



# The Grapevine

June 2012 • The Journal of the Midwest Fruit Explorers • Vol. 36 No. 2

## President's Message

I do not look forward to writing this quarter's President's message. As you know from the email string, Ron Malcolm's health continued to deteriorate over the past few weeks and I am sad to announce that Ron passed away in late May.

Ron was a dear friend of many club members and a devoted member of the club. I remember Ron as a person with extensive knowledge, strong opinions and always willing to listen. When I think about Ron, he always talked about growing big trees on his property. He was growing fruits and berries that no others dare to attempt. Last year at the cider pressing I had the honor to walk his property with Ron. Not only did Ron have an extensive collection of fruit bushes and trees he also had what can be best described as his own arboretum. He was a collector of unusual woody plants. He knew his stuff. The majority of the things he grew I had never seen even at though I have visited many botanical gardens and arboretums. I will always remember a large leaved maple that was simply beautiful. It was only one of hundreds of species he grew. My only regret was that I did not pay more attention on that walk.

Ron has been a huge contributor to the club. Among the events he has organized, Ron had been the coordinator of the summer picnic for many years and last year's cider pressing. He was a man's man. Strappy, powerful and strong and that is how I will remember him. *Please take a moment to think of Ron.*

This year the picnic is at my house in Gurnee on July 8<sup>th</sup>. We will get the chance to once again get together and talk trees and friendship. Let's think of this picnic as Ron's picnic. We will devote time to discuss memories, share photos and stories.

When I think about why I am a member of our club it has a lot to do with the information exchange and learning to be a better fruit grower. It also opened my eyes to the huge variety of apples, pears, peaches and cherries. I have learned a lot being a member. The best benefit has been getting to know other the members. By hearing about how they do things and what varieties they like, I've been hooked. I grafted lots of trees. My once-open  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre looks more like a commercial orchard than a suburban backyard, and I am still adding.

The varieties and trees themselves are tied deeply to other members: a Seckel pear from Brad because you just have to have it! Two Williams Pride apple trees, one of my first grafts, from knurly scion wood I got from Sherwin, that, to my amazement, took. There are many varieties with a Gene Yale or Al Cosnow tag on them. Chris Andersen provided the SnowSweet apple, my current favorite. The main tree lost in last year's wind storms survives as a two-year-old on M27. My peaches are now RedHaven and Alberta, after Ron said Reliance had no taste, and he was right, of course. And my favorite pear, another Ron recommendation: Collette.

I would suggest that you take full advantage of what the club has to offer. Reach out to members and tap their knowledge and advice. Most importantly when you get a piece of scion wood or a recommendation- do what I do—write it on the tree tag and mark it in your garden log. You will find trees take on a whole lot more meaning.

<u>INSIDE</u>	
<b>President's Message</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Events:</b> Summer Picnic, Orchard Tour, Summer Pruning Workshop	<b>2</b>
<b>Notes:</b> MidFEX Goes Electronic, Bill Shoemaker to Retire	<b>4</b>
<b>Recent Events</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Recipes:</b> Peach Crisp, Caramel Peach Pie	<b>6</b>
<b>Field Tips, Membership Renewal Form</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>8</b>

Finally, I would encourage you all to continue to volunteer for the club. It is our life blood. Open up your gardens to share your techniques, your varieties and your challenges. Here are our current needs:

- **Contact Bill or myself with suggestions on lectures and lecturers or volunteer for to host a garden tour!**

- **Apple Pressing—We need a host and a location. Heated space with water and a drain? We need to know about it.**

—Tim Hamilton



## EVENTS, continued

### Ozzello Orchard Tour

**Sunday August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm**

**Jim Ozzello, 5020 Valley Trail, Racine Wi**

Jim Ozzello will open his orchard for a tour on August 5th at 2:00. Jim has an extensive collection of pears and an unusual column/espalier growing technique!



### Summer Pruning Workshop

**Sunday August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm**

**Gene Yale's house, 9121 N. Keeler Ave., Skokie, IL**

Gene has invited us to learn how he keeps his trees so neat, compact, and productive. Bring your pruning tools – Gene is going to let us cut his trees! This is a great opportunity to get a look at Gene's unique orchard.



### Budwood Collection Guidelines

The budding demonstration at the MidFEx picnic has fostered an informal budwood exchange between members. Most tree fruit can be successfully budded in summer but budding is particularly useful for propagating stone fruit (plums, apricots, peaches, cherries) that need warmer temperatures to callous and hence are difficult to graft when dormant. Also, if your spring graft failed to take and the rootstock is growing vigorously, summer budding can be a second chance to make a tree this year.

To assure the most viable budwood:

- Collect the most mature wood from this year's growth – at least 3/16<sup>th</sup> or ¼ inch thick.
- Remove the soft top growth and leaves but leave the petioles (leaf stems).
- Either label each piece or label a ziploc type bag with the variety name.
- Wrap the budwood in a dampened paper towel, seal in the plastic bag, and refrigerate.
- The budwood is fragile and has a short shelf life so collect it as close to the time of distribution as possible and keep it as cool as possible during transport. A small insulated beverage cooler bag with an ice pack works well for an extended period – like the picnic.

Chuck Heisinger has created an excellent video of Al Cosnow's summer budding techniques – including how to collect and prepare budwood. A link to the video is on the "Create Your Own Fruit Trees" page at [www.MidFEx.org](http://www.MidFEx.org). The MidFEx forum is a good place to request budwood from other members.

### **Directions to Orchard Tour**

- 94 north to exit 333 WI-20 Racine head east 10 miles to Main Street
- Left on Main to 4 Mile Road
- Right on 4 Mile to 2nd left, 5020 Valley Trail.

### **Directions to Pruning Workshop**

#### **From I-294 southbound**

- Exit east on Golf Road. Proceed 7.1 miles to Keeler Ave..
- Turn South on Keeler Ave. Proceed .6 miles to 9121.

#### **From I-294 northbound**

- Exit east on Dempster Ave. Proceed 7.0 miles to Keeler Ave.
- Turn north on Keeler Ave. Proceed .4 miles to 9121.

**From I94 northbound or southbound:**

- Exit east on Dempster Ave. Proceed 1.8 miles to Keeler Ave.
- Turn north on Keeler Ave. Proceed .4 miles to 9121.

## Notes

### **MidFEx Enters the Electronic Age**

#### **Sherwin Dubren**

There have been a few electronic acquisitions by MidFEx in the recent past that members might be interested in.

The first was a video camera, which the club uses to make videos of things like grafting instructions available on our web site.

More recently we acquired a new multimedia or video projector. It needs a video source to function like a computer or DVD player. It adapts very nicely to a computer and makes the display settings very simple. We should be making good use of this for presentations and public functions. It would be nice if someone could put together a slide show of MidFEx activities.

The most recent acquisition is a wireless microphone system. The system chosen is very economical but has a lot of features—like 3 kinds of microphones. One is handheld, and two others are for either wearing as a head set or on a lapel. There is a battery powered speaker that can also run off of AC. This should be useful for presentations of outside speakers or for club members at our grafting sessions.

### **Bill Shoemaker to Retire**

Bill Shoemaker, currently the Superintendent and Senior Research Specialist at the University of Illinois St. Charles Horticultural Research Center is retiring at the end of June after 30 years with the University of Illinois. Bill's research and outreach programs in fruit and vegetable production have been based in northern Illinois for more than twenty years. He currently is the Regional Viticulture Specialist for the Illinois Grape Growers & Vintners Association and conducts work in grape breeding, evaluating cultivars for winter hardiness, and investigating IPM and training systems for optimizing wine production. Bill has been a great help and support to us at MidFEx and we wish him well!

If you would like to have an email or card given to Bill, please address your card to Ruth Thompson, 535 S. Randall Rd, St. Charles, IL 60174.



## Recent Events

### Grafting Workshops • March 18 and 25, 2012

The grafting sessions at both Cantigny and Chicago Botanical Garden were once again a success. I am always amazed at the number of volunteers that turn out for Cantigny. It is totally nuts! Somehow it seems to work.

Cantigny is the perfect spot for sorting and organizing the sessions. Thanks to all that helped out, particularly to Jeff for organizing the rootstock and for Dennis printing labels. We had great attendance at both sessions. Lots of participants seemed interested in joining the club. We used our newly purchased microphone. Thanks to Chuck Heisinger, our go-to tech guy, for identifying and purchasing a very good system.

Jeff offered a few new rootstocks (Geneva) this year. I will be interested in how they do.

We seemed to have just about the right amount of rootstock this year. I do not know how Jeff does it.

We were a bit tight on M27. Members, please remember next year to pre-order. We want to make sure there is enough to go around. Even if you are only going to graft two trees- Please Pre-Order.

At the CBG we used the LAB for the first time. It was great and we asked to use it again next year.

One disconcerting issue was there was knife mark damage done to one of the tables. Please remember that we are guests and the tables should not be used as cutting boards.

The other two big issues at the sessions- Because of Easter the sessions were very early in the year. Also we did not have as much scion wood variety as years past. This might be due to the weird weather in 2012.

We are going to make two changes: We will hold the grafting sessions 2 weeks later than this year and we will move the January business meeting to the third week of February. We will encourage you come to the February Business meeting with 5-10 pieces of scion wood from each variety you bring. We can then label and store the wood ahead of the grafting session.

### Cantigny Open House

May 6, 2012

I participated in the Cantigny greenhouse and open house last month. There were 6-10 other garden related groups with table tops. The weather did not cooperate and attendance was low due to rain. However next year I would encourage members to stop by and support Cantigny. They really are gracious to our club.



## RECIPES

### Fresh Peach Crisp

Fresh peach crisp recipe is a delicious dessert with cinnamon and whipped topping or ice cream.

**Total Time:** 45 minutes

**Ingredients:**

2 1/2 pounds fresh peaches, peeled, pitted  
1 cup sifted all-purpose flour  
1 cup sugar  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/2 cup soft butter



**Preparation:**

Butter an 8-inch square baking dish. Preheat oven to 375°.

Slice peeled, pitted peaches into the prepared baking dish. Sift together the flour, sugar, salt and cinnamon into a medium bowl. Cut butter into flour mixture with pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle crumbs evenly over peaches in baking dish. Bake at 375° for 45 to 50 minutes, until topping is golden brown and peaches are tender. Serve peach crisp warm with cream or whipped topping.



### Easy Caramel Peach Pie

An easy caramel peach batter pie.

**Total Time:** 1 hour

**Ingredients:**

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sifted all-purpose flour (sift before measuring)	1/3 cup milk
1 tsp baking powder	1 tsp vanilla
1/2 tsp cinnamon	1 egg
1/2 tsp salt	Caramel sauce (see below)
1 cup sugar	1 3/4 cups drained sliced peaches, reserve juice for sauce
1/4 cup butter, room temperature	

**Preparation:**

Sift together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, and sugar. Add butter, milk, and vanilla. Beat for 2 minutes at medium speed of electric mixer. Add egg and beat 1 minute longer. Fold in peaches, reserving 8 slices for topping later; pour batter into unbaked pie shell. Spoon cooled caramel sauce over top of batter. Bake at 350° for 50 to 60 minutes, or until set. 10 minutes before the pie is done, quickly arrange reserved peach slices over the top. Serve peach pie warm.

**Caramel sauce:**

2/3 cup brown sugar, firmly packed  
1/4 cup butter  
1/4 cup reserved peach juice  
2 Tbsp corn syrup

Combine all sauce ingredients in saucepan; bring to a boil. Cook for 1 minute. Cool to lukewarm.



## Field Tips



### Disinfecting Tools

**Jeff Postlewaite**

Bleach is a pretty effective and cheap disinfectant but is pretty hard on tools if used more than occasionally. I ruined a pair of good pruning shears several years back when I had some fireblight and dipped my shears in a bleach solution frequently to avoid disease transmission. The shear blades became very pitted and corroded.

I now use Lysol (original formula - brown bottle) mixed to hospital strength for routine cleaning. Stronger (20% solution) if known or suspected pathogens are present. Much kinder to the tools. I've brought a Lysol solution to the pruning workshops the last few years.

Whatever disinfectant you use, probably should give a vigorous brushing with disinfectant and soaking where possible. Just spraying a disinfectant probably isn't sufficient if there is the possibility of sap stuck to your tools. In the case of your chain saw -- may help to cut up some dead (non-infectable) wood to wear off accumulated sap before disinfecting.

Here are a few links with comparisons of tool disinfectants:

<http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/~linda%20chalker-scott/FactSheets/Pruning.pdf>

<http://ucanr.org/repository/cao/landingpage.cfm?article=ca.v045n04p21&fulltext=yes>

[http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/~linda%20chalker-scott/horticultural%20myths\\_files/Myths/Pruning%20tools.pdf](http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/~linda%20chalker-scott/horticultural%20myths_files/Myths/Pruning%20tools.pdf)

Your membership may be expiring! **Check your Grapevine address label for your membership expiration date. If it says "6/30/12" or earlier, then it is time to renew.**

### MidFEx Membership Application

New Member

Renewing Member

Name (please print)			
Address	City	State	Zip
Telephone	E-Mail		

Amount Enclosed:  \$15 (1 Year)  \$25 (2 Years)  \$30 (3 Years)

Mail to: MidFEx Membership  
P.O. Box 93  
Markham, IL 60428-0093

The above information (name, address and phone only) will appear in our Members' Only Directory (June issue) and is never sold or rented to outside interests.

-----

## MidFEx Calendar 2012

July 8	Summer Picnic: 36500 N. Field View, Gurnee
August 5 – 2PM	Orchard Tour: Jim Ozzello, 5020 Valley Trail, Racine Wi
August 12	Submission deadline for fall issue of the <i>Grapevine</i>
August 26 – 1PM	Summer Pruning Workshop: Gene Yale, 9121 N. Keeler Ave, Skokie, IL
October 19–21	Fall Harvest Festival at Chicago Botanic Gardens
November 4	Apple Cider Social
December	Lecture TBD
February 2013	Business meeting (look for date)

### 2012 MidFEx Officers and Contacts

<b>President:</b> Tim Hamilton <b>Secretary:</b> Bill Scheffler <b>Vice-President:</b> Craig Evankoe <b>Treasurer:</b> Jeff Postlewaite	<b>Membership:</b> Use enclosed application, see website, email <a href="mailto:membership@midfex.org">membership@midfex.org</a> Or write: MidFEx Membership P.O. Box 93 Markham, IL 60428-0093
<b>Grapevine articles wanted!</b> Deadline for articles to Robin Guy for next issue: August 12, 2012. Please e-mail articles to Robin and type "GRAPEVINE" in the header. <b>Gathering editor:</b> Robin Guy ( <a href="mailto:editor@midfex.org">editor@midfex.org</a> ) <b>Layout editors:</b> Angela Bowman and Vanessa Smith	<b>MidFEx Online Forum:</b> Members are invited to join the MidFEx forum. Get advice and share your fruit growing experiences with other members. Subscribe to the forum at: <a href="http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/midfex">http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/midfex</a> <b>Forum Administrator:</b> Sherwin Dubren ( <a href="mailto:sherwindu@att.net">sherwindu@att.net</a> )
<b>Orchard Guide:</b> Local on-line fruit growing resource developed by a MidFEx member. You enter in the varieties of fruit trees that you are growing. The site estimates when pests will appear based on local weather reports so you can exercise spraying or integrated pest management (IPM) more efficiently. Post feedback on your growing experiences with specific varieties, and read feedback from others about which varieties do well here and which struggle. <a href="http://orchardguide.net">http://orchardguide.net</a>	<b>MidFEx Web Site:</b> <a href="http://www.midfex.org">http://www.midfex.org</a> Send anything of interest (links, photographs, fruit info, etc.) to <a href="mailto:webadmin@midfex.org">webadmin@midfex.org</a> for consideration for web site posting. <b>Member Area first time login:</b> <b>username</b> is your last name (exactly as on your address label) plus a '-' plus your 5 character zip code. Example "Doe-60010". <b>password</b> is your <b>username</b> as described above plus a '-' plus your membership expiration date expressed as 6 numeric characters. Example "Doe-60010-063012"

The Grapevine  
 Midwest Fruit Explorers  
 PO Box 93, Markham, IL  
 60428-0093

First Class