

# Springville Herbary

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**We have a deer fence! We have a garden! I have a 'new' desk chair! We have a rototiller! Details to follow.**

**Where to begin... Perhaps the most exciting, at least to us, is our DEER FENCE. If you have been here in the past few months, you will have seen that the market area is now enclosed in deer netting with a proper gate. How wonderful not to be afraid to come out in the morning and see what was destroyed overnight.**

**Contrary to what we all have read, the 5-foot deer netting (\$40.00 for 100 feet at Tractor Supply) has worked beautifully. I believe if you put up a solid fence that deer can see easily and brace on the top to jump, you may need seven feet or so. The netting is black which makes it virtually invisible at night and way too flimsy for jumping effectively. Yes, we still feed them corn every night. Dumb...**

**We also have deer netted ourselves a GARDEN. Not much variety this year. We weren't sure it would work when we planted. It has.**

**Have any of you grown OKRA? Yes, I know, it's a southern thing and if you cook it too long it gets slimy. Try it raw in a salad or my favorite way: fresh corn, tomatoes and okra. Cook just till tomatoes looks somewhat done. If okra is slimy, you overcooked. Anyway, okra has the most amazing blooms; like a big butter-yellow rose of Sharon with a maroon throat. Warning: they grow ridiculously fast. Cut every three or four days.**

**Also in the garden, our super ZINNIAS which we have been taking to the County Market as cut flowers and sharing with friends. Varieties we love are State Fair,**

Cactus flower and Peppermint Stick (or Candy Cane, depending on the seed company).

We won't talk about the TOMATOES. They are horrible. Or the calendulas which died a slow death being shaded by the zinnias.

And the TITHONIAS (Mexican sunflowers)! They have gone over eight feet! The butterflies and hummingbirds think they are great. "What do they look like?" I hear you asking. They look nothing like what you think of as a sunflower. They are huge branched plants sporting many bright orange single flowers. Want to try them? See me next year.

What is so exciting about a DESK CHAIR? I have hated typing in a chair with arms. I like to stick out my elbows. (In college boarding house they made me sit at the end of the table.) When I spotted an armless, obviously vintage chair at Goodwill, I had to have it- the price? \$7.99. We looked it up when we got home and found that it is a Gio Ponti 'Tanker' worth up to \$600.00! It adjusts all different ways and the upholstery is perfect.

Who was Gio Ponti? He was an Italian architect, furniture designer, artist, etc., etc. Look him up. He was involved with a bunch of famous buildings. I love my chair.

You may remember we were looking for a ROTOTILLER in the spring. One of our nice customers had one for sale. It is an older machine, but it kicks ass. (Sorry) We have planted in virgin soil that hasn't been turned in at least forever.

One of the spots newly tilled is inside the market compound where I planted BALSAM. This is not the stuff of model planes, but a (hopefully) self-sowing annual my mother always grew. It has been really beautiful, with all different colors of blooms in big clusters. Also called touch-me-not, the dried seed pods are supposed to shoot when touched. We haven't seen that yet. Look it up. Want it? See me next year.

It seems that most of you have smudged and cleansed where it needed to be done. I still have five WHITE SAGES left. Not winter hardy here. I will bargain.

Don't forget, FALL IS FOR PLANTING; also for dividing and harvesting. Don't risk your basil or lemon grass. If you miss them, they will be totally ruined and unusable.

Do you have PICTURE THIS on your phone yet? What is your excuse? Get it. The app doesn't only ID plants, it has a lot of additional information and a search bar.

TRIPS AND TOURS We visited Nemours in Delaware with friends last week. What a fabulous place! Go there if you haven't. Read a bit of the history first. I was the only one with Picture This and was repeatedly asked to identify trees, shrubs and flowers.

Last month we went to Mount Cuba with same friends, also in Delaware. Their specialty is native plants, but they also have a gorgeous mansion. May be silly, but one of the things that amazed me was the honor system snack bar where you can purchase an assortment of snacks, take them in the conservatory and sit on the beautiful furniture to eat. Go there, too.

As is our tradition, we went to the NJ State Fair and the WV State Fair in August. Sadly, we must admit that the WV Fair was better. As much as we like the NJ Fair and look forward to seeing our Nepalese vendor friends and even the motel owner where we always stay, we had to agree that it has become a bit of same old, same old. The WV Fair seems to change up more with some different features each year. No chickens at either fair due to possible avian flu contamination. Also had to commune with WV pigs from a distance unlike other years.

Every year I look at the LOVAGES and think it is time to share Rose's lovage soup recipe. Then come the swallowtail caterpillars. I am more than glad to share, but there goes the soup. The plants are all regrowing nicely if you need one, but a bit shy of soup quantity.

We did our planned elimination of most of our AILANTHUS TREES. Richard May Tree Service came and removed probably 45 trees, some of which were at least 25 years old. Of course, the stumps all sprouted and we still had many lantern flies but they were easier to kill on the short growth instead of in the tall trees. Hopefully fewer next year.

Andy has fond memories of growing BACHELOR BUTTONS as a child. It has taken us thirty plus years to attempt to grow them. Unhappily, we have had what you might call 'limited success.' The plants I bought were expensive and a total failure. The ones I grew from seed are finally putting up a few small blooms, nothing like the two-foot plants they are supposed to be.

But here is the interesting part. You know that expensive blue ink you buy for your computer? It is call cyan, not just blue. Why? Bachelor buttons' botanical

name is *centaurus cyanus* and they are as blue as anything in nature or elsewhere. Cool, huh?

You all know that I appreciate your dropping off your POTS AND FLATS. Some go to other people besides my using so many. Please don't bring me your lovely hanging baskets without the inserts in the bottom. There is no effective substitute and I just have to throw them away.

Now the SAD PART and part of why it has taken me so long to do a newsletter. We have had a rough and upsetting time with predators this year. Our geese hatched five lovely goslings and we lost four of them. We lost four chickens including Shirley and the Philadelphia chicken. The last victim was one of our adult female geese to a fox. We would think all were safe and danger would come in another form. We have also had trouble with the Cooper's hawk taking our little birds. At least the blue jays are good at sounding the alarm so I can try to chase it away. Better times ahead we hope.

I HATE ANTS. I had for years considered them neutral and part of life, but no more. They get in the bottom of plant pots and make them temporarily unsaleable. They get in stacks of empty pots and make them temporarily unusable. We are talking about hundreds, with eggs or young, not just a few. Worst of all, they transport aphids. Ants farm aphids for what they produce and will carry them onto your plants. If you see ants on your plants, look for aphids. Grrrrr.

One of my customers at the County market kept asking me for FRENCH THYME. I finally thought "Why not?" so I got it. Of course, I have not seen him since, but the French thyme has been quite popular. All seem to agree it is a little bit sweeter and a little bit stronger than English. We still have English, French, lemon, lime green, hi-ho silver and woolly.

What else do we have? It's kind of like the song from Fiddler on the Roof; 'A little bit of this, a little bit of that.' Plenty of lavender, rosemary, chives and some fine coneflowers. We have at least some of almost everything else except parsley and basil. We have grown more basil than we will ever use, so if you come in and smile nicely, I may cut you some. We also have these enormous pineapple sages which I think aren't going to bloom till Christmas.

Andy hasn't had a haircut since June last year. And we have been coloring my hair teal.

I don't understand the NATIVE PLANT thing. When some environmental group or the like has a native plant sale, people flock there all excited. We have a number of really cool native plants and a sign on the road that says Natives, but here they mostly sit. I have had to tell my customers after a purchase elsewhere, "Milkweed is extremely invasive with deep roots, trumpet vine will pop up all over your yard and no, you don't want Virginia creeper." Again, I don't get it.

We saw lots of Monarch BUTTERFLIES but no caterpillars on our aphid laden milkweed. Black swallowtail caterpillars were late but numerous, a smattering of others. I'm hoping for my favorite red-spotted purples as the apples drop. They prefer fruit to flowers.

Come see us

Ring the bell if you can find it in the snakeroot.

Read the poem about lavender. Andy doesn't like it. I

do.

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1. Now, summer goes,  
Lingers, bestows  
One last rich gift of her making-  
These, azure-dim,

2. So many flowers!  
Such shining hours!  
Many a bird's sweet 'Come hither.'  
Then the rose fades,

Odorous, slim,  
Lavender blooms for our taking.

Hushed are the glades,  
Lavender's sweet tho' it wither!

3. Pass them not by,  
    Silent and shy,  
Sober, aloof in their seeming;  
    Through winter nights  
    Of June's delights,  
Lavender sets us a-dreaming

Agnes S. Falconer