

Garden Friendly Journal

Schuylerville Garden Club Publishing

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Welcome to the Fall issue of the Garden Friendly Journal - an easy read for grown-ups who want to learn more about gardening and play in the dirt with the children from their family and around the neighborhood.

Maybe you or your child discovered the new "Frog Bag" of books and activities on the Library desk during a recent visit. This is a program, sponsored by members of the local Schuylerville Garden Club to share their love and knowledge of gardening and to promote conservation and eco-friendly growing practices for a healthy environment.

The "Frog Bag" will have 1 or 2 children's books about growing, nature, bugs, animals and other interesting topics. There will be activities, handouts, supplies and a give-away for each borrower, along with handouts or information sheets for the borrower and the parent/grandparent/guardian. The books, activities, handouts, supplies/give-aways will change each season. After the borrowing period, just return the "Frog Bag" and the books and the library staff will replenish the handouts/supplies and give-away for the next borrower.

We think you will enjoy learning with your child and have fun as you partner with them as they complete the activity.

"Fun Crafts with Fall Leaves"

This season's activity is "Fun Crafts with Fall Leaves." Your child can use the pictures of animal leaf art and the steps provided in their handouts as guides to create their own leaf art on the construction page included. It will be a fun project to do together. After they are done, ask your budding artist to sign their name to the finished piece and take a picture of the art work and the artist. Maybe you could post this picture to the Schuylerville Library Facebook page for all to see!

The fun skit on page 2 of this newsletter gives a simple approach to lawn care. Think of what you could do with the freed-up time if you adopt this earth-friendly way to landscaping. Of course, you would need to convince the neighbors or your development that this is the way to go! 😊 You could start a trend!

The more high-tech our lives become, the more nature we need. We have a human right to a meaningful connection to nature, and we have the responsibilities that come with that right. Few today would question the notion that every person, especially every young person, has a right to access the Internet. We should also have access to the natural world, because that connection is part of our humanity.

— Richard Louv

Mather Nature Has a Garden Plan--and It Doesn't Include Green Rectangles

A conversation in heaven between Mother Nature and St. Francis.

Mother Nature: St. Francis, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in the USA? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden-plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honeybees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

St. Francis: It's the tribes that settled there, Mother Nature. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

Mother Nature: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

St. Francis: Apparently so, Mother Nature. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

Mother Nature: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

St. Francis: Apparently not, Mother Nature. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

Mother Nature: They cut it? Do they then bale it, like hay?

St. Francis: Not exactly Mother Nature. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

Mother Nature: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

St. Francis: No, Ma'am -- just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

Mother Nature: Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass, so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

St. Francis: Yes, Ma'am.

Mother Nature: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

St. Francis: You aren't going to believe this, Mother Nature. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

Mother Nature: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

St. Francis: You'd better sit down, Mother Nature. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

Mother Nature: No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist and loose?

St. Francis: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

Mother Nature: And where do they get this mulch?

St. Francis: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

Mother Nature: Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Cecil B, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

St. Cecil B: "Dumb and Dumber," Ma'am. It's a real stupid movie about...

Mother Nature: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.