

New plants grab gardener's attention

Though not strutting the runway or preening in front of mirrors, plants make a splash every year just like the latest fashions.

And like clothes, plants need cache to capture the audience. Sometimes popularity comes with a new trait like color, size or shape. Sometimes it's a plant much of the public has never heard of before, like this year's entry, an herb from New Guinea with edible leaves that taste like mushrooms.

"People like what's new or different," said Claudia Groth, an Oregon State University Extension Service master gardener for more than 25 years. "It's the human condition. We want what's trending."

Plant buyers at garden centers make educated choices as they cruise nursery tradeshows, chat with salespeople and generally get a bead on new introductions or unusual plants about to hit the market. With hundreds of varieties to choose from, marking up the order sheet can be a gamble, said Groth, who staffs the information desk at Portland Nursery.

"Trends come and go, but if you're familiar with the market and keep up with those trends, you usually know what people are looking for," she said.

Sometimes it's pretty easy, like Weigela "Tuxedo," a shorter, extremely dark-leaved version of its brethren, or "Pretty in Pink" hebe, again a smaller shrub



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

with burgundy-tipped new growth and pink flowers. Both enjoyed a horde of media attention and turned into extremely good sellers.

It all starts in the breeders' minds. If they produce a plant that grabs the industry's eye, gardeners will open their wallets and buy.

"Breeders are in charge," Groth said. "If they do the marketing right, they can really push something."

So far this year, gardeners like the color purple, unusual vegetables and the continuing theme of smaller plants for smaller spaces. Here are six plants Groth choose that are showing popularity this season:

Verbena "Lascar Black Velvet": A compact, mounding verbena that's ideal for containers and hanging baskets, especially mixed with white or intense pink. "I can't believe how deep purple it is," Groth said. "It sits on the information desk and all day long people stare at it."

Petunia "Night Sky": Another entry into the purple realm, "Night Sky" will grab you with distinctive white sprinkles across dark purple petals. "This introduction is like no other petunia," Groth said. "It's amazing." The 10- to 13-inch plants are good additions to containers, window boxes or massed at



PHOTO BY CORINA REYNOLDS STEARNS

The intensely purple flowers of Verbena 'Lascar Black Velvet' draw stares.

the front of flower beds.

Hosta 'Mini Skirt' and Hosta "Lakeside Paisley Print": There's no question, hostas are hot. And these two have the added benefit of small size going for them. "Mini Skirt" is a mere 5- to 7-inches high, while "Paisley Print" grows to 12 inches. "Mini Skirt" boasts bluish-green leaves with a creamy edge. The shiny green foliage of "Paisley Print" draws attention to itself with creamy white centers that feather out into wavy green margins. Both are fantastic for smaller gardens and containers.

Mashua (Tropaeolum tuberosum): A nasturtium from the Andes, mashua grows edible tubers rich in vitamin C that can be eaten

raw, but are usually cooked like a potato and have a flavor comparable to turnips. Similar to common nasturtium, the plant is vining and can grow up to 8 feet on a structure. The orange or orange-and-yellow flowers are trumpet shaped and also edible. "It's highly decorative," Groth said.

Mushroom plant (Rungia klossi): Certainly the most unusual of this year's unveilings, the mushroom plant is a perennial herb from New Guinea packed with vitamin C and beta-carotene. The crisp, bright green, mushroom-flavored leaves go raw into salads or sandwiches or can be added to soups and stir fries. It likes shade in the garden, according to Groth, or can be kept indoors.

MI TOWN

I'd like to apologize to Dr. Rob Winningham for misspelling his first name in last week's MI Town story about the Monmouth Senior Center. Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa and sorry about that, Dr. Winningham. My high school and college journalism teachers are no doubt shaking their angel heads in dismay for this inexcusable faux pas.

We're knee deep in summer, with high school and college graduations in the rearview mirror. The streets and roads in MI Town have been alive with U-Haul trucks, parents loading up cars, and students heading back home for the summer. We'll miss our student residents who bring lots of youthful enthusiasm, laughter and energy to our communities, and say goodbye to those who are graduating



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

and heading off in different directions - to jobs, graduate school, the military and to their futures, which we hope will be bright.

Both of our excellent libraries have so many things to offer for summertime fun. Independence Library's summer reading program began Friday and readers of all ages are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible. The Mystery Book Club is in full swing, and next month's book selection is "The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie," by Alan Bradley. For more information on ei-

ther or both programs, please check the library's web page or call 503-838-1811.

The Monmouth Library's summer reading program began Tuesday, and volunteers will be signing up readers of all ages all week long. Readers are welcome to sign up anytime the library is open. If you have any questions, please call the library at 503-838-1932.

And while we're on the subject - don't forget that Wednesday evening is Family Literacy Night at Burgerville. Families are encouraged to bring their children for free books, free ice cream cones for children, \$2 off kids' meals, and an opportunity to enjoy a fun evening. The hours are from 5:30 to 7 p.m. This outstanding program is sponsored by Independence and

Monmouth Public Libraries, Mid-Valley Parenting, and Western Oregon University.

We're looking ahead to yet another summer of outstanding outdoor programs at MI Town's amphitheaters. Get your picnic blanket and basket together so you're ready for the first free outdoor movie in Independence on July 1, when "Jurassic World" will be playing. Movies are free and begin at 9:30 p.m. Check the website for details on more movies during the summer.

Monmouth's new amphitheater's summer concerts begin on July 6 with The Ben Rice Blues Band. The music begins at 6:30 p.m., but everyone is invited to bring picnic baskets and enjoy an evening with friends and family.

PEDEE NEWS

The Luckiamute Valley Charter School in Pedee graduated 15 students from the eighth grade this year: Enrique Berumen, Tristan Creekmore, Seth Ellingsworth, Callum Francis, Taylor Hill, Colene Kadell, Eric Myers, Robert Phillips, Kyle Reed, Corbin Sedlacek, Daniel Torres, Savannah Trujillo, Thalia Villareal, Michael Simmons, and Christopher Seiber. Graduation was after school on June 8 and featured a slide show of the kids and their activities through the years at the school. The ceremony was followed by a barbecue potluck for everyone, then the kids took lead teacher Steve Diehl to Independence to see "Captain America: Civil War."

Last Thursday Linda North and the Norths' exchange student from Germany, Anna Tiefert, were baptized in the Luckiamute



ARLENE KOVASH
Columnist

River by Pedee Church pastor Daniel Russell, as several church members witnessed this special event. Anna participated in Dallas High School's graduation ceremony, and then Sunday the church had a reception for her as she will be going home to Koblenz this week. She was a delight, and the community will miss her greatly.

News to me, but one of Daniel Russell's hobbies is free diving, which is diving with a wetsuit but no oxygen tanks, so short dives, obviously. He and friend Laurence Rogers, of Monmouth, went to Newport on Thurs-

day and dove off the South Jetty with their spearguns to catch fish. Daniel only got two perch, though.

Nic and Cassandra Heller had a party for family and friends at their house on a very warm Saturday afternoon, June 4, to announce their baby girl's name, which will be Mercy Rae. They served hamburgers to the guests, who brought gifts for baby and family. Cassandra's parents, Paul and Polly Ramos, came from Omaha, Neb., for the event.

My daughter Suzanne Burbank and I hosted a shower (really, a "sprinkle" of small gifts) for her son Derek's fiancé, Ashley Grucza, the next day, June 5. We invited relatives and old family friends for lunch and to bring her either their favorite cleaning product or kitchen utensil. Since we had them tell about the

item, we all learned a lot from each other in the process. She got everything from parchment paper and gardening tools to a bottle of ammonia. Very fun! Ashley's mother, Tina Grucza, of Turner, and grandmother, Gloria Tiefert, of Marion, were there, as well as friends of Suzanne's and mine.

Immediately after the shower, I left for Portland to catch a plane to go to American Agri-Women's (AAW) "Fly-In" to Washington, D.C., where we take our concerns to our congressional delegates and agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Agriculture. This year, I am secretary of this national organization, so got to sit in on some special meetings as well. Don't think I'll do the red-eye flight again, though, as I'm no good without sleep.

BIRTHS

Grove

Espn Nicholas Troy Grove was born to Ashley Lantis and Bandy Grove, of Dallas, at 3:38 a.m. on June 2 at Salem Family Birth Center.

He weighed 7 pounds, 15 ounces and was 20 and 3/4 inches long.

Espn joins Destiny, 6, and Urijah, 4.

Grandparents are Lesa Neal, Owen Neal, Kenny Lantis, Tonya Grove and Richard Grove.

Perez

Daisy Juanita Perez was born to Kodi Tull and Armando Perez, of Independence, on June 2 at the Salem Family Birth Center.

She weighed 6 pounds, 14 ounces.

Grandparents are Armando Perez and San Juanita, both of Independence.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Continued from page 8A

TUESDAY, JUNE 21

• **Dallas Wingdingers RC Flying Club** — 7 p.m., 1833 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.

• **Oveaters Anonymous** — Noon to 1 p.m., Salem Health West Valley, 525 SE Washington St., Dallas. Support group meets in the conference room immediately inside the front doors.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22

• **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.

• **Painting, Canvas and Cocktails** — 7 p.m., The Boondocks, 318 N. Main St., Falls City. All supplies, paint, canvas and instruction provided. No experience necessary. \$30, snack and cocktail included. 503-787-2700.

• **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.

Thursdays May through September

10am - 3pm

182 Academy St, Dallas 503-623-2564

- Family Building Blocks will be there providing kids activities.
- Cash & Company playing music from 11am to 1pm.
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INDEPENDENCE CINEMA 8

Matinees are all shows before 6pm. New pricing for matinees are: Adult \$7.25 Children \$6.75 • Senior \$7.00 Pricing does not reflect 3D showings.

450 S. 2nd St., Independence
Showtimes 503-606-3000
www.IndependenceCinema8.com

Friday - Wednesday June 17 - June 22				
JUNGLE BOOK (Digital) (PG)	(12:00 2:30)			
ME BEFORE YOU (Digital) (PG13)	(4:55)	7:25	9:55	
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 (Digital) (PG13)	(1:15 4:15)	7:10	10:05	
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE (PG13)	(11:25 2:00 4:40)	7:20	10:00	
FINDING DORY (Digital) (PG)	(11:30 2:00 4:30)	7:00	9:30	
FINDING DORY (Digital) (PG)	(1:30 4:00)	6:30		
XMEN: APOCALYPSE (Digital) (PG13)			9:00	
THE CONJURING 2 (Digital) (R)	(12:50 3:50)	6:50	9:40	
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS (Digital) (PG)	(11:30 4:45)			
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS (Digital) (PG13)	(2:05)	7:15	9:50	
WARCRAFT (Digital) (PG13)	(1:20 4:10)	7:05	9:55	
Thursday June 23				
JUNGLE BOOK (Digital) (PG)	(12:00 2:30)			
ME BEFORE YOU (Digital) (PG13)	(4:55)	7:25	9:55	
NOW YOU SEE ME 2 (Digital) (PG13)	(1:15 4:15)	7:10	10:05	
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE (PG13)	(11:25 2:00 4:40)	7:20	10:00	
FINDING DORY (Digital) (PG)	(11:30 2:00 4:30)	7:00	9:30	
FINDING DORY (Digital) (PG)	(1:30 4:00)	6:30		
INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE (Digital) (PG13)		7:00	9:45	
THE CONJURING 2 (Digital) (R)	(12:50 3:50)	6:50	9:40	
ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS (Digital) (PG)	(11:30 4:45)			
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WARCRAFT (Digital) (PG13)	(1:20 4:10)	7:05	9:55	

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2016 Spring PEP Talks Series

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In Person

Tuesday, June 21

- Know How to Work a Room
- Pitch Your Business Efficiently
- Engage Others Effectively

Presented by: **Jeremy McKern, Tunnel Radio**

• **12:00 PM - 1:30 PM**
Henry Hill Education Support Center
750 S 5th St., Independence

• **Cost per workshop: \$15 - MICC Members \$20 - Non-Members**
Includes lunch from Arena Sports Bar & Grill

• Register: www.micc-or.org or 503-838-4268
Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center

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