

Have a date with your shrub

You've got clippers in hand, a shrub in mind and a gleam in your eye. It's pruning time.

But do you have a plan? Before you clip a stem, know your shrub, said Neil Bell, horticulturist for Oregon State University's Extension Service.

"What you want to focus on is flowering time and growth habit," he said. "Certain shrubs you can prune right about now; others you should wait until after they flower."

Spring-blooming shrubs like forsythia, mock orange, flowering quince, deutzia and lilac, should be left alone until flowering is over. These bloom on last year's stems, known as old wood, from buds that form in summer or fall. Prune now and you sacrifice flowers.

Summer—and fall—blooming shrubs, on the other hand, flower on new wood. They're fair game to prune now.

There are some exceptions, Bell said. If the goal is to remove some older canes to even out the canopy or thin out the center to facilitate air circulation, pruning a spring-blooming shrub during the dormant season is acceptable.

"It's easier since you can



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

see the plant's form," he said. "Just be judicious. Thin out only the oldest canes, leaving the height and width the same to assure you maintain growth habit and you're not cutting off too many flowers."

Keep in mind that many shrubs need only light pruning, especially if given the room to grow to their mature size. Rhododendron, azalea, rockrose (Cistus) and ceanothus are a few of these. They're better off with a light trim every couple of years. Pieris, rosemary, lavender and Daphne odora and other winter daphne are also low-maintenance. Just cutting off the flowers does the trick.

If Bell has one piece of advice he's most adamant about, it's avoid shearing or topping a shrub.

Instead, if you want a rounded bush, seek out those that grow that way naturally, he said, pointing to rockrose (Cistus), hebe and some daphne and spirea as examples. Or use plants like boxwood, privet



PHOTO BY NEIL BELL

A spring-blooming shrub like forsythia should be pruned after it flowers so that the following year it lives up to its potential.



PHOTO BY NEIL BELL

Another forsythia pruned much, too hard has lost its shape and most of its flowers.

and Japanese holly (Ilex crenata) that respond well to shearing into spheres, squares or other shapes.

Pruning: Most of the time, well-considered pruning begins with determining the shape of the plant. Is it vase-shaped? Upright? Weeping? You'll want to keep that form in mind as you proceed. When it comes time to pick up the clippers, start by cutting out dead or dying canes (stems that grow from the ground). If the shrub needs thinning, cut out the old, less-attractive canes first, Bell said. They'll often be the tallest, so pruning them will keep the plant at a more manageable size. Crossing branches within the canopy can also be clipped out if they're causing too much congestion. Cut some of those stems back to a main branch. But don't go wild. Less is more.

If a plant has gotten out of control, it can be cut to the ground and allowed to grow back, Bell said. However, that applies only to vigorous plants. If a plant is declining because of too much shade, poor soil or a disease, no amount of pruning will rejuvenate it. Even for vigorous plants, constant pruning is not ideal.

Unless you inherit an overgrown plant, he said, it's always better to start with the right plant for the right place.

MI TOWN

Years ago there used to be a saying: you could tell when it was spring in Oregon because the rain was warmer. I'll tip my hot chocolate cup to that statement, and add that I'm thankful we've gotten through at least most of another winter without any real weather disasters like people have experienced in so much of the country this year.

While you're indoors and staying dry from those not-so-gentle spring rains, why not take the time to go through your bookcases as well as the stack of books you've been meaning to read all winter long. Before long, it'll be time to do outdoor tasks and spend more time and energy on walks and hikes and gardening, and the



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

books will still be there. The Friends of the Monmouth Library would appreciate donations of gently-used books for the upcoming May Book Sale. Please stop by the library during regular hours to drop off your donations, and check the ongoing book sale while you are there. After all, there's more room in your bookcases now and you can find something that you really want to read.

With all the political wrangling everywhere, it's easy to

complain about "those politicians" and how our candidate of choice could be so much better in every way. Sometimes it's frustrating to hear all kinds of news — along with the myth and folklore that prevails everywhere — and feel that our voices aren't really heard in the halls of Congress. All politics begins at the local level, and a good way to really find out what's going on in MI Town is to attend local government meetings. Independence City Council meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday and at 7:30 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Monmouth City Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of every month at 7 p.m.

Be sure to mark your cal-

endars and plan to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in MI Town at the Monmouth Senior Center's Soup and Pie sale, from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. on March 17. There will be five varieties of soups and a variety of fruit pies — all homemade by some of the best cooks in MI Town. Prices are still \$3 for a large bowl of soup and \$2 for a generous slice of pie. See you there.

The Independence Library Book Sale is scheduled for March 18 and 19 at the old library building, 311 Monmouth St. Be sure to be there during the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. both days, and discover all kinds of bargains and great reading, including the \$5 per bag sale event.

PEDEE NEWS

The Pedee community increased by one on Thursday with the birth of Aria Braelyn Crowe. Parents David and Korin are thrilled to have a girl to complete their family. Big brothers Preston, Parker, and Kayson will have a hard time not spoiling her, though, if her dad doesn't beat them to it.

Several women on the way to the Women's Club meeting on Highway 223 last Wednesday had to take a detour as a car had careened off the road near Sunken Grade, hit a tree, and a few minutes later burst into flames. The driver, Jon Carey, of Monmouth, had been pulled out of the



ARLENE KOVASH
Columnist

vehicle seconds before the fire, thanks to two deputies who witnessed the crash and stopped to help.

Jimmy Libke and Mickenzy Tootle are both recent graduates of the Polk County Fire District No. 1 Firefighter Academy and are now responding with crews from the Pedee Fire Station, which Jimmy did on Wednesday to help put out

that car fire. Their volunteer efforts ensure that help is available in the region around Pedee when someone calls 911. We appreciate them, as well as all our firefighters.

Diane Telfer is a cover girl! She was on the cover of this month's Ruralite magazine, which featured her and husband Paul's volunteer work with the American Red Cross. They have been volunteering for three years now, and she has responded to several disasters around the U.S., including the Napa, Calif., earthquake, the floods in Houston, and several wildfires around the West. Plus they have re-

sponded to several local house fires.

The Pedee Women's Club has been preparing the upstairs area of their building for a place firefighters would be able to stay when on duty; consequently, they are getting rid of items that have accumulated. There are three sets of quilting frames that are available, if any of you out there are interested in them, contact Ethelene Osgood, 503-838-1944.

The women have appreciated the work that Melvin Nice has been doing to consolidate their shelves of fabric, items for packing soldier boxes, and candy-making supplies.

ENGAGEMENTS

Dunmire-Weaver



Janessa M. Dunmire, of Dallas, and Broc M. Weaver, of Rickreall, are planning a May wedding.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Bret and Mary Dunmire, of Dallas. Her fiancé is the son of Brad and Jeannine Weaver, of Rickreall.

Janessa is a 2010 graduate of Dallas High School. She is employed at Ag West Supply in Rickreall as a customer service representative.

Broc is a 2010 graduate of Dallas High School. He is employed at Wilfong Farms as a mechanic and farm hand.

The wedding is set for May 21 at the Salt Creek Saloon in Amity.

BIRTHS

Raymond

Naomi Grace Raymond was born to Tyler Raymond and Cheyenne Bradford, of Monmouth, at 7:39 p.m. on Feb. 24 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

She weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces, and was 19.5 inches long.

Naomi is the couple's first child. Grandparents are Sandy Dingle, of Willamina, Dan Bradford, of McMinnville, Melissa Modglin-Raymond and Gary Modglin, of Independence.

Great-grandparents are Jeffrey and Nina Lee, of Independence, and Marge Kirkpatrick, of Sheridan.

Boal

Parker James Boal was born to Allen and Sabrina Boal, of Dallas, at 1:12 p.m. on Feb. 26 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

He weighed 8 pounds, 5 ounces, and was 20.5 inches long.

Parker joins Aiddien, 7, and Landon, 4. Grandparents are Virginia Crone, of Olympia, Wash., Dennis Maxfield, of Falls City, Chris Boal, of LaPine, and Ida Hutchison, of Dallas.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Continued from page 8A

TUESDAY, MARCH 15

- **Dallas Wingdiggers RC Flying Club** — 7 p.m., Whitworth Elementary School library, 1151 SE Miller Ave., Dallas. 503-623-7288.
- **Polk County Coin Club** — 7 p.m., Monmouth Senior Center, 180 S. Warren St., Monmouth. 503-362-9123.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

- **Helping Hands Emergency Food Bank** — 10 a.m. to noon, Monmouth Christian Church, 959 Church St. W., Monmouth. For eligible community members; available every Wednesday. 541-404-6517.
- **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.
- **Day-2-Day Diabetes Support Group** — 3 to 4 p.m., West Valley Hospital (main conference room inside main entrance), 525 SE Washington St., Dallas. 503-623-7323
- **Bingo at the Farm** — 6:30 p.m., Rogue Farms Hopyard, 3590 Wigrich Road, Independence. All ages welcome. Free; food and beverages available for purchase. 503-838-9813.
- **Brew and BS: The Old Testament** — 7 p.m., St. Thomas Episcopal Church, 1486 SW Levens St., Dallas. A lecture series on the Old Testament. Bring brew of choice — coffee, tea, chai, beer, wine, cider. 435-503-4304.
- **Lenten series** — 5:30 to 8 p.m., St. Thomas Church, 1486 SW Levens St., Dallas. Free. Worship service at 5:30; soup supper at 6; video lecture series on Old Testament followed by discussion from 7 to 8.
- **Dale Recinella speaker, "The Biblical Truth About the American Death Penalty"** — 5 p.m., Werner University Center at Western Oregon University. Free and open to the public. 503-990-7060.

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The Total Woman

We would like to thank the following for their support of The Total Woman Event held at the Majestic on February 26 - 27:

- Ray Stratton, the Majestic
- Janey Jefferson, Dance & Fitness Studio
- Kathy Downey & Laurie Jandil, New Life Ministries Women's Bible Group
- Dr. Sharon Thornton, Thornton Chiropractic
- Joann Stutzman, RN, BSN, OCN, Corvallis Clinic
- Chicks Connect, Julie Muller & all members
- Jackie Lawson, Ruby Ribbon Mini Fashion Show
- Tawnee Sweet, Agnes & Dora Clothing Fashion Show
- Kurlen Nowickas, Teacher & Singer
- MB Bradshaw, Damsel In Defense • Prestige Theatres
- BeckenRidge Vineyards • Roth's Family Market • Rick's Place
- Limeberry Frozen Yogurt • San Antonio Restaurant
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6	8	4	2	9	7	3	5	1
7	9	5	1	3	4	2	6	8
4	3	8	5	7	2	1	9	6
9	2	6	3	8	1	7	4	5
5	7	1	9	4	6	8	2	3
2	4	3	6	5	8	9	1	7
8	6	7	4	1	9	5	3	2
1	5	9	7	2	3	6	8	4

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