

*Yard and Garden – 11-26-2016 – Ted Griess/ Extension Horticulture Assistant*

As you read this column, two days will have elapsed since we as a nation officially celebrated Thanksgiving. While preparing to write this article, my first thought was to feature a column devoted to garden produce often found in a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Then I thought, Thanksgiving should be a time to reflect on all the blessings we've received and to be grateful. With that in mind, I am thankful for how this past week my heart was touched in two special ways — physically and emotionally.

Physically, I underwent a surgical procedure at the Kearney Regional Medical Center involving my heart. Obviously, the procedure was a success or I wouldn't be writing this column. I extend my sincere gratitude to this superb lifesaving institution and to my doctors. They and the entire medical staff provided me with the opportunity to continue enjoying life. Life is a gift from God and through his mercy and the talents of these many wonderful people, I live to enjoy another day. Now with my heart being physically touched, I look forward to any and all future blessings, and I will do so with continuing gratitude. I am blessed to have a wonderful and loving family. I am also thankful that I live in a country where I am free— free to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I am also thankful how one very special kind heart touched my heart emotionally. When my wife Rita and I arrived at the hospital, our first stop was admissions. There, we were greeted by a lovely, young lady by the name of Direlyd Roman, also known as Dee. I was nervous about my pending surgery. Dee immediately picked up on it and through her kind and gentle manner, set my mind at ease. While filling out the necessary paperwork, the three of us chatted jovially. I recall asking Dee if I could have the honeymoon suite for my room, and she commented she'd check on it. We then agreed chocolate mints would be placed on my pillow when I arrived at my room. We added candlelight and perhaps even a bottle of wine. I recall Dee asking me if I would prefer red or white. In unison, both Rita and I responded, "Red." Finishing up with admissions, we left the area, and while waiting to be called for surgery, both Rita and I commented on what a pleasant experience that was.

After my surgery, I was wheeled to my room. Upon my arrival I certainly did not give a thought to the room not being the honeymoon suite. I was just grateful I had survived the surgery and my room was furnished with all the necessary medical equipment and staffed by skilled and professional nurses, whom, by the way, I call "Angels of Mercy." The following morning I, with the aid of my nurse, went for a walk down the corridors of the hospital. After returning to my room, sitting by my bed was a basket filled with chocolate mints, a scented candle, a bottle of red wine, a cute little hand-crafted reindeer and some Mary Kay lotion. Affixed to the top of the basket was a note that read, "Wishing you a speedy recovery!!! Enjoy 😊. Below was written, "Dee from Admissions."

Such an act of altruism, and especially from a complete stranger, immediately touched my heart emotionally. Choked up and with misty eyes, I explained to my nurse the meaning of the gift and from whom it came. We both agreed, Dee is a wonderful person.

For the balance of the day, whenever anyone came to my room, I excitedly pointed out the gift and shared this beautiful story.

My release from the hospital occurred during business hours. As Rita and I were about to exit the hospital, we stopped by admissions. Dee was at her desk. While holding back my tears, I told her what a beautiful person she was and thanked her for what she had done. I wanted her to know how deeply she had touched my heart. I then asked her if it would be alright if I could give her a hug and she agreed.

As Rita and I left the hospital, I felt joy in my heart even though my sutures were sending a different message. While returning to our car, I thanked God for all my blessings, and Dee was one of them.

I hope you and yours had a blessed Thanksgiving. I certainly did.