

**From:** Paul Parent Garden Club <newsletter@paulparentclub.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 6, 2012 2:21 PM  
**To:** rickmorin@earthlink.net  
**Subject:** Paul Parent Garden Club News - July 6, 2012

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Edition 12.27	<b>Paul Parent Garden Club News</b>	July 6, 2012
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**Featured Quote:**

"In my garden there is a large place for sentiment. My garden of flowers is also my garden of thoughts and dreams. The thoughts grow as freely as the flowers, and the dreams are as beautiful."

~Abram L. Urban

**Gifts for the Gardener**

[Here are some great ideas for gifts your favorite gardener will just love!](#)

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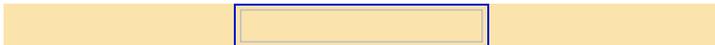
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**We're a bit late!**  
Paul celebrated his 40th anniversary Sunday and the Fourth of July on Wednesday. Sorry for the delay!

**Come See Paul's Garden!**

Join us for the 18th annual "Private Gardens of the Kennebunks" Garden Tour, July 14, 2012 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. SHINE OR RAIN. All proceeds benefit the prevention programs of the Child Abuse Prevention Council of York County, Maine. Tour eight lovely gardens throughout Kennebunk and Kennebunkport. Advance tickets are \$20.00 through the day of the event. Please visit [www.kidsfreetogrow.org](http://www.kidsfreetogrow.org) for more information. This year you can also [purchase your tickets online](#) to save some time.

This year Paul will have many surprises for you to see in his garden, as well as many great ideas for you to add to your garden. And Paul will be there all day for you to talk to! Bring your friends and make it a day trip to enjoy the beautiful gardens in Kennebunk Maine.



**Rescue Japanese & Oriental Beetle Trap**

**What it catches:**

This trap catches the Japanese beetle, a destructive garden pest that infests and destroys over 300 varieties of ornamental plants. Also catches the Oriental beetle, which feeds on roots of turfgrass, nursery stock, greenhouse ornamental crops and fruit.

**How it works:**

The trap uses floral scents proven to be a natural attractant, along with the beetle's natural sex attractant. The trap uses a scientifically designed method to control the release of these natural

**Where can I find Paul on Sunday mornings?**

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floral and sex attractants to lure both male and female beetles to the trap. The convenient plastic cone design prevents the user from having to handle the actual attractants. Once attracted by the pheromone scent, Japanese beetles fly into the large yellow panels of the trap and are stunned on impact. They then fall into the attached bag. Once inside, they cannot fly out of the trap.

**Unique features and benefits:**

- Central attractant placement disperses pheromone in all directions
- New zippered bottom allows trap to be emptied and reused
- Catch capacity is four times larger than the competition
- Double-layer nylon bag is highly durable
- An all-in-one trap, with no accessories to buy
- Bright panels and the bag are welded together to ensure the bag stays attached

Click here for more information about [Rescue Japanese & Oriental Beetle Traps](#).

When Spanish, Italian and English explorers left their countries looking for the New World, they hoped to find new lands filled with animals, fish and plants that would help to feed and better their fellow countrymen. When they reached North America, they found a plant that was beautiful and stood out among all the plants that they found.

This plant, the sunflower, was named for its beautiful flowers that resembled the sun, had flowers that always faced south towards the sun and stood so tall over other flowers that it could be located in the distant sky like the sun. Old world gardeners, dazzled by the sunflower's beauty and size, searched and traded for the seed with other gardeners from around the world for the bragging rights to the tallest and largest flower in the gardens of the world.

Even if you are not a gardener, you know of the sunflower and so do most kindergarten children. The sunflower is that huge, gold outer-petaled flower with the yellow or brown center that in time will contain large seeds to feed the birds. The flower head is a circle of petal-like florets that surround the dense center in the shape of a plate. The plate is covered with tiny flowers that when pollinated will fall, revealing rows of seed arranged in a circular fashion. The plant grows so fast we can measure it almost daily and watch it grow larger every day--in just a few weeks it will grow taller than we are, almost like the tale of Jack and the Beanstalk.

The sunflower is grown mostly for the oil rich seed found in the center of the large flower and not for the birds, even though most of us think of it as a source of food for our winter feeder. Actually, the sunflower is grown for the oil in the seed for cooking, bread making and baked goods, eaten as a raw or toasted seed and lastly as a source for food for our birds. The oils in the seed make it possible for our birds to survive a long, cold and wet winter season. The main use of the sunflower is for its seeds, that are pressed for the oil they contain for cooking, use in margarine and to help lower cholesterol in our diet.

Plant sunflowers in a full sun garden that has a better than average soil that is well drained. The better you prepare the soil, the larger the plants and flower will be. If your growing season is short, you can begin the plants inside the house in 4-inch pots for a head start on the season but start no sooner than 3 weeks before planting. If you start too early, the pot that you use to start them in could almost stunt them, as they grow so quickly that they will get root bound.

I always prefer that you plant seeds directly in the garden, as they do grow quickly. Condition the soil with animal manure and compost before planting, and add additional soil conditioners once the plants have grown to 12 inches tall for the extra boost.

Today sunflowers come in many heights, from 18 inches to 10 feet tall. Sunflowers come in various colors such as yellow, orange, red and bi-colors. You can also choose varieties that make a single flower, or the new branching varieties that will make multiple stems with multiple flowers that are great for cutting. If you are growing the sunflowers for the birds, look for the black oil types, as the seed is richer with oil than the traditional striped seed type. You can also save some of the seeds from your bag of bird food and plant them in your garden.

Several years ago I planted a section of my garden with a mixture of sunflower seeds and it turned out beautifully, with multiple colors and heights. I purchased 6 different types of sunflower seeds that would grow 4 to 8 feet tall and mixed them together before planting in the garden. I also fertilized every week with Miracle-Gro--and the results were stunning.

Try growing a sunflower garden or plant random giant sunflowers in the flower or vegetable garden and watch them grow. If you have young children or grandchildren, have them each plant their own cluster of 3 or 4 tall-growing plants in the garden and create a contest for the tallest plant and largest flower head. When I was growing up, my dad did this--and we ended up with plants over 15 feet tall in the garden! Enjoy.

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If you think about all the trees and shrubs around your home, how many of them have a fragrance? Most of the plants we grow around our home were selected by us for their flowers and foliage but few for fragrance. I hope that after you read this you will make a change.

The plant I am suggesting you look at is the summersweet or clethra. During July and August your yard will be filled with the sweet floral scent of the summersweet and the fragrance can be noticed 50 feet or more from the plant. The plant itself is not eye-catching until it flowers. For most of the growing season, it almost looks like a wild shrub, which it is in New England, as it is a native plant. So plant this shrub on the edge of your property line, near a deck or patio so you can enjoy the fragrance when you are relaxing.

Summersweet will grow like many of our spreading-type shrubs but is more rounded in appearance. Once established in your yard, the summersweet will make many suckering branches from the base of the plant, helping it to fill in quickly and grow larger. The plant will grow 3 to 8 feet tall and often wider, but you can prune it in the spring to control the overall size of the plant.

The foliage is elongated, oval and comes to a point; it is 2 to 4 inches long, with little teeth on the edge of the leaf. The leaf is dark green and has a sheen to make it look lustrous but not striking. In the fall, you are in for a real treat as those dark green leaves turn to a pale yellow then to golden yellow.

Summersweet is now in bloom all over the Northeast with spike-like flowers that will grow from two to six inches tall and almost one inch wide. The flowers open from the bottom first and move up the spike slowly to give you enjoyment for 4 to 6 weeks, depending on the weather. Each cup-like individual flower is loved by butterflies and hummingbirds.

You will see this plant growing along country roads, near streams or along rivers. Summersweet prefers acid soil, a soil that is moist but it must be well-drained; the plant will grow in full sunshine or up to half a day of shade. This plant is amazing, because it will adapt quickly to where you plant it. Another reason it is a native plant in the Northeast. The summersweet is also heat and drought tolerant.

In the spring you will have to remember that the summersweet is slow to leaf out and many gardeners fear that it has died during the winter, but be patient and the leaves will come. Hold off the pruning until you see the new growth forming, unless you are pruning to control the size of the plant. To control size, prune while the plant is dormant in early April. Once the new growth begins you can remove any dead branches but this plant is very hardy and little pruning is needed. The plant is winter hardy to 20 to 30 below zero and will tolerate and thrive in windy locations.

Fertilize with acid-adoring fertilizer from Dr Earth or Plant-Tone in the spring to help increase the number and size of the flowers. When the flowers fade, a small seedpod will develop where the flower was and, like the foliage, will turn golden-yellow in the fall.

Summersweet is a wonderful plant for a woodland garden, in plant borders with perennials, near a pond, lake or river edge to help hold the ground firm. If you have a steep slope and have erosion problems, this is your plant. Visit your local garden center and look at the new hybrids with pink flower buds called 'Pink Spires' and the new 'Red Spice' with deep rose-colored flowers. I also like 'Hummingbird,' as it is more compact and covered with white flower spikes. Aroma, fragrance and the smell of summer is now possible with the summersweet/clethra shrub. Enjoy!

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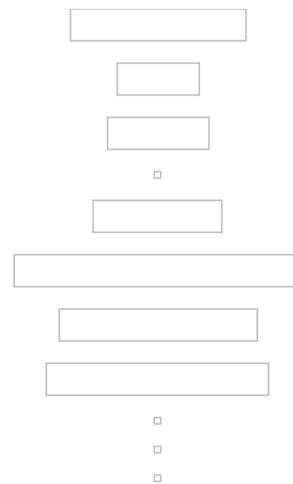
It is summer and the vegetable gardens are wonderful, so how do we keep them that way until the fall? Here are a few simple things to do to keep your garden productive right to the end.

If you planted peas this spring they'll probably be finished producing around the end of the month, but you'll still have time to plant a new crop though early August. Peas will take from 60 to 90 days to mature; they are cold tolerant and should mature for you during September to mid-October, so get the new crop in the ground in time. Leaf lettuce and spinach will also mature for a great fall crop of fresh greens if planted around the beginning of August. Radishes come up quickly, so keep planting as they mature--about every 30 days.

Broccoli will make small 1 to 2 inch florets of flowers that will keep coming until frost if you clean the plant of yellow leaves and fertilize every 2 weeks with Miracle-Gro. I pick the florets every couple of days and store in a poly storage bag in the refrigerator until I have enough to cook or use in a salad. Feed them regularly, pick often and the plant will continue to produce for you.

Brussels sprouts will get bigger with the heat and moisture of summer. As they grow, remove some of the lower leaves to make space for them to mature. Pick in September when the weather gets cooler for better taste--but the best tasting sprouts will come after a frost. Do not pull the plant out of the ground in the fall, as you can pick sprouts in Southern New England until Christmas--and I did when I lived on the South Shore of Boston. Fertilize them now if you haven't in the last 30 days with Liquid Miracle Gro. If your plants are getting tall, you may have to stake them to keep the sprouts off the ground and clean.

Peppers love the heat, so keep feeding them now; the heat of summer is the most productive time for them. When the fruit matures, harvest it so the plant can keep making more fruit.



Eggplants also love the heat so keep them well watered and feed for mature fruit earlier and a second crop in the fall.

Summer and zucchini squash will keep producing until first frost, as long as they have enough water and are fertilized regularly. Pick the squashes when they are small so seeds do not have a chance to mature and the plant will keep making more for you. Keep the plant clean and remove yellow leaves as they begin to go by. Use a liquid fertilizer every 2 weeks on the foliage of the plant as well as soaking the soil at the base of the plant to keep the roots strong. If leaves begin to turn powdery white, spray foliage with Serenade organic fungicide to control powdery mildew and keep plant productive.

Vine squash like butternut, blue hubbard, acorn and other winter squashes will continue to make fruit well into September if you can water and fertilize regularly. Watch for powdery mildew and the possibility of deer or woodchucks moving into the garden for a feed. If they begin to show signs of feeding, create a barrier protection with Deer Scram or Shake-Away repellent.

Tomatoes will begin to mature this month and next, so you can make your famous spaghetti sauce, salsa, piccalilli and relishes. Keep the plants healthy by watering regularly in the morning (when possible) and fertilizing every 2 weeks with Miracle-Gro. Remove the yellow leaves, and, if needed, use Serenade organic fungicide to keep foliage green and productive.

Around the beginning of August, you should cut back your tomato your plants a bit. I prune the tomato plant to the last fruit made by the plant; this sends all the energy made by the plant to the maturing fruit and helps mature larger fruit faster. I only remove about a foot of the new growth so the plant can concentrate on maturing the existing fruit, stop getting larger and stop making new flower buds that will not have time to mature. Fertilizing them with Miracle-Gro every 2 weeks will speed maturing fruit.

If you have a large freezer, did you know that you can freeze whole red tomatoes in the fall and thaw them during the winter for great tomato soups? Freeze washed tomatoes in freezer bags to prevent freezer burn. Thaw the night before, dip in boiling water to help remove skins and you're ready for a great base for tomato or vegetable soup.

Cucumbers will stay productive longer if you keep feeding and watering the plants. When cucumbers start to look like a baby's bottle with a nipple on the end of the cucumber, it means your watering is not regular enough and the plants are running out of energy, so feed them every 2 weeks now with Miracle-Gro. Spray the foliage of the plant as well as the soil because Miracle Gro-can be absorbed through the foliage as well as through the roots. When your plants stop producing, it means you are back to waxed cucumbers until next June, so do not give up too soon.

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#### **This Week's Question**

What do you call the red pigment responsible for the color of (most) ripe tomatoes?

#### **This Week's Prize:**

Liquid Plant THRIVE

#### **Soil Conditioner & Mycorrhizal Root Stimulator--perfect for seedlings and growing plants of all types.**

The hottest gardening product for 2012! From existing plants to seedlings--THRIVE helps plants get off on the right "root." The beginning is often the most important part of your plants' lives. Maintaining soil quality for them to grow is imperative. Liquid Plant THRIVE contains a concentrated dose of the microbes already found in nature that will ensure a strong root system, require less watering and help you do your part for the environment.



For more information, [see the THRIVE website.](#)

[Click Here to Answer](#)

#### **Last Week's Question:**

What did the great rivals John Adams and Thomas Jefferson both do on July 4, 1826?

#### **Last Week's Winner:**

Eric Duphily

#### **Last Week's Answer:**

Both Adams and Jefferson both passed away on July, 4 1826.

#### **Last Week's Prize:**

Liquid Plant THRIVE

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!

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.](#)

**FEATURED RECIPE:**  
**Warm Chicken and Mango Salad**



**Ingredients:**

- 1/3 cup vanilla low-fat yogurt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lime juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons mango chutney
- 1 tablespoon seasoned rice vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon ground paprika
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves--cut into strips
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 1/2 cups peeled, seeded and chopped mango
- 1 cup sliced red bell pepper
- 1/3 cup chopped green onion
- 8 cups torn romaine lettuce

**Directions:**

- In a small bowl, blend vanilla yogurt, lime juice, mango chutney, rice vinegar, honey, cumin, coriander, and paprika.
- Heat olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Place chicken, ginger, and

garlic in the skillet. Cook 7 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear.

- Mix mango, red bell pepper, and green onions into the skillet. Cook about 5 minutes, until pepper is tender and mangoes are heated through. Stir in the vanilla yogurt mixture. Spoon over romaine lettuce to serve.

Yield: 4 servings



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