



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

Conversations with and about plants and how they affect us

Comic-strip character Maxine says, "The only thing I'm growing this year is older and more miserable."

Not so. Anyone can grow beautiful flowers! However, I've heard many people say they don't have a green thumb.

I read a quip the other day: "There is one thing God cannot do."

Well, that caught my attention. Reading on, I was reminded that no word from God will ever fail. "For there is nothing that God cannot do . . . except fail. With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Luke 18:26-27)

Even growing eye-catching flowers is possible.

Some say, especially at this time of year, that I have a green thumb.

I do have some very beautiful violets inside my home, plus a Christmas cactus, all doing quite well.

Outside, I have an abundance of dahlias, nasturtiums, roses, geraniums and impatiens plus a few other pretty flowers.

I look at my thumb and it's not green. So, where did that expression come from?

According to James Underwood Crockett, it comes from the fact that algae growing on the outside of earthenware pots will stain a person's thumb and fingers if he or she handles enough pots. Hence, a person who is always working with flowerpots has a green thumb.

Some of us older seniors may remember that Crockett, who was born in 1915, was the original host of the popular PBS television show, "The

Victory Garden." He also was an author of many gardening books.

My secret to healthy violet plants is something I learned many years ago: talk to my plants and never water them with cold or hot water, but lukewarm water. Also, I'll confess to using a unique fertilizer that an "older" woman once told me about. It's simply called Eleanor's VF-11 and a capful does wonders in that lukewarm water.

Hospital patients with indoor plants in their rooms feel less stressed than those without plants, according to a study by researchers in The Netherlands.

The presence of flowers or any type of greenery in one's home can help reduce blood pressure and anxiety and can improve mental acuity. (Perhaps the same finds would hold true for seniors in assisted living or nursing care settings.)

Plants are natural air purifiers and have the ability to reduce noise from the outdoors, which can further decrease stress. Next time you visit a sick friend, bring a plant rather than a bouquet of flowers. You will be doing a good deed.

Five plants specifically recommended for indoor growing are the peace lily, African violet, aloe vera, spider plant and the Amazon elephant ear.

Over the years, we always had an aloe vera plant indoors for its healing properties (especially for burns).

Another very wise Maxine observation: "Never go to a doctor whose office plants have died."

Property tax appeals board members sought

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners seeks applications from residents interested in serving on the Board of Property Tax Appeals for the 2019-20 term.

The board hears petitions from taxpayers seeking a decrease in their real market or assessed value of real and personal property.

Applicants should have a

working knowledge of the local real estate market, be willing to participate in public hearings, have skills that include mediation, real estate appraisal or financing and be familiar with Oregon property tax law.

Training is provided in January. The committee holds one to three daytime meetings beginning in February

to hear petitions. The committee adjourns April 15, with terms ending June 30, 2020.

Application forms for the appointments are available on the county website, www.co.clatsop.or.us, or at the County Manager's Office, 800 Exchange Street, Suite 410, Astoria.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. Sept. 12.

New corrections leader for Tillamook, Portland posts

Nichole Brown has been promoted by the Oregon Department of Corrections to superintendent of Columbia River Correctional Institution in Portland and the South Fork Forest Camp in Tillamook.

Brown currently oversees the Programs and Social Support Services Unit for Corrections. She's responsible for Inmate Services, Volunteer Services, Victim Services, and Family Advocacy.

Brown started her career in 1997 at the Powder River Correctional Facility in the In-

mate Work Programs section. From 2004 to 2012, she served as Workforce Development administrator.

The promotion was announced by Colette Peters, DOC director, and is effective Aug. 1.

"I must acknowledge law enforcement and the African American community, traditionally, have not always had a symbiotic relationship," Brown said when asked how it feels to be the first black



Brown

woman to run a prison in Oregon.

"My decision to apply for the position was easy. ... leadership of the agency has made a commitment to diversify the workforce with highly trained staff and to

normalize and humanize the corrections setting."

Director Peters, the first female DOC director, said she was proud to promote the first African-American female to superintendent.

Roadwork

CLATSOP COUNTY

- Clatsop County road crews are replacing a culvert and repairing the embankment on John Day River Road. The project is expected to be complete Friday, Aug. 2.

- Crews have begun striping roads countywide this month. The county uses a water-based paint, so if any gets on your vehicle, wash it off immediately.

ASTORIA

- Work continues on the waterfront bridge project, which affects the foots of Sixth through 11th streets downtown. Six aging bridges are being replaced. Half the streets are scheduled to be complete by mid-August. Work on the other streets begins after that and is expected to run through June 2020.

- A project to improve drainage, water and sewer at Highway 30

and 30th Street is under way. Flaggers will control single-lane traffic in the area.

WARRENTON

- Columbia Beach Lane wall installation is scheduled to begin the week of Aug. 19, with construction expected to take two weeks. Columbia Beach Lane will be closed during construction with traffic routed through Smith Lake Drive and Delaura

Beach Lane.

- The bridge on Highway 101 over Youngs Bay is undergoing repair. Most of the work is being done from underneath. The project will be complete in 2021.

SEASIDE

- The Dooley Bridge at the junction of Highway 26 and Highway 101 is undergoing repairs. There will be some overnight lane closures.

Senior lunch menu

Monday, Aug. 5: Lasagna, garlic bread, broccoli, romaine salad, ice cream.

Thursday, Aug. 8: Chicken Parmesan, pasta primavera, green beans, coleslaw, fruit pie.

The Warrenton senior lunch program is at noon (doors open at 10:30 a.m.) Mondays and Thursdays at Warrenton Community Center, 170 SW Third St. Suggested donation is \$6 for ages 55 and older; \$7 for those younger. For more information, call 503-861-3502.