

HORTICULTURAL YOUTH SOCIETY NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2012



Photo by Rad Dad

"When a newborn holds your finger in a little fist,
then you're hooked for life"

NEW – TWO CANADA BLOOMS YOUTH COMPETITIONS – PAGE 5

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For recent copies of the Youth Newsletters:
Go to www.gardenontario.org, click on "ABOUT OHA"
And then click on YOUTH at the bottom of that column.



Please: if you are no longer the youth leader then please forward this copy to the proper person.

Note: For all leaders' names changes or cancellations, would you please inform either/or both, the OHA Youth Chair: Betty Morrison, 705-789-1407 email: kenmorrison156@gmail.com, and/or OHA Secretary: Debbie Stewart, 613-584-2655, e-mail debbie_stewart@sympatico.ca - Thanks, Rad Dad

— Kerri Robinson – Grade
6 – Port Dover

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INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

"The ultimate test of man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard."

- Gaylor Nelson, former governor of Wisconsin,
Founder of Earth Day

I HAVE TO KNOW!

She gave me a squinted stare
But I gave her a long glare
The ball came in
The sound went zing!
I opened my eyes
And looked in the skies
Did it go over?
Right out of Dover?
Maybe it didn't go over the fence
I must be too tense
The ball came down and hit my head
Now I think its time for bed

P.S.

STRAWBERRIES
NUTRITION

140 grams of the daily value
of vitamin C
12 % of the daily value for
dietary fiber
Just 7 grams of sugar, lowest
of the top fruits
A source of folate and
potassium
Just 45 calories

A VERY BERRY-SWEET
WAKE-UP SHAKE.

250 mL / 1 cup strawberries
1 medium banana, in pieces
250 mL / 1 cup milk
125 mL / ½ cup plain or
flavoured yogurt
15 – 30 mL / 1 – 2 tbsp honey
nutmeg, optional
Reserve 3 strawberries. In a
blender container, combine
remaining strawberries,
banana, milk, yogurt and
honey. Cover, blend at
medium-low speed until thick
and smooth. Pour into chilled
glasses, sprinkle with nutmeg.
Garnish each with a whole
strawberry.

Makes 3 servings. 160 cal, 2
g fat, 6 g protein, 11 carbs.
70 mg sodium, 2 g dietary
fibre per 180 g / ¾ cup.

TO MY TEACHER

You sure are nice to us
You always lend a hand,
Your love stretches on and on
Just like a rubber band

You sure know how to teach
us
You talk gentle in every word
Whenever I think of you
You're a graceful bird.

I know what kind of bird you
are
You're a lovely dove
Because you are a leader
Way up there high above

— Amy Holodinsky – Grade 4

EGGSHELL POSY VASE

By Jane Lake

Source: allfreecrafts.com/

Make a sweet little posy vase from an eggshell. Perfect for tiny flower bouquets on Easter, Mother's Day or Valentine's Day, or just to give someone you love along with breakfast in bed!

Craft Supplies needed:

- Half an eggshell
- Water
- Glass candleholder, eggcup, or small dish
- Sea glass, seashells, coloured sand, or flat glass marbles
- Bouquet of small fresh flowers

Eggshell Posy Vase



Instructions:

Save that eggshell from breakfast and make a sweet little posy vase for tiny flowers. This looks lovely on the breakfast table, on a breakfast tray or in any corner that needs a little splash of bright color.

You will need a glass candleholder for the display shown in our photograph. Simply support the eggshell in the area meant to hold a tapered candle in place. Surround the eggshell with sea glass, seashells, colored sand or flat glass marbles.

Add water to the eggshell.

Cut a few short-stemmed flowers and arrange in the eggshell.

Suggestions:

You could support the eggshell in a pretty eggcup, or in a small bowl, supporting the egg with the items that you choose to surround it; sea glass or colored marbles work well for this.

Decorate the eggshell if you wish - use Easter

North P.S.
egg dye or paint with acrylics.

YOUTH GARDEN PROJECT 2011

Here are a few pictures of the vegetable and ornamentals garden winners of the Fort Malden/Amherstburg Youth Group 2011. They had productive and wonderful gardens.



Corey Way First Prize



HOW TO MAKE DANDYLION SYRUP

by Jane Lake

Source: allfreecrafts.com

I first made dandelion syrup when my kids were preschoolers and we woke one morning to find the lawn full of dandelions. I never used weed killer on my lawn, and the dandelions were there for the picking, so...we gathered up buckets of dandelion heads and made new syrup for pancakes and waffles. The kids were enchanted, and it's still one of their favourite memories.

Here are two recipes for dandelion syrup, plus an uplifting essay from Donna Doyon on the subject of the lowly dandelion weed.

Dandelion Syrup

Put 250 dandelion flower heads* in a large kettle. Squeeze the juice of one lemon into the kettle, and add 4 cups of water. Bring to a boil, cover kettle, and simmer for one hour. Remove from heat and leave the kettle covered overnight. Strain the dandelion mixture and add 2 lbs of white sugar to the remaining liquid. Boil for one and a half hours to a syrup consistency. Wipe any spills from the stove immediately (or you'll need a chisel to remove it!) Store in a tightly sealed jar in the refrigerator.

Dandelion Syrup Deux

4 cups dandelion tops*
juice of 1/2 lemon
1 quart water
2 pounds sugar

Place tops in water and bring to a boil. Let boil for one minute, cover, and let stand overnight. Next day, strain and extract excess water. Discard flower tops. Mix with lemon juice and sugar and simmer until most of the water evaporates. Do not bring to a hard boil. Let mixture cool, then simmer once more until the thickness of maple syrup. Good for pancakes and flapjacks.

*** Be sure to use only dandelions that have not been exposed to pesticides, lead, herbicides or other chemicals. This includes dandelions growing on the side of roads. Unless you are sure that the flowers are chemical free, don't use them!**

LESSONS FROM A DANDYLION

by Donna Doyon

Source: allfreecrafts.com

I recall as a young child bringing bouquets of brilliant yellow flowers to my mother. It didn't matter that the stems felt sticky or that both my parents cursed the presence of these flowers in the lawn. I thought they were beautiful!

And there were so many of them! We spent hours picking the flowers and then popping the blossoms off with a snap of our fingers. But the supply of dandelions never ran out. My father or brothers would chop off all the heads with the lawn mower at least once a week, but that didn't stop these hardy wonders.

And for those flowers that escaped the honor of being hand delivered to my mother, the horror of a childish singsong game of "Mama had a baby and its head popped off" or the sharp blades of the lawn mower, there was another level of existence.



The soft, round puffs of a dandelion gone to seed caused endless giggles and squeals of delight as we unwittingly spread this flower across the yard.

As I worked in my garden last week, pulling unwanted weeds out of the space that would become a haven for tomatoes, corn, peas and sunflowers, I again marveled at the flower that some call a weed. And I thought, "If only I had the staying power of a dandelion."

If only I could stretch my roots so deep and straight that something tugging on my stem couldn't separate me completely from the source that feeds me life. If only I could come back to face the world with a bright, sunny face after someone has run me over with a lawnmower or worse, purposely attacked me in an attempt to destroy me. If only my foliage was a nutritious

source of vitamins that help others grow. If only I could spread love and encouragement as freely and fully as this flower spreads seeds of itself.

The lawns at my parents' home are now beautiful green blankets. The only patches of color come from well-placed, well-controlled flowerbeds. Chemicals have managed to kill what human persistence couldn't.

I hope you and I can be different. I hope that we can stretch our roots deep enough that the strongest poison can't reach our souls. I hope that we can overcome the poisons of anger, fear, hate, criticism and competitiveness. I hope that we can see flowers in a world that sees weeds.

HORTICULTURAL YOUTH GROUP LEADER

CANADA BLOOMS YOUTH COMPETITIONS

Canada Blooms has always included a horticultural and design competition, but this time there will be a few new additions to the flower show.

TWO YOUTH COMPETITIONS:

Youth Floral Design

In the city, we celebrate the butterfly who makes it's home amid the concrete.

Class 1 Youth Fun

A butterfly made of dried plant material and equipped to be attached to a metal trellis. Your design can represent a real butterfly, or one created by your imagination. Any type of dried plant material may be used, e.g. seeds, leaves, flowers, bark. The plant material may be dyed or painted. Accessories permitted. Maximum dimensions: 8" x 10". Please attach a 6" length of wire, for example a twist tie, to the tummy area of your butterfly. This will be used to attach the butterflies to a metal trellis.

DESIGN CLASS 1

A Butterfly made with dried plant material and equipped with a wire so that it can be attached to a trellis

We would love to have many entries, from all parts of Ontario. All children who are members of OHA societies, or children or grandchildren of members can enter.

Youth Horticulture

Class 2 Youth

Spider Plant - *Chlorophytum comosum* -

A Spider plant rooted from Spider plant babies by the exhibitor in the fall of 2011, pot

HORTICULTURAL CLASS 1

A Spider Plant grown from a baby offset planted by Dec. 21, 2011

For further information please contact Peggy Lockie or Ursula Eley.

Canada Blooms will take place March 16 – 25 in 2012. Please check the schedule for entry times and days.

Note: For complete details, please see the show schedule details as can be found on both, the OHA website and the Canada Blooms website.

Note: There is also a Photography Competition.

Looking forward to hearing from you,
Ursula Eley

TEA BOX PLANTER

Source: allfreecrafts.com

By Jane Lake

This miniature tea box planter will fit almost any windowsill, and is perfect for apartments or where space is limited.

Plant with violas, pansies, or other small plants such as herbs: basil, lemon balm, rosemary or thyme, or even catnip or cat grass for your favourite feline.



What You Need:

- A tea box (available at dollar stores and grocery stores) - or you could substitute any wooden box

of about the same size.

- Your choice of two (or maybe three) small flower plants or herbs, depending on the size of tea box, some are slightly larger than others and can take that extra plant.
- Plastic bag to line the box.
- Small amount of potting soil.

The success with this tea box planter is selecting small plants that will survive in a relatively confined space, and to water the plants regularly, as the soil can dry out quite quickly when warmed on a windowsill.

What You Do:

You could start your flowers or herbs from seed, but depending on the time of year many annuals and herbs may be available already in bloom. Then you can go for instant color. Choose plants that have been grown in small packs; the kind that come 4 in a pack are perfect, as the root ball on these is small enough to fit the box.

You need to remove the lid, and the bag of tea inside, of course -- that's for later, when you're done! :)

Line the box with the plastic bag, cutting off any extra plastic just inside the top edge of the box. The bag is to protect the wood from moisture and help retain water for the plants.

Pour a small amount of soil on the bottom of the bag, and turn the box on its end, to spoon a small amount of soil onto the left side.

Nestle in one of the plants, then add a few more spoonfuls of soil, then another plant, more soil, and the last plant - which you will need to carefully push to the side in order to add more soil between it and the right box side.

This procedure sounds more complicated than what it is; what you're trying to do is add the maximum amount of soil so that you can allow the plants some expansion room for their roots.

Water the new plants. The soil should settle a little, allowing you to top it up some more.

Place on a windowsill, and water frequently. Oh - and don't forget to brew a nice pot of tea now you're done!!!

TRIVIAL AGRICULTURAL FACTS

Source: The Ridgeway Independence Sept 1011

- A typical Canadian eats 28 pigs in a lifetime
- Aunt Jemima pancake flour, invented in 1889, was the first ready-mix food to be sold commercially.

- Capsicum which makes hot peppers "hot" to the human mouth, is best neutralized by casein, the main protein found in milk
Goulash, a beef soup, originated in Hungary in the 9th century

MAKING A BEAN TEEPEE

Source: kiddiegardens.com/bean_teepee

A bean teepee creates a wonderful hiding hole for young kids during the summer months at the same time as providing a perfect support for growing pole beans!

You can locate your bean teepee either in the vegetable patch or in a spare corner of the garden - it adds the dimension of height and is not only useful and fun, but quite ornamental too. Just bear in mind that the teepee will cast a fair bit of shade once the beans have grown.

How to make a bean teepee:

You will need: 7 - 9 long bamboo poles, some twine, string or even masking tape, and runner or pole beans.

Start off by finding a suitable spot in your garden and dig the earth over in a circular shape. A circle with a diameter of 1 metre / 3-4 foot is usually perfectly adequate.

Beans like well-drained soil, so add some compost and fertilizer if needed
Firmly push the ends of the bamboo poles into the ground by about 7 ½ cm / 3 inches on the outside of the circle.

Leave a gap between two of the poles to act as the entrance to the bean teepee.

Tie the bamboo poles together firmly near the top using twine, string, a bit of old rope or even masking tape.



There is absolutely no fine art in tying the poles

together - the main and only aim is to ensure they are all VERY firmly held in place, as no matter how careful kids are, they are likely to knock the poles when going in and out of the teepee!

Plant the runner or pole beans about 5 cm / 2" deep. Plant them on the inside of the teepee rather than the outside, as this makes it easier to hoe and keep weeds down - anything growing on the outside of the bamboo poles are weeds!

It is usual to plant two beans per pole. That should ensure at least one healthy plant per pole



Water generously.

Beans usually take between 7 to 14 days to germinate. Once the seedlings appear, protect them from slug attacks.

When the beans are a few centimeters/ inches high, loosely tie them to the poles. From then on, they should find their own way up.

When the plants reach the top of the teepee after about 7-8 weeks, nip the growing ends off. Keep them well watered during a dry patch, especially once the pods have started forming.

Once the dense foliage of the runner or pole beans has climbed up the bamboo poles and provides a cover, your bean teepee is ready for it's inhabitants. Pop a blanket inside for the perfect private hide-away!

Tips

Once the first bean pods are ready to be harvested, keep picking them every few days to ensure the plants keep flowering and producing more pods. Once a pod reaches full maturity, the flowering process is shut down.

Beans can be planted outside once the risk of frost is over, usually late May or the beginning of June in the more northern areas.

For an even more colourful display, interplant climbing flowering plants too, such as climbing nasturtiums or black-eyed Susan. Cats love these shady hide-a-way's too!

MAKING BAMBOO WIND CHIMES

Source: kiddiegardens.com/bamboo

If, you have a few bamboo canes left over from the tomatoes, you could make bamboo wind chimes with your kids and hang them up in the garden or on the patio.

Quick and simple to make, these chimes add character and the hollow, dulcet tones are a delight to hear in the background on a lazy sunny evening - especially for your neighbours!

You will need:

- A length of bamboo cane or two,
- Some string or yarn (not too thick and preferably synthetic as it will last longer),
- A saw,
- A very small drill.
- A metal or wooden ring is also useful but optional.

You will want one length of bamboo about 24 – 30 cm / 10" to 12" long for the top of the chime, and at least 6 further lengths to hang down. These can be either of varying lengths to produce many different tones, or all the same length, in which case they will produce much the same tone when they bang into each other.

We prefer cutting the bamboo various different lengths for our bamboo wind chime, simply because it looks and sound more interesting.

One idea is to measure the first one 10 cm / 4" long, then each subsequent length 2 ½ cm / 1" longer than the previous one. Saw them carefully - ADULTS ONLY.

Tip:

Make your bamboo wind chimes colourful by painting the lengths different colours!

While making the chime, try gently banging the lengths together to explore the different tones they make ... several of ours have been turned into drumsticks instead!

With the saw (or a sharp serrated knife) cut fine grooves in the top length of bamboo, spaced evenly, equivalent to the number of lengths you will have dangling from it - ADULTS ONLY. Very carefully drill a hole through the top of each length of bamboo, with the exception of the top piece. Insert the string through the holes, and loop it around the top piece, ensuring it falls neatly into one of the grooves. Allow a couple of centimeters/inches between the top of each piece of bamboo and the horizontal length, so they can dangle freely and not get all knotted up!

Tip:

Use a needle and thread to pull the string through the holes ... tie the string to the end of the thread.

Finally pull a length of twine or string through the length of the top piece, tying them together about 15 cm / 6" above the center of the horizontal. You can either tie them simply using a knot, or through a ring, or better even, through a large button - this ensures your bamboo wind chime is nicely balance

Finally, hang your work of art up somewhere where you will be able to hear and admire it for years to come, but where you won't keep banging your head on it!

You can either hang the chime from a hook, or tie more string to it and dangle it from a branch or similar outside ... though the birds would appreciate it if you could place it a little way from their feeder!

TRIVIAL AGRICULTURAL FACTS

Source: The Ridgeway Independence Sept 1011

The world's first chocolate candy was produced in 1828 by Dutch chocolate-maker Conrad J. Van Houten. He pressed the fat from roasted cocoa beans to produce cocoa butter, to which he added cocoa powder and sugar.

Haggis is the national dish of Scotland. To make it, one takes the heart, liver, lungs, and small intestine of a calf or sheep, boil them in the stomach of the animal, season with salt, pepper and onions, and then add suet and oatmeal.

In the authentic Chinese meal, the last course is soup because it allows the roast duck entrée to "swim" toward digestion.

Potato chips are North American's favourite snack food. They are devoured at a rate of 1.2 billions pounds per year. Chef George Crum invented them in 1853. The chips were a mocking

response to a customer who complained that his French fries were too thick.

Rice is the staple food of more than 50% of the world's population.

THREE THINGS TO DO WITH EGG CARTONS

Source: familyfun.go.com/crafts/home-garden

ONE: GIVE ACTION GUYS A RIDE

Our associate art director Tim MacKay was really excited when he heard we'd be dreaming up fun uses for egg cartons. "Transports!" he declared.

He fondly recalled loading his action figures into his mom's discarded cartons and steering them across the kitchen floor. So we decided to introduce a whole new generation of thrill-seekers to this awesome ad hoc vehicle.



Use your imagination and just about any kind of egg carton — or if you want to make our model, start with two cardboard cartons. On the first one, cut flaps as shown to serve as hatches (the inside can be used to carry smaller figures or equipment), then paint it gray.

Use the other carton for parts: we snipped off the tips of the interior dividers, painted them red to make thrusters and running lights, and attached them to the transport body with glue dots. Place your guys inside and on top, and they're ready to defend the world, or at least the kitchen.

TWO: COUNT THE DAYS TILL EASTER

Save the eggs for dyeing, and then use the carton to build anticipation for the bunny's visit. On each of the 12 days leading up to the holiday, let your child tear open one-cup's cover to find a small surprise hiding inside.

Begin by cutting off a carton's top and side flaps and trimming the center dividers so that they're level with the outside edge. Lay the carton facedown on a piece of tissue paper. Trace it, then cut along the traced line. Turn the carton right side up again and place a wrapped treat, a

trinket, or a fun note in each cup.



Apply glue around each cup and all around the edges. Lay the cut tissue paper piece over the glue and press it to secure it. For extra wow factor (and to prevent peeking!), cut circles from tissue paper in contrasting colors and affix one circle over each cup with a glue stick.

THREE: GROW A GRASSAPILLAR

Celebrate the arrival of spring by bringing this fuzzy critter to life.

Begin by mixing 3/4 cup of potting soil and 2 tablespoons of grass seed in a bowl. Add water to moisten the mixture, and then set it aside.



Cut away a three-cup section of an egg carton, and then trim the section along the longer edges so that your "grassapillar" will look the same from both sides. With a permanent marker, draw a face on one end as shown. Gently spoon the seed mixture into the cups.

Set your creation on a dish in a brightly lit spot

and keep the soil moist. The grass should sprout in about a week.

EASTER EGG: BEE EGG

Source: familyfun.go.com/crafts

With this project, kids blow an egg, and then turn it into a flying wonder. All you need is a raw egg, paint, craft supplies, and fishing line for hanging the egg. The best part is that this blown-egg creature will keep indefinitely.



Materials

- Eggs
- Newsprint
- Egg dye
- Paper towels
- Birthday candles or crayons
- Red and black acrylic or tempera paint
- Brushes
- White tissue
- Glue
- Fishing line
- Pipe cleaners
- Blue tissue

Instructions:

1. Blow the Egg:

Wash and dry the raw egg. Cover your table with newsprint and set out bowls, pushpins, and paper towels. Shake the egg to break the yolk. Next, pierce the top and bottom with a pushpin, making the hole on the wider end a bit larger. Position the egg over the bowl and blow through the small hole, allowing the inside of the egg to seep into the bowl. Set the empty egg, with the large hole down, in an egg carton to dry. Be sure

children wash their hands after handling raw egg.

2. Decorate the Egg:

Let the kids paint half of the egg, stand it atop a bottle cap to dry (use a hair dryer to speed things up), and then paint the other half. Centering the face on either hole, paint on features with contrasting colors. Paint your bee bright yellow, then paint on a red smile, black eyes, and black stripes. Glue on white tissue paper wings.



3. Take Flight:

Tape a long length of fishing line to the end of an unfolded paper clip. Starting at the small hole, thread the line through the decorated egg and out the large hole. To keep your flying critter upright, tape the fishing line just above the hole in the critter's back. Hang it from the ceiling or an egg tree.

EASTER EGG: BLUEBIRD EGG

Treat the same way as for Bee Egg except here you begin with a blue painted egg, then paint on black eyes. Glue on blue tissue paper wings and a billow tail. Finally, glue on a paper beak.



NATURALLY DYED EASTER EGGS

Source: curbly.com/users/Chrisjob/posts/3840

Materials

- Free-range eggs
- Alum powder (available at the supermarket in the spice aisle)
- White Vinegar
- Vegetables and spices, see step one
- Cook top
- Saucepan
- Measuring spoons
- Wooden spoon and slotted spoon
- Vegetable oil, wax, electrical tape, leaves, stickers, etc (optional)



1). Choose, which colors you'd like to dye your eggs.

- For blue, use red cabbage
- For red, try whole beets (not canned), cherries, or cranberries
- For light green, use spinach or fresh green herbs
- For tan, brew some strong coffee, tea, or a handful of cumin seeds
- For yellow, try turmeric (a spice) and yellow onion skins
- For olive green, use red onion skins (the color is produced by a reaction with the vinegar)
- For purple, grape juice or frozen blueberries

2). For each color, fill a saucepan with at least three inches of water. Add in your vegetables or spices. It'll take a lot...around two cups, packed.

3). Bring the water to a boil, and add two teaspoons of alum powder – UNLESS you're using onionskins, as it creates a funky reaction.

4). Boil for thirty minutes.

5). Remove the pan from heat and allow it to cool

slightly. You don't want to add the eggs to boiling water, because the shells will likely crack.

6). Return to heat, and stir in two tablespoons of white vinegar. Add the eggs, and bring the mixture back to a full boil. Reduce the heat slightly, and cook for 10-12 minutes. Take the pan off the heat, and let the eggs cool in the dye.

7). Remove the eggs from the dye. If you're satisfied with the color, then allow them to dry. For deeper, richer colors, strain the liquid, and allow the egg to continue to soak for up to eight hours. (Any longer, and the vinegar will start to disintegrate the shell.) If you plan to eat the eggs, put them into the refrigerator.

Other ideas

8). To add this marbled effect, stir in a few teaspoons of vegetable oil into the cooled, strained dye. The oil will stick to the shell in certain places, preventing the dye from continuing to color the shell in certain spots.



9). Try dripping wax on the shell, or color them with crayons. Dye as above, and then stick them in a 200° oven for 8-10 minutes to melt the wax.



ALL-PURPOSE RHUBARB-DYE FOR MULTIPLE USES

Source: savor-the-rhubarb.com/rhubarb-dye

Multipurpose rhubarb-dye can color your wool, and makes a great Easter-egg-dye as well.

Better for you and the environment, dye made from rhubarb can be made and used in a variety of ways.

There are so many vegetables and fruit based products available these days to dye different things in a natural and organic way. This dye will produce a lovely shade of various red or orange colored tones. Depending on how long they are left, the effect can also result in a light shade of pink.

Rhubarb-dye can be used for coloring **Easter eggs**. If you have rhubarb stalks or even a rhubarb root, they can be cut into pieces, simmered until the color is extracted, and the eggs can then be dipped for however long suits you.

Boil your cut up stalks with a few cups of water to form compote. Strain the mixture, and add the eggs when cooled. Let them absorb the color until it seems just right, and remove the eggs to let dry.

Remember some steps before you start.

Lay some newspaper down to protect the surface. Boil eggs for 8 minutes and then let simmer. Use gloves to prevent your hands and fingers from absorbing your homemade dye.

TRIVIAL AGRICULTURAL FACTS

Source: The Ridgetown Independence Sept 1011

- Since Hindus don't eat beef, the McDonalds

stores in New Delhi, India, make burgers with mutton.

- Sliced bread was introduced under the Wonder Brand label in 1930

- The average child will eat 1,500 peanut butter sandwiches by the time of graduation from high school.

The difference between apple juice and apple cider is that the juice is pasteurized and the cider is not.

- The dye used to stamp the grade on the meat you purchase at retail grocery and butcher stores are in fact edible. It's made from grape skins.

- The white potato originated in the Andes Mountains and was probably brought to Britain by Sir Francis Drake about 1586.

MY REPORT CARD

My report card is a lonely card,
To look at it requires safety guard.

It shows you all my low grades,
I wish it could be trampled on by a zillion parades.

My teachers all feel the same way,
That I could never get an A.

In Math my marks are very bad, my teacher
couldn't be more sad.

In spelling I'm flunking out,
My teacher says that, without a doubt.

My French teacher is ready to cry,
I bet she wishes she could curl up and die.
In Reading, Art, and Mapping I'm not doing too well,
Although I try to hide it my teacher always tells.
In Music and Gym my marks are going up,
Hey, at least those teachers aren't giving up.
Since all this is untrue, my parents
Need not ask the teacher for an interview.

- Alyssa Shepherd
- Boston P.S – Grade 5

HOLIDAY CENTERPIECE ARRANGEMENTS

At the Naahii Ridge Elementary School in Ridgetown Ontario

For many years in late December the Ridgetown Horticultural Society does a holiday season centerpiece arrangement workshop with teacher Susan Sparling's class. Many years ago, Mrs Sparling won the OHA environmental youth category award for a very large rainforest project she did with her class, which was open for public viewing.



In early December, a few of the Horticultural society members cut an abundance of evergreen branches for this workshop. The branches consist of junipers, cedars, boxwoods, euonymus, holly etc., but NO yew. The society provides the floral foam and the students bring a margarine tub-type container from home as a recycled item. Since all parts of a yew, other than the red fleshy jelly-like material covering the black seed called an aril is highly poisonous; we exclude it as a cautionary measure, even though many homes in Ontario do have yews in their home landscape.

Should a pet of any size by any remote chance eat even a small amount of a yew branch, it will very sadly mean death. Let alone a small child.



Before the class arrangements begin, your youth newsletter editor "Rad Dad" gives the students a brief "lecture" about the various plant materials and then demonstrates to the class how to go about making an evergreen table arrangement.



Rad-Dad, along with other members of the society assists the students in completing their

own arrangements that they then take home.



- Pictures by Society member Hugh McVittie