



The Spade & The Hoe

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From the Desk of Pamela Frank

I want to thank Gloria Traimer for lending me an "earth-friendly" calendar that was produced by an Elgin-based environmental group. The calendar's theme is "baring all in the war against global warming". The calendar expresses the group's message on simple ways that we can lessen our impact of global warming in a somewhat provocative manner, if you know what I mean. But month by month they get the message across.

I guess that we all need to assess our impact on the earth a little more. We need to reuse and repair things instead of discarding them. I recently learned that Northfield Township is collecting used motor oil to burn in the buildings oil-fired furnace.

We need to recycle our cans, glass, paper and plastics every week. Whenever we see an opportunity to reduce the use of electricity and fossil fuels, we should make the effort. At my house, we have replaced most of our light bulbs with CFL's. I'm also using less disposable bags. We all could make use of rain barrels in our gardens, just like Holly Jansen has done. As gardeners we should use organic fertilizers and compost.

Let's all embrace the earth-friendly concepts that will help make a greener world.

Dear garden club members:

At the January meeting I introduced the idea of our garden club logo on sweatshirts. I was wearing a black sweatshirt with the logo on it. This logo can be applied to your garment of choice for \$6.00. Let me know if you want to do this. *Pam*

March Program

On Tuesday, March 10th, we will meet at the police station for a program on *Organic Gardening and Less Toil with Good Soil* by Wally Schmidt. Refreshments will be provided by Nancy Olderr.

As you learn more about gardening, every new experience means more to you and makes a long-lasting impression.

- Rosemary Verey

February Program

Kristi Robinson presented a program on Enabling Gardens and displayed many tools designed for use by handicapped gardeners.

The more one gardens, the more one learns; and the more one learns, the more one realizes how little one knows. I suppose the whole of life is like that.

- Vita Sackville-West

Transplanting Vegetables

Beans and peas do not transplant well. They should be sown directly into the soil. As long as you sow their seeds in peat or newspaper pots, beets, carrots, cucumbers, spinach, summer and winter squash and Swiss chard will transplant well, as long as you do not disturb their roots.

These vegetables transplant easily: asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, celery, eggplant, lettuce, onions, peppers, kale, and tomatoes.

Through the Garden Gate
Many, many years ago, when I was a child, the entire country engages in creating Victory Gardens in every bit of unused ground. Eleanor Roosevelt started a Victory Garden on the White House lawn in 1943. She encouraged Americans to follow in her footsteps. By the time WWII ended, we were producing 40% of the fruits and vegetables being consumed in the United States!

It seems to me that these times call for a resurgence of a vegetable garden, not only for saving money but for insuring our health. Growing our own healthy, delicious vegetables simply makes sense. You know how easy it is to grow tomato plants and pepper plants, but other easy to grow plants are lettuce, beans, peas, squash, zucchini and radishes. And when you have a bumper crop, we can trade recipes and even veggies.

Let's all plant to have a vegetable garden and eat our own fresh home-grown veggies. (Maybe we can join the Future Farmers of America.)

Esther

Chalet Garden Center

On March 13 & March 14, the Chalet will present a lecture on Vegetables 101 with Scott Thalmann. He'll explain the process of vegetable gardening from choosing the best varieties for our area, though germinating seeds and transplanting seedlings, to harvesting an abundant crop. Friday and Saturday, 10-11:30am. Plan to attend.

Life is so short, the craft so long to learn. This was said about literature, but it really fits gardening better.

- Henry Mitchell

Statistics

In January, the Glenview Gardeners web site recorded 882 hits, and the number of page requests was 343.

Many web sites have links to our site. Check out our site yourselves. It is at <http://www.glenviewgardeners.org>

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.*
- William Blake (1757-1827),
From Auguries of Innocence

Tips for transplanting Out

First of all, be sure the soil is properly prepared. Seedlings need sa light, loose, crumbly soil that is well supplied with nutrients. To maintain strong, healthy seedlings, give them a period of transition known as hardening-off. Put them in a shady spot outdoors for a few hours the first day. Bring them indoors to rest. On the second day let them, remain outside for a few more hours, gradually increasing the length of time outdoors until you can leave them outdoors overnight. Of course, if the weather changes, bring them indoors until the weather improves. Don't forget to keep watering them as they need it. The day before you transplant the seedlings, outdoors, water them and the area where they will be planted. If the seedlings are lanky, plant them deeper than they were before so they don't flop over in the wind. If you used peat pots, tear the sides so the roots can quickly grow outwards. Also, make sure the tops of the pots are completely buried so they don't act as wicks and dry out the roots. Healthy seedlings send out new roots quickly and will establish themselves in well-prepared soil in a few days.

- Foolproof Planting by
Anne Moyer Halpin

Gardening is an art which is learned by practice, experience and sensible advice.

- Jules Oravetz, Sr.

The best thing about gardens is that they take us to a place that doesn't sprint from one news cycle to the next. It's a place where flowers appear when they are ready, butterflies, drop by when it's time, and trees become good friends over decades. If we slow down and live by nature's rhythms in the garden, the garden will become a place of peace.

- Beth Botts, Chicago Tribune

Division

Division is a quick, easy way to propagate plants that multiply themselves by means of rhizomes, suckers, or underground growth or offsets, such as astilbe, daylily, daffodils, mums, hosta, iris, monarda, and peony. Most of them need to be divided periodically to rejuvenate them and keep them producing flowers. Some, like bleeding hearts and Oriental poppies don't like being disturbed.

Spring is an excellent time to divide plants, as there is no foliage with which to contend. Insert a spading fork at an angle under the root ball or bulbs and lift the plant carefully. If the plant has a cluster of crowns, such as hosta, pull or cut the clump apart with a knife to split it into sections that each contain "eyes". If the crown is large, use two forks back to back and push and pull them back and forth to pry the clumps apart. As you divide the clumps of roots, discard the old tough roots at the center of the plant and replant the younger, more vigorous roots. Replant quickly so the roots don't dry out and be sure to water them in well.

With daffodils, the offsets or bulblets will grow into new plants, but for now complete with the main bulb for water and nutrients. Divide tuberous-rooted plants like dahlias by cutting apart the clump so that each section has an eye and part of the old stem.

Buying Plants

When choosing vegetable, herbs and bedding plants, look for ones that are compact and bushy. Don't buy the largest ones, as they will suffer more from transplant shock. Likewise, don't buy plants in bud or flower or fruit.

Avoid spindly and top-heavy plants, with pale or yellowed leaves. Shake gently to see if whiteflies are present. Check the roots of cabbage plants to see if they are soft and yellowish. Turn the individual pots over to see if the roots are growing out of the drainage holes. Don't buy these.

Also don't buy any that are not in individual pots as their roots will be intertwined. If you buy tender plants early, before the last frost date, plan on keeping them in the garage or house, or in a sheltered spot out of the wind and direct sun. Be sure to water them regularly.

If you purchase plants by mail, buying from a grower is better than a middleman. If a catalog is full of "wonder" or "miracle" growers, beware. The hyperbole is usually a tip-off.

Look for information on when they will send the plants to you, also, if they will replace plants that die in their first year.

A gardener learns more in the mistakes than in the successes.
- Barbara Dodge Boland



In March, remember to:

- Plan a vegetable garden;
- Sow lettuce and radishes outdoors;
- Sow seeds of vegetables and annuals that need 12 weeks to grow before transplanting;
- Remember to keep a garden diary;
- Prune out dead raspberry canes;
- Repot and increase water and fertilizer for houseplants that exhibit new growth;
- Rake winter debris from the lawn;
- Divide perennials before growth starts;
- Check tools for rust if you didn't clean and oil them last fall;
- Draw a sketch of your garden to help with formulating a new plan for additional or enlarged garden beds, especially vegetable beds.

Tips for Gardeners

According to the Epsom Salt industry council, Epsom salts can help seeds germinate, make plants bushier, produce more flowers, improve phosphorus and nitrogen uptake, increase chlorophyll production, and deter pests such as slugs.

They recommend 1 tbsp. per 9 sq ft for shrubs and repeat every 2-4 weeks; 3 lbs per 1250 sq ft for lawns; 2 tbsp per 9 sq ft for trees and apply to the root zone 3 times a year, 1 cup per 100 sq ft for new gardens and mix it into the soil before planting, and for roses and tomatoes, use 1 tbsp per foot of plant height and repeat every 2 weeks. Do not use on Sage!

Recycle milk cartons, butter tubs, etc as free seed pots. Punch holes into the bottom of them and fill with potting soil mix.

What's Blooming Table

Thanks to Pam Frank for bringing her Christmas cactus plant for show and tell.

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