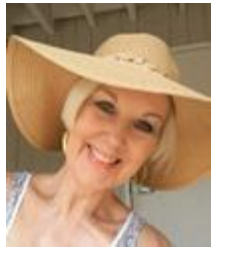


Editorial page

Nolia's Notes

The Suit that got away!

by NOLIA BIGGERSTAFF



I am smiling as I write this story. I am betting that you all have a similar story that might not be a story about a suit, but some other item.

Before Dwaine and I married, he went to a department store in Augusta. As he tells it, there was a suit hanging in a display in the men's department. He really liked the suit but not the price tag.

At that time, Dwaine was working and going to school and he could not afford the price of this suit. Every time he went in that store, he would go over and check on the suit, see if it was still there, and see if the price had been reduced.

One day, the suit was actually reduced, but not very much. It was still more than he wanted to pay. He kept checking and checking until, one day that suit was gone! Seems someone else was admiring that suit, too, and they actually decided to make the purchase.

Well, this has bothered Dwaine for over 50 years. During our marriage, whenever the subject of clothing purchases and shopping entered the conversation, I could always expect the "suit that got away" story.

Now, over the years, this suit story has been greatly embellished. Later in our marriage the suit became green, a beautiful, beautiful green, according to Dwaine.

Later on, the green suit had stripes. As the story continued to evolve over the years, this suit was green, but not just any green, not a

green that I could imagine, according to my husband (who has obviously forgotten that I am an artist and know my greens). This suit was an olive green, just exquisite!

As the years rolled on the stripes on this olive green suit became orange in the description, an orange that was hard to describe, it was not just any orange, but seemed to be an orange from the crayon box of angels!

The other night, this suit story resurfaced. Dwaine sat in our living room fantasizing about this suit and retelling the suit story. This time, the suit was this special olive green, with these special orange stripes but also, now had white stripes!!!!

I had had enough!!!! After hearing this suit story evolve for 50 years of marriage, I said, "Dwaine, I am glad you did not purchase that suit! If you had worn a suit like that while we were dating, I probably would have never married you!!!!"

"Well, why?" Dwaine asked totally, totally surprised.

"Because, that suit sounds like a suit worn by a guy pictured on a box of Animal Crackers!!!!"

Dwaine left the room. The suit conversation was over, for now.

I wonder if it will come up again in the future. For the record, I can envision a three-piece man's olive green suit with orange and white stripes and I bet you can, too! Totally, totally circus couture.



Consumers get answers from Dept. of Agriculture

Consumer Q's is a weekly question-and-answer column by Arty Schronce at the Georgia Department of Agriculture. Please share your thoughts, questions and suggestions with him by phone, mail or email.

Q: When are Georgia blueberries in season? May they be eaten raw?

A: You will start seeing Georgia blueberries in stores in May. If you are only familiar with cooked blueberries in pancakes, muffins or pies, you owe yourself a favor to try them raw. Raw blueberries are excellent as a topping for cereal (stir in as many as you like) or mixed into yogurt. Blend a handful (or two) of blueberries, a frozen banana and a cup of plain or vanilla yogurt for a cool and colorful breakfast smoothie or for an afternoon pick-me-up. Blueberries can be added to salads; consider a salad of mixed greens perhaps with vinaigrette and topped with blueberries, toasted pecans and blue cheese crumbles. For a patriotic dessert for Memorial Day, try blueberries and strawberries as a topping for vanilla ice cream or served with whipped cream. For the Fourth of July, combine Georgia watermelons and blueberries in a refreshing and healthy fruit salad. Blueberries are so nutritious and delicious that chefs and nutritionists are looking at many ways to get them onto America's menu.

Q: I heard that bats help farmers by eating insect pests. Is this true?

A: Yes. Besides eating tons of mosquitoes, bats are voracious predators of other nocturnal insects, including many crop and forest pests. Research indicates that the loss of bats in North America could lead to agricultural losses estimated at more than \$3.7 billion per year. To learn more about bats and how you can help them, contact Bat Conservation International, P.O. Box 162603, Austin, TX 78716. Phone 512-327-9721 or visit www.batcon.org.

Q: How long should a newly planted tree be staked?

A: You should never stake a tree unless it is in danger of falling over. If you must stake a tree, the stakes and supports should be removed as soon as possible - within one year. If the tree is not stable by then, you need to plant another tree. Long-term staking will lead to a very weak tree. Also, you are likely to forget the tree is staked, and five years later you will find wires cutting into the trunk, severely damaging the tree.

Q: It looks like there is an abundance of Vidalia® onions this year and the prices are good. I eat them on salads, hamburgers, sandwiches and as onion rings. Any other suggestions?

A: Try adding Vidalias to breakfast or brunch. They are a good match with eggs. Put them in omelets, frittatas, breakfast quiches and breakfast casseroles. An internet search brings up numerous recipes. Church and community cookbooks are other good sources of information. Breakfast casseroles are especially effective if you are serving a large crowd. A breakfast burrito (a flour tortilla stuffed with sausage, eggs, cheese and sautéed diced onions and bell pepper) is a savory way to start the day. From the website of the Vidalia® Onion Committee (www.vidaliaonion.org) come recipes for "Sweet Potato Hash Browns with Vidalia Onions and Georgia Pecans," "Sweet Vidalia Onion Latkes," "Grits with Corn and Vidalia Onion" and "Vidalia Onion Custard Bread." For even more variety, try LEO (lox, eggs and onions). It may not be a typical Georgia dish, but it packs a lot of flavor and is excellent served with a bagel or toast.

Breakfast is sometimes devoid of vegetables or fruits. Your children and your entire family are more likely to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables if they are given an opportunity to do so at every meal. We invite everyone to wake up their taste buds with Georgia fruits and vegetables by making them part of their morning menu.

If you have questions about agriculture, horticulture, food safety or services or products regulated by the Georgia Department of Agriculture, write Arty Schronce (arty.schronce@agr.georgia.gov) or visit the department's website at www.agr.georgia.gov.

UGA extension
Making the most of pecans
 By Robyn Stewart
 Lincoln County Extension Service

I had a client this week ask why he doesn't get better nut quality from his pecan tree. Unfortunately, if you have older tree varieties and aren't really managing them, you may never get the quality and quantity of pecans that you might hope for. With that said, I wanted to discuss some of how pecan nuts are formed and some factors that impact kernel size and nut quality.

Nuts are considered a storage organ for nutrients produced by the leaves of any nutbearing tree. These stored nutrients can then be used for germination, respiration, and initial growth of the seedling until it has enough leaves to produce its own food. Pecan nut production starts with the onset of flowering and subsequent pollination of those flowers. About 25% of the nutlets, or immature nuts, are dropped in April and June. The April drop is typically immature flowers, flowers that were not pollinated, or flowers that were pollinated but did not develop nutlets due to environmental conditions. The June nut drop is typically more noticeable and is caused by a lack of nutritional support for the nutlet or more commonly, due to the lack of fertilization of the egg cell. Both of these drops increase in times of environmental stress and in self-pollinating systems.

The development of the nut is further broken down into two phases. Phase I occurs from pollination in April and May to shell hardening sometime in August/September. It takes about 90 days for the pecan to grow to its full size, with the majority of growth occurring in the last 30-45 days or so. Once you hit shell hardening, the space for the kernel is as large as it's going to be—so any management you do to improve pecan size is only effective during this phase. The actual physical size of the nuts is genetically determined by the variety you have - but other influences on overall nut size, include the health/vigor of the overall tree, the position of the nuts on the tree, fertility of the soil and moisture supply, and the size of the crop. In the absence of a soil and leaf tissue test, you can fertilize by broadcasting 4 lbs of a 10-10-10 fertilizer for each inch of trunk diameter (max 25lb/tree) in mid-March. You should also apply 3-5lbs of Zinc Sulfate

to mature trees each year as Zinc can be a limiting nutrient for pecan production. By end of Phase I, there is a third nut drop of 8-10% of the crop, typically due to drought/water stress, excess water, hot/dry weather, insect and physical damage to the shell.

Phase II of nut production is considered the "nut filling" stage. At this time, the actual pecan is as large as it's going to be, and the shell hardens. Typically, shell hardening is complete in Georgia between August and September. The kernel, or meat of the nut, will start filling in August and continue to fill as long as conditions are correct, typically in October. How large and well-developed the kernels become is determined by several factors. The size of crop, again, has an impact—essentially, trees with large numbers of pecans will produce smaller nuts, and smaller kernels, since the tree is trying to fill so many of them. We recommend thinning your crop when necessary to improve nut size and kernel quality. The condition of leaves directly correlates to the tree's ability to make food and develop the kernel, and any insect or disease damage to the leaves or pecans themselves can dramatically impact nut fill. Another factor is whether the tree is in a bearing year or an alternate year, and what the previous year's crop was. A large crop will lead to less production the next year as the tree has used the majority of its energy reserves the year prior. Appropriate fertilization and thinning of the crop can help mitigate the effect of alternate bearing cycles. Finally, probably the most important impact on kernel fill is the weather. Hot, dry conditions will reduce the tree's ability to develop a quality kernel, so providing adequate irrigation is essential, especially in the first 2 weeks of September. From April-October, the tree needs 700-1000 gallons of water per week. In Phase II, that amount should be doubled.

Understanding the importance of water, fertilization, and crop thinning for better pecan quality is key. If you have any questions about your pecans or if you need help calibrating your irrigation system, let us know at uge3181@uga.edu or 706-359-3233.

This weeks tips from the BBB

When planning an event, looking for a good deal for a family vacation, or a getaway, BBB encourages people to plan ahead to save money, avoid scams, and travel safely.

Scammers will often target people looking for great deals online by offering tempting vacation packages at unrealistically low prices. One place to begin an online search is BBB.org for finding reputable travel agencies, agents and websites.

BBB adds the following tips to help ensure an enjoyable vacation:

Plan ahead. Allow plenty of time to research hotels, flights, and the area where you will be staying. Typically, the earlier reservations are made, the better the deals and the lower the risk of the destination being booked solid. Making reservations in advance also locks in rates and prevents higher prices later during prime spring break, peak summer, or holiday travel seasons.

Avoid broad internet searches. Entering phrases like "best deals" into whichever search engine used can sometimes bring up websites that look official but are designed solely to rip people off.

Be alert for travel scams. Watch out for phone calls or letters claiming a "free trip" or websites offering prices that appear too good to be true. It's easy to extend questionable offers like these, but the vast majority of them leave hopeful travelers in limbo - and

out money.

Do your homework. Ask family and friends to recommend a travel agent or travel website and visit BBB.org for free Business Profiles. Research the business and read customer reviews about any rentals under consideration.

Get trip details in writing. Before making a final payment, get all the details of the trip in writing. This should include the total cost, restrictions, cancellation penalties, and names of the airlines and hotels. Also, review and keep a copy of the airline and hotel's cancellation and refund policies, as well as the cancellation policies of the travel agency or booking site used.

Consider travel insurance. Travel insurance covers things like trip cancellations or medical emergencies. There are different levels of coverage based on what type of plan purchased. Ask a lot of questions, and always read the fine print to see what's covered and what's not.

Pay with a credit card. Paying with a credit card provides additional protection if something should go wrong with the travel reservation.

No matter when or where you are traveling, take extra precautions:

Wait to post on social media. It's fun to post adventures with friends and family but wait until getting back from the trip. Photos and social media posts of the family having a great time also lets thieves know the house is empty.

Check your home insurance. If your home will be unattended while away, make sure you know your responsibilities under your home insurance policy. Some policies do not cover damage if nobody checks on your home for a certain amount of time.

Share a copy of the itinerary with a family member or close friend. Include the contact information of someone joining you on your trip.

Take a map. People rely heavily on smartphones and GPS. Consider having an atlas or hard copy map just in case of technical difficulties.

Check the weather conditions where you will be traveling and pack appropriate supplies and clothing.

Avoid traveling alone. Use the buddy system and stick with the group.

Use a hotel safe to store extra cash and keep any valuables under lock and key.

For more BBB tips or to find a travel agent, visit BBB.org.

Sunday services

Blessed Hope Bible Baptist meets at the Presbyterian Church on Sundays at 11 a.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. for prayer meeting. Come join us. For more information call 706-359-6759.

Coffee, classic cars June 12

American Legion Post 194 will host a "Coffee and Classic Cars Series on the second Saturday of each month series

The event is free to enter and will start June 12, 8 a.m. - 11 a.m., at the Post home located at 1121 American Legion Road.

The Legion will offer coffee, teas, juices, pastries, bagels and a variety of cream cheeses for sale in this fundraiser.

Oldies and classic country music is provided by Al Ewing Entertainment.

The general public is welcome to participate in this free event as a vehicle owner or just a classic cars enthusiast.

For more information contact event coordinator Al Ewing at 706-359-3445 or 661-666-3749

Letters to the Editor TO THE EDITOR

Many thanks to River of Life

TO THE EDITOR:

Last week during the hottest days we've had this year, a group of young people sponsored by the Wesley Foundation, River of Life, and the Lincolnton United Methodist Church, as well as several local individuals, came to my house and repaired my roof, painted the exterior of my house, and trimmed some shrubbery.

They worked tirelessly and did excellent work. These young people's hometowns are from all over Georgia and few raised out of state, and they were all students or graduates of the University of Georgia.

I just wanted to thank them publicly for the work they did and the fellowship we shared. They were all so nice and respectful, not only

to me, but to each other. They started and ended work each day with prayer and worked with smiles on their faces.

If you tried to thank them, they would tell you to thank God because we are working for Him.

If you ever have a chance to meet or be helped by these people, I guarantee you will be blessed and impressed.

Again, thank you!
ROBERT T. POSS

Mail in tithes

Price Grove Baptist Church members are reminded that they are able to mail in their tithes to Price Grove Baptist Church, P.O. Box 916, Lincolnton, GA 30817.

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