

Hybrid asparagus becomes long-lived, prolific investment

There is always one thing we can bank on in early spring – and that would be those succulent stalks of asparagus.

The first stems of the season generally begin peeking out of their bed in March and we can depend on good production until the end of June.

But, alas, this winter refused to take a hike and the first efforts of the asparagus patch were lost to temperatures down into the teens. But no never mind. Production seems to have caught up to normal during warmer days and nights.

You know, asparagus is not difficult to grow. It thrives best in full sun in well-drained soil. But varietal choices have noticeably changed in just the last decade, making it even easier to assure yourself of a reliable crop for many years to come.

When I was a kid back in the



Kay Melia

• The Gardener

dark ages, a variety known as Martha Washington was about the only choice you had, and it was a very reliable producer. It's still available just about everywhere.

But the extremely talented and hard-working plant scientists at Rutgers University made asparagus growing much more enjoyable with the creation of the "Jersey" line of hybrid varieties, and asparagus growing was fun again. The Jersey named crowns of asparagus are all male plants and are much more productive because they don't have to invest energy in making seed.

With an all-male variety such

as Jersey Giant, Jersey Knight or the newest of the lot called Jersey Supreme, 25 plants – or crowns – are usually adequate for a family of four. You would need to plant twice as many Martha Washington or other standard varieties to accomplish the same purpose.

Planting seed to grow your own crowns isn't recommended anymore because buying crowns simply makes more sense. You can buy either 1-year-old crowns or 2-year-crowns. Many gardeners believe the younger ones are the smartest buy for a couple of reasons. Number one, they are cheaper at the store, and number two, the two-year-old crowns tend to suffer from transplant shock more readily than their little brothers.

Asparagus beds can be successfully started just about anywhere. It must be planted in areas where the ground freezes in the winter

and where dry seasons prevail. Those reasons make it a cinch here in the High Plains.

The high country of California grows 70 percent of the commercially grown asparagus in the nation. That alone is reason enough to start your own bed, because when fresh vegetables are shipped here from California, they just aren't very fresh anymore.

But here's the best reason to grow your own. An asparagus bed started in your garden will produce a crop for 20 years or more. That is truly perennial.

Search out some of those fresh, healthy asparagus crowns that are adorned with roots that resemble the tentacles of an octopus. Follow directions carefully for planting. It could prove to be the most enjoyable new creation in your garden this year.



Joyce and Dean Weis

Reception to honor 60th anniversary

The children of Dean and Joyce (Pope) Weis of Great Bend, formerly of Selden, will celebrate the couple's 60th wedding anniversary with a reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, May 26, at the Selden Parish Center.

The couple was married July 14, 1953, in Colby. Dean worked for Dow Well, an oil company that transferred the family to towns across western Kansas. Joyce was a stay-at-home mother, then worked at Kentucky Fried Chick-

en in Great Bend.

They have six children: Mike (Karen) Weis of San Antonio, Texas; Jennifer (Robert) Reynolds of Guyman, Okla.; Debbie (Russell) Wood of Spearville; Tim (Dianne) Wood of Fontana; Jeff and Julie Weis of Edmond, Okla.; and Nikki and Paul Zamarripa of Great Bend.

The couple has 18 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

The family requests no gifts.

Colby Rotary Club

Colby Rotary Club met Tuesday at Colby Community College with 32 members and guests Matt Bain, Cherry Chen, Christy Griffiths, Millie Horlacher and Michelle Hubert.

Wayne Horlacher had the program. His guest was Bain, project coordinator of the Smoky Valley Ranch, which is part of the Nature Conservancy. The conservancy, started in 1951, is the world's largest conservation organization according to Bain, and has chapters in all 50 states and in 32 countries.

There are 118 million acres in

the conservancy, with the purpose of protecting nature and preserving life. The Kansas chapter has existed since 1965 but was not formally established until 1989. It owns more than 45,700 acres.

Smoky Valley Ranch in Logan County was established as part of the conservancy in 1999 and includes 16,800 acres. It is a working cattle ranch where bison were reintroduced in 2009.

Vernon Hurd won Roto-Lotto. Rotary meets weekly in Room 106 of the Student Union.

— Relda Galli

Senator to speak in WaKeeney

The ninth annual Memorial Day service will be at 10 a.m. at the Kansas Veterans' Cemetery at WaKeeney next Monday.

Sen. Jerry Moran will be a guest speaker for the event, along with Spc. 4 (ret.) Wayne Purinton, U.S. Army.

Send a birthday card

The family of Delores Aumiller of Colby will celebrate her 80th birthday on Friday, May 24, 2013, with a card shower.

Aumiller was born May 24, 1933, in Leoti. She has one daughter, Roxanne (Eric) Baker.

Send cards to 385 S. Chickamauga Ave., Colby, Kan., 67701.



Delores Aumiller last year

Requirements change on equivalency diploma

Students who are working toward passing the General Educational Development (GED) test to receive their Kansas High School Diploma might want to finish soon. The test will change beginning Thursday, Jan. 2.

"By the end of 2013, the GED as we know it will be changing and time is running out to enroll in a preparation class to finish your Kansas High School Diploma," said Examiner Megan Allen. "Students who do not complete their GED before 2014 will face several changes."

The test now has five parts. People will have to start over if they do not pass all five parts this year.

According to Allen, the new test will have only four parts. However, because writing, now a separate section, will be spread through the whole test as essay questions, the overall difficulty will increase.

The new test is predicted to be significantly more difficult than the current test and the cost will

increase from \$85 to \$120. In addition, the new test will be computerized and will not be available to take with pencil and paper.

Approximately 700,000 adults take the test each year. About 72 percent pass the test. More than 1 million may take the test this year prior to the changes.

"I'm encouraging everyone who is interested in taking the GED prior to January to contact Nance Munderloh in the Colby Community College Adult Education office," said Allen. "She can enroll students in a preparation class. If the student is ready to take or finish the GED, they can contact me at the college at 460-5480. Students who have started or taken parts of the GED in the past two years can still finish without starting over. However, the remaining parts must be completed prior to Dec. 31, 2013."

For more information contact Allen at 460-5480.

Job market is tough

By Shaun Hittle

The Lawrence Journal-World LAWRENCE (AP) – Lawrence man Ryan Banning is in every sense of the word an entrepreneur. For more than a decade, Banning, 36, has operated his own business, Ryan's Vending Service, managing a dozen or so vending machines in Lawrence.

He's always looking to expand, he said as he loaded the soda and snack machines at the Lawrence Municipal Airport recently.

And the bottom line for Ryan, who has Down syndrome, is that he enjoys the work and turns a profit.

"He's earning, he's paying taxes," said Martha, his mother, who helped conceive of the business idea when Ryan finished high school. "It's been a really good fit for him."

Ryan needs a little help with his small business. A job coach drives him to pick up supplies at Sam's Club and to several local locations, including Visiting Nurses Association and a Kansas University fraternity. Ryan's father, Bob, helps obtain the vending machines and supplies, and runs the financial side of the business.

While Ryan has found work he enjoys, he's the exception for those with developmental disabilities, said Judith Gross, a research associate with the Kansas University's Beach Center, which advocates for those with disabilities.

"They graduate from school to the couch," missing out on socialization and a general sense of self-worth, Gross said. "Work is an important part of everyone's life."

And it's the type of work that makes a big difference, according to Rocky Nichols, executive director of the Disability Rights Center of Kansas.

While many with developmental disabilities find sub-minimum

wage work in very structured workshop settings, that shouldn't be the goal, Nichols said. The focus should be on employment in a typical job setting where those with developmental disabilities work alongside those without disabilities.

But finding jobs, and employers willing to work with those with developmental disabilities, isn't easy.

According to a 2011 report from the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, only 14 percent of adults with a developmental disability are employed in the competitive workforce.

Overland Park woman Tracey Dickey knows the struggles firsthand. Her son, Cole, a student at Blue Valley Northwest, has one year left in school, and she's been fighting for the past several years to find Cole a job.

Bridge Club

Meadow Lake bridge winners for Tuesday were: first, Margaret Denneker; second, Ken Ptacek; third, Joy Davis; fourth, Katie Melvin; fifth, Bob Renner; and sixth, Sarah Jane Barrett.

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

Sheila "Kathleen" Schultz

Sheila K. Schultz, 44, Lenexa, KS, passed away May 17, 2013. Visitation will be from 5-7 p.m. Wednesday May 22, at Valley View United Methodist Church, 8412 W. 95th St. Overland Park, KS.

Funeral Services will be held at 10:00 a.m. Thursday at the Church. Memorial contributions may be made to the Valley View United Methodist Church Youth Fund.

Mrs. Schultz was born September 3, 1968, in Seneca, KS. Sheila was a graduate of Sterling College. She was a mother first, a Bible School Teacher, Book Club leader and Girl Scout leader. Her favorite athletic team was whatever team her children were playing on. Additionally, she was a K-State fan and enjoyed watching the Royals.

She was preceded in death by her father, Robert Porting, mother, Florence Bernhardt Porting, and step-mother, Wanda Peschel Porting.

Sheila leaves a legacy of love for her husband of 23 years, Brad and her loving children, Braden William, and Paige Kathleen (both of the home). (Condolences may be expressed at: www.porterfuneralhome.com Arrangements: Porter Funeral Homes & Crematory, 8535 Monrovia, Lenexa, KS (913) 438-6444)



Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day
Hi-Plains Co-op

Wheat (bushel)	\$7.02
Corn (bushel)	\$6.72
Milo (hundredweight)	\$11.38
Soybeans (bushel)	\$13.98

TAKE A SMALL STEP TO GET HEALTHY

www.smallstep.gov



LET'S GO SWIMMING

SEASON PASSES ON SALE!

MON 5/20 2-7 PM	TUES 5/21 2-7 PM	WED 5/22 2-7 PM
-----------------------	------------------------	-----------------------

Avoid opening day lines - Get your passes now

If you have last years pass, bring it in to be reactivated with this years pass.

Colby Aquatic Park Open Saturday, May 25 at 1 p.m.

CLOSED

MEMORIAL DAY MAY 27th

The Colby Free Press will be CLOSED Monday, May 27th to observe Memorial Day. (There will not be a Monday paper this week.)

We will reopen for normal business hours Tuesday, May 28th.



COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. FIFTH, COLBY, KS
785.462.3963

Colby Junior Golf

Sign up at Meadow Lake Golf Course Thursday, May 30 • 9:00 a.m.

The first practice will follow sign up.

Practice every Thursday starting May 30 - July 25 from 10 - 11:30 a.m.

Ages 7-17 • Members: \$15 • Non-Members: \$65

— scholarships available —

Golf Coach: Kevan Taylor/Sara Betz/Ed Schmitt

Contact Person: Sara Betz - 785-269-7394 or 785-460-9855

