



Christian County Master Gardeners Across the Garden Gate



Volume 3 Issue 2 March and April 2007

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Get ready...Get set.... Almost time to get serious about “digging in the dirt”.

I hope you all have your gardens cleaned up and your plans are all in place for the spring planting. I am happy to say that our CCMG garden plot plans are in place, and our volunteers are ready to go. Also the plans

for our annual plant sale are taking shape under the direction of Danny Self, and I am predicting a very successful event.

Our next meeting is April 19, 2007. See you all there, and **don't forget your name badge.**

Chris Harstick

President, CCMG

PLANT SALE REMINDER

It's time to get your plants potted for our second annual plant sale which is April 21, 2007. The committee will have another meeting on March 29, at 7:00 P.M. at OTC. I encourage everyone to come and share in the planning and help make our sale a successful event. If you have not signed-up for some of the “duties” yet, please call or email me. There are lots of opportunities, and you will enjoy the sale more by knowing you took part.

We hope to have a great selection of plants again this year. Chances are if you have a favorite plant, someone else will like it as well. So, share the joy and start potting!

Danny Self, Chairman

Plant Sale Committee

743-4914

danbarbaraself@juno.com

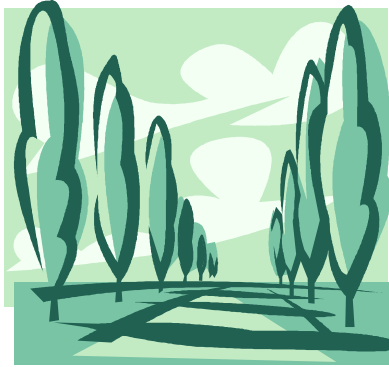


TREES

Imagine, if you can, what if there were no hypothetical situations. My wife keeps telling me that even though I'm a good gardener, deep down what I really want is instant gratification, and the garden takes too long to do that. While I have your attention, I wish to comment on Gandhi's assertion that "There is more to life than increasing its speed." Well it's pretty clear that he has never been on I-44 on a weekend. Now that I have that off my mind I'll just sit here and watch the paint dry until I get another wild hair.

Here is another thought off the deep end. The next time you are out

raking up the gum balls from under your sweet-gum trees and those despairing thoughts about that tree keep popping up, just stop, take a break, wipe the sweat from your brow and remember....



One acre of trees supplies 4 tons of oxygen a year-enough to support 18 people, while using up about 2.6 tons of carbon dioxide. That same acre, according to Doug Powell,

a U.S. Forest Service researcher, cleans about 13 tons of dust and gases annually from the surrounding environment. One acre of beech or maple trees can give off 8,000 gallons of water that is aspirated into the earth's atmosphere during a single growing season.

This makes me wonder what it would have been like to take a walk through the Ozark woods a hundred years ago.

(The statistics quoted were from a clipping I ran across, "Trees: Nature's Air Conditioning and Humidifier".)

Joe Kleiber

AND THE ANSWER IS...

My question about storm-damaged trees directed to the Arbor Day Society was answered in late January. Robert Smith of the National Arbor Day Foundation emailed a long response to my query about which trees to plant in our areas to replace those we lost. To summarize, he listed the following as the most resistant to ice storm damage: American Sweet Gum, Bald Cypress, Black Walnut, Blue Beech, Catalpa, Eastern Hemlock, Ginkgo, Ironwood, Kentucky Coffee Tree, Little Leaf Linden, Norway Maple, Silver Linden, Swamp White Oak, and White Oak.

He also suggested to plant a diversity of trees, plant trees in groups, and prune properly.
Barbara Self

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 31 Spring Horticulture Seminar, State Fruit Experiment Station, Mtn. Grove, MO. 9:30 to noon. Rain Gardens and Water Gardens. Free
- April 7 Naturescaping Symposium. 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Four sessions: Natives, Attracting Wildlife, Rain Barrels, Rain Garden Construction. Plants for sale. Springfield Nature Center.
- April 13-15 Bloom 'n' Garden Expo. Franklin, Tennessee. Workshops, speakers, 200+vendors.
- April 14 Native Plant Sale. 9:00 A.M. to noon. Bradford Research and Extension Center, Columbia, MO. Call Thresa Chism or Tim Reinbott, 573-884-7945 or <http://aes.missouri.edu/bradford/index.stm>
Plant sales and planned activities.
- April 21 Christian County Master Gardener second annual plant sale. 8:00 until all items sold. Help out on Friday and Saturday. Call Dan Self, 743-4914
- April 28 Springfield/Greene County Master Gardener Sale. 7:30 A.M. Nathanael Greene Park.
- May 2-5 International Master Gardener Conference. Little Rock, Arkansas
- Sept. 7-9 Thirteenth Annual Master Gardener State Conference. Kirksville, MO

Barbara Self

GARDENING TIPS FOR MARCH AND APRIL

Do you have time for this? For a 20x50 food garden, plan to spend at least two hours per week, not including harvesting and planting.

When danger of frost is past, plant tomato, eggplant, pepper, and melons.

Don't get too anxious and plow your garden while it is wet. Make sure soil is dry enough to crumble in your hand, not mold together like clay.

Virginia Extension cautions not to add lime to area for potatoes. Lower pH helps control scab.

If garden space is at a premium, use containers for many vegetables. Use barrels, window boxes, cut-off milk jugs, anything with good drainage, that is deep enough to support the plant.

Minimum depths:

4 inches-lettuce, radishes, beets, low-growing herbs

6 inches-chard, turnips, short-rooted carrots

8 inches-eggplant, peppers, bush cucumbers

10 inches-cauliflower, broccoli

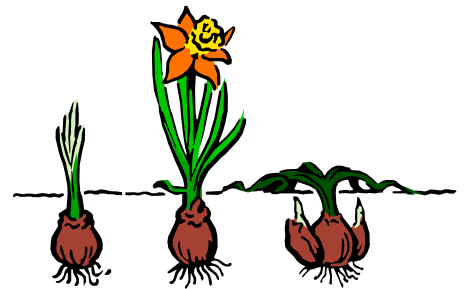
12 inches-tomatoes, long-rooted carrots.

Apply sulfur to the soils around acid-loving plants such as azaleas and rhododendrons.

Mow lawns low to remove old growth before new begins. Then mow 3" high thereafter.

Over-seed thin spots and bare patches in the lawn.

Barbara Self



**SOMETHING
SIMPLE**

Divide fall-blooming plants in the spring like mums, shasta daisy, yarrow, and asters.

Divide spring blooming plants in the fall.

Fertilize bulbs as foliage pokes through the ground when roots are most active, **NOT** until or after flowering. Bone meal is the best choice. Application is 2 lb. per 100 sq. ft. or 1 teaspoon per sq. ft.

Barbara Self

Source: Savvy Gardener

**LUCK IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN
PREPARATION MEETS OPPORTUNITY**

Unknown

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MORE THINGS I'VE LEARNED

During the summer we try to catch and save all the rain water we can in five-gallon buckets. Our biggest problem (other than lack of rain) was keeping the mosquitoes from laying eggs in them. I solved this problem by popping a shower cap over each bucket. No more mosquitoes. However....if you happen to get busy, then notice "squiggles" in your buckets, a scant teaspoon of liquid spectracide or sevin stops them cold.

I just love the old-fashioned kind of petunias. You can't buy their fragrance. But I always hated their deadheading every few days. One day my hands were wet and the job was so much easier. So just dip your pinkies in water for easier deadheading. Petunia will come back in pots or tubs if you just fold the old vines up into the pot's surface and cover with straw. In April uncover the pots and be patient. By mid-May they will be popping up. Just be ready to run down people to give them to.

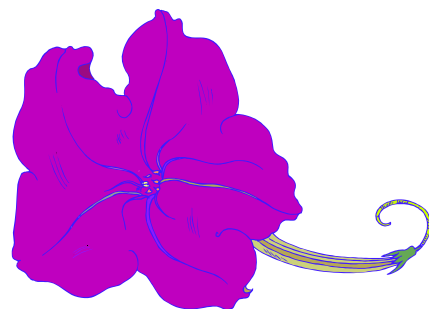
For extra large pots or tubs, fill the pot half full of crumbled Styrofoam or crumpled pop cans. Cover with a thick mat of newspaper, then add dirt and plants. Just remember they will need to be watered more often, but they sure are easier to move around.

Sandy Weter

ODE TO A BRADFORD PEAR

You seduced me
With your svelte form
And early white buds of spring.
You teased me.
Yes, you, China doll.
Your resistance to insects and infections.
The eagerness of your growing stature.
Your tolerance to sun or shade,
Your adaptability to growing conditions and pollution.
Just when my heart was overflowing with love and pride-
Cruelty struck.
The weakness in your soul ripped us apart as your limbs
lay asunder.
The showiness of your branches belied the frailty beneath.

Written by Barbara Self and printed in Headliner News



Rain Barrel Follow-Up

Sold out! All gone! That is the report from James River Basin Partnership. Tiffany Frey of JRBP said that all the rain barrels were sold by Saturday of the recent Lawn and Garden Show. More have been ordered, she says.

To check on availability, visit www.springfieldmogov.org/stormwater/rain or call 864-1901.

Opportunity

The **ICE STORM** in the Ozarks may have created opportunity.

Each of us may consider the opportunity to recycle yard waste. To prepare for this opportunity you may want to consider composting.

A very optimal situation may have been created to replace lost trees and plants. Preparation for this opportunity has many op-

tions including the consideration to Grow Native.

Cleaning up the yard (composting), replacing trees and plants (Grow Native) leads to the opportunity to potentially help the yard. We grow grass in soil not dirt. Dirt is something you sweep or dust up. Soil is what we require for plants and grass. Prepare by obtaining a soil test. What is the pH in your

soil? Some people are lucky and have a pH of 6.7 to grow their grass. One can prepare the soil to obtain the lucky number for grass and or obtain the lucky numbers for other plants.

Below is a selected listing of reference guides to assist in the opportunity for each of us to prepare our area of the Ozarks.

Reference Guide: MU GUIDES PUBLISHED BY MU EXTENSION, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI COLUMBIA. You may also visit <http://extension.missouri.edu> or contact the nearest County Extension Center.

Making and Using Compost: MU Guide G6956 and G6958.

Grass Clippings, Compost and Mulch: Questions and Answers. MU Guide G6958.

Tree Placement on Home Grounds: MU Guide G6900.

How to Plant a Tree: MU Guide 6850.

Selecting Landscape Plants: Shade Trees: MU Guide G6800.

Selecting Landscape Plants: Deciduous Shrubs: MU Guide G6830.

Soil Testing for Lawns: MU Guide G6954.

Lawn Establishment and Renovation: MU Guide G6700.

Home Lawn Watering Guide: MU Guide G6720.

“GOOD LUCK”

Larry Whitely



The Miracle of Nature's Magic



It really is quite astonishing how brilliant we humans think we are.

For instance, I feel especially proud when I see the results of the numerous jonquil bulbs I've planted, or the growth of the trees and shrubs I've pruned.

Yet it never ceases to amaze me how nature seems to take care of itself without our help. Seasons come and go with regularity, always providing efficient, dependable cycles.



No one sets an alarm clock to coax a flower to "wake up" in the early spring. No one hands a bird a blueprint with instructions on building a nest.

I have observed robins gathering twigs and straw to craft a fortress strong enough to protect delicate eggs from heavy winds.

I have watched spiders fashion intricate webs, the results often resembling a fine piece of tatting.

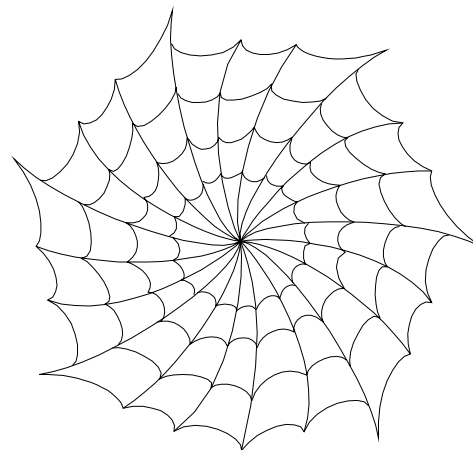
And have you ever witnessed a caterpillar designing a delicate chrysalis? Its paper-thin covering will soon house the caterpillar's amazing transformation into a beautiful creature.



Or how about watching a squirrel find hiding place after hiding place where it has stashed acorns for winter nourishment? They don't need a map.

We often assume we are the superior species. Yet how surprising is it that small creatures-some with no hands and tiny brains-possess enough skill and determination to match some of our greatest endeavors?

As with the wonder of creation and its many mysteries, there is one constant that reminds us we're not as smart as we think we are--the miracle of nature's magic.



Donna Singleton

from *Birds & Blooms* magazine

Missouri Gravel Bed

I constructed the Missouri Gravel Bed in December, 2005. This bed was developed by Chris Starbuck of University of Missouri Extension. Mine is still in good shape.

The base is constructed of pea gravel (no larger than one half inch), ten percent washed sand (passing a # ten screen), and twenty percent calcined clay (kitty litter or oil dry). The addition of clay into the sand/gravel mix greatly reduces the irrigation requirements and eliminates the need of a re-circulating system.

The hardest part of this whole project was the pea gravel. A lot of dirt had to be washed away. If the dirt was left in, you would have a simple adobe mix. If it ever dried out, it would be a worthless pile of clods.

Here are the calculations for the bed I constructed.:

Proposed bed 120" long, 45" wide, and 15" deep=Total fill capacity of 1.736 cu. yards.

2000 lbs. pea gravel=1.85 cu. yards- washed.

400 lbs. calcined clay=.4 cu. yards or 3.6 cu. ft.

200 lbs. builders sand=.2 cu. yards or 1.8 cu. ft.

The Missouri Gravel Bed was developed as a technique to facilitate the handling of bare root nursery stock.

Joe Kleiber

Healthy Gardening Tips

- ◆ Protect your joints by doing some stretching/bending exercises before you start gardening. Use tools with padded handles. If you are doing much kneeling, wear knee pads. Save your back by squatting before lifting heavy objects. Don't lean to lift.
- ◆ Wear sunscreen with at least SPF30. Wear protective glasses even on cloudy days. Hats with wide brims are great and wear gloves, too.
- ◆ Plan smart. Start small with a garden close to a water supply. Use a wheeled cart for hauling. Mulching saves watering and protects tender plants.
- ◆ Be kind to yourself. Stop before exhaustion. Drink plenty of fluids. Take frequent rest periods. If it doesn't get done, there's always tomorrow.

Jan Hoover

Web Watch

[Highcountrygardens.com](http://www.highcountrygardens.com) has an extensive list of plants resistant to deer and another list specifically resistant to rabbits.

From the Arbor Day Foundation on protection of trees:

<http://www.righttreerightplace.com/storm/saved.asp>

<http://www.righttreerightplace.com/storm/firstaid.asp>.

<http://www.righttreerightplace.com/storm/futuredamage.asp>

*OUR APRIL MEETING
WILL BE HELD AT
6:30 AT THE RICH-
WOOD VALLEY OTC
CAMPUS ON HWY. 14
BETWEEN NIXA AND OZARK.*

