



KYM POKORNY / for the Itemizer-Observer
A fruit tree trains on an espalier, which can make the fruit easier to pick because it is at a lower level. The practice takes patience.

Training a fruit tree into an espalier

Espaliered trees bring fruit down to eye level. They allow for easy picking and taking advantage of small spaces.

But don't kid yourself into thinking espaliers are any easier than regular-sized trees, said Ross Penhallagon, a horticulturist with Oregon State University's Extension Service.

"Espalier is one of many ways to prune — or design — a fruit tree," he said. "It's beautiful; it doesn't take up a lot of room in the yard. There are a lot of reasons to do it, but it takes dedication and time. It's like growing grapes or wisteria correctly."

In espalier, tree branches are typically trained flat along the wires of a trellis, which may be of several types, depending on how difficult an espalier project you want to attempt. In addition to a trellis, trees can be supported by a wall, wooden fence, or deer or cattle fencing.

If the trellis will be attached to a building, consid-



KYM POKORNY
 Your Garden

er how it will look. Even though the trellis may be removed once the tree has reached its final, rigid state, it will need to remain in place long enough to support the tree, which can be up to 10 years.

The most important aspect of growing an espaliered tree, which can be any type of fruit but is usually an apple, is pruning. Unlike an open canopy tree, Penhallagon said, an espalier must be pruned several times during the growing season to keep in control.

"That's a lot of cutting," he said. "Most people don't know how to prune, so it's important to do your research before beginning."

Penhallagon offers the following instructions for

the simplest way to espalier an apple tree:

- Build a trellis by setting posts 8 feet apart and stretch 12-gauge or heavier galvanized wire between them 18 inches from the ground. At that time you can add more levels of wire, typically three, each 18 inches taller than the other. Alternatively, you can wait until the following years when it's time to train another level to add additional wires.

- Buy a 1- or 2-year-old tree, preferably a dwarf variety, and plant in the middle of the trellis, usually in February. Attach two supple branches, which are called laterals, to the first level of wire, one going left and one going right. Prune out the thickest branch, which is generally in the middle and called the leader, and any other branches.

- As the season goes on, weak branches — called suckers — will grow straight up. These need to be removed regularly. If they are young enough, rub off with

your thumb or, if too thick, cut them off. Also appearing will be sturdier shoots — called spurs. Leave one about every 6 inches and cut off the rest. As they begin to grow, prune the spurs down to three leaves. This is where fruit will form after two years.

- The year after beginning the espalier, start another level by training two lateral branches along the next level of wire and cutting off any additional branches. The following year, add another level.

- After four years, cut off all spurs along one of the branches along the bottom wire to allow new ones to form. The next year, prune off spurs on the other branch on that same wire. In subsequent years, do the same thing, working your way up each level of the espalier.

For more information on espaliering, check out the Extension guide called *Training and Pruning Your Home Orchard*.

MI TOWN

Summertime — and when tempted to complain about my labors while working in a very warm kitchen, I think about those who are working in the fields and on highway construction projects. It helps keep things in perspective until the next batch of jam jars need to be removed from the boiling water bath. This summer is proving to be an excellent one for all garden goodies; and the apple trees and grapevines promise even more bountiful delights in the weeks to come.

Be sure to mark your calendars for Aug. 6 through 8 for the upcoming Polk County Fair. You can find all the information you need on the website: www.co.polk.or.us/fair, about Blue Jeans and Country Dreams — this year's fair theme. There's also a list of



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
 Columnist

contributors who help make this wonderful event possible who would welcome your support. The Polk County Fair is just about my favorite event of the summer, and I can't wait to enjoy corn on the cob from the FFA Alumni booth. Fairgoers of all ages will have something wonderful to see and do, and it's always such fun to discover the talents of our friends and neighbors as we visit the exhibits throughout the fairgrounds.

Those of us who were 4-H kids, as well as others who learned about the benefits

of 4-H membership, have seen our children and grandchildren enjoying learning so many good things about their communities, the world beyond our borders and a renewed interest in science and space exploration. This year's Polk County Fair will showcase accomplishments and talents of MI Town's 4-Hers and those who participate in this worthwhile program throughout Polk County. Be sure to stop by the 4-H Building to meet these youngsters and the leaders who have generously donated their time and talents to yet another generation.

We've so enjoyed watching our great-grandson, Austin Keel, whose baseball team from Milwaukie won third prize in their recent state tournament, and granddaughter, Nicole Luk-

inbeal whose ASA softball team beat teams from Salem and Houston last Thursday. It's great to share the teamwork, sportsmanship and enthusiasm with players, family members, coaches and volunteers while cheering for young athletes who love to play baseball.

Independence High School graduates: the class of 1950 will mark 65 years since graduation with a classic car rally at 11 a.m. followed by a luncheon at noon at Rock-N-Rogers Farrol's Restaurant on Friday, Aug. 21. The cost is \$14.99. The following day, Aug. 22, the all-school reunion will be held at Henry Hill Educational Support Center, located at 750 S. Fifth St., in Independence. Tickets are \$15 and are available by contacting Al Opplinger at 503-838-1353.

PEDEE NEWS

Portia Perkins flew to Davenport, Iowa, on July 14 to visit her sister Paula. During the week, they put 2,000 miles on Paula's car, traveling around visiting friends and family, some as far away as Blue Springs, Mo. They especially liked Galena, Ill., where they ate and shopped much, before going on. They did have a grand time being together for a week.

Meanwhile, James and Jenny Mellein and their kids Leo and Annika spent two weeks in Enterprise, Ala., with Jenny's family. Coincidentally, her brother



ARLENE KOVASH
 Columnist

Michael was there on leave from his post in Afghanistan, which was a happy surprise. Also, James's sister Melisa Clements and her two kids, Sammy and Lory, came up from League City, Texas, to see them. Jenny had been working at the Clemens Community Pool in Philomath for sever-

al years, but had resigned in time to enjoy herself on the trip.

Bob and Lynda Schneckenger traveled to Wisconsin to pick up a 1947 Chevy Coupe they purchased to give Bob a project to work on. They traveled through Yellowstone from east to west and saw some buffalo. They plan to go back and spend more time there.

Pedee Church's Vacation Bible School (VBS) has just concluded a week of crafts, games, music, and fun, all

teaching about Jesus based on the theme "Weird Animals." The 29 children of all ages were taught and supervised by teens and adults from both Pedee and Kings Valley. Each helper was so appreciated, I'm listing them all. Lyndsey and Rob Zarfes were in charge of the "zoo," and helping them were Shelly and Erika Tarvin; Scott Castle; Ronnie Simons; Pesa, Alyssa, and Abigail Makalea; Philip and Jacob North; Jenny Mellein; Allison Barnhart and Alicia Warren. I prepared and served refreshments during the week.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Continued from page 8A

TUESDAY, AUG. 4

- **National Night Out-Independence** — 6 to 8 p.m., Mount Fir Park, on F Street between Seventh and Eighth streets. Meet McGruff the Crime Dog and tour the Inspiration Garden. Free. 503-838-1214.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 5

- **Willamette Valley Food Assistance Program Food Bank** — 1:30 to 6:30 p.m., 888 Monmouth Cutoff Road, Building E, Dallas. Weekly distribution for eligible community members. 503-831-5634.

- **Scrabble with Betty** — 1 p.m., Independence Public Library, 175 Monmouth St., Independence. Scrabble games first Wednesday of every month. Free; refreshments and prizes available. 503-551-7687 or 503-838-1811.

- **Yarning for Others** — 3 to 5 p.m., St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 1486 SW Levens St., Dallas. Knitters and crocheters gather to make clothing and accessories for those in need on the first Wednesday of every month. 503-689-7222.

- **Music in the Park** — 6:30 p.m., Main Street Park, Monmouth. Roseland Hunters, New Orleans Funk. Free. www.ci.monmouth.or.us.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dallas FFW honored nationwide

DALLAS — The Dallas Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 3203 received top honors at the state and national levels this year. The all-State and all-American designations go to a VFW post that excelled in various areas during the 2014-15 membership year including membership, community service and participation in VFW programs.

Through recruitment drives and increased interest in veteran benefits and causes, the post's membership has increased from 91 members last year to 123 this year.

Post members donate their time and money to outside charitable activities. Totals for time and money donated is 2,252 hours, driving 11,000 miles and \$2,700 to assist others.

The final criteria used to judge VFW posts is programs including "VFW in the Classroom" and national military service programs. Post No. 3203 had entrants in all three of the programs that come under the "VFW in the Classroom."

Also, the VFW Post No. 3203 formally adopted the 162nd Oregon National Guard Unit. For more information about VFW: myvfw.org/Oregon.

American Pickers to come to Oregon

POLK COUNTY — Mike Wolfe and Frank Fritz from the series, "American Pickers," on the History Channel, will film in Oregon in September.

The show is a documentary series that explores the world of antique "picking." Wolfe and Fritz embark on road trips across the U.S. in search of the most valuable antiques from motorcycles, classic cars and bicycles to one-of-a-kind vintage memorabilia.

American Pickers is looking for leads. Producers are on the hunt for interesting characters with interesting and unique items. Some of what they look for: vintage bicycles, toys, unusual radios, movie memorabilia, advertising, military items, folk art, vintage musical equipment, vintage automobile items, early firefighting equipment, vintage clothing and pre-1950s western gear.

To be considered for the show, email your name, number, address and description of the collection or photos to americanpickers@cinetflix.com.

West Valley Hospital Foundation's Moonlight & Vines Gala

Friday, Aug. 21, 6 to 9:30 p.m.
 Nesmith Readiness Center, Dallas

At this summer garden party, you'll enjoy:

Dining on a gourmet meal and bidding on silent auction items including trips to Salishan, RiverPlace Hotel and U of O football game, to name several.

Seating is limited, so please call the Foundation Office at 503-831-3456. Tickets are \$50 each.

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