

Divide, conquer plants to keep healthy

While you're weeding and seeding and planting and pruning, there's one more thing to put on your plate: dividing.

Dividing is a matter of digging up plants, prying them apart with hands, spades, knives or an ax and replanting them in new holes, said Weston Miller, a horticulturist for Oregon State University's Extension Service. As perennials grow from the crown and the clumps get larger, plants decline in vigor and have fewer flowers. If you wait too long to divide, flowering can stop altogether.

That's not the only reason to take out the spade and start splitting up your prized plants.

"I divide plants when I want more of them," Miller said. "I'm looking outside and seeing some chives. I'll hack those into quarters. I divide things like yarrow a lot because I want to populate large areas."

If you've got enough yarrow - or whatever other plant that needs to be divided - thrill your gardening



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

friends by sharing extras. How many more plants you end up with depends on how big or vigorous the original plant. Hosta, grasses and daylily can produce six or more, while hollyhock and coral bells may only yield three. Be sure to pay attention to how many growing points there are and leave at least two per clump when you cut plants apart.

As a general rule, Miller said, divide summer- and fall-blooming plants in spring and spring-blooming plants after they've bloomed or in the fall. Don't cut apart a plant when it's blooming.

You'll know your plant needs dividing if it's dying in the middle or becoming lackadaisical, he said. Even if a reference says to divide a plant every three years,

How to divide plants:

Saturate soil where you plan to plant divisions a few days ahead of time.

Prepare soil in the new planting area with organic matter and saturate again.

Dig holes where you will plant divisions. Make them wide enough to accommodate the roots and a bit more. Dig deep enough so crown of divisions will be level with top of the soil.

If the soil is dry, water the plant a day or two before dividing it.

Cut the plant down to 6 inches from the ground.

Use a spading fork or sharp shovel to dig around the plant.

Pry or dig out in one big chunk.

Once on the surface, don't allow root ball to dry out. If it's a warm day, cover with plastic sheet, cloth or even plant clippings.

Make sure there are growing portions in each division.

For smaller plants or those with fibrous roots systems like small ornamental grasses, pry apart the roots with your hands or saw through them with a serrated knife or weeding tool such as a Hori-Hori knife. Use a sharp spade, shovel, handsaw or ax for larger plants. With really tough roots, pry them apart with two spading forks placed back to back.

Shake or hose off loose soil.

Discard dead center of plant.

Plant divisions with crowns even with soil line.

there's no need to do so if it's growing well.

One thing people don't think to divide are culinary herbs such as sage, thyme, oregano and marjoram,

Miller said.

"You'll get much more supply growth and better culinary quality if they're divided every couple of years," he said.

MI TOWN

The calendar tells us that we're knee-deep in springtime - and in MI Town that means that kids of all ages are in the midst of participating in wonderful outdoor sports such as track and field, baseball and softball. Whether or not we have kids or grandkids or even great-grandkids involved in spring sports, it's so much fun to spend these warm afternoons and twilight evenings watching these events. We don't have to drive to busy cities or pay for expensive seats at faraway stadiums to enjoy a great time.

MI Town is alive with the sounds of lawnmowers and weed whackers, and there are days you wonder if the weeds are winning the battle in every neighborhood. For gardeners, these bright and



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

sunny days bring a mixed blessing - the weeds seem to grow faster than the flowers - and it's a challenge to stay ahead of the game. This is truly the season of renewal in so many ways, and a day in the yard will bring so many rewards for each of us and for our neighbors, who will welcome an opportunity to chat over the back fence and take a welcome break from our mutual labors.

Thanks to the Monmouth Garden Club and the Ore-

gon State University Master Gardeners recent plant sales, our vegetable gardens are all taking on a new look for springtime as well. There's a lot of work up front when planting a garden, but the rewards are well worth it as the tomatoes, green beans, lettuce and all the herbs are harvested during the season. This year at our house, the grapevines are beginning to show lots of promise - shade for the back deck in summertime and the bounty of fresh grapes in the fall.

If you don't have time and/or energy or the outdoor space to grow your own fresh fruit and veggies, you can meet and greet your friends and neighbors at the Monmouth Bounty Market on Tuesdays, and stop by the

Independence farmers markets every Saturday in the Umpqua Bank parking lot and down at Riverview Park. Farm-grown vegetables and fruits and all kinds of hand-crafted items are available at reasonable prices. Good springtime fare from our Willamette Valley is available right in our neighborhood - and our money goes much farther when we buy locally.

Springtime is a great season to welcome new neighbors or touch base with folks we haven't seen in a long time. It's also a good time to walk along our main streets to see what our local merchants can share with us. Let's also stop for a cup of coffee or a cold drink at one of our many cafes and restaurants.

PEDEE NEWS

Judy Guida visited former neighbor Sharon Ketchum in Colville, Wash., for a little over a week in April while Sharon's husband Scott was on a business trip out of the country. She had a wonderful time riding horses with Sharon, as well as learning the finer points of gopher trapping. They also went to a concert each Saturday, the first Saturday to the Spokane Symphony and the second Saturday: to hear Pink Martini, a Portland-based jazz and pop band. On one of the days, they drove to Idaho to check out a beautiful, well-trained palomino gelding which Sharon ultimately bought -



ARLENE KOVASH

always fun to go horse shopping!

Once Sharon got Judy out of the house, she and several friends flew to Louisville, Ky., to go to the Kentucky Derby. They had a great time, wearing traditional "Southern Belle" Derby hats, attending Derby festivities, and seeing their favorite, American Pharaoh, win.

Last weekend Judy traveled to Phoenix, Ariz., to visit relatives, enjoy the 100 degree weather and see historic sites in Phoenix and Scottsdale (Heard Museum and Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West) plus go to a barbecue festival where there were lots of country bands playing.

Kevin Porter, who rented some acreage from a neighbor, planted 17 acres of purple phacelia for seed last week, to be sold as a cover crop. These purple flowers are very sweet and attractive to bees and will also beautify the neighborhood later

this summer. Kevin's wife Karen is slowly recovering from a head-on crash she had in January. Still some deep bruising, not quite healed.

The Polk County Saddletes are planning their annual poker ride for Saturday, June 20, so plan for that! Also, save these dates: there will be the annual Family Fun Fair at Kings Valley School at 2 p.m., Sunday, June 28, sponsored by Pedee Church among other groups, and Pedee Church's Vacation Bible School, themed "Weird Animals," will be Monday through Friday, July 20-24.

LIBRARY CALENDAR

DALLAS
950 Main St. • 503-623-2633
www.ci.dallas.or.us/library

- Wednesday, May 4 p.m. — Read to the Dog, Bella.
- Thursday, May 14, 11:15 a.m. — Storytime.
- Friday, May 15, 5:30 p.m. — Young Adult Movie Night, "Captain America, First Avenger."
- Tuesday, May 19, 11:15 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. — Storytime.
- Wednesday, May 20, 4:30 p.m. — Teen Book Club, "Dragon-spell" by Donita K. Paul.
- Wednesday, May 20, 4 p.m. — Read to the Dog, Davos.

INDEPENDENCE
175 Monmouth St.
503-838-1811
www.ci.independence.or.us/library

- Wednesday, May 13, 10:30 a.m. — Storytime
- Thursday, May 14, 4:30 p.m. — Chess Club for Kids (grades 1 and older)
- Friday, May 15, 6:30 p.m. — Knitting Monsters (basic knitting projects)
- Friday, May 15, 6:30 p.m. — Knitting Monsters (for adults)
- Saturday, May 16, 3 p.m. — Book Bingo for Adults
- Tuesday, May 19, 4 p.m. — Spring Fun Club (Lego Mania)
- Wednesday, May 20, 10:30 a.m. — Storytime

MONMOUTH
168 S. Ecols St. • 503-751-0182
www.ci.monmouth.or.us/library

- Wednesday, May 13, 3:30 p.m. — Community Chinese Lessons
- Thursday, May 14, 10 a.m. — Little Builders Club (babies to preschoolers)
- Thursday, May 14, 7 p.m. — Once Upon a Thursday Book Club (meets on second Thursday of the month)
- Saturday, May 16, 1 p.m. — "Sports Around the World"
- Tuesday, May 19, 10:15 a.m. — Storytime
- Wednesday, May 20, 10 a.m. — Bob the Builder

• Wednesday, May 20, 3:30 p.m. — Community Chinese Lessons (conversation)

WAGNER COMMUNITY LIBRARY
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503-787-3521, ext. 319
www.wagner.plinkit.org



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BIRTHS

Andersen

Reed Steven Andersen was born to Mark and Monica Andersen of Dallas at 8:47 p.m. on April 11 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

He weighed 9 pounds, 1 ounce, and was 21½ inches long.

Reed joins Grant 5.

Grandparents are Scott and Tina Andersen and Steve and Sandy Lewis all of Dallas, and Tonya Hall-Lewis of Creswell.

Great-grandparents are Hoyt and Judy Hall of Estill Springs, Tenn., Bob and Wanda Andersen of Placerville, Calif., and Paul Lewis of Dallas.

King

Grover Case King was born to Isaac and Stefani King of Dallas at 2:59 a.m. on April 18 at Silverton Hospital Family Birth Center.

He weighed 8 pounds, 13 ounces, and was 21 inches long.

Grover joins Rusty, 1.

Grandparents are Mark and Jill Cavender of Dallas, and Brian and Kathy King of Falls City.

English

Ryker Lee English was born to Thomas English and Tanisha Soto of Dallas at 1:51 p.m. on April 21 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

He weighed 4 pounds, 9 ounces, and was 17 inches long.

Ryker joins Joe, 15, Jamie, 13, Jaden, 10, and Braxton, 8.

Grandparents are Todd and Maggie Dennett of Dayton. Great-grandparents are Lapreal Dennett of New Plymouth, Idaho.

Holmes

Sinai Janaye Holmes was born to Austin and Daisy Holmes of Salem at 10:36 a.m. on April 25 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

She weighed 8 pounds, 3 ounces, and was 20¼ inches long.

Sinai joins Marley, 4, and Azryah, 2.

Grandparents are Celso and Laticia Sanchez of Monmouth, and Richard and Cathy Holmes of Salem.

Great-grandparents are Gilbert and Carmen Martinez of Los Angeles.

Eisele

Roman Carter Eisele was born to Melvin and Mellisa Eisele of Dallas at 9:54 p.m. on May 4 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

He weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces, and was 19½ inches long.

Roman joins Shelby, 8.

Monmouth-Independence Rotary Club
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Bring in any of the items listed below and we will dispose of them for you, in a manner friendly to the environment.
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Degreasers
Engine Cleaners
Fluorescent Tubes
Furniture Stripper
Herbicides
Household Batteries
Kerosene Gas
Lab Sets
Latex paint
Lighter Fluid
Mercury
Oil based paint
Paint Thinner
Pesticides
Pool Chemicals
Rose Dust
Rust Remover
Slug Bait
Solvents
Spot Remover
Thermometers
Thermostats
Transmission Fluid
Turpentine
Weed Killers
Wood Preservatives
IMPORTANT:
• Keep products in original containers if possible.
• Do not mix any products.
• Keep away from passengers while transporting.
WHAT NOT TO BRING
Explosives
Radioactive Waste
Motor oil
DATE: Saturday, May 23rd, 2015
TIME: From 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Polk County Public Works 820 SW Ash Street
SPONSORED BY: Polk County, The Cities of Dallas, Independence, Monmouth, Falls City and Salem