

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
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Edition 10.18	Paul Parent Garden Club News	May 6, 2010
 <p><b>FEATURED QUOTE :</b> "Where flowers bloom, so does hope." - Lady Bird Johnson, from <i>Public Roads: Where Flowers Bloom</i></p> <p>Looking for a great gift for Mother's Day? This garden journal helps make planning and organizing easy. This journal, <i>autographed personally by Paul</i>, makes a great gift. The cover holds a 5x7 or 4x6 photo and a heavy-duty D-ring binder.</p> <p>Also included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 tabbed sections</li><li>• 5 garden details sections with pockets for seeds, tags...</li><li>• Weather records page</li><li>• 6 three year journal pages</li><li>• Insect &amp; diseases page - 3 project pages</li><li>• 3 annual checklist pages</li><li>• Plant wish list page</li><li>• 2 large pocket pages</li><li>• Sheet of garden labels</li><li>• 5 garden detail sheets</li><li>• 5 graph paper pages for layouts</li><li>• 5 photo pages, each holding four 4x6 photos in landscape or portrait format</li></ul> <p><a href="#">Click here to order online.</a></p>	<p><b>Gifts for the Gardener</b> <a href="#">Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!</a></p> <p><b>Contact Information:</b> <b>E-Mail:</b> <a href="#">Click to contact us.</a></p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> (207) 985-6972 (800) 259-9231 (Sunday 6 AM to 10 AM)</p> <p><b>Fax:</b> (207) 985-6972</p> <p><b>Address:</b> Paul Parent Garden Club 2 Blueberry Pines Dr Kennebunk, ME 04043</p> <p><b>Phone Hours:</b> Monday-Saturday 8 AM to 6 PM Sunday: 10 AM to 6 PM</p> <p><b>Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?</b> <a href="#">Click here to find Paul Parent Garden Club™ radio stations.</a></p> <p><b>Trains of the Colorado Rockies Trip</b> Join us for a journey into the grand landscapes and fascinating history of the American West. <a href="#">Click here for more information.</a></p> <p><b>Have a Look Around Our Website:</b> <a href="#">Home</a> <a href="#">About Paul</a> <a href="#">Paul's Recipes</a></p>	 <p><i>Happy Mother's Day</i></p> <p>The earliest Mother's Day celebrations we know of were ancient Greek spring celebrations in honor of Rhea, the mother of the gods; the ancient Romans also had another holiday, Matronalia, that was dedicated to Juno. But those were in honor of one particular mother. England's "Mothering Sunday," begun in the 1600's, is closer to what we think of as "Mother's Day." Celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent, "Mothering Sunday" honored the mothers of England.</p> <p>In 1907, Anna Jarvis started a drive to establish a national Mother's Day. In 1907 she passed out 500 white carnations at her mother's church in West Virginia--one for each mother in the</p>

congregation. In 1908, her mother's church held the first Mother's Day service, on May 10th (the second Sunday in May). That same day a special service was held at the Wanamaker Auditorium in Philadelphia, where Anna was from, which could seat no more than a third of the 15,000 people who showed up.

By 1909, churches in 46 states, Canada and Mexico were holding Mother's Day services. In the meantime, Ms. Jarvis had quit her job to campaign full time. She managed to get the World's Sunday School Association to help; they were a big factor in convincing legislators to support the idea. In 1912, West Virginia was the first state to designate an official Mother's Day. By 1914, the



campaign had convinced Congress, which passed a joint resolution. President Woodrow Wilson signed the resolution, establishing an official national Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May.

Many countries of the world now have their own Mother's Day at different times of the year, but Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Japan, and Turkey join the US in celebrating Mother's Day on the second Sunday of May. Britain still celebrates Mothering Day on the fourth Sunday of Lent--but they now call it Mother's Day. By any name, and at any date, it's a special day to honor a special person.

Having trouble thinking of a gift? Why not do something a little different this year? Instead of giving her a bouquet of roses, plant her a rose garden! If she already has a rose garden--add to it! If she lives in an apartment, consider a potted rose plant--

many roses will do quite well in containers). And you can give her a Garden Journal to keep track of her roses!

Why give one bouquet that will soon fade away, when you can give years of pleasure from living roses instead?



## Veggies or Flowers



Sometimes gardeners appear to be senators on opposite sides of the aisle. Vegetable gardening or flower gardening? Each will have their very strong opinions as to why they have chosen one or the other. But in the spirit of bi-partisanship, why not do both in the same garden?

If taking such a grand leap into the other party's dogmata is just a bit too scary, why not inch into it? If you are a vegetable gardener, create small arcs of annuals on the outside edge of each corner of the garden, creating a surround of color just as you would your mailbox. Flowers attract pollinators, which in turn pollinate tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, and other fruiting types. Flowers provide nectar and pollen to the beneficial insects which in turn prey on pests. Confuse insect pests searching for their favorite vegetable plants to feed upon by mixing up the beds with flowers. And flowers will attract birds looking for seeds, but who are delightfully happy to settle for eating insects that are unwanted in your garden. This is especially helpful if you're gardening organically!

Whether your vegetables and herbs are being grown in big, raised beds, in window boxes, or in containers, the same rules apply. We are always searching for a variety of color, texture, and color, along with varying height. Lobelia, with over 350 species, is an ideal addition to any container garden, whether you're opting for the trailing varieties, with billowing masses of blossoms, or more compact bedding types that seldom exceed 6 inches in height. As they sport 1/2 to 3/4 inch wide flowers that come in red, white and blue, a container filled with all lobelia could be a patriotic nod for your Fourth of July barbecue.

Why not add snapdragons for height? Plant them in the back of your container, with a center of herbal plantings, and a border of trailing lobelias. The dwarf varieties grow to about 10 inches, while the taller types grow to a height of 18-24 inches, and come in a fantastic array of colors, from red to orange, yellow, lavender, and white.

The bright blue of bachelor's buttons (also known as cornflowers) is an attractant for pollinating bees. Candytuft, an old-fashioned annual, attracts hoverflies that are excellent pollinators. It also provides nectar for other beneficial insects and a cover for good-guy beetles. The easy-to-grow calendula feeds many predatory insects with its abundance of pollen, along with nectar for butterflies; a visual enchantment. The tall, fern-like cosmos adds height and cheeriness to your late summer veggie garden. It's a jack-of-all-trades, attracting bees, hoverflies, parasitic wasps, butterflies and many small birds.

One favorite annual in a vegetable garden was also a favorite of the Aztecs, who believed that marigolds protected their crops; planting a ring of them around the garden wards off parasitic nematodes. Plant them in amongst the vegetables and they will draw many pollinators and parasitic wasps. They will bloom all summer long, need little attention, come with pompom flowers or tiny, daisy-like blooms, and even have the distinction of the National Garden Bureau having named 2010 The Year of the Marigold.

Keep in mind a cardinal rule of an interesting garden, whether it be a vegetable garden or a flower garden, is that variations in height will always be more interesting to view. Start with a border of sweet alyssum which hides the beetles that feed on insects and pests. The flowers are a rich

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source of nectar for a number of pollinators. Then add in vining and dwarf forms of nasturtium, which are strong pollinators and a great trap crop for aphids. When planted alongside cucumbers and squash, they confuse attacking pests. And top it all off with big, bouncy, colorful sunflowers. They attract many beneficial insects, produce nectar for butterflies, and bring birds to your garden to not only nosh on their seeds, but also on proximal insects.

If you have only created flower gardens, flirt with the other side by incorporating edible herbs and vegetables into your beds. Bergamot, or bee balm, is a perennial herb with minty leaves and attractive flowers that will attract bees and hummingbirds. Garlic chives provide a light flavor and scent, and look like tall clumps of grass; their pretty white flowers self-seed prolifically. Combine with onion chives, which sport purple flowers.

Scented geraniums provide a wonderful variety of aromas; rose, peppermint, lemon, lime, orange, strawberry, apple, almond, and mint, with a variety of foliage available. As scent is so important to a flower garden, a must-include is lemon thyme, which likes a lot of sun. Mint spreads rapidly, and will tolerate the shadier sections of your flower garden; perfect for brewed tea, and a grand garnish in sorbet. With the recent rise in the popularity of Thai-inspired cooking, lemongrass is a perfect herb to include in your flower garden, with its lemon-flavored leaves that are an attractive blue-green shaded ornamental grass. And of course, our personal favorite, rosemary, with its strong aroma and variegated spikes, adds height, scent and taste to your flower garden.

While we dealt here with adding herbs to your flower gardens, there are many vegetables that will accomplish the same ends. Kale and cauliflower add color, texture and taste, especially to your late-season garden. Eggplants have very attractive purple flowers. Lettuce and Italian parsley add texture and fullness to the garden, and will allow you to eat your way through the color! And if you want not only a fresh and delicious vegetable as a centerpiece in your flower garden, but also a conversation-starter, plant the spinach Malabar where it can vine upwards, sporting tiny, purple flowers with beautifully thick green leaves. Pluck the leaves, rinse them off, and pop them into your salad!

So, let's join forces and recognize the assets of both vegetable and flower gardens. When the bill of fare includes color, texture, scent, attractiveness to bees, birds, butterflies and hummingbirds, and taste that enhances our dining pleasure, isn't it one bill that simply must be passed?



Spring brings with it beautiful blossoms, fresh air, warmer temperatures . . . and bugs! Ants, gnats, tent worms, none of which are pleasant. Ah, but spring also gives us ladybugs (*Hippodamia convergens*), which are the best-known garden predators available. There are nearly 5,000 different kinds of ladybugs worldwide, 400 of which live in North America. In fact, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ohio and Tennessee have adopted the ladybug as their official state insect!

As legend has it, in Europe, during the Middle Ages, the crops were being destroyed by insects, so the farmers prayed to the Virgin Mary for help. The ladybugs came, ate the pests, and saved the crops! The grateful farmers began calling the ladybugs "The Beetles of Our Lady" which eventually morphed into "Lady Beetles," and from there to ladybugs.

With aphids, mealy bugs and mites being their favorite food, ladybugs are some of our most beneficial bugs; an adult ladybug can eat over 50 aphids a day. These small, oval-winged insects are usually red with black spots, and are less than ¼ inch in length. As they age, the color of the spots will fade. If a bird, the primary predator of the ladybug, threatens a ladybug, she will play dead.

Some more silly facts about this delightful and advantageous visitor to our forests, fields, gardens, and yes, even our homes:

Ladybugs chew from side to side and not up and down like people do.



- A gallon jar will hold from 72,000 to 80,000 ladybugs.
- A female ladybug will lay more than 1000 eggs in her lifetime.
- The Asian lady beetle can live up to 2-3 years if the conditions are right.

Ladybugs eat nectar as well as insects, so to attract and keep them, grow some of their favorite nectar plants - if you like growing herbs, try some dill, cilantro, fennel or yarrow. Flower growers, try cosmos, sweet alyssum, coreopsis marigolds and geraniums. They also like lilies and other cup-shaped flowers to hide in.

Get to know your beneficial insects. They can be very useful in keeping the pests away and reducing the use of chemicals. And remember--when you *do* need to use chemicals in your garden, read the instructions carefully and consult with a nursery professional, who can advise you on the best one to use for your particular problem.



Many homeowners revel in the glory of their garden in spring, only to be disappointed when plants start to dry out and look stressed in the heat of summer. The natural reaction is to pour more water into the garden to "moisturize" the plants. This in turn can lead to root rot and/or the continuous lowering of soil temperature to the point that plants aren't stimulated to grow--or just plain die (overwatering is one of the main causes of plant death). But these problems can be greatly reduced or, in many cases, prevented by proper mulching.

The goal of mulching is not only to reduce summer heat stress on plants, but to create an environment for plants that will be conducive to good growth. Mulch is to a garden what a roof is to your home. We couldn't heat or air condition the home without the roof. The same seasonal temperature variance occurs in your garden. A 3" layer of mulch not only retains moisture in the soil, but also maintains a cooler temperature in the summer and a warmer temperature in the winter.

Mulching also brings many other benefits to the garden. It gives the garden a tidier appearance, and greatly improves the growing conditions for plants. Mulch helps suppress weeds and helps to conserve moisture. It creates an environment where earthworms can thrive and enhance the soil's condition. Nature provides this for us in natural settings, and when we apply mulch to our garden, we mimic what is naturally done on the forest floor.

The strategy is to stimulate the growth of good soil bacteria which in turn digest plant foods that the plant will recognize as nutrients and absorb. By keeping moisture in the soil you will attract earthworms and beneficial microbes and bacteria. The earthworms loosen up the soil easing compaction, and the beneficial microbes help digest nutrients more efficiently making them more readily available to the plants. Maintaining "moist" soil as opposed to "wet" soil keeps the temperature of the soil at a more consistent level for optimum growth. Mulch also provides a blanket to the soil that protects against the crusting effect that happens as a result of watering or rain. Organic mulches decompose and add humus to the soil.

The method is to spread a 2-3" inch layer of a composted mulch over the top of the native soil before the heat of summer hits. There are many mulching materials available. Color, particle size, and nutrient exchange are considerations when choosing your material. While decorative barks are attractive, they will drag nitrogen from your soil. If you wish to use a decorative bark, we recommend putting it over a composted mulch to balance out nutrient loss.

When properly mulched, the plants in your garden will not only survive the stress of summer, but will thrive in it. A good rule of thumb for mulch is to apply it at least 1-1/2 inches and up to 3 inches in depth. Mulch should never be placed right up against the stem of the plant or trunk of the tree.

In addition to all of the cultural advantages created by mulching, you will also give your garden a more "finished" look, adding to its overall beauty.



**This Week's Question:**

Where did the sunflower originate?

**This Week's Prize:**



Espoma Organic Potting Mix

- Contains Myco-tone® mycorrhizae
- For all indoor and outdoor containers.
- In 4, 8, 16 qt., 1 and 2 cu. ft. bags.

[Click Here to Answer](#)

**Last Week's Question:**

Which expensive foodstuff is obtained from crocus flowers?

**Last Week's Prize:**

Espoma Organic Potting Mix

**Last Week's Winner:**

Kathy Fitzpatrick

**Last Week's Answer:**

Saffron

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



## The Ultimate Pasta Salad



**What You'll Need:**

- 1 (16 ounce) package uncooked tri-colored spiral pasta
- 1 head fresh broccoli, cut into bite size pieces
- 1 head fresh cauliflower, chopped into bite size pieces
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 8 ounces pepperoni slices, cut into quarters
- 1 (8 ounce) package mozzarella cheese, cut into cubes
- 1 (6 ounce) can large pitted black olives, drained and sliced
- 1/2 cup olive oil (or to taste)
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar (or to taste)
- salt and pepper to taste
- Italian seasoning to taste

**Step by Step:**

- Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil.
- Place pasta in the pot, cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until al dente, and drain.
- Transfer to a bowl, cover, and chill 1 hour in the refrigerator.
- Toss chilled pasta with the broccoli, cauliflower, red onion, garlic, pepperoni, mozzarella cheese, olives, olive oil, and red wine vinegar.
- Season with salt, pepper, and Italian seasoning.
- Chill in the refrigerator until serving.

Yield: 12 servings



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