

From: Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>
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Edition 11.09	Paul Parent Garden Club News	March 3, 2011
 <p style="text-align: center;">FEATURED QUOTE : "He who plants a tree loves others besides himself." ~ Thomas Fuller</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto 20px auto;"></div> <p style="text-align: center;">Bayer Advanced Fruit, Citrus & Vegetable Insect Control</p> <p>Season-long protection without spraying</p> <p>Kills insects and prevents new infestations</p> <p>Specially formulated for use on 100+ fruits, vegetables and citrus plants</p> <p>Rainproof protection won't wash off</p> <p>No spraying – just mix and pour</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 250px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto 20px auto;"></div>		<p>Gifts for the Gardener</p> <p>Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</p> <p>Contact Information:</p> <p>E-Mail: Click to contact us.</p> <p>Telephone: (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p>Fax: (207) 985-6972</p> <p>Address: Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p>Phone Hours: Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p>
<p>Several hundred years ago in the mountains of Central Asia, early gardeners found trees that produced a fruit that would one day be grown around the world. This tree was moved from country to country by man because of its flavor, its ability to keep well in storage and its ability to grow most anywhere it was planted without much care. The Romans grew apples and propagated new varieties with grafting techniques. Early settlers in this country and abroad use crosspollination to develop new varieties and this is how the American gardener developed the Golden Delicious apple and other varieties.</p> <p>Here is what you will need to consider if you are thinking of growing apple trees in your yard this year. First and most important is location! By location I mean an area with FULL SUN all day. Do not kid yourself: the tree will grow in partial shade, but it will never produce the fruit it is capable of. Next is air circulation around the tree, to prevent possible early frost damage to the tree that is in bloom. Circulation of air around the tree will also minimize disease problems during the growing season, but avoid windy locations. Also if you have the choice of planting on top or the bottom of a slope, always choose the top of the slope as cold air will always move downhill and cause problems early in the growing season.</p> <p>Drainage is also very important and your trees should never be planted in soils that will have standing water during the winter and early spring. The soil should be fertile, well drained, slightly acidic, and as deep and rich as possible. Soils that are alkaline and shallow will make the tree struggle.</p> <p>Here is how to plant your tree this spring. Begin by digging a hole 2 feet deep and as wide as possible. If your soil is not good, dig the hole bigger so you can backfill the hole with conditioned soil when you plant. Use compost and animal manure to condition the soil around the plant. I also add Soil Moist granules, to help hold moisture around the young root system to help get it off to a better start during the heat of summer. Also use the new technology in soil science and add mycorrhizae-enhanced products when planting to stimulate root development.</p> <p>All fruit trees should be staked at the time they are planted to help keep them in place during windy days and prevent root damage by the wind. Stakes should be left on the trees for 2 years to insure good root development. When you place the soil around the roots of the plant in the hole, firm it in place, but never stamp it down. Cover the planting bed with 2 to 3 inches of bark mulch around the</p>		<p>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;">Have a Look Around Our Website:</p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div> <p>Subscribe to our newsletter!</p> <p>Click here to subscribe, unsubscribe or change your address.</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; width: 150px; height: 15px; margin: 0 auto 20px auto;"></div>

plant to keep out weeds and help retain moisture during the heat of summer. This planting bed will also prevent damage to the trunk of the tree by your lawn mower or weed whacker when you care for the lawn in your yard.

Water regularly for the first year right up to the time the leaves fall from the plant in the fall--water is that important to plant growth. Spring and early fall are also the perfect times to fertilize your tree until it is well established and producing fruit.

Use a slow release fertilizer like Plant-Tone for uniform growth above and below the ground on the plant. Also very important is to add a ring or collar of hardware cloth wire around the trunk of the plant to prevent rodent damage. Make the wire covering a good inch away from the trunk and push it into the ground 1 to 2 inches deep to keep all types of animals away from the tender and sweet-tasting bark. The wire should be 2 to 3 feet high and remain around the plant for 3 to 5 years if you have animal problems on your property.

The type of tree you select will depend on the amount of work you desire and the room you have on your property. The most popular types are standard growing trees that will grow 25 feet tall and wide, semi-dwarf trees that will grow 15 feet tall and wide and the dwarf trees that will grow under 10 feet tall and wide. Taller growing trees require more maintenance, more time by you, and better equipment--but produce more fruit. Semi-dwarf trees will be easier to maintain and you will not have to leave the ground to perform the maintenance; great for smaller spaces. Dwarf trees can be grown in a container or garden and are very easy to maintain but produce less fruit, so you'd need to plant more trees.

Plan a spraying program for your trees if you want good fruit and foliage from the tree. This will begin--before the flowers open--with an application of, Hi-Yield Lime-Sulfur to kill off disease spores that overwintered on the plant. I also apply it in the fall when all the foliage has fallen from the tree. At the same time, apply Bonide All-Season Oil to kill any overwintering insect eggs on the tree, both in the fall and spring. During the growing season, use a fruit tree spray every other week to keep problems under control.

New this year is a systemic foliage insect control for fruit trees to keep most all insects off the tree. The product, made by Bayer Advanced and called Fruit, Citrus and Vegetable Insect Control, will offer season-long protection without spraying! It will kill insects and prevent new infections; rainproof protection won't wash off. This product stays only in the foliage and will not enter the fruit.

Here is a trick to accurately time your first applications of Fruit tree spray to make it more effective and have better control. Buy 2 plastic red apples with stems on them and tie a piece of string to them. Tie the apples on your fruit tree branch, at eye level and coat them with a thin layer of Vaseline. The red apple will become an insect monitor and when insects arrive, they will be drawn to the red apple. The insects will get stuck on it, telling you it is now time to apply your fruit tree spray and begin the spraying program. This idea was developed at the University of Massachusetts in 1970 by my Orchard Planning teacher and our class, and it helped get him his Doctorate. Today it is used in all orchards across the country and because of this LESS pesticide is used to grow your apples.

If you're going to do this right, get yourself a good book on growing fruit trees, I recommend *The Backyard Orchardist* by Stella Otto. Learn all the tricks of the trade from a family-run business that specializes in fruit trees for a living. Planting, pruning, varieties, and harvesting--it's all there and easy to read and understand.

Apples have been around for a long time--it all began with Adam and Eve, so be careful what you eat! Apples are the Tree of Knowledge, The Tree of Life, and in this country it all began as a movement in Leominster, Massachusetts by John Chapman in 1774. John, a pioneer nurseryman better known as Johnny Appleseed, planted thousands of apple trees from New England to Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. John was a pioneer and a gardener credited as the inventor of the modern apple; not a fairy tale, but a true person.

Americans eat 19 pounds of apples a year, that's just one apple per week on average and this fruit is Americans' favorite. Think "Mom and Apple Pie." An apple a day does keep the doctor away, as it helps to slow cholesterol plaque build-up, improves brain health and reduces the risk of heart disease. Just because Snow White got a bad apple, do not stop eating apples and apple products; you will be healthier.

Here are a few more apple quotes to remember and I am sure you have heard them before. "The apple does not fall far from the tree." "One bad apple can spoil the whole bunch." "As American as apple pie." Washington is the apple state, the number one producer of apples. If you watched the *Wizard of Oz*, the bad apple trees did throw apples at the Scarecrow and Dorothy. This spring, plant an apple tree and enjoy your garden.

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When you look out the window today and see all the snow that covers the ground you might get discouraged--but don't, because spring is just 17 days away. Very soon all that snow will melt away. When the snow melts, the first shrub to come into bloom is the Korean rhododendron--and it will be this month!!! This wonderful plant will soon fill your garden with beautiful light rosy-purple flowers when nothing else is even thinking of flowering, and it will bloom for 4 to 6 weeks.

This rhododendron is native to Korea and winter hardy to temperatures of 20 to 30 below zero, making it a very hardy plant for the northern part of the country. It will also grow as far south as North Carolina, where it is in bloom right now. The *Rhododendron mucronulatum* is not widely planted, because when it is in bloom most of us are not yet thinking of visiting the nursery yet.

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When we finally go to the nursery it is done blooming so it does not sell well. You need to call your favorite nursery now, and ask them to get it for you so you can enjoy flowering shrubs in your yard before most of your neighbors do.

This rhododendron is unique because it will lose its foliage during the winter, making it a deciduous shrub. Most people who see this plant for the first time think it is an azalea because it has no leaves at this time of the year, and that is OK.

The Korean rhododendron will grow to 4 to 8 feet tall and just as wide. It grows upright, somewhat rounded or oval in appearance. The branches are very strong and snow damage is not a problem. The stems are light brown to dark gray, and very smooth. The plant will produce multiple stems from the base of the plant and those stems branch out, creating many new branches and buds each year.

The plant does best when planted in full sun to a bit of light shade but I have seen them growing in moderate shade if the trees are limbed up high to get good light to the plant. If you can provide a garden soil that is moist and has a lot of organic matter it, the plant will thrive. All you have to do is add compost to the ground when you plant it in your garden. Like all rhododendrons, the plant will grow better if the soil is on the acidic side so keep lime and wood ash away. All rhododendrons must have a well-drained soil, and this one is no exception. If your soil is on the clay side, plant in a raised bed and add plenty of compost. Just remember--no standing water at any time.

The plant does not look like a formal plant, more natural or wild-looking, making it a wonderful addition to naturalistic areas, mass plantings and group plantings. If you can provide evergreen plants for the background, the flowers will become even more pleasing to you and more noticeable in the early spring. I like the plant as a foundation plant on the east or west side of the house, to help hide a gas or electric meter or along a wooded border--much as you would plant a forsythia. You can also plant them in a row to make a hedge that will grow uniformly. Plant spring flowering bulbs, like daffodils, early tulips or grape hyacinths at the base of the plant for a very colorful focal point in your garden.

The foliage is 1 to 4 inches long and 1/2 to 1 inch wide, much like a P.J.M. rhododendron, except that it is aromatic when you crush the foliage. Only medium green, not as dark as the traditional rhododendron but in the fall the foliage will turn a mixture of yellow to orange with some streaking of wine. If you rake the foliage that falls around the plant, the fragrance will be noticeable and pleasant. This fall color is later in the season and because of this becomes more noticeable in your garden.

The flowers come in clusters of 3 or more blooms on the tips of the new growth. Each flower is 1 to 1-1/2 inches long and wide and because there is no foliage on the plant, it is quite striking. The plant will make 3 to 5 inches of new growth each summer and the flower buds develop in the fall. Because the flowers come so early, you will often see early bees around the plant all excited with the find of a spring color. They will not bother you as the days are still cold and short and they know they must move fast to get the job done while the sun is still warm. If you get a few days of warm weather the flower buds may open early and some springs the cold nights can kill the delicate flowers.

Fertilize in the spring with Holly-Tone to help the plant grow larger and again in the fall to produce more flower buds for the following spring. Insect problems are minimal and so are disease problems, as long as you keep the plant out of wet soils. Just remember that this plant will help you to feel better at a time when you really need a sign that winter is coming to an end! Order one today

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It's time to look at the calendar, not out the window! If you planning to have tender bulbs in your summer garden, NOW is the time to start planting them in your home. Visit your local garden center and pick up such bulbs as tuberous begonias, cannas, calla lilies, caladiums, and dahlias--just to name a few. If you can start them during March in your home and transplant them to your garden in early May, these plants will bloom earlier and longer in your garden for you!

In the past, many of you have planted these summer flowering bulbs directly into the garden--and that is OK! But if you start them this month in your home, it will motivate you, encourage you, and excite you that spring is really coming. Please try it--you will feel better!

Some of you have stored these bulbs in your basement for the winter. It's now time to bring them upstairs, wake them up, repot them, and watch them come to life. These bulbs have been hibernating all winter, like you, and NOW is the time to get moving! Are you getting the message yet? It's time now!

All you will need is a good sterile potting soil mix like Miracle-Gro potting soil or the new Espoma super potting soil with microbes. Use new pots or wash your old pots with bleach before adding soil to them and then you're ready to plant. I use one cup of bleach to a gallon of water to sterilize the containers. You can reuse them year after year. Brush off any soil stuck to the pots and dip the pot in this mixture for 30 seconds. Allow them to dry and you're ready to plant--so let's clean those pots now.

Here are suggestions for pot size; tuberous begonias use 4 to 6 inch pots, cannas use 6 to 8 inch pots, calla lilies 4 to 6 inch pots, caladiums 4 to 6 inch pots, and dahlias will depend on the size of the bulbs types. Dahlias that grow 1 to 2 feet tall -- use a 6 inch pot, 2 to 3 foot tall growing--use an 8 inch pot, and 3 to 6 foot tall growing--use a 10 inch pot.

When you purchase these bulbs for the first time, ask the sales person to show you what side of the bulb is up. Please do not be embarrassed to ask for help, this is new to you and you want to do it right the first time!

Planting depth is easy, usually, as most bulbs need to be covered with one inch of soil in your container. Once the bulbs have been planted, give the soil around them a good watering and place the containers where it is warm in your home. These bulbs do not need light until they begin to emerge from the soil; warmth is more important to wake them up and get them growing.

The soil should be kept moist while these bulbs develop so poke your finger into the container and feel for moisture before you water again. Until the roots form, your soil will not dry up so be careful not to over-water. Once the plant pokes through the soil, give it a good drink of water and fertilizer such as Fertilome's new Blooming and Rooting 9-59-8. This is a great fertilizer for root development and flower production on all flowering plants--especially bulbs.

Once the bulbs begin to grow move them to a sunny or brightly lit window where they will stay until they are ready to go into your garden. I spin the container every week, some times more often if I notice they are bending towards the light. This will keep them growing straight. If at all possible, choose a room that stays cool to keep the stems short and thick; if they are growing fast and thin, move them to another window that is not as hot.

Two weeks before you're going to plant them in your garden, put them outside during the day and back in the house at night to get them acclimated to the outside temperatures. Do this the first week and the second week move the plants into your garage or tool shed for the night time. If the weather is stormy during the day leave them in the tool shed or garage as they need to prepare for the move outside.

Start with just a few bulbs the first year and see how you make out. This is just another area of gardening you must learn how to do. You may fail, but you could also succeed and this is a great learning experience for you. When you succeed, pat yourself on the back and call me on Sunday to tell me all about it. If you're having problems, call me. I will be there for you. Enjoy.

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Are you looking for a great gift for a gardener (or yourself)? This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy. This journal, *autographed personally by Paul*, makes a perfect gift for gardeners. The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder.

Also included:

- 8 tabbed sections
- 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...
- Weather records page
- 6 three year journal pages
- Insect & diseases page - 3 project pages
- 3 annual checklist pages
- Plant wish list page
- 2 large pocket pages
- Sheet of garden labels
- 5 garden detail sheets
- 5 graph paper pages for layouts
- 5 photo pages, each holding four 4x6 photos in landscape or portrait format

[Click here to order online.](#)



This Week's Question:

Name two members of the lily family that might be more commonly seen on the dinner plate than as the centerpiece. (There are more than two possibilities.)

[Click Here to Answer](#)

This Week's Prize: *Healthy Garden, Healthy You*, by Milo Shammass

Milo takes us through a storytelling journey of soil health, plant health, animal health and how they directly relate to human health.

BONUS: 100 easy-to-grow plants, their growing instructions, and their direct human health benefits and disease prevention properties.

Last Week's Question:

I am a member of the cabbage family, and a close relative of cauliflower. One of my biggest claims to fame is being hated by an ex-President of the United States. What am I?

Last Week's Winner:

Dave Peck

Last Week's Answer:

Broccoli.

Last Week's Prize:

Healthy Garden, Healthy You, by Milo Shammass

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:

Quick and Easy Pancit



Pancit is a traditional noodle dish from the Philippines that is not only healthful, but tasty too!

What You'll Need:

- 1 (12 ounce) package dried rice noodles
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups diced cooked chicken breast meat
- 1 small head cabbage, thinly sliced
- 4 carrot, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 2 lemons--cut into wedges, for garnish

Step by Step:

- Place the rice noodles in a large bowl, and cover with warm water. When soft, drain, and set aside.
- Heat oil in a wok or large skillet over medium heat.
- Sauté onion and garlic until soft.
- Stir in chicken, cabbage, carrots and soy sauce.
- Cook until cabbage begins to soften. Toss in noodles, and cook until heated through, stirring constantly.
- Transfer pancit to a serving dish and garnish with quartered lemons.



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