



Where in the world is the Jamestown Press?

Emma, Ben and Julia Cotsonas took the Press out for some sun in Dorado Beach, Puerto Rico last week.

Thousands of daffodils at Blithewold gardens

Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum opens for the season with Daffodil Days, as springtime settles on the shores of Narragansett Bay.

The festival will run from April 12 to May 4.

The year 2008 marks several milestones at Blithewold: one hundred years since the new mansion replaced the former dwelling which was destroyed by fire in 1906; thirty years since the estate was opened to the public; twenty years since Blithewold Gift Shop opened; and ten years since Blithewold, Inc. saved the estate from outside development.

As in years gone by, Blithewold's gardens will once again come to life with tens of thousands of daffodils and other early blooming bulbs, trees and shrubs. Along with the wonderful display in the gardens, Daffodil Days offer other special exhibits and activities for the whole family.

For daffodil bloom updates, visit the Garden Blog at www.blithewold.org or call for the Daffodil Message at 401-253-2707, ext. 35.

Blithewold is located at 101 Ferry Road, Route 114, in Bristol. Visit www.blithewold.org for more information.

Wickford celebrates spring with weekend events

Historic Wickford Village, in North Kingstown, will celebrate its 6th Annual Daffodil Days event on Saturday, April 5 and Sunday, April 6. This family-friendly event, sponsored jointly by the Village Merchants Association and Histwick, is a traditional and fun way to celebrate the beginning of spring. Thousands of daffodils will decorate the streets of this quaint waterfront village.

Among the special events scheduled for the weekend are, a spring fashion show at noon on Saturday in Updike Park; historic walking tours from the First Baptist Church on both days at 1:30 p.m.; a Daffy Dog Parade at noon on Sunday, and children's events.

The weather is getting milder, daylight saving time is here and it's time to trim the fruit trees. But you'll need to remember not to prune away too much tree or you could force the tree into biannual fruiting, which is not what you want to do. You'd like to get fruit every year wouldn't you?

First, prune out the suckers. These are the vertical shoots that usually grow in the middle of the tree. Quite often they grow from nubs that were pruned last year. I find the easiest way to control them is to pinch them out while they are small during the growing season, but you may not have remembered to do that last year.

With the suckers removed, look for any branches that cross over each other and prune so that the crossover is removed. When pruning, look for the little tiny bud just below the cut that you are about to make and cut about an eighth to a quarter inch above it. This forces that bud to grow. If you make sure that bud is facing away from the center of the tree it encourages the tree to grow like a tulip, open in the middle with branches around the outside. In fact, if you hold your hand up, palm upwards, fingers slightly spread, that's the shape you should be looking for in a fruiting tree. Having the middle open allows sunlight to penetrate and increases the fruit yield.

The final step is to prune off last year's growing tips. Prune the tips away, leaving two or three buds from last year's growth. Make sure that you prune to an outward facing bud and never prune more



The Island Garden

By Roger Marshall

than one quarter of the tree away. That's it, your pruning is done.

Now you'll need to spray the tree to kill off any insects that might be overwintering in the nooks and crannies of the bark. I like to use organic dormant oil for this first spraying of the season and spray the tree until the bark and branches literally drip with the spray. As the water-based dormant oil dries, it smothers insects. Pick a day when it is not likely to rain for about 36 hours to give the spray time to dry and when the temperatures are above 50 degrees. That could be any time about now.

You can also prune soft fruits now, before the sap starts running. Prune out the old shoots from last year's raspberries, trim out the black and red currants to shape the bushes before they leaf out. While they are bare, it is easy to see the structure of any bush or tree and prune it to the right shape.

While you are working on your trees, check the mulch around the base of the tree and pull it away from the tree trunk. Mulch that is too close to the trunk can cause the bark to rot or it can hide mice and other insects that like to eat growing tips. I like to cut in the edges of the lawn and the mulch at this

stage so that I am finished with all the work around the trees. The only thing left to do later for the fruit trees is to push some fertilizer spikes into the ground around the tree when the weather gets a little warmer.

One other job left for gardeners who like to get an early start on the season is to move artichoke plants into a cold environment. If you put them in the cold right now (a cold greenhouse is ideal), they will get about six weeks of cold weather and should give you artichokes this season. Just in case, they don't, I overwintered last year's plants in the heated greenhouse and expect to get artichokes in late May or early June.

You should also bring seed potatoes into a warm place to start them sprouting. This is called "chitting" in England. By making the potatoes sprout, experiments have shown that you get earlier potatoes, but the same experiments also showed that putting potatoes directly into the ground gave greater yields of later potatoes. I'm doing both.

Finally, you might want to divide up dahlia tubers, leaving one eye on each tuber. Plant these tubers into potting soil and keep them in a warm place to increase the number of plants that you have.

Next week we will start seedlings, so make sure that you have seed trays, potting soil, kitchen plastic wrap, and your tomato, eggplant, and pepper seeds ready to go. We'll look at the right way to do the job and when to plant out your new plants.

Churches announce Holy Week services

Central Baptist Church

The Central Baptist Church congregation will begin its Holy Week observance on Maundy Thursday, March 20, with a soup dinner at 6:30 p.m. A service of communion and Tenebrae will begin at 7:30 p.m. The first portion of the service will center on remembering and reenacting the last meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. The second portion will make use of readings and the extinguishing of candles to recall the events of Holy Week.

Two brief services of reflection and prayer will be offered on Good Friday, March 21. The first story will begin at 7:30 a.m., and the second at 7:30 p.m.

A sunrise service at Jamestown's Beavertail Park will begin the congregation's celebration

of Easter on March 23. The brief service will begin at 6:30 a.m. and will be followed by a pancake breakfast at the church.

Special music, readings, and a sermon titled "In Spite of Everything," will be featured during CBC's 9:30 a.m. service on Easter Sunday. A reception will follow.

For more information, call Kathryn Palen, pastor, at 423-1651.

St. Mark Church

St. Mark Church will hold their Holy Thursday Mass with the Lord's Supper tonight, March 20, at 7 p.m.

They will celebrate the island ecumenical service at 3 p.m. on Good Friday and will have a Mass of the Passion at 7 p.m. On Holy Saturday, there will be an Easter Vigil Mass at 7 p.m. and Easter

Sunday services will be at 8:30 and 10 a.m. The latter is a Family Mass.

St. Matthew's Church

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church will hold a 6 p.m. potluck supper tonight, followed by a Maundy Thursday service at 7 p.m. including Holy Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar.

On Good Friday, they will participate in the 3 p.m. ecumenical service at St. Mark and will have a Good Friday Liturgy at 7 p.m. at St. Matthew's.

On Holy Saturday, they will celebrate The Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday services will be at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. The 10 a.m. service is a family service.

Jamestown Chapel

Jamestown Chapel will be having an Easter Celebration, focusing on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The service begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Senior Center/Grange building on West Street. Refreshments will be served following the service.

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