

The Growing Scene Gazette

The Growing Scene, Inc. 17009 Harmony Rd, Marengo, Illinois 60152

Volume 12, Issue 2

July-Aug 2007

Pond Seminar

By Kathleen Carr

We are incredibly please to announce that we will be hosting a Pond Seminar on Saturday July 21. We invite anyone who is interested in participating or watching as we construct a pond in our retail display area. Aspen Valley Landscape Supply and our own landscaping crew will be supervising the design, layout, construction and filling of our new water feature. We will begin at 8am on Saturday and continue until completion! The Pond also marks the debut of our Water Garden Plants and Products sales area. Just as we have expanded product selection in other areas we will begin to offer a variety of water

plants, fountains and do-it-yourself pond sets. Please join us for a day of camaraderie as we begin this adventure together!

Family First

Last week, Sarah, my 7 year old daughter, announced that she wanted to learn everything about plants. Well, where do I start? Do I describe the fast growth habit of the Acer saccharinum that is just off of our porch or go on and on about the fall color of the Fraxinus pennsylvanica in our back yard? That was a pretty ambitious statement to make to a Mom who spend her days talking with people about plants.

I decided to take the organizational approach-start on one side of the yard and work

our way around. As we began discussing the attributes of Periwinkle, our dog ran through the bed. As we moved on to the Peonies, here came my son Christopher just absolutely needing help in the kitchen. Mary, my other daughter, wanted to read a book together when Sarah and I were standing among the Irises. It seems that no matter how hard we try to learn and appreciate nature, something more pressing always comes up. A flowers call is not nearly as loud as the ring of the telephone. I hope that you are able to listen to and learn from nature a bit this summer

**Farm Stand Opens
Thursday, July 12**

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Dates to Remember:

- July 12 Farm Stand Opens
- July 18-22 Kane County Fair
- July 21 Pond Seminar
- July 24 Marengo Chamber of Commerce Mixer 5-7pm
- August 2-5 Coon Creek Days, Hampshire

Container Gardening

By Delice Clewer

Container gardening is a good alternative for gardeners that do not have much space for planting. It gives us a means to still experience the joys of gardening and the relaxing feelings that nature brings to us. Container gardening can be used for decorative reasons or for harvesting. Here are a few tips for successful container gardening:

- Make sure there is ade-

quate drainage in your container. Holes can be put in the bottom of the container if needed

- Use a fertile soil or growing mix in your container, preferably with a slow release fertilizer mixed into it.
- Consider plant size, light requirements, & water requirements when

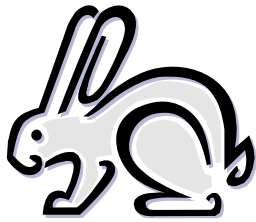
planting containers.

- Fertilize the container regularly.
- Containers can dry out quickly, so monitor watering needs.
- Last but not least-Enjoy your garden!

Be Critter Free Naturally

By Melissa Shippy

In the last newsletter, we discussed cicadas and moles. I would like to discuss the ever present rabbit problem that some people are having. I often hear customers remarking about rabbit damage in their yards. I know how frustrating it can be to work so hard on your garden and then have the local rabbits come in and destroy it. Rabbits are notorious for reproducing rapidly. Three weeks after a mother rabbit gives birth to a litter she may be bred again and is already thinking about the next litter.



They can have 2-5 litters per year, with 5-8 young in each litter. What boils down to is that there can be a lot of rabbits in your neighborhood if you don't do something to deter them from coming back.

Rabbits are hungry after not eating much over the winter months. They love to eat new growth. If you see clean bite marks it is probably from a rabbit family who decided they wanted to make your home their new home.

What you need to do is use the rabbit's inborn instinctive fear of its worst enemy, the fox.

Fear is strongest deterrent in nature. We recommend and carry the natural

product Shake-Away. Simply sprinkle Shake-Away granules around the area you want to protect. Animals will stay away from that area claimed by the fox's urine.

Other benefits of this 100% organic product is that it makes no mess and is safe around children and pets.

Stop by our garden center to purchase this natural and effective product.

Source: www.critter-repellent.com

“So plant your own garden and decorate your own soul, instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers”

Freezing Fruits and Vegetables

By Kathleen Carr

It began when I received a “Make Your Own Baby Food” book at a baby shower. 10 years and hundreds of hours later my husband and I are still tucking the kids into bed and transforming the kitchen into our own personal food processing plant. For several years we made all of our own baby food from fresh fruits, vegetables and meats. Each batch was frozen in ice cube trays and then served in turn to our three little ones. Just as they have moved onto solid foods we have moved beyond baby food to processing all sorts of fresh fruits and vegetables. I urge you to consider doing the same. All you really need is a sharp knife, Ziploc bags and a freezer. Trust me, I am a pretty horrible cook, but even I can

manage this.

I highly recommend that you purchase a book called “The Busy Person's Guide to Preserving Food” by Janet Chadwick.

It gives you a step by step accounting of how to process just about any fruit and vegetable that is grown locally. Since my Grandmother does not trust my canning abilities (she's afraid I will get hurt from the scalding water or an exploding jar) freezing is my preferred method of home food processing. I usually freeze tomatoes, green peppers, sweet corn, green beans, peaches, strawberries, and blueberries.

With many items you simply wash them and bag them up! It really is that simple.

The benefits to frozen and canned foods are many! The produce tastes better and retains more nutrients when processed properly at home. Processing 5 dozen ears of corn only takes about 3 hours. Those three hours will save you many more through out the winter because you can simply go to your freezer and get a bag of corn instead of having to trek to the grocery store. Strawberries can be so expensive in the supermarket during the winter. Frozen strawberries are delicious! It only makes sense to purchase them locally when they are being harvested and freeze them for winter. We will have Janet's book available at our garden center if you would like to give it a try!

Watering the Right Way!

By Kate Kelley

Now that the hot weather is upon us, it is important that we take care of ourselves and our gardens accordingly. A common response people have to warm weather is to gently shower their plants everyday. Yet, although a refreshing mist of water does a lot to cool us off during the summer, plants require deep waterings that will reach the tips of their roots.

The limiting factor of any garden is the type of soil that lies beneath it. Once you know that it is mostly clay, sand, or loam, you will have a better idea of how much water the plants in that soil need. Clay soils will take much longer for water to drain through than sandy soils. A good way of quickly determining the kind of soil you have is to dig a couple inches into the soil and roll up a golf ball sized lump of damp soil. A ball that falls apart very easily indicates a sandier soil, whereas a ball that is very sticky and holds together very tightly indicates a clay soil. Loamy soil is ideal because it drains well, yet makes water available to the roots. It holds together nicely in a ball.

Trees are probably the hardest and most time consuming to water because their roots spread out an average of two times the spread of the canopy of leaves. This is the area that is best to water. Watering by the base of the trunk won't ensure that the water reaches the tips of the roots, and could lead to trunk rot and other problems.

It is important to give a soaking to your plants each time you water, which should only be one to two times a week in the summer.

Plants such as roses, rhododendrons, and birches like a lot of water, so pay special attention to them. Most annuals and perennials need about an inch of water a week, while shrubs and trees need more.

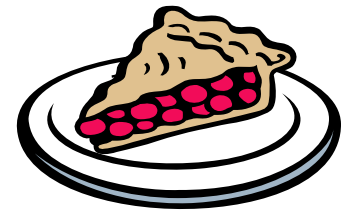
Following these simple guidelines will save you time, water, and your plants.



Gourmet Delights

By Kathleen Carr

Cherry Pie Filling, Roasted Garlic Mustard, Mild Pineapple Salsa, Hickory BBQ Sauce. Sound Good? These are all part of our Gourmet Food Product line that we are selling at our Farm Stand.



In addition to our homegrown sweet corn, tomatoes, green beans, peaches, watermelon and more, we will have a selection of specially selected complimentary products. Locally produced honey, pure maple syrup, fresh popcorn kernels and chocolate covered sunflower seeds are all in stock at our newly expanded Farm Stand. We have enjoyed sampling the products and know that you will too! We are very excited to announce that we have expanded our product selection to include the products listed above and many more!

Grandma's Recipe Book

From Grandpa's Garden to Grandma's Kitchen

CORN RELISH

14 Ears sweet corn
2 c Cider vinegar
4 large peppers (any color)
1 ¼ c brown sugar
1 Tbs. Dry mustard
2 tsp. Celery seed
½ head cabbage
1 med. Onion
1 garlic clove

1 Tbs. Salt
1 tsp. Tumeric
Cut corn off cob (about 7 cups).
Chop other ingredients. Heat vinegar and remaining ingredients and simmer 15 min. Add corn and bring to a boil, simmering 5 more min. Put in large bowl and refrigerate or put in freezer cartons. Makes 8 cups.





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***A Garden Center and
Landscaping Company***

**Home grown produce and gourmet food products now available at
our Farm Stand!**

The Growing Scene Gazette, is a publication of **The Growing Scene, Inc.** **The Growing Scene** is a garden center and landscaping company located at 17009 Harmony Road, Marengo. The phone number is 815-923-7322.

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