

Can You Dig It?

By Schann Nelson
OSU Master Gardener



For the record, I think the Senior Center looks great! The bold colors, chosen by the center's folk though some collaborative process, are the result of their courage and creativity. Huzzah! Huzzah! Huzzah!!!! They want the rest of us to notice their presence and you surely can't drive through town and ignore the senior center now. That spark of color is a relief to the eye and spirit after miles of unrelenting green or the unrelieved neutral toned color schemes of modern

public and commercial buildings.

Of course, this is from the woman who tries every year to achieve the perfect combination of bright orange and dark purple or blue flowers. It's hard to get! So far, in all my years of gardening I've gotten one perfect bouquet of orange lilies and dark delphiniums. The following year the lily didn't bloom and that was the end of that until I manage to procure more lilies.

How are you doing in the battle against slugs? This warm, wet weather is perfect for the voracious monsters and for all kinds of diseases. Since I mulch heavily, I also fight slugs year-round and I fight dirty. I use every kind of slug bait on the market and I apply it heavily in the fall and early spring. Remember those nice days? So do the slugs, who crawled out and made babies! After many years of the aggressive approach, the biggest slug I've seen in the garden was about an inch long. Yah! I think this means I'm actually reducing the life span of the remaining slugs as well as their numbers - Yee-hah! Of course, the chicken and the ducks on the other side of the fence on two sides of the garden don't suffer slugs in their part of the property either, and they are more effective than any bait. Unfortunately, a raccoon has set up residence nearby and killed all three of the old ducks and the five ducklings, and probably one of my cats. Damn! We'll be buying and using a live-trap soon.

2005 Tomato Trial: (All plants purchased at the Columbia County Master Gardeners Sale)

Determinate Varieties: Early Girl (54), First in the Field (H, 58), Golden Nugget (C, 60), Carolina Gold (H, 71), Health Kick (72)

Indeterminate Varieties: Sun Gold (C, 57), Moskvich (60), Isis Candy (C 67), Peron (68), Aunt Ruby's German Green (80)

KEY: C= Cherry, H= Heirloom, followed by number of days to harvest

Yes, a mere ten varieties. This taints my sample since I have a single specimen of each variety, so any differences could be accounted for by one of many variables. This year, I've managed to separate determinate and indeterminate varieties and (hopefully) will keep track of the differences in growth habit. I don't plan on pinching back side-shoots at all on the determinate varieties in

hopes that they will set a concentrated harvest over a short period of time. That's the kind of harvest I need for processing, a get in and get out approach as opposed to small batches all the time.

For the indeterminate tomatoes, I will limit side-shoot production (though not to a single leader as the hot houses do), and prune all the flowers off in August or September in an attempt to ripen what fruit has set. Since the area of the two plantings is much smaller than it has been in the past, I'm hoping to be more successful building protection from fall rains. Since I have a fine (this in my best sarcastic voice) outbreak of several varieties of bacterial and fungal disease throughout my yard, protection from rain will be critical for any kind of decent harvest.

Flowers, too: This year I've made up several large pots.

I used several combinations of repotted houseplants, tomatoes, rooted cuttings of geranium and *trandesia* (previous known as Wandering Jew) and annual flowers. If it all works, they should be pretty, productive and allow me to overwinter what I want.

I got the low-down on fuchsia fertilizing from a grower. When I asked him if the fertilizer was in the pot he said, "Oh no, get your pencil out and mark your calendar!" Apparently, the secret to continued flowering is providing high phosphorus fertilizer throughout

the season. He recommended a water soluble fertilizer applied every ten days. This sounds like a great idea, and is recommended for many areas of the yard and garden, but it's not something I've ever managed to accomplish.

Rumors may be circulating about my quitting the newspaper. Don't worry, this column is safe! I will continue to amaze you with my disastrous and delightful gardening adventures. For the last five years I have written about the Banks City Council and school district and I'm tired of going out of town

to meetings so I'm going to stop.

I have appreciated sharing the joy of my first grandchild, Ben, with the community. We've waited a lot longer than others our age who have had grands for years. Sweet, beautiful, teeny Ben carries two families into a new generation for the first time and we are all drunk with love.

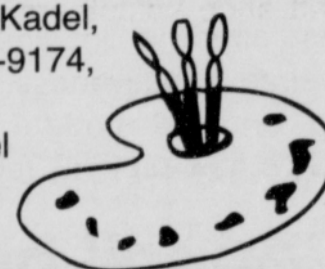


Gallery seeking art submissions in all media

Anything goes in the July art show at The Gallery at Columbia Center. All artists are invited to celebrate creativity and show their work in any style or medium. The mission of The Gallery at Columbia Center, the only public, non-profit gallery in Columbia County, is to provide a space for artists at every level, amateur and professional, to display their artwork. Three dimensional work and photography are also welcome. Art may be offered for sale or just for display.

Submissions will be accepted by the Art Committee on Friday, July 1, 4:30-6:00 p.m., at the Columbia Center, 375 S. 18 Street, St. Helens. Art may also be dropped off earlier in the day at the Columbia Technology Center in the same building. The art will be on display until July 29.

For more information on art submissions or future shows, contact Art Committee members Amy Williams, 503-366-3083, email <amy@pnca.edu> or Patty Kadel, 503-397-9174, email <phkadel@yahoo.com>.



Church Directory

ST. AUGUSTINE (CANTERBURY) EPISCOPAL CHURCH

375 North St. (Vernonia Grange Hall)
Vernonia, 503 705-2173
Please call for service schedule.

VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH

Grant Williams, Pastor
957 State Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-6790
Sunday Breakfast 9:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 9:45 a.m.
*B.L.A.S.T. w/Nursery 10:00 a.m.
*Bible Learning and Scripture Training
Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.

VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sam Hough, Evangelist
410 North Street
Vernonia, 503 429-6522
Sunday School 9:45 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 7:00 p.m.

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.

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.

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
Grant & North Streets
Vernonia, 503 429-5378
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Nursery available
Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.

VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH

850 Madison Avenue
Vernonia, 503 429-1103
Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School

ASSEMBLY OF GOD

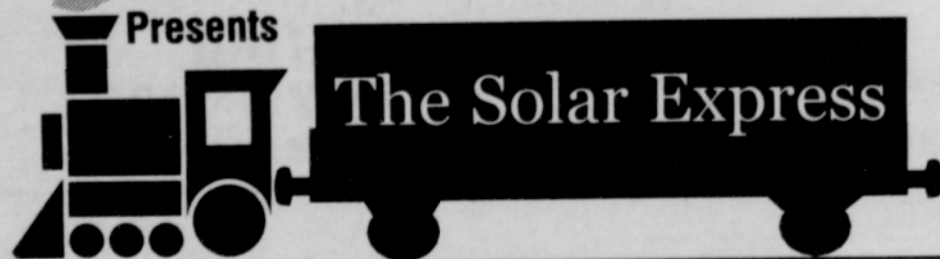
662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia,
503 556-1961 for Information
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

John Aitken II, Pastor, 396-1856
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.
Vernonia, 503 429-8301
Morning Worship, 9:15 a.m.
Bible Study 10:30 a.m.

Nehalem Valley Bible Church

Presents



The Solar Express

July 11th thru 15th
9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Fun for Kids 3 years up to 5th Grade

500 North Street, Vernonia
For info call 503-429-5378