

Fight fires with appropriate landscaping

Drawing a line around the house with fire-resistant landscapes can mean the difference between a home consumed by flames and one left standing.

"Fire specialists often show pictures of houses where people took adequate precautions," said Brad Withrow-Robinson, forester with Oregon State University's Extension Service. "I've seen lots of photos of land charred all around and a house left standing in the middle because the owners created a fire-resistant space next to it. Not always, but often."

It's fire season again, and people who live in rural areas or on rural-urban boundaries throughout the state need to exercise caution.

"People tend to think of wild fire as an issue only in central or eastern Oregon," Withrow-Robinson said. "But the vigorous, dense growth typical of western Oregon, along with our hot, dry summers, means we have a significant fire danger most years here, too."

People should create and maintain "defensible space" around their homes. Among other things, these areas should be free from brush, debris and firewood, have irrigated zones near the house and feature fire-resistant plants.

To help people establish



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

such spaces OSU Extension developed a guide to Fire-resistant Landscapes Plants for the Willamette Valley, which can be downloaded free as an app for iOS and Android phones. The 190-page publication also comes as a mobile-friendly or printable PDF.

Co-author Brooke Edmunds, a horticulturist with OSU's Extension Service, said the guide features 170 plants that thrive in the Willamette Valley. Plants are organized into ground covers, perennials, vines, shrubs and trees. Icons indicate what level of water and sun a plant needs, as well as other details such as deer-resistance, and if it attracts bees, butterflies or birds. Height, width and hardiness information and other descriptions are also included.

"No plant is fireproof," Edmunds said, "but some are considered fire resistant."

In general, these are plants with more supple leaves without a waxy or resinous surface. Such plants don't readily ignite. They may be damaged or even killed by fire, but their foliage and

stems don't significantly contribute to a fire's intensity, said Amy Jo Detweiler, an OSU Extension horticulturist. In essence, they can create a living wall that reduces and blocks intense heat. However, she stressed that fire-resistant plants will burn if not watered and pruned properly.

Some of the plants featured in the guide are:

Carnation (Dianthus): An evergreen ground cover that grows to about 6 to 9 inches tall and 15 inches wide, has pink flowers that appear in June and July and is hardy in Zones 3-9. It takes partial to full sun, attracts birds and butterflies and grows well in rock gardens.

Tickseed (Coreopsis): A perennial with yellow, orange, maroon or red flowers that bloom from March through November if kept deadheaded. The blossoms entice butterflies and the seeds are attractive to birds. Grow in part to full sun in well-drained soil. Hardy in Zones 3-9.

Delphinium: A perennial that prefers well-drained soil and grows upright to 2 feet and gets 18 to 36 inches wide. The blue, pink, purple or white flowers bloom in March and April. Delphiniums take partial to full sun and need well-drained soil. Hardy in Zones 5-9.

Daphne (D. x burkwood-

ii): A 3- to 5-foot, semi-evergreen shrub with highly fragrant white to pink flowers that bloom in May and June and attract butterflies. This plant needs partial shade and well-drained soil with a neutral pH. Hardy in Zones 4-8.

Black oak (Quercus velutina): A deciduous tree with a spreading crown and good fall color. Grows 50 to 60 feet tall and wide. The diminutive flowers in March through May appeal to birds and butterflies. Acorns attract wildlife. Grows in full sun and is drought tolerant. Hardy in Zones 3-9.

In addition to planting fire-resistant plants, Edmunds recommends the following precautions:

Move plants, especially flammable ones, away from the house.

Clean up dead brush and debris and move firewood away from buildings.

Trim trees and shrubs to keep them about 10 feet from each other.

Use non-flammable mulch such as rocks near the house.

Have irrigated zones around the home's perimeter.

Clean off debris from roof and gutters.

Remove lawn close to the house or keep it closely cropped and watered.

Keep potted plants well irrigated.

MI TOWN

We're an entire month away from the solar eclipse, but it seems like there are so many mugs, T-shirts and other items that are for sale all over the internet — and at some stores as well. Several people have compared notes with one another about members of their families and friends who want to camp in their fields or backyards to view this historic occasion. Others have questioned the cost of hotel and motel reservations at various locations, as well. Oregon's last eclipse of the sun was back in 1979, and while many don't think it was a big deal — a generation of school children and young adults will have the opportunity to learn more about science, and the rest of us might learn something new, too.

Summertime brings



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

about blood shortages for many reasons — regular donors are on vacation; there are more car crashes because of the increase of summer travelers, people plan elective surgeries during this time of year, and other factors contribute to the need for blood donations. The next scheduled American Red Cross blood drive scheduled for MI Town will be at First Baptist Church, located at 1505 Monmouth St., in Independence, on Monday from 12:45 p.m. until 6:15 p.m. More information is available at [www.redcross-](http://www.redcross-blood.org)

[blood.org](http://www.redcross-blood.org). The Red Cross has many other dates and times where you can schedule an appointment, as the need continues to rise during these next few months.

Both Independence and Monmouth libraries continue to have fun and interesting programs available during the summertime for readers and curiosity seekers of all ages. There are two events today worth checking out, where students in fourth through 12th grades can Build a Better Galaxy Craft at the Monmouth Library at 2 p.m. Juggler, Henrik Bothe, will be featured in the Build a Better World at 3 p.m. at the Independence Library.

Pack up a picnic supper — or get everything to feed your family from vendors in the park or nearby — and

come to Main Street Park this evening (Wednesday) where Hillstomp, a blues group, will be featured from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Be sure to patronize the many merchants and other businesses who help pay for these great evenings.

Let's all try to remember to stay hydrated on these hot summer days — cold water, iced tea and lemonade are great thirst-quenchers and help us maintain sound and healthy bodies. Another good idea is to keep fresh water in pet bowls outside so our pets and neighborhood birds and squirrels have access to needed liquids. Fire season is definitely upon us, so use added care when using any kind of burning materials and grills or barbecues.

PEDEE NEWS

Judy Guida went to Houston, to spend time with her seven grandkids, Adrianna, AJ, Neko, Sam, Tristen, Layla, and Josie, children of John and Gina Guida. They spent lots of time in the neighborhood swimming pools, as temperatures were in the 90s. Judy celebrated the Fourth of July at a family barbecue with fireworks for the kids. Her birthday was July 6, so she and Joe took a dinner cruise in Trinity Bay near Galveston. She had a great time in spite of the hot weather.

On July 1, June Clark headed for Colorado Springs on her motorcycle. The first days were lovely as



ARLENE KOVASH
Columnist

she visited Mapleton, Cave Junction, Glendale, and Shady Cove in Oregon, and McCloud in California, to get motorcycle club checkpoints. On to the Narrows south of Burns, and then it was time to go east.

By Rock Springs, Wyom., she encountered a random problem with fuel delivery to the engine, which led to several days of trying to solve the problem. No way

to get to Colorado Springs to meet with other Women on Wheels members on time, so she headed home via Highway 26 to get two more checkpoints in Unity and Dayville, then over the pass and home, which she was glad to see.

Ted and Ethelene Osgood spent a week in the Steens Mountains with friends Nancy Russell, of Wren, and Leon Goebels, of Albany. They had a good time enjoying the scenery, even though the best views were up miles of gravel roads. Still, it was worth the effort.

Amy Shifley was among the more than 900 under-

graduate, adult degree and graduate-level students who received diplomas in commencement ceremonies at George Fox University this spring. She earned a bachelor of arts in art and design and is now interviewing for jobs.

On July 29, the Pedee Kids/Youth will have a car wash from 1-3 p.m., then cool off with a swim in the Luckiamute from 3-5 followed by a barbecue, all at Pam Burbank's house. This is for anyone with a dirty car, so come on over. Contact Pam Burbank at zpamepoo@gmail.com or 503-838-4103 for details. Good time guaranteed.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

These Polk County groups would welcome individuals who have time or expertise to volunteer. Organizations that would like to be added to this list should call 503-623-2373 or email IONews@polkio.com.

- AARP Foundation Tax-Aide — 503-930-7636
- After DARC — 503-623-9501
- American Cancer Society Road to Recovery — 1-800-227-2345
- Arc of Polk County — 541-223-3261
- Ash Creek Arts Center — 971-599-3301
- Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Polk County Inc. — 503-623-8473
- Central School District — 503-838-0030
- City of Dallas — 503-831-3502
- City of Independence — 503-838-1212
- City of Monmouth — 503-751-0145
- Crime Victims Assistance Program — 503-623-9268
- Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce — 503-623-2564
- Dallas Fire Department — 503-831-3532
- Dallas Food Bank — 503-623-3578
- Dallas Kids, Inc. — 503-623-6419
- Dallas Police Department — 503-831-3582
- Dallas Public Library — 503-623-2633
- Dallas Retirement Village — 503-623-5581
- Dallas School District — 503-623-5594
- Delbert Hunter Arboretum — 503-623-7359
- Ella Curran Food Bank — 503-838-1276
- Falls City Arts Center — 503-559-6291
- Falls City School District — 503-787-3531
- Family Building Blocks — 503-566-2132, ext. 308.
- Friends of the Dallas Library — 503-559-3830
- Gentle House Gardens, Monmouth — 503-838-2995
- Girl Scouts of Southwest Washington and Oregon — 1-800-338-5248
- H-2-O — 503-831-4736
- HART (Horses Adaptive Riding and Therapy) — 971-301-4278
- HandsOn Mid-Willamette Valley — 503-363-1651
- Heron Pointe Assisted Living — 503-838-6850
- Independence Health and Rehabilitation — 503-838-0001
- Independence Public Library — 503-838-1811
- Kings Valley Charter School — 541-929-2134
- Luckiamute Watershed Council — 503-837-0237
- Luckiamute Valley Charter School — 503-623-4837
- Meals on Wheels — 503-838-2084
- Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce — 503-838-4268
- Monmouth-Independence YMCA — 503-838-4042
- Monmouth Public Library — 503-838-1932
- Northwest Human Services — 503-588-5828
- Oregon Child Development Coalition — 503-838-2745
- OSU Extension Service - Polk County — 503-623-8395
- Perrydale School District — 503-623-2040
- Polk Community Development Corporation — 503-831-3173
- Polk County Community Emergency Response Team — 503-623-9396
- Polk County Museum — 503-623-6251
- Polk County Public Health — 503-623-8175
- Polk County Resource Center — 503-623-8429
- Polk Soil and Water Conservation District — 503-623-9680
- Relief Nursery Classroom — 503-566-2132
- SABLE House — 503-623-6703
- SALT (Sheriff's Auxiliary & Law Enforcement Together) — 503-851-9366
- Salvation Army — 503-798-4783
- SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) — 503-391-8423
- Salem Health West Valley Hospital — 503-623-8301
- Victim Assistance Program-Polk Co. District Attorney's Office — 503-623-9268 x1444
- Willamette Valley Hospice — 503-588-3600
- WIMPEG Community Access Television — 503-837-0163

Do you depend on Social Media for your advertising?



Did you know we can increase your reach? and more!

NO AD BLOCKERS!

YOUR Social Media streaming on our website with the help of Friends 2 Follow

As low as \$50 mo.

Friends 2 Follow

polkio.com has on average 6,000 visitors each week! They could all be looking at your social media posts!

Call us to get your social media posts streaming on our website and instantly increase your reach!



Heidi 503-623-2373 ext 115
Rachel 503-623-2373 ext 110
Karen 503-623-2373 ext 118

DENTAL Insurance
Physicians Mutual Insurance Company

A less expensive way to help get the dental care you deserve

- ✓ If you're over 50, you can get coverage for about \$1 a day*
- ✓ Keep your own dentist! NO networks to worry about
- ✓ NO annual or lifetime cap on the cash benefits you can receive
- ✓ No wait for preventive care and no deductibles — you could get a checkup tomorrow
- ✓ Coverage for over 350 procedures including cleanings, exams, fillings, crowns...even dentures

FREE Information Kit
1-877-599-0125
www.dental50plus.com/25

*Individual plans. Product not available in MN, MT, NH, RI, VT, WA. Acceptance guaranteed for one insurance policy/certificate of this type. Contact us for complete details about this insurance solution. This specific offer is not available in CO, NY, or 1-800-969-4781 or request for similar offer. Certificate C259A (ID: C259E; PA: C259D); Insurance Policy P150(GA; P150GA; NY: P150NY; OK: P150OK; TN: P150TN); 6096C MB16-NM001C

MORE HD CHANNELS
FASTER INTERNET AND
UNLIMITED PHONE.

Time Warner Cable **Spectrum**

• Speeds up to 100Mbps
• Unlimited data — no data caps

BEST INTERNET OFFER
AS LOW AS

\$34.99

CALL TODAY AND PAY LESS
800-718-0153

FREE ACCESS TO WIFI HOTSPOTS

Spectrum Triple Play offers 3 ways of keeping up with everything and everyone you love. THE MOST HD SUPERFAST UNLIMITED SUPERIOR

125+ CHANNELS
UP TO 100MBPS
UNLIMITED CALLING

Triple Play Select
TV, INTERNET AND PHONE

\$89.99

Are You Still Paying Too Much For Your Medications?

You can save up to 97% when you fill your prescriptions with our Canadian and International prescription service.

Get An Extra \$15 Off & Free Shipping On Your 1st Order!

Call the number below and save an additional \$15 plus get free shipping on your first prescription order with Canada Drug Center. Expires December 31, 2017. Offer is valid for prescription orders only and can not be used in conjunction with any other offers. Valid for new customers only. One time use per household. Use code 15FREE to receive this special offer.

Call Now! 855-781-6462

Please note that we do not carry controlled substances and a valid prescription is required for all prescription medication orders. Use of these services is subject to the Terms of Use and accompanying policies at www.canadadrugcenter.com.

What's YOUR neighbor up to?

Find out in the Itemizer Observer. You may find your neighbor, your boss, your friend or yourself in the pages of the Itemizer Observer. Local stories on local people — that's our specialty.

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER
147 SE Court St., Dallas • 503-623-2373

Polk County Itemizer-Observer