	12-13 inches	14-15 inches	16-17 inches

NOTE: Heights are in full sun. Plants will be taller in low light.  
SOURCE: easytogrowbulbs.com

**Too tired to tidy up for the holidays?**

Hire a professional to help with all your holiday needs.

-house cleaning

Watch for our Holiday Service Guide each Sunday in the Metro Section

The Dallas Morning News  
dallasnews.com

**Holiday Services**

**NORTH HAVEN Gardens**

**Celebrate the Holidays In Beautiful Living Color!**

**Holiday Weekend**  
**December 1 & 2**  
Arts & Crafts Sale  
Both days!  
A unique selection of handmade gifts. Jewelry, Clay, Glass Beads, Herb Soaps, Photography, Stain Glass, Purses, Fudge, and more!  
**Sunday, December 2**  
Operation Kindness  
Pet Adoptions  
11 am - 5 pm

We have the best Christmas trees in town! Fresh, healthy trees, wreaths and garland create a festive holiday home. Vibrant Poinsettias, fragrant Rosemary Topiaries and live mini-trees make your holidays extra special.

**Special Holiday Shopping Hours:**  
November 23rd thru December 15th  
Open until 7pm Thur., Fri. & Sat.

7700 Northaven Rd. (Just West of 75)  
Open Daily ☎ 214-363-5316 ☎ www.nhg.com

**PASS IT ON**

Pass It On is a free service for readers who want to donate unwanted items. To submit, e-mail home@dallasnews.com. Offerings are accepted up to one week before publication. Requests for items are not accepted.

**FOR A NONPROFIT**  
**Two large plastic dog crates.** For an animal rescue or shelter. Call after 9 a.m. Kathryn, Dallas 214-755-6864.

Sigrid Murene

