

Plant two times the flavor with edible flowers

Pop some flowers in among the beans and lettuce and you'll have two times the chance for an edible harvest.

"Edible flowers look great in the garden and on the plate," said Brooke Edmunds, horticulturist for the Oregon State University Extension Service. "Some especially pretty and tasty ones are the blue blossoms of borage, classic roses and chamomile with its little, white flowers."

Others on her list include annuals such as happy orange or yellow flowering calendula, marigold or nasturtium; the distinctive faces of Johnny jump up or pansy; and traditional blue bachelor button. All of these are easy to start by seed indoors right now or directly seeded into the ground when the soil warms up in May. Follow the directions on the back of the seed packet and you'll be golden. Don't forget to thin the little seedlings, Edmunds said. Otherwise, they'll compete each other out of existence.

Herbs can't possibly be left off the list, so mull over chive, basil, fennel, oregano, lavender and rosemary flowers, all of which do double duty with flower power and foliage flavor. Perennials such as pineapple sage and daylily do us a kindness in the kitchen as well, and don't forget to use vegetable



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

flowers like snap peas, broccoli, squash, chives and scarlet runner beans in dishes along with their more traditional edible parts.

Make sure the blossoms you plant are the blossoms you can eat, Edmunds said. Not all flowers are safe to consume, so always identify the plant first and verify that they're okay to put in your mouth or mix into your recipes. The OSU Master Gardeners are a great source for help with plant identification. It's also a good idea to try any new plant in small amounts.

Deciding where to plant edible flowers needn't be a conundrum. You can sprinkle them about, line a bed or path, even add an entire row in the vegetable plot.

Designing with edible flowers has more than culinary rewards, she noted.

"Adding edible flowers to the garden is going to increase the diversity of plants," she said. "This in turn will attract a diverse insect population, including beneficial insects such as pollinators or those that keep pest insects in check."

Avoid eating flowers from florists — like roses — be-



PHOTO BY CHRIS LABELLE

A classic culinary flower, lavender pairs nicely with ice cream and sorbet, cookies and scones, tea, salad dressings and looks and tastes lovely frozen into ice cubes.

cause they're not being sold as food and it's hard to know whether they've been treated with chemicals, Edmunds said. If you get them locally from a farm stand or a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), you can ask.

In your garden, harvest flowers at their peak. Treat them like cut flowers and place the ends in water to preserve freshness. Keeping them cool can also help, Edmunds said. Commercial companies will package and refrigerate cut, edible flowers.

You've got them grown,

cut and chilled. Now what? Here are a few of Edmunds' suggestions:

Nasturtium adds a peppery flavor and bright orange, red and white colors to salads.

Borage has a mild cucumber flavor. Freeze in ice cubes and add a pop of blue to lemonade or summer cocktails.

Use **roses** to flavor pastry cream, add it to a tart shell and top with raspberries.

Candied flowers are good for topping cupcakes and desserts.

Strawberry-lavender milkshakes are amazing,

MI TOWN

This coming weekend, we turn the calendar to the brand spanking new month of April, and we're looking forward to a new month of longer and sunnier days, and hopes that we can make some headway against the weeds that — given half a chance — could easily take over the garden.

Weeding the backyard garden is much simpler than getting rid of the noxious weeds that seem to be growing everywhere, in the form of anger and mean-spirited hate speech — in small towns and big cities, in farms and factories and in coffee shops and living rooms. I've been a political junkie since I met Adlai Stevenson when he was campaigning for president and I was writing for my high school newspaper. I cast my first presidential



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

vote for Barry Goldwater and my most recent for Barack Obama, and I've voted for candidates from both political parties over the years. I've been called a bleeding-heart liberal by conservatives and a rock-ribbed conservative by liberals.

It's an understatement to say that people from all sides of the political spectrum, as well as members of the public, have been behaving badly. When elected officials are spat upon, horrid things are said and threats are made against

their families, it is time to seriously think about what we have become as individual citizens and what it says about our values. We all need to take a few moments to really evaluate what's being said about whom, is it true or just something to get better TV or radio ratings. What is truth and what is myth and folklore? What values does a particular candidate share with you? What has the candidate accomplished that reflects positive things? What does a candidate promise and what steps does he or she outline to make it a reality? What candidate shares your values and ideas? Vote for the best candidate, not the loudest.

Let's celebrate our brand new month with breakfast at the Monmouth Senior Center on Saturday from

8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Bring the family and friends and start off a busy weekend with pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, biscuits and gravy served by cheerful volunteers.

After the breakfast on Saturday, stop by the Monmouth Public Library meeting room, where Lyle Wallace, Ph.D. student at Oregon State University will show adults how to grow the most favorable tomato possible in their gardens, beginning at 11 a.m.

Mark your calendars for Tuesday when Monmouth Public Library hosts Family Coloring Night from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Join the fun and enjoy a great evening discovering this great pastime. All supplies and snacks are provided by the Friends of the Monmouth Library.

BIRTHS

McKibben

Kolbie June McKibben was born to Micheal McKibben and Courtney Durbin, of Dallas, at 11:38 a.m. on March 11 at Salem Hospital Family Birth Center.

He weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Kolbie joins Jace, 4, and Presley, 1.

Grandparents are Paul and Kim Malvaney, of Redmond, and Paul and Angi McCallum, of Dallas.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

Indoor Play Park — 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, First Presbyterian Church, 879 SW Levens St., Dallas. Drop-ins welcome. For ages infant through pre-K with parent. Free, but donations accepted. 503-623-3397.

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.

Senior meals, Dallas — 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday, LaCreole Manor, 204 SW Walnut St., Dallas. Free, but \$3 donation suggested. Reservations required. 503-623-6232.

Senior meals, Monmouth — 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday, Monmouth Senior Center, 180 S. Warren St., Monmouth. Free, but \$3 donation suggested. Reservations required. 503-838-2084.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Relay for Life of Polk County
Spaghetti Feed and Auction

Christ's Church Methodist & Presbyterian United, 412 W Clay Street, Monmouth

Friday, April 8th

Food and Silent Auction begin at 5 pm
Outcry Auction begins at 7 pm • Live Music

Suggested donation \$5 per meal, \$20 maximum for immediate family

Menu:	Auction items include:
Spaghetti and sauce	• Antiques and other old stuff
Green salad	• International arts and crafts
Garlic bread	• Quilts and wooden boxes
Choice of drinks	• Local crafts and goods
<i>(Until 7:00 pm while it lasts)</i>	

Silent Auctions close at various times. Auctioneer: Al Sieversen

For tickets for the dinner or more information:
Christ's Church Office: 503-838-1724
Deny Saxowsky: 541-223-4462, saxowsky@gmail.com
Kay Graven: 503-623-5495, gkr@q.com
Tami Bookey-Kuhlmann: 2015relayforlife@gmail.com

Organized by Relay for Life teams such as **Footprints, Determinators, Minions Fighting Cancer, Cleaning Up Cancer Babes** and more.

All proceeds go to the American Cancer Society to help Finish the Fight against Cancer.

It's that time again!

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