

Light It Up! - By Stan Southwick

Our Holiday Seasons typically begin with the lighting of a Christmas tree, house lights, menorah or some other colorful, and sometimes extravagant, display of lights. These lights bring smiles to faces and joy to hearts as we think on what they represent and watch them twinkle on dark cold nights. It is truly a magical time of year. The lighting of our holiday lights seems to always be accompanied by the lighting of something deep down inside each of us. We smile a little brighter, laugh a little quicker, lend a helping hand more freely and are just better people. There are so many ways to light up your world and those who come in your circle of influence. It can be as simple as smiling and saying "Hi" to a stranger, letting someone merge in front of you on the freeway, dropping a buck or two in the bell-ringer bucket, settling a grudge you've carried for way too long, telling a family member you love them, paying it forward (whatever "it" might be), or doing something extra without being asked. Well, you get the picture. One of the most enjoyable things I found to do this year is at the Downtown Summerlin mall. There are "Giving Machines" to purchase items for others in need. Just swipe your credit card and select a donation. I purchased chickens, sheep and polio vaccinations for third world countries; food and school supplies for local charities. This season take special note of ways to let that light inside you ignite the light in someone else. It may seem a little selfish, but you may feel better than those you help. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



*Make the Season
Bright with
Christmas Giving!*



"It's not how much you give but how love we put into giving"

Mother Teresa

Favorite Flora:

Schlumbergera bridgesii - Christmas Cactus - By Jon Marenfeld



The holidays are in full swing, the weather is getting cooler, and for some more time is spent indoors. Take your love of plants indoors and get a Christmastime surprise with Schlumbergera bridgesii commonly known as the Christmas Cactus. It is a native of tropical jungles of Brazil and is epiphytic which means it grows by attaching itself to trees while deriving its moisture and nutrients from the air, rain, or from debris accumulating around it. Unlike other cacti it prefers wetter and darker conditions than desert cactus. It will begin to bloom in late fall and early winter producing red flowers on the end of the stems. Hybrids of Schlumbergera bridgesii may produce yellow, purple, pink, or white flowers but may bloom

earlier or later than a true Christmas Cactus.

Plant Christmas Cactus in a well-draining humus-rich potting soil like what you'd use for a typical potted houseplant. Do not expose it to prolonged direct sunlight. They will do much better with indirect partial light which is comparable to their natural habitat. Also, place it in a location where it can get uninterrupted periods of darkness. If lights are turned on a and off regularly it may get confused and not grow or bloom normally. When it's flowering it can handle a bit more direct sunlight. Water it about every 3 weeks in mid-winter and a bit more in summer. If it's budding or blooming give it a little extra water. After it blooms taper watering back until summer.



Sawtooth Range
Idaho
Matt Durham