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Edition 10.10	Paul Parent Garden Club News	March 11, 2010
 <p style="text-align: center;">FEATURED QUOTE : "Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed." ~Francis Bacon</p>		<p>Gifts for the Gardener Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p>
		<p>Contact Information: E-Mail: Click to contact us. Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM) Fax: (207) 985-6972 Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043 Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Back Porch ComposTumbler</p> <p>Makes Compost in 4-6 weeks!</p> <p>□</p> <p>This size was developed for backyard composting. If you have a city property or if you have a very small yard, this little composter was designed just for you. The frame includes two wheels so you can take the compost right to your flower beds and garden areas. You can add to it each day for continuous composting.</p> <p>Specs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 cubic ft. (4 bushels, 37 gallons)• Holds about one 30-gallon trash bag• 37 high x 31 wide x 26 deep• Heavy-duty polyethelene drum• Made in the USA• Aerator/drainage units and screened vents• Turning grooves let you grip the drum to turn it• Beautiful sage green color• FREE User and Composting Tips Guide <p>Click here for more information</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div>		<p style="text-align: center;">Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</p> <p>Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Trip to Croatia</p> <p>Join us this spring as we visit Croatia. (Click here for more information.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div>
<p>The most grown fruit tree is the apple! Apples are believed to have originated in the mountains of Kazakhstan in central Asia. Pears, plums, peaches, and cherries are also popular but the apple has one characteristic the others do not have: the ability to be stored during the winter. Apples can be eaten when ripe in September and October but, when stored properly, will last well into the winter months. Not long ago, when fresh fruit was nearly impossible to find during the winter months, apples were king. Today, with modern shipping, any fruit is available at anytime of the</p>		<p>Subscribe to our newsletter!</p>

year from around the world. But for the home gardener, this is still the best fruit for ease of winter storage.

It does not matter what type of fruit tree you plant; just follow these steps and all types of fruits will provide you with a nice crop of fresh fruit in the late summer to late fall. Begin by selecting a location with full sunshine. This location should be sheltered from the wind when possible and warm during the day. Try to avoid frost pockets and, when possible, plant on the side of a hill rather than at the bottom of a hill, because cold always slides down the hill and collects at the bottom. This is most important in the early spring when the fruit trees are in bloom, as a frosty morning could kill all your flowers and no fruit will form.

All fruit trees prefer a soil that is well drained and rich in organic matter. When planting fruit trees, be sure to add plenty of compost to help get them off to a great start. A slightly acidic soil is preferred; pH 6.0 to 6.5 is recommended. In a wet location on flat ground, the tree will struggle. If you have a clay-type soil plant something else, because your trees will never do well. Newly planted fruit trees must be watered regularly during the first year, and I recommend it be twice a week, 5 to 10 gallons each time. If the summer gets hot and dry, water more!

Fertilizing in the spring is best--before the foliage appears on the tree--with an organic slow release fertilizer such as Tree-Tone, Milorganite or Dr Earth Fruit Tree Food. Lime is necessary when you see moss growing on the ground around the trees. No moss growing--no lime needed. Mulch piled around the base of the tree will help the tree in many ways. Mulch or compost should be 2 to 3 inches deep and 3 to 4 feet wide around the tree. This will keep the weeds away, keep the soil cooler during the summer and hold surface water longer around the tree during the summer. This planting bed also prevents YOU from hitting the trunk of the tree with the lawn mower or weed whacker when maintaining the yard. Compost around the base will slowly feed the young roots every time it rains, to encourage a good root development and a better tree.

At the time you plant your fruit trees, use a single stake driven into the ground to support the tree for the first couple of years and tie down the tree with wire and a hose sleeve to prevent damage to the tree. This will help create a straight growing tree. Wrap the trunk of the tree with a circular ring of hardware cloth wire to protect the bark of the tree for the first 5 years from mice and rabbits. The wire ring should be 3 inches away from the trunk of the tree and pushed into the soil 2 inches deep. The height of the wire should be 24 inches. (Remember to remove the supports before the tree grows into them!)

In February or March, prune your tree to control size and create a better shape on the tree. When the outdoor temperature is above 40 degrees, spray your fruit trees with dormant or horticultural oil to kill eggs laid on the tree last fall by insects. This will really help with insect problems during the year. Also spray your trees with Liquid Copper Fungicide to help eliminate disease spores left on the plant last fall. These two sprayings should always be done before the foliage develops on the tree. When the tree is in bloom, "DO NOTHING" to the tree or you could cause all the flowers to drop, resulting in no fruiting on the tree. Once the flowers fall from the fruit tree, develop an every-other-week spraying program to control disease and insect problems. For organic control use Organocide fruit tree spray from Organic Labs, or the new liquid Fruit Tree Spray from Bonide Lawn and Garden. Do this until 2 weeks before harvest.



Now that the snow is gone and the weather has begun to stabilize, let us get out and get the yard and gardens ready. On a nice day, walk your property and pick up all the sticks and branches that have fallen from the trees to the ground during the winter months. If you see broken branches dangling from the trees and you can reach them safely, pull them down. These branches are called "Widow Makers" and can come down on you when you least expect it, so be safe.

Did you know that you can get away with raking your lawn only one time each year? The time to rake the lawn is during early spring, March or early April, depending on the weather. The spring cleaning of the lawn is designed to remove any plant debris that did not decompose during the fall and winter season--a time to remove dead grass, weeds and moss that has accumulated from last year. The raking does good things for your lawn; it removes dead parts of the grass plant to make room for healthy growth to develop. Raking the grass also helps to fluff up the grass plants that were flattened with the weight of the snow and rain while they were dormant during the winter. This fluffing will allow air movement around the plant and help prevent disease problems later. The cleaning opens up the soil so the grass plant can fill the open spaces with new shoots easier. Think of it as waking up after a long nap, stretching and scratching your back. Don't you feel better? So does your lawn!

In the garden, rake the ground clean of all dead branches and foliage you forgot there last fall. This will help get rid of potential insect and disease problems that are on the plant parts left in the garden. Cut back and remove all plant parts that have died during the winter, so the new growth will have a easier time developing and coming to the surface. Edge the beds to make them look straight and neat.

Now that you have cleaned the grass and gardens, it is time to wake up the soil! Begin with the acidity of the soil, as this will determine how well the plants uses the food you will be applying and the food already in the ground. A well-balanced soil helps a plant stay healthier, aids it in fighting off disease and insect problems more easily, and requires less maintenance from you. In general, your soil should have a pH level between 6 and 7. Go to your local nursery and ask for the new Soil Stick from www.Plumstone.com to test your soil for acidity.

Most soil in the Northeast is on the acidic side and we must add limestone, wood ash or the new Mag-I-Cal from Jonathan Green Lawn and Garden. The old fashioned limestone will do the trick,

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but it will take 6 months to raise the pH of the soil. Wood ash from your stove or fireplace will do the job in 2 weeks at the rate of one 5 gallon bucket of wood ash per 1000 sq ft. Jonathan Green Mag-I-Cal will also work in 2 weeks and one bag will treat up to 10,000 sq ft of soil. One 40 pound bag of Mag-I-Cal is equal to 10 50-pound bags of old fashioned limestone. That is 40 pounds of Mag-I-Cal to 500 pounds of limestone product to do the same job. Think of your back this year!

Sweet soils will do these things and more for you: lilacs and clematis will flower better, tomatoes will not have blossom end rot on the bottom of the fruit, moss will not grow in your lawn. Weeds prefer an acid soil and crabgrass will grow better and faster. It is worth the effort.

If you have heavy and wet soils, apply garden gypsum to break up the clay soils so the plants roots can grow easier. Root vegetables will grow bigger and longer, broadleaf evergreens will have darker and greener foliage. When applied along the side of the road the Garden Gypsum will flush out the road salt from the soil faster minimizing the amount of grass that dies due to road salt kill. Go to www.soillogic.com for more information. Liquid gypsum is available at most Garden Centers. Now you are ready to plant, fertilize, and apply mulch to the gardens. While the weather is nice, get a head start on the garden chores and you will not have to work as hard later.



The best known and most loved type of rose in the family of roses is the beach rose. The Rosa Rugosa has it all, including a "FRAGRANT" flower that is hard to find today in the rose garden. As the flower fades, a one inch diameter orange red tomato-like fruit develops at the base of the stem where the flower once was. The fruit will color up in late July to early August and last well into the fall. You can eat the fleshy part of the rose fruit, as it is rich in vitamin E.

The Rosa Rugosa is a shrub rose and, unlike the typical rose bush you plant in the garden, has its own root system. The typical rose bush is grafted to a different root system, to make it strong enough to survive the winter where you live. Because the beach rose has its own roots, it is able to spread with underground stems that form from those roots to start new plants away from the main plant.

The beach rose has rough-looking deep green leaves that are shiny, with rounded teeth on the edge of the leaf margin. Each leaf is thick and will have from 3 to 7 individual leaflets making up the leaf. Older leaves have higher leaflet count and the leaf just below the flower always has 3 leaflets. The veins on the leaf are sunken into the foliage and very noticeable. The plant develops into a rounded mound of stems, and each of those stems is covered with flowers in June. You can grow the plant as a single mound-type rose bush if you remove the suckering branches that develop continuously around the plant.

The flowers are 2 to 3.5" in diameter and mostly single blossoms. Single flowering types have a single row of petals that are flat and number 5 petals--like a rosette. Today you can find new hybrids that are double-flowering and often resemble a carnation bloom. The flower color will range through white, pink, red and mauve. The center of the flower is filled with many yellow stamens, giving it additional color. Each flower will bloom for 2 weeks or more on the plant. If you cut a fresh bloom just opening and place it in a bowl or brandy snifter filled with water, it will float easily and bring fragrance to your kitchen table. It will last several days.

The Rosa Rugosa will grow 4 to 6 feet tall but with pruning you can keep it at any height you want. When planted on 3 foot centers in a row, they will make a wonderful hedge planting. Make the planting bed 3 feet wide to allow room for the new shoots to develop and in just 2 to 3 years your individual plants will fill in the entire bed with new shoots, creating a solid hedge. Your only maintenance will be removing the shoots that develop in the lawn area from the hedge. Cover the bed with 2 to 3 inches of compost or bark mulch to keep the weeds out.

Rosa Rugosa, or beach rose, will grow "ANYWHERE," even at the beach in the sand. If you have a sunny, well drained place in your yard that where nothing seems to grow, think about planting a beach rose. When planting, use the same method as any other plant in your garden by conditioning the hole and surrounding soil with animal manure and compost to get the plant off to a good start. I always use a soil conditioner like Soil Moist in sandy soil to help hold moisture around the roots. Soil Moist will hold 200 times the moisture in the soil that peat will, and only a couple of tablespoons are needed per plant. Think about this, two tablespoons of Soil Moist will hold 400 tablespoons of water around the roots of a plant that is growing in a sandy soil. Less watering is necessary, and once it is established it can take care of itself. Fertilize in the spring and again in June with granular organic rose fertilizer and enjoy a garden of roses all summer long. One last thing about this rose is **disease resistance**, unlike most other roses. Enjoy!



Many of us know that the strongest wood available from our native forest is the oak family of trees. The value of the wood from these trees was almost that of gold at one time during the 1700's. The king of the trees was the white pine and it was so valuable that this tree was one of the reasons we fought the War of Independence in 1776. In 1761, the British government passed a law in England that all white pines growing in the colonies that had growth 24 inches diameter and upwards at 12 inches from the earth belonged to the Royal Navy. No such tree, they said, "shall be cut without a license" from the Kingdom of Great Britain.

In 1774 The American Congress passed a law stopping the export of all white pine trees from its

shores. In 1775 the lumbermen from Machias, Maine overtook the armed British Warship "Margaretta" and turned her into a privateer against the British. The same year the patriots of Portsmouth, New Hampshire seized the British storage yards where hundreds of tall white pine logs were ready for shipment to England for ship's masts. In 1777, John Paul Jones used those same logs to build a mast for the "Ranger," our first warship, and it flew the "Stars and Stripes."

And you thought it was just a tree! Well, as just a tree, it is the finest evergreen tree you can plant on your property. If the white pine is not disturbed it will grow for up to 400 years. The white pine is the tallest growing tree native to eastern North America, and is the state tree of Maine and Michigan.

White pines are easily transplanted because of a wide spider web like root system that grows shallow in the soil. It will thrive in a well-drained sandy soil, but if you plant it in a rich moist soil in a sunny location this tree will have no match for its looks. When the tree is young, it will have a pyramidal shape and hold green foliage right to the ground, making a great screen plant. As it matures, the tree opens up and spreads out, often with a flat top, and the branches become irregularly shaped. Most white pines grow from a single trunk and seldom need pruning. Plant them in groups and they will protect you from the wind and muffle the noise on the other side of the planting. Once the pine grows to 25 to 30 feet tall, it will provide you with a beautiful living area under the branches as they mature.

White pines will grow 1 to 3 feet a year when established and mature to 50 to 80 feet tall and 20 to 50 feet wide. The needles are soft to the touch and grow to 4 to 5 inches long. The needle color will range from medium green to blue green and they develop in a bunch of five. Each needle cluster will stay on the tree for a year and a half before falling from the tree. The ground will have a thick blanket-like covering under the tree of brown needles, often choking out the weeds. The soil is traditionally acid for the best growth so keep the limestone away from this plant. When young, fertilize spring and fall until the trees reach 10 feet tall. Use an acid-based tree food such as Holly-Tone or Acid Adoring.

Plant the white pine as specimen plant on the front lawn and prune it to keep the pyramidal shape. This tree will make a wonderful plant when used in groups for screening or hedges for privacy. White pine will not do well when planted on the side of the road as it will suffer from road salt, air pollution, ozone and sulfur dioxide damage. It will not do well in a clay type soil or areas with standing water. If you park your car under the tree you will compact the soil and hurt the tree roots, so stay off! The tree will get back to you by dripping "pitch" on your car and remove the paint. Enjoy.



This Week's Question:

What is the origin of the plant name "lilac"?

This Week's Prize:

One bottle of Vacation.

[Click Here to Answer](#)

Last Week's Question:

What are the only 2 vegetables that can reproduce on their own for several growing seasons, without being replanted every year?

Last Week's Prize:

One bottle of Vacation.

Last Week's Winner:

Mike Fahey

Last Week's Answer:

The two vegetables that get an "A" for lasting several seasons without having to be replanted are the artichoke and asparagus.

One winner per question - we choose winners from the list of those who answer correctly. Winners must be newsletter subscribers. We'll ship you your prize, so be sure to put your address in the form in case you win!

FEATURED RECIPE:

Buffalo Wing Dip



Have your buffalo wings without the mess! Serve this addicting dip with tortilla chips and celery sticks.

What You'll Need:

- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 (12 fluid ounce) can or bottle hot chicken wing sauce
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 (16 ounce) bottle blue cheese dressing

Step by Step:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
- Place chicken in a pot with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil and cook 25 minutes, until chicken juices run clear. Drain liquid from pot and shred chicken. Mix wing sauce and butter into pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer 10 minutes.
- Spread cream cheese over the bottom of an 8x8 inch baking dish. Pour chicken mixture over cream cheese. Top with dressing.
- Bake 15 minutes in the preheated oven, until hot and bubbly.



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