

Rules for hard pruning your plants

Whacking overgrown shrubs back hard, like changing diapers, needs doing occasionally and can be worrisome the first time. But it usually works out fine.

And it doesn't harm plants. Ever see where a drunk driver ran over hapless crape myrtles, and the plants sprouted right back out and bloomed just fine?

Horticulturists have been doing this for centuries

(not while drink driving of course). Cutting willows, red- or yellow-twig dogwoods, crape myrtles, and other multi-stem plants back to the ground, called coppicing, and cutting higher up on knots, called pollarding, produce straight fenceposts and twigs for weaving between the posts. And, self-appointed tastemaker opinions aside, it doesn't harm the plants whatsoever. Really. You with open minds, Google pollarding and coppicing. With the exceptions of conifers like cedar, juniper, and arborvitae, hard "rejuvenation" pruning stimulates strong new shoots which, pushed by an intact root system, will really jump.

Most folks prune shrub roses hard like this, but it can be a little scary, cutting

really old landscape shrubs back to just stubby trunks. Before I learned the physiology behind this in college arboriculture classes, I had only reluctantly done it as a kid being made to stop enjoying life until I finished cutting overgrown hedges way back. Did what I was told, never really thought about how well it worked.

Later, while working for the campus landscape maintenance department at MSU, I was tasked with taking a chain saw to some 60-year-old hollies around historic Lee Hall. I was sure it would ruin them. I would have preferred to limb the stately old specimen up into small evergreen trees by thinning out a few lower limbs, but the hard-pruned plants came right back out more vigorous than ever.

But hard pruning has some timing caveats. It takes weeks, maybe a couple of months, for new growth to break out, which can be nerve-wracking if family or neighbors are questioning you every week. And the new growth needs time to mature before winter. Because of this, it's best to rejuvenate in late winter, spring, or up to mid-summer, no later. You can do it in the early



Hard pruning stimulates strong new growth.

winter but the plants will just sit there nakedly 'til spring, giving your neighbors more time to talk. And of course while it's fine to really whack back generic green shrubs and those that flower on new growth like roses, Abelia, and rose of Sharon in the winter spring or early summer, it's best to wait for spring bloomers like azaleas, blueberries, wisteria, once-blooming roses and the like to finish flowering.

Main thing is, don't prune shrubs really hard past mid-

dad. Joey underwent major surgery Saturday. Thanks to God that he is feeling better but not at all well yet. May God bless and keep him in his care.

We have been missing David and Beth Truitt and look forward to them returning to our town for visits.

Love and prayers are with Joe and Mary Crowder. We miss them and look forward to them feeling better and being back home. They are special to this small community.

Dale and Jan McBride are surely missed. All pray they will be back soon to First Baptist Church for worship with friends.

Fishing for Freedom



Holmes County Herald subscriber Clanton Pitchford (pictured above right) of Evanston, Illinois, stopped by the newspaper office on Friday, July 11, to share a recent experience of his. Pitchford, a Lexington native who served in the United States Air Force, 1965-1969, and toured in Vietnam, took part in the 9th annual Fishing for Freedom. The event was held at Dralle Lake, Illinois, in Adams County. Fishing for Freedom brings together former service men and wounded warriors with volunteers boaters for a day of tournament bass fishing in a relaxed fun filled celebration of the outdoors. This event is made possible by volunteers and paid for by local and corporate sponsors and private donations. Participants received a pack of tackle donated by local sponsors with lodging and meals provided. Pitchford was also featured in a local Illinois publication, *The Camp Point Journal*. (Photo submitted)

and tree seedlings. Cut those back to the ground, and brush or mist Roundup on the new growth to kill them roots and all without harming the nearby shrubs while they sprout back out. Too bad we can't prune frail old dogs and errant children, to start them over. But there's still a month or so to whack

old or struggling shrubs, or blueberries that're finished fruiting; wear a hat, stay hydrated, and watch for poison ivy and wasp nests.

Felder Rushing is a Mississippi author, columnist, and host of the "Gestalt Gardener" on MPB Think Radio. Email gardening questions to rushingfelder@yahoo.com.

DURANT NEWS

by Rowena Hill

We regret having to give up our Fred's Dollar Store but pray we will get a store to take its place without being empty for years. We really need stores in our town.

Jackie Hill's sister Judy, of the cold northern states, flew here Friday after Joey Hill went for his surgery. She stayed for several days with Jackie, Joey and the family. Judy was welcome by all and a blessing to each. Thank God for a successful surgery. Our love and prayers are with him and the family. All look forward to Joey's healing.

May God bless Mr. and Mrs. Billy Stonestreet and give healing to them as she attends to his needs. They are somewhat house-bound.

Mrs. Jaime Hill Conner of California arrived last Saturday and stayed at the side of her dad, Joey Hill, almost the whole time. Joey underwent very major surgery during the week at the University hospital in Jackson. Needless to say, Joey and Jackie were happy to see and be with her. She has three small children that her husband was caring for during her time here at the side of her

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The Mississippi State Law requires a Logistic and Accuracy Testing at least five (5) days before an election on all voting equipment.

The Logistic and Accuracy Test provides certification of the accuracy of the Voting System along with the opportunity to discover any issues that may exist with the voting equipment. Logistic and Accuracy Test will be performed on all Accu Vote-TSX and Accu Vote-OS Units, the GEMS Server, and GEMS Election Database to ensure that:

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- Results are uploaded accurately
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