

Can You Dig It?

By Schann Nelson



I'm finally DONE! Master Gardeners is a great class, don't get me wrong, but at the end of eleven weeks my brain feels like mush, my desk is completely overloaded from having lost my organization day, and nothing has happened in my yard or garden. Now that I've finished the class, I have just enough information to be dangerous. Just don't ask me questions when I don't have access to a full bank of reference books.

Last week I went to the Scion Exchange offered by the Home Orchard Society (HOS) — a nice drive to the Clackamas County Fairgrounds in Canby that I haven't taken in many years. Surprisingly, the house where I lived in Canby many years ago, is still there! The exchange was funky and homey, lots of folks wandering around a space about the size of the VHS gym (though with a low ceiling and kind of dark) filled with tables holding quart-sized containers of scion. As prepared by HOS (and they know what they're doing), scion looks like a six-inch piece of last year's growth from a fruit tree. But THESE small sticks hold the secret to having a big orchard in a small space.

Every kind of apple imaginable was available. By grafting these onto existing trees or rootstock, which was available for a very nominal fee, you can have exactly the tree you want. You can determine the size, flavor, disease resistance, keeping quality, use (for eating or cider or sauce). If, like me, you don't know how to get what you want, there are experts there to help.

I went with a specific mission. Over the winter, a 100-year old King Apple at the Keasey farm fell over and shattered into pieces. For many years, this tree has provided us with shade and cider and has been a great climbing tree for the kids. My mission was to get at least one good graft from that tree to grow a new King to replace it. So that morning I went out and cut about a dozen lengths of last year's growth from the tree as it lay on the ground. (We haven't cut it up yet so I could get the scion wood and my brother can get the wood, but no bark, for barbecue.)

Picture me walking into this dark, open room, full of people who mostly know each other, with my jar of cuttings. First off, everybody knows I'm a new-by because MY scion is full-length, about 12-18 inches long, not the neat little, carefully cut, six-inch pieces on the tables. And, of course, I have to walk clear to the back of

the hall to visit the ladies' room before I can do anything else. Then I find the place where you can have a graft done and they tell me I have to have rootstock. To get rootstock I wander back to the other end of the place. Then I wait to talk to somebody about which rootstock to get. Then I put in my order for rootstock and wait for them to get to it. Lo and behold, a nurseryman had set up right there, vending heirloom trees. So, of course, I have to investigate while I'm waiting.

I had a great time talking to people and managed to only buy two apple trees, three grapes, and a fig. The apples are for my yard, to replace one that died with a disease resistant variety, and I just couldn't resist the other, also dwarf and disease resistant, because the variety is named SHAY. Don't you think we should have some of those by the Shay in town? Another project for Vernonia's gardeners? The grapes I'm using as a bribe to get Dennis to move the fence around my garden into the pasture so I can get more sun exposure. The fig is going out to Keasey farm and I plan an espalier against a sunny wall.

I got to watch an expert graft two of my scion, bought some rootstock to try some on my own, gave the remainder of my cuttings to the nursery guys (who promised a growing tree in return for the heirloom stock), picked up a slew of literature, and just generally had a great time.

There are lots of gardening events coming up. I've got to get this in (I'm WAY past deadline) so I can't do the calendar but Columbia, Washington and Multnomah counties are offering sales and or classes in the next month. Get out and get some new stuff, learn some new things and meet some people.



Senior Spelling Bee spells fun

The Vernonia Senior Center will be the setting for the annual Senior Spelling Bee on Friday, April 2 at 1:00 p.m. The one-and-only requirement for participation is to have lived at least fifty years.

The format for this event is: A one hundred word written test, given in 25-word segments, with a short break between each set for refreshments. This is for fun and there will be trophies for the winners, but there is absolutely, positively no entry fee.

Some contestants study the dictionary to prepare, while others depend on their instincts to figure out the correct spelling of the words, which will be of medium difficulty. It isn't necessary to know how to spell antidisestablishmentarianism!

There is a sign-up sheet at the Senior Center. Or, call 503-429-3912 or 503-429-9700 to enter the contest. Drop-ins are also welcome.

Church Directory

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grant Williams, Pastor
957 State Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-6790

Sunday
Breakfast 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
*B.L.A.S.T. w/Nursery 11:00 a.m.
*Bible Learning and Scripture Training
Youth Group 6-8:00 p.m.
(Jr. & Sr. High)
Wednesday
Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

GRACE REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

D.J. Dickey, Pastor
Grant & North Streets
Vernonia, 503 429-1919

Sunday Services: Adult Prayer & Children's Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:15 a.m.
Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.
Evening Service will change to 3:00 p.m. on Sept. 7, 2003
Wednesday Service:
All Family Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Darwin Harvey, Pastor
662 Jefferson
Vernonia, 503 429-4615

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
Bible Study, Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Youth & Kids, Thursday 7:00 p.m.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

John Cahill, Pastor
359 "A" Street
Vernonia, 503 429-1161

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship
Saturday, 6:00 p.m.

NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH

Gary Taylor, Pastor
500 California Ave
Vernonia, 503 429-5378

Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Nursery available
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Pastoral Associate
Juanita Dennis
960 Missouri Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-8841

Mass Schedule
Sunday 12:00 Noon
Religious Education
Sunday 10:30 a.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Kevin Reiner, Pastor, 543-2254
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.
Vernonia, 503 429-8301
Sabbath School 9:15 a.m.
Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m.
Prayer Meeting, Wed. 7:00 p.m.

ST. AUGUSTINE (CANTERBURY) EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Rev. Robert Grafe, Pastor
375 North St. (Vernonia Grange Hall)
Vernonia, 503 429-3700

Sunday Services 10:00 a.m.

VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Jim Kirby, Evangelist
410 North Street
Vernonia, 503 429-6522

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

Every Wednesday:
Ladies' Bible Study 9:30 a.m.
Ladies' Worship 10:00 a.m.
Children's Choir 3:00 p.m.
Family Bible Study 6:30 p.m.

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

850 Madison Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-1103

Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Jeff Cheney, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street
Vernonia, 503 429-7151

Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m.
Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m.
Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.

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