



Through the Vine

A Quarterly Newsletter of the OSU Extension Fairfield County Master Gardeners

Spring 2018

Mission: To make a difference in the community in which you live through gardening education and knowledge.

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The Myth of Cloroxed Clippers

This article was written by Linda Chalker-Scott, Ph.D., Extension Horticulturist and Associate Professor, Puyallup Research and Extension Center, Washington State University, <https://puyallup.wsu.edu/lcs/>

"A bleach solution is the best choice for disinfecting pruning wounds and tools."

The Myth

Anyone who has made an investment in top-quality pruning tools probably cleans and maintains them on a regular basis. But would you clean them every day - maybe several times? If you are worried about potentially transmitting plant diseases such as fire blight, Dutch elm disease, and sudden oak death, then such a cleaning regimen would be crucial. Furthermore, you might be inspired to disinfect the pruning wounds, especially those made on diseased trees and shrubs. The question is - what to use as your disinfectant?

Nearly all of the popular web sites with advice regarding tool disinfection say something like this: "...sterilize pruning tools using a solution of 1½ cups of liquid chlorine bleach in 2 gallons of water. After each cut, dip the pruner or saw into this solution before starting the next cut." This advice is repeated on thousands of web

pages, including .edu sites. Is this the best choice?



The Reality

A few years ago I wrote a fact sheet on when to disinfect pruning tools (available on my web page at <http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/~Linda%20Chalker-Scott/Fact%20sheets.html>), so I will not cover that material for this discussion. We'll assume you have already established a legitimate need to disinfect your tools and focus on choice of disinfectant materials.

Before disinfection, tools should be free of dirt and debris so the disinfecting solution can reach every cutting surface. Increment borers should be treated in the same manner. Disinfectant solution can be carried into the field in a tightly sealed plastic bottle; ideally this bottle should be wide enough so that tools can be dipped directly into it. If this is not feasible, solution can be applied with a clean cloth or poured over the tool held over a bucket. Disinfecting solutions should not be allowed to contaminate the soil.

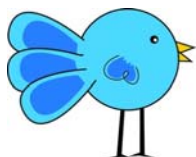
Pruning tools that are regularly disinfected need to be kept in top condition. The older the blades, the

Article continued on page 4.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



CONNIE'S CORNER

Dear Master Gardeners,

Welcome 2018!! This is going to be our best year yet!! We have endless *opportunities* to share our knowledge and experiences!!

Opportunities at the new AHA Children's Museum will become a reality as the opening is now scheduled for April, 2018. **THE LATEST UPDATE as of 3/12/18 - Wendy was able to find the additional \$20,000 needed for the Vegetable Garden.** Direct from Wendy's Email: "Master Gardeners need to get that strip by the building planned and planted first and then turn them loose on the veggie garden ASAP. I will have a timeline from my landscape team soon. My only request is sunflowers in that strip, but anything else is your call. We will also have some small theme areas for the butterfly lovers in the group and maybe a fairy garden. Again, they can plan and plant those. Then, next year, 2019 we start thinking about creating theme and storybook gardens on the other side of the playscape." Gina Sutphin (ginasutphin@yahoo.com) is collecting names of MGVs interested in assisting with the AHA! Project. Planning for MGVs will begin following the DIG.

Also in April we will have the *opportunity* to reach many gardeners at our Dig Into Gardening Educational Event slated for April 28 at Christ United Methodist Church in Baltimore. This is a great way for you to reach your give back volunteer hours (20 per year) and continuing education hours (10 per year). Mark your calendar now, plan to get involved ... spend a day of learning and volunteering!

And the final *opportunity* will be a series of garden related programs centered at the Pickerington Community Gardens thanks to MGV Keith Eichhorn. We will be working on a monthly series of garden related programs with the Pickerington Parks and Recreation Department. Details are just now being confirmed but we will be given the opportunity to some "in the garden" classes in mid-summer. This is a great *opportunity* to reach out to a new community of gardeners!!

Finally, congratulations to 2017 Master Gardener Trainees who have completed their 50 hours of Volunteer Service to the Master Gardener Program. As of December 13, 2017 Mary Carter has given back 53.5 hours, Keith Eichhorn- 63 hours, D.J. Hoermele - 54.75 hours and Edna Wilson -64.40 hours. Several other members of the Class of '17 are very close to completing the 50 hour give back commitment as well. Congratulations, all!!

2018 will definitely be a year of fun times and endless *opportunities*. Make plans to be involved!!

Connie Smith
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DIG 2018 is filling up!

Information about the DIG registration was available earlier in March and we already have over 90 people registered! If you are interested in attending or know of someone else who is interested, you can find the DIG registration form on the last page of the newsletter. **Register early!!**

A new project starts...

Our partnership with the Aha Children's Museum is going to be a great project for this year and years to come! Read Connie's Corner (above) for the latest updates. If you are interested in being involved, MGV Gina Sutphin is gathering names. Contact Gina at ginasutphin@yahoo.com. **For your information, a diagram of the Nature Playscape is included at the end of the newsletter.**

YOUR Newsletter is Award Winning!

Congratulations to all of those who have contributed articles for the *Through the Vine* Master Gardener Newsletter over the years. The newsletter received first place in the Creative Works and Media Competition Team Newsletter category at the OSU Extension Annual Conference in late January. This award is given by the Joint Council of Extension Professionals. The Newsletter was evaluated on the use of branding, content and also for



engaging individuals across the life span. I am absolutely thrilled that the Master Gardener Newsletter is a great tool for many of you to share your knowledge, expertise and passion!! Congratulations Kelley and all who take time to contribute to the *Through the Vine* Master Gardener Newsletter. *Connie Smith*



Don't Forget to Recertify!

Don't forget to recertify as a Master Gardener Volunteer for 2018!! In the online Volunteer Management System (VMS), please click on the Complete Documents button (see screen shot below—this is what you will see in VMS) and sign in as seeking recertification even if you did not complete your hours. **Everyone needs to recertify!!** If you have questions or concerns, contact Connie at smith.3204@osu.edu.

IT IS TIME TO RECERTIFY AS AN OSUE MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SIMPLE ONLINE PROCESS TO UPDATE YOUR MGV STATUS.

[PLEASE COMPLETE THE DOCUMENTS NOW](#)

From Your Newsletter Editor

Like the seasons and our gardens, things change. When I “graduated” as an MGV in 2009, the newsletter was one of the first projects I helped start again. After more than seven years as MGV editor, I am passing the editor’s pen to Lisa Stoklosa (MGV 2017). I am sure Lisa will continue to craft a useful and engaging *Through the Vine* newsletter. Lisa can be reached at lmstoklos@gmail.com.

Thank you to all those who have contributed articles and creative pieces over the years, and to those who have shared affirming support. The newsletter is a product of your creativity. I look forward to working with you on other MGV projects as well as contributing garden writing pieces to the newsletter and the new blog. See you around the garden!

Kelley Scott (MGV 2009)

Cloroxed Clippers (cont'd from page 1)

more pitted they become; these pits can harbor microbes that are unaffected by quick sterilization. This is especially true of bacteria associated with active cankers; the sticky matrix is often difficult to remove from pruner surfaces. One study found that disinfectant solutions would not remove bacterial slime from the surface of cutting tools, especially if the tool surface was pitted.

I do not recommend the use of chlorine bleach for disinfectant use in the field for a variety of scientific and practical reasons:

- 1) Tool damage: As the MSDS (material safety data sheet) states for Clorox as well as other brands of bleach, “prolonged contact with metal may cause pitting or discoloration.” Indeed, this includes your pruning tools. Bleach is an oxidizing agent, which means it is corrosive. You don’t find bleach for sale in unlined metal containers, and there’s a reason for that.
- 2) Clothing damage: It’s pretty self-evident that bleach will, well, bleach your clothing. Any spills in the field are impossible to treat unless you can immerse the affected material immediately. It probably is not a smart idea to carry a bottle of bleach in your pocket. Cloths used to wipe your tools down after treatment disintegrate quickly and have to be replaced continuously.
- 3) Human health damage: Chlorine bleach (like Clorox) is listed as an acute and chronic health hazard. In addition to the damage it can do to your clothing and tools, contact with bleach will irritate your skin and your nose, throat and lungs if vapors are inhaled. Medical conditions such as asthma, chronic bronchitis and obstructive lung disease are aggravated by exposure to chlorine bleach. Though you would most likely be in a well-ventilated area while using bleach, to minimize health risk you are also supposed to wear impervious gloves and safety glasses. This means more equipment to carry.
- 4) Plant health damage: Bleach is extremely phytotoxic, more so than any of the other

commonly used disinfectants. Any bleach left on your pruning tools will damage the tissue of the next cut. Likewise, those pruners sold with reservoirs that release disinfectant as they cut should never be used.

Other disinfectant treatments have included:

Alcohol dips (ethanol or isopropyl alcohol): Alcohols are readily available and moderately safe and effective to use. They can be expensive, however.

Alcohol dips + flaming: Though this is standard procedure for tissue culture, it’s not practical for field use.

Copper compounds (copper oxide, Bordeaux mixture): These are powerful fungicides and readily available. However, they probably are not the most environmentally friendly choice. There has not been a great deal of research on their effectiveness as pruning tool disinfectants.

Formalin (HCHO): It’s used in embalming fluid and readily penetrates skin. Not a good choice.

Household cleaners (Listerine, Lysol, Pine-Sol): Readily available, moderately safe, can be extremely effective. Lysol (the original, phenol-based material) in particular was found to be least corrosive to pruning tools. This is my personal choice.

Trisodium phosphate (Na₃PO₄): Like bleach, this compound is corrosive and probably not a good choice for field work.

Finally, disinfectants should never be applied to pruning wounds, though old literature from the 1930’s and 1940’s often recommended this practice. This just adds insult to injury, making it more difficult for the plant to treat the wound with its own arsenal of disinfectants. Indeed, more recent research has established that pruning wounds treated with ethanol and other disinfectants had more cambial necrosis and wood discoloration than tissues left alone. Furthermore, treated wounds were inhibited from forming the

Article continued on page 5.

Cloroxed Clippers (cont'd from page 4)

callus tissue that protects damaged tissue. The only exception to this may be in treating cut stumps where regrowth is desired; in such cases sterilizing this broad, flat surface may prevent pathogen infection.

The Bottom Line

- ◆ Choose a disinfectant that is effective, readily available and affordable, relatively safe to handle, and won't harm your tools or clothing. Many household cleaners fit this description.
- ◆ Be sure to clean tools of dirt, debris, etc. before disinfecting.
- ◆ After dipping your pruning tools, be sure to wipe away excess disinfectant to avoid injuring the next plant.
- ◆ A longer soaking may be needed for pruning surfaces that are not smooth.
- ◆ Like pruners, increment borers should always be sterilized before and after use.
- ◆ Never use disinfectants on pruning wounds; they are phytotoxic and cause more harm than good.

For more information, please visit Dr. Chalker-Scott's web page at <http://www.theinformedgardener.com>.



RIPE FOR THE PICKING

Visit This Gardening Blog Site!

If you are looking for a new gardening resource, read on for a recommendation from a fellow MG...

Debbie Wren (MGV 2005) recommends a gardening blog called *Susan's in the Garden*, which Debbie finds to be a really informative site. Susan posts great pictures every day on Facebook, as well. Susan Mulvihill is an MG from Spokane, Washington and also writes a Sunday garden column for the *Spokesman-Review*.

Earlier in the year, Susan posted questions about the bulbs most of us know as Amaryllis...and their real story. Aren't you curious to know more?

I challenge you to learn this fun fact and explore the blog site! Go to *Susan's in the Garden* at <https://www.susansinthegarden.com/2018/01/a-maryllis-vs-hippeastrum/>.



Time for Your Spring

by Esther Messerknecht (MG 1996)

There is a time for everything a season for Spring
Every activity under the sun from cold Winter breeze
Time for healing in life every season reason to rejoice

The good earth time for planting MG
Dig Into Gardening becomes educational your worth
Ground dormant now bulbs burst forth
Beauty awaits our pleasure time for you to emerge
from your cocoon

(Written March 5, 2018)

Tulpenmanie (Tulip Mania)

by Carol Schleich, Master Gardener 2013

Although many of us plant tulip bulbs each fall and eagerly await their spring arrival, it is doubtful that the world will ever again experience tulip mania, a period in the Dutch Golden Age which is the first speculative economic bubble of record. In 1637 at the height of tulip mania some single bulbs sold for more than ten times the annual income of a skilled worker.

According to *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, by British journalist Charles Mackay, at one point 12 acres of land were offered for a Semper Augustus bulb. Many investors were ruined by the subsequent and inevitable fall in prices, causing Dutch commerce to suffer a severe shock. Some modern scholars argue that not enough price data is available to prove that a tulip bulb bubble indeed occurred. (I like to think that it did. Legends are fun.)

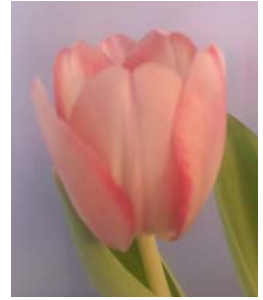
Another of Mackay's anecdotes recounted a sailor who mistook a tulip bulb for an onion. (Who eats a whole onion?). The merchant chased the sailor to find him "eating a breakfast whose cost might have regaled a whole ship's crew for a twelvemonth". The sailor was jailed.

A *Satire of Tulip Mania* by Jan Brueghel the Younger depicts speculators as brainless monkeys wearing upper-class clothing. While one monkey urinates on the previously valuable plants, others appear in debtor's court and one is carried to the grave.

The tulip was unique at that time, with a saturated intense petal color unlike any other plant. The appearance of the nonpareil tulip coincides with the rise of newly independent Holland's trade fortunes where one voyage to the East Indies could yield profits of 400%.

Now luxury items, the glut of varieties were classified in groups: the single-hued tulips of red, yellow, or white were known as Couleren; the multicolored white streaks on a red or pink background, Rosen; white streaks on purple, Violetten; and the rarest of all, the

Bizarden (Bizarres), with yellow or white streaks on a red, brown or purple background. The multicolor spectacular intricate lines and vivid flame-like streaks made them highly popular. This effect is due to the bulbs being infected with a tulip-specific mosaic virus, known as the "Tulip breaking virus", so called because it "breaks" the one petal color into two or more. While the Bizarden might have been rare and therefore even more valuable than the others, their clashing-muddy colors would not appeal to me. But wouldn't a pot of Violetten bring cheer on a cloudy winter day?



Although purchases occurred during the plants' dormant phase from June to September, during the rest of the year tulip traders signed notarized contracts to buy the bulbs at the end of the season. Short selling was banned in 1610 and strengthened in 1621, 1630, and 1636. By 1636 the tulip bulb became the fourth leading export product of the Netherlands, after gin, herrings and cheese. Many men made and lost fortunes overnight.

Tulip mania reached its peak during the winter of 1636–37, with some bulbs purportedly changing hands ten times in a day. However, in February 1637 prices collapsed abruptly and the trade of tulips ground to a halt. The debacle began when buyers did not show up at a routine bulb auction, perhaps because the area was then at the height of a bubonic plague outbreak.

With the demand for tulips destroyed, prices plummeted and the speculative bubble burst. Some were left holding contracts to purchase tulips at prices now ten times greater than those on the open market, while others found themselves in possession of bulbs now worth a fraction of their purchase price.

Since I've never been a high roller, I'm grateful to be able to buy a few packs of these gorgeous bulbs each year.

Hoop Gardening or What One Can Learn by Accident

by *Bruce Garrett, Master Gardener 2015*



First let me say, the proper phrasing is 'BY ACCIDENT' not 'on accident' as I hear more and more, mostly young folks, say. On purpose, by accident. Pet peeve out of the way.

Sometimes it's what you learn when you least expect it that makes the biggest impacts on, in this case, my gardening. At the MGV classes last spring I had the opportunity to sit next to a Pickaway MGV and among other things, we talked about the hoop gardening he was doing. A light went on in my head and I realized that what he was telling me could help my garden and my relationship with my wife. First the backstory.

It is sort of like the movie "Ground Hogs Day" except instead of each day repeating itself, my situation is one day each year repeating itself. It usually happens on a mild, sunny March day as Lola and I are enjoying the weather and the conversation turns to the garden. Now, I already have numerous plants growing under lights but she rarely goes downstairs where I have them so she asks, "What are you planning for the garden this year?"

I take the bait like a hungry tuna. "Oh, the usual." Then I list the types of tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, etc. that I have started. Then I say the "B" word.

"I think I'll put some beans in that bed over there."

Then I smile inwardly because she took the bait, too. "Beans!?" This begins the story of a poor country girl forced to help pick and can truck loads of beans on her Dad's hundred acre (50 foot by 50 foot garden) bean farm. I get to hear the story of how she was sick of beans, dusting them, picking bugs, then picking the beans, cutting out the bad spots, canning them. In my mind, the old slave song, "Nobody knows the troubles I've known," plays but I dare not even whistle the tune.

Actually, when her story is boiled down, it is the dusting, picking off bugs and cutting out bad spots that she complains about most. Enter Loren from Pickaway MGV. He tells me about how he used garden cloth covered hoops to cover his beans to

keep bugs off. We talk about what he uses for hoops and where he gets the garden cloth.

I start scrounging in my barn and come across some 1/2" PEX plastic tubing left over from plumbing our house and this became the perfect hoops. I then used garden cloth from Johnny's (Loren's recommendation and the best price I could find). After measuring and estimating the best height for the hoops, I cut sections of PEX, made the hoops and pushed the ends into the dirt along the sides of the raised beds. I placed the hoops 3-4 feet apart and then tied a 1" ridged plastic pipe along the top to help support the cloth and keep the hoops upright. I did this on beds for my beans, cabbage and brussel sprouts. Note: I discovered that sprouts need much higher hoops. First I planted the cabbage and sprouts and then covered the hoops with the cloth, using some spare bricks to hold the cloth down along the edges. Later I planted the beans and did the same.

The results were better than I expected. I discovered through reading that I did not have to uncover the beds for pollination. The cloth allows water through so I did not have to uncover to water. I did have to uncover every couple of weeks to weed. AND NO BUGS. No little white cabbage butterflies, no bean beetles. No worms in the cabbage. No dusting. No blemishes on the beans.

Ground hogs day will not occur this year as Lola wants me to plant more beans. I didn't get as many last year as I would have liked because our daughter and her kids liked them too (we had beans with Klondike Gold potatoes and ham when they visited) so they picked some/lots to take home. The beans did so well that after I picked in July I replanted and got quite a few in October from the same bed.

Loren also used hoop gardening to start his peppers and tomatoes earlier. This sounds like a good idea as our fall beans lasted through several frosts with the cover. Give it a try. Good bug control, good season extender, and, at least for me, good for family relations.

Adding Water to Your Garden

by *Dianna Wears, Master Gardener 2011*

Many people find the sound of tinkling, splashing water relaxing. What better way to combine a water feature with your love of gardening?

I have been a water gardener for over 30 years now. You can start out small and expand to a larger sized water garden, as I have, or you can stay small. My first water garden was in a half whiskey barrel. We lined it with a package of the cellophane plastic winter insulation that you shrink in place with a hair dryer. It was easily at hand at the time and it served the purpose for a year or two.



After choosing a site that received 6-8 hours of direct sun, the whiskey barrel was filled with water. I went to a local store and purchased a tropical water lily, a blue dauben. I also purchased a tropical umbrella plant and some floating water lettuce. The lily and umbrella plants were set on bricks in the water to adjust them to their proper height requirement, and the water lettuce was floated. I purchased goldfish, food and a couple of snails and added them to the water.

Things went well until the summer got hot and with the whiskey barrel sitting on the edge of the concrete driveway, the water really heated up. I found the fish gasping for air at the top of the water. I had an old aquarium pump and tubing, so I used that to add oxygen to the water until I bought an actual submersible pump. I also did a partial water change by running the water hose into the whisky barrel adding cooler water.

When fall came, I moved the fish indoors to an aquarium; the water lily in its pot to the unheated garage and tried to winter over the water lettuce in the aquarium. I found that the water lettuce got mushy and eventually died. I don't remember what I did with the umbrella plant.

The next spring, all went back outside. I purchased new water lettuce and an umbrella plant. Eventually

I found and purchased a black plastic liner for the whiskey barrel that I still use.

The science behind the setup is that water lilies need at least 6 hours of direct sunlight to bloom. The umbrella plant provided a taller point of interest in the pot and the floating water lettuce helped to shade the water both to help keep the water temperature down and to prevent algae growth. The fish will eat mosquito larvae and will trim the roots of the water lettuce. The snails are the sanitation crew.

Once set up, maintenance was minimal - deadheading spent lily blooms and dying leaves, light feeding of the fish until the water temperature reached 80 degrees and adding a fertilizer tablet monthly or so the lily and umbrella plant. On occasion, the snails climbed up the stalk of the umbrella plant and laid eggs, but they never hatched.

Potting medium for water plants must be heavy clay. Potting soil will only float and foul the water. A layer of gravel over the soil will help to keep the fish from digging into the soil. Over the years, I have tried other potting mediums, but have had little success. I tried using clumped leaves; they rotted and fouled the water. I tried sand, which worked fine, except that it would get into my pumps and ruin them. I now use straight gravel. There are special containers for water plants, but they are not necessary. I use 1 gallon plastic ice cream buckets. They are easy to obtain and cheap to replace.

I started water gardening with a half whiskey barrel, but you could use any container that would hold water. I would recommend that it hold at least 20 gallons, which is what the half whiskey barrel holds.



While I still have a whiskey barrel sized terra cotta planter that I use for a water garden in front of my house, I have progressed to larger, ornamental ponds. I will tell you those stories another time. Happy water gardening!

Fear the Pesticide, Not the Pest?

by *Carol Schleich, Master Gardener 2013*

Since there are two sides to every controversy (or there is nothing controversial to argue about), I decided to do a little research about the use/necessity/dangers/benefits of chemicals for gardening and farming. While conceding that organic farming practices will not feed our overly populated planet, I confess to being strongly in favor of natural methods in home gardening.

My father sprayed DDT on our garden and my mother, a believer in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, always blamed the chemicals of the day on his death (cancer). As soon as I "owned" my own tiny piece of paradise on earth, I enthusiastically joined the organic gardening revolution. To this day, my only intentional chemical purchase was one large container of brush and poison ivy killer which I considered a necessary evil. My goal is a healthy environment for my family, myself, all mankind, pets, birds, wild animals, insects and the earth itself. Although to my knowledge my body does not contain a drop of Native American blood, I share our indigenous people's reverence for all creation.

Recently someone called to warn me about yet another listeria outbreak. Since salad is not a favorite and I especially am not interested in the pre-packaged kind, it was not a concern until - wait for it - my well educated (admitted to the bar in two states) friend suggested that the produce was probably "organically grown." (She is obviously not the only person who believes chemical free gardening is unsanitary and potentially dangerous.). Her naivety can be forgiven as she is and has always been a city girl and spends little time contemplating the dangers of herbicides.

According to the National Wildlife Federation, about twenty million U.S. acres are planted as residential lawn, which consumes sixty-seven million pounds of synthetic pesticides annually, contaminating wildlife food sources.

Eliminating wildlife-harming chemical pesticides and fertilizers and employing organic gardening encourages biodiversity: Insects eat plants and birds eat insects.

Stumbling upon this information made me cringe. Neonicotinoids, commonly called "neonics", are broad-spectrum systemic insecticides. They were first introduced in the 1990s in response to the widespread resistance of pests to older products, as well as health concerns associated with them. Neonicotinoids are now the most widely-used insecticides in the world, registered for use on hundreds of field crops in over 120 countries. They are coated on seeds, sprayed on plants and injected into trees. According to a recent study neonics can be 5,000 to 10,000 times more toxic to bees than DDT, a pesticide that has been banned for agricultural use.

Research at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) has linked the use of insecticides to serious health issues in songbirds. "Studies on the risks of neonicotinoids have often focused on bees that have been experiencing population declines. However, it is not just bees that are being affected by these insecticides," said Christy Morrissey, U of S biology professor.

American Bird Conservatory reports that pesticides actually reduce agricultural yields by decimating the birds, bats, butterflies, and beneficial invertebrates that keep pests in check.

Some neonics such as imadocloprid are commonly used in treatments for pets to prevent fleas and lice. Neonics came into my life when one of my dogs "stole" and ingested a package of bacon which caused pancreatitis and required an overnight medical stay. Our veterinarian insisted that without flea control Rudi would be refused admission to the clinic while at the same assuring me the medicine was "safe" with marigolds as its

Article continued on page 11.

New to Me Garden Tool

by Carol Schleich, Master Gardener 2013

When I learned that steam weeders exist, I immediately hit a search engine to learn more, primarily price and availability. Since I do not consider chemical weed killers an option and flame frightens me, the idea of steam weeding was appealing.



Weedtechnics, headquartered in Australia, offers cost-effective hydro-thermal weed control machines used by University of Colorado - Boulder although they are more popular in Great Britain, Europe and Australia. Unfortunately,

Weedtechnics' steam weeders are manufactured for commercial use, and appear to be cost prohibitive for a backyard gardener.

Further investigation revealed a product, DynaSteam, designed for individual households and reasonably priced (\$200 to \$400), available at Amazon. According to the instruction manual, a shot of steam lasting 5 to 10 seconds is sufficient to treat each weed and for best results use when the weather is sunny and the soil is dry.

There are YouTube videos demonstrating using Shark steam cleaners to kill weeds in small areas but that doesn't meet my needs, not to mention it's beyond my meager to non-existent mechanical abilities.

Steam weeding is safe and efficient:

- ◆ Steam kills both plants and seeds;
- ◆ Steam doesn't damage soil;
- ◆ Plants decomposing into the soil releases mineral nutrients adding carbon and nitrogen to the soil;
- ◆ Ordinary tap water is heated to 300 degrees;
- ◆ Steam weeding is relatively easy. Simply position the steam wand 1 to 2 inches from the base of the weed and move upward to the top of it, then engulf with steam;

- ◆ Super-heated steam injected below the ground kills roots;
- ◆ Weeds die within 24 hours;
- ◆ It is safe to use the area immediately after treatment.

Unfortunately, steam weeders require electricity and my problem areas are well past the reach of a 100' outdoor extension cord.

Having been married to a mad scientist for most of my adult life, I knew that a creative inventor could jury rig a steam weeder to a battery. Unfortunately, although our very own Doc Brown left two kids and two grandsons, he took his eccentric way of thinking with him and thus far, he has not figured out an escape from St. Mary's Cemetery. (Changing light bulbs can challenge me, so Ms. Fix It I am not and an image of blowing up my car battery or even my car exploding made me realize this needed to be carefully thought out.)

When I asked a younger technical thinker if it would be safe for me to plug a UCERAMI Power Inverter 150W DC 12V to 110V AC Outlet Car Adapter Converter into my car's cigarette lighter, he replied, "Is the wattage and voltage lower than what the inverter supplies?" and "I would think as long as it doesn't go over the output of the inverter it'd be okay." English, please! He did not offer to help.

I'm currently researching the availability of a stand alone battery similar to a UPS back-up for a computer network. However, this might not be safe in my hands. Might not?

This endless seeming winter, I had plenty of time to mull this over, even investigating and subsequently abandoning the possibility of crowdfunding to invent and produce a gas powered weeder. If going beyond my 100' heavy duty electrical cord is not possible, I can still steam weed closer to the house using DynaSteam. Most likely the entire idea will go into my Wildest Dreams file.



DESTINATION GARDENS

Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park

by *Melinda Lee Adkins, Master Gardener 2015*

Pyramid Hill is a unique outdoor museum created by Harry T. Wilks. In 1987 Mr. Wilks purchased 40 acres outside of Hamilton, Ohio and he began designing his home. The structure he proposed



was an underground home with a giant glass pyramid to allow light in the 2500 square foot living room. On the East and West side of the glass pyramid is a hallway with

skylights and additional living space. The construction began in 1990 and was completed in 1992. After the home was completed Mr. Wilks wanted to preserve the property for future generations, so he formed a non-profit organization and donated the land to it. He then began purchasing sculptures to place in the newly formed park. In 1996 Pyramid Hill had its grand opening.

Over sixty sculptures are nestled among 300 acres of woodlands, meadows, lakes and gardens and there are three ways that visitors can view the art in the park. The first way visitors can view the art is to drive their vehicle on the paved Gallery Loop Road. There are parking areas along the road so that



visitors can park their vehicle to get a closer view of the art and take pictures. The second way visitors can view the art is by walking the 3 miles of trails in the park. And the third way visitors can view the art is by art cart. Visitors can rent an art cart from the visitor's center and

travel on the paved pathways or go off the pathways to get a closer view of the sculptures.



While visiting the park stop by the Ancient Sculpture Museum to view artwork of Egyptian, Grecian, Roman and Etruscan traditions and visit the Founder's Library. The Founder's Library contains a visual history of the park. The Library walls are lined with items such as newspaper and magazine articles and pictures of Mr. Wilke's home during construction and completed. After touring the museum, relax on the overlook patio.



In addition to the sculpture park and the Ancient Sculpture Museum, Pyramid Hill provides summer programs for children and special events throughout the year. A few of these events include: the Fishing Derby; Zombie Ball; Art Fair; Holiday Lights; and Blues, Brews and BBQ. To learn more about Pyramid Hill go to their website at: <https://www.pyramidhill.org/>

Pesticides & Pests (cont'd from pg . 9)

main ingredient. I guess I should have realized how dangerous this particular flea treatment is because it is highly effective, and in fact the only thing that has ever worked for my pets. Any suggestions? I've made lemon-lime juice and water concoctions that did not repel fleas. Frequent vacuuming is part of flea control but not a stand alone solution.

Although my puppy came from a dirt poor rescue in Ross County, with no fancy pedigree, he is highly allergic to fleas. This is surprising since I've always associated allergies with frou frou fidos, not a silly guy with redbone coonhound, beagle and Tree Walker ancestry. Since there is no effective substitute, I will continue to apply flea drops between his shoulders the last day of each and every month. But now I know the truth about neonics I must ask myself: What kind of earth will I be leaving for Keith Richards?

In and Around the Garden—You Won't Want to Miss It!



Mark your calendars with these important dates and upcoming activities/events!

COMING SOON:

Friends of Wagnalls Meeting—March 24
9:30-11am. Contact Pam Jarvis.

Lawn Care 101 - March 24
Peace United Methodist Church—Diley Road

Shitake Mushroom Workshop - March 29
2:00pm—Fairfield County Agriculture Center
831 College Avenue, Lancaster, OH 43130

Vegetable Gardening Class - April 7
9:00am—Peace United Methodist Church—Diley Road

Fairfield MGV Planning Meeting—April 19
2:00-4:00pm—Fairfield County Agriculture Center
831 College Avenue, Lancaster, OH 43130

Earth Day at Wesley Ridge - April 22
12:00-3:00pm—Wesley Ridge, Reynoldsburg
Contact Barbara Velez Barbosa for more information.

Dig Into Gardening Educational Day—April 28
10:00 am—Christ United Methodist Church—Baltimore
See flyer on the last page of the newsletter!

SAVE THE DATE:

Garden Q & A - May 12
Pickerington Community Gardens

Wesley Ridge Work Days - May 9 and May 23
9:00am—Contact Barbara Velez Barbosa.

Ag Center Work Day —May 18 (and maybe May 19)
8:30am—Fairfield County Agriculture Center

Across the Fence

An announcement from Bruce Garrett
(MGV 2015)...

WANT TO BUILD SOME RAISED BEDS? A friend has taken a deck off of the back of his house in Bexley and has quite a bit of lumber that would be good for raised beds.

I used salvaged cedar from a deck for mine. He tells me he has 2x6 and 2x8 treated lumber up to 20 feet long. He says he want a nickel for the pile but I think you can talk him down a bit. You have to get and haul it. Contact me if you are interested: blgarrett07@yahoo.com.



WISHES FOR A HAPPY BIRTHDAY... CELEBRATE AND ENJOY!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS...

Mark Adkins, Bernie Anderson, Mary Edwards, Laura Hempleman, Earl Hill, Edward Kiser, Janet Neeley, Nick Shaw, Connie Smith, Gina Sutphin, Debbie Wren, Beverly Zurhorst

APRIL BIRTHDAYS....

Sheree Baker, Linda Barker, Meghan Blake, Thelma Dilliard, Linda Everitt, Margy Hite, Alice Hughes, Kathy Martin, Connie McVey, Sherry Oatney, Nancy Weidman

MAY BIRTHDAYS....

Erin Eichel, Diane Hilliard-Faulkner, DJ Hoermle, Robin Leja, Michele Parker, Janet Ptacin, Patty Sykes

GARDEN MUSINGS

Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)

by Carol Schleich, Master Gardener 2013

Flipping through a garden catalog, I once again noticed a primitive hand drawn picture of a redwood including two dinosaurs, one flying. "Grew when dinosaurs roamed the Earth! The only tree of its kind that had the strength and growing power to



survive after nearly 70 million years!" This is reminiscent of vintage magazine ads for live pet seahorses (90 cents).

You might be thinking, "Who on earth would fall for this?" Three guesses and the first two don't count. Moi!! I sent for one eight or ten years ago, planted it

and after the leaves turned dark brown the first winter, I gave up on it until – two years ago while clearing out brush I was astonished to see healthy, green fern-like leaves flourishing. I did not realize it was a deciduous conifer.

Surprises are what keep me planting and taking chances. 1-2' trees, \$5.99 each, Burgess Seed and Plant Co. Dawn Redwood is a well-known example of a living fossil species. It faces extinction due to deforestation, and is being planted extensively worldwide.



Thieves* Vinegar

A safe and potent disinfectant, Thieves Vinegar dates back to the days of the Black Plague. Lightly pack fresh herbs from your garden (mint and lavender would be my ideal combo but unfortunately lavender doesn't survive my loving care) in a canning jar, cover with warmed (not boiling) vinegar, secure the lid, and place in a sunny window for a week or two. Strain and pour into a spray bottle. Use to clean kitchens, bathrooms and other areas that you wish to sanitize and freshen. *Carol Schleich (MGV 2013)*

* According to legend, grave robbers bathed in herb infused vinegar to protect themselves when stealing from dead bodies of Plague victims. At a time when most people didn't bathe at all, this kept infected fleas from feasting on the great unwashed.

Through the Vine is a publication of the Ohio State University Extension Office in Fairfield County

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For the latest information and news about OSU Extension in Fairfield County, including the Master Gardeners of Fairfield County, visit <http://fairfield.osu.edu/>



Ohio Master Gardener Program Mission

We are Ohio State University Extension trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information.

Fairfield County Master Gardener Volunteers 2018 "Dig Into Gardening" Educational Day

Join us and learn more about:

Invasive Plants & Control Measures

Jerry Iles, Extension Educator, Fairfield Co.

Know Your Ticks! Tick I.D. & More

Tim McDermott, Extension Educator,
Franklin Co.

**These Are NOT Your Grandma's
Annuals.....Discover low-maintenance &
easy-to-grow annuals that will add the
"WOW" factor to your landscape - without
a lot of work**

Pam Bennett, Ohio State Master Gardener
Volunteer Program Director

**Stunning New Proven Winners Annuals
and Perennials for Your Landscape and
some old favorites, too!**

Doug Parkinson - Program Development,
Proven Winners Four Star Greenhouse



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COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
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OSU Extension
Fairfield County
831 College Ave, Suite D
Lancaster OH 43130-1081
740.652.7260
<http://fairfield.osu.edu>

Saturday, April 28, 2018

10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Registration & vendors open at 9:00 a.m.

Come and shop early with our vendors!

Christ United Methodist Church

700 S. Main Street (S.R. 158)

Baltimore, OH

Advance Registration is \$30.00.00 (cash/check only)

Includes continental breakfast & lunch

Lunch plate includes chicken salad, pasta salad, fresh fruit,
rolls & beverage served by the Church

*Don't miss the Master
Gardeners' "Favorites"
Tomato Plant Sale!!*



Return this section with your payment of \$30.00 by **April 13, 2018**. Register early, limited seating.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Phone (____) _____ email _____

Please include any dietary restrictions or if you require any special assistance to attend "Dig Into Gardening":

Make checks payable to "OSU Extension" and mail to:

OSU Extension – Fairfield County, 831 College Avenue, Suite D, Lancaster OH 43130-1081