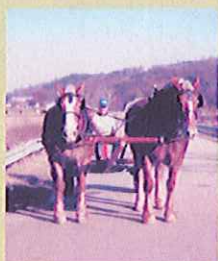


2012 WINTER
EDITION

*Home of Josephine's
Garden*

*Owned and Operated
by the Huff Family
since 1905*

*In Memory of.....
Ray Ellis Huff*



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Hillgate Farm

UNION TOWNSHIP, LAWRENCE COUNTY OHIO

Planning a Garden

What sacrilege to walk across unblemished snow. I hesitate, not wishing to scar the smooth surface that glitters in the sunlight. All around the yard animals have come during the night and the quiet day to forage for food. Small, indiscrete tracks can be seen upon close inspection. The hickory nuts that have lain on the ground since fall begin to disappear. Holly berries and left overs from the vegetable garden also disappear leaving the garden and yard tidier and ready for warm weather.

Winter is a time when we need a good book and a good fire. My thoughts, not surprisingly, considering the winter temperatures, are centered on spring and the gardens coming to life.

So what better time of the year to snuggle up with a blanket, hot cocoa, and a pile of seed catalogs in preparation for that spring garden. With the snow and wind howling, set aside some time to pour over those beautiful flower and vegetable seed catalogs that arrived in the mail earlier in the season.

Winter is not really a down time for gardeners; there are many tasks to consider as the days become longer and warmer. Garden planning is a wonderful way to keep spirits high and mind busy.

Here are some planning ideas from me to you.....

Gather gardening magazines and books and decide on spring and summer projects for the year. Cut out or copy those projects

that interest you and put them on a bulletin board or in a notebook. Scan the web, books, and magazines for additional ideas.

Next, make a 'to do' list of everything needed to accomplish your projects. I have my 'To Do' list on spreadsheets divided by garden name (front garden, veggie garden, herb garden), house, barn, pasture, forest, etc. since I usually have multiple 'to do' tasks for each area of the farm. Next to the task on the spreadsheet I place the materials I will need to accomplish the project so I'll have a list of items I may pick up over time at the supply centers. I also have a column for costs, phone numbers of contractors and other general notes.

Seed can be collected from native plants in your area for planting in fall or spring. This would need to be done in summer or fall of the previous year. Remember that native plants are tolerant of the climate and soil in their native region and would require less maintenance.

Scan through the seed catalogs paying particular attention to the needs of the plants (soil, sun, shade) and prepare and place the seed order early to ensure the seed company will not run out of the seed being ordered. The seed company will generally hold off shipping the order until warmer weather prevails or unless otherwise requested. If starting seed early in a greenhouse or on the window sill, seeds will be needed earlier.

Print photos of your home, yard and gardens photographed in the previous summer and use

the photos to decide on new designs and landscape features. Sketch your ideas on the photo to see how they might look. I've found that a solid fine point black marker works best. If you are good on the computer, the landscape features can be drawn onto the photos to get an idea what your design may look like once complete.

Expand your knowledge of gardening by choosing garden DVDs to enjoy while looking over the catalogs and books.

Create a scrapbook or journal of your ideas and plans. Paste photos and ideas into the journal and draw design plans. I make notes of what worked, what did not work and other experiments I would like to try. I stew over a design for probably longer than I should but I want to be sure that I can expand on my design once constructed and as the garden matures. One great tool is Microsoft OneNote, an online journal for keeping all types of notes, photos and websites.

Winter brings unexpected color, smells, and silhouettes of trees and shrubs. Look carefully at the shapes and branches and cultivate winter interest into your plan. Choose plants with attractive shapes remembering that in winter, the garden vista becomes broader and the plan is even more open.

Most importantly, have fun planning for spring!





Montroso Orchards located in Lawrence County Ohio north

An Apple a Day!

Hillgate Farm is continuing the search for antique and heirloom apple trees in Lawrence County. We are also interesting in information about trees in the surrounding Ohio counties.

As our readers may remember, Hillgate Farm received a grant in 2012 from the North Central Region SARE to research and locate apple trees from remnant orchards in Lawrence County. The grant also provided for historic research of the once vibrant apple industry in Lawrence County.

Anyone that knows of an old orchard or even an old apple tree, please let us know, we want to hear from you. Our goal is to revive the old apple varieties rarely made available today....

Roxbury Russet
Golden Pippin
Tallman's Sweeting
Gilliflower

And many more!

Contact Hillgate Farm at
HillgateFarm@gmail.com



Apples collected from trees in Lawrence County.

Nature Journaling



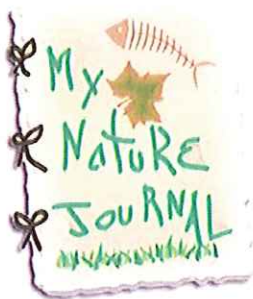
One of the best ways to learn about the natural world is by journaling. Make your own journal or purchase one of the many journals available. Some have blank sketch paper and others come with lines or a combination of the two.

Journaling can be used for learning outside the classroom, and can be used during vacations or other outdoor activities. Journaling also gives students a prerequisite for learn-

ing how to conduct field research.

There is no right way or wrong way to journal, you do not need to be an artist or even a writer. Simply sketch what you observe and write about it in your own words. Once the information is added to the journal it is much easier to remember the information in the future since most of the senses are being used; sight, smell, sound, sometimes taste.

There are a number of books available about journaling that provide more information and tips about using journaling for learning experiences and increasing observation skills. Most important, journaling is fun and should not be a chore. Let it become a time of reconnecting with nature.



Our Culture's profound separation of humans from all the rest of creation has produced a deep, diffuse, pervasive loneliness, disorientation, sense of loss, and fragility that is played out in all our relationships and through all our means of expression. Rejoining these two aspects of the original whole, the self and nature, is the great task each one of us faces, the great requirement of our civilization at this pivotal moment in time.

Peter London, Drawing Closer to

Some of my favorite seed catalogs include:

Seeds of Change <http://www.seedsofchange.com/>

Nichols Garden Nursery

<https://www.nicholsgardennursery.com/store/>

Prairie Moon Nursery <http://www.prairiemoon.com/>

Favorite magazines include:

The English Garden Magazine, six issues per year,

<http://www.theenglishgarden.co.uk/>

Hobby Farms, 6 issues per year, <http://www.hobbyfarms.com/>

Orion Magazine, 6 issues per year, <http://www.orionmagazine.org/>

Favorite Garden Suppliers are:

Lee Valley Tools, <http://www.leevalley.com/>

Red Pig Garden Tools, Made in the USA,

<http://www.redpigtools.com/servlet/StoreFront>

Favorite Ohio Native Plant Nursery:

Porterbrook Native Plants located in Racine Ohio of Meigs

County, <http://www.porterbrooknativeplants.com/>

Veterinarian Chad Brown Floats over to Hillgate Farm

Raising animals can be a rewarding and fun experience. Each animal has its own personality just like people and even the bark of a dog or whinny of a horse can be distinctive to that animal.

Each year the veterinarian visits Hillgate for the usual check ups and shots. This winter, Dr. Chad Brown, owner of Brown Veterinary Service in Wayne WV visited Hillgate to 'float' the teeth of three horses.

Floating the teeth of a horse is not as easy and you might think. Floating teeth is basically filing the teeth to make them smooth. Sometimes horses will develop sharp edges on their teeth which makes chewing painful. An adult horse may have between 36 to 44 permanent teeth. The procedure generally takes between 15 to 20 minutes per horse once sedated and a mouth speculum is used to keep the horse's mouth open. Most vets use a

hand file in a back and forth motion to file the sharp edges but Dr. Brown uses an electric file which rotates the sharp edges away.

Dr. Brown has been a good vet for Hillgate, always there for emergencies day or night for animals of all sizes. Unlike most vets, Dr. Brown makes house calls for dogs and small animals too and he is always up to speed on all the latest medical technology.



Thank you Dr. Brown!

Winter Favorite Book

"Barn Quilts and the American Quilt Trail Movement"

By Suzi Parron, Donna Sue Groves

ISBN-13: 9780804011389

Publisher: Ohio University Press

Published: 2/15/2012

Parron documents a journey that began in 2001 in Adams County Ohio with the founder of the movement, Donna Sue Groves and Donna Sue's desire to honor her mother with a quilt square painted on their barn which became a group effort that eventually grew into a county-wide project.



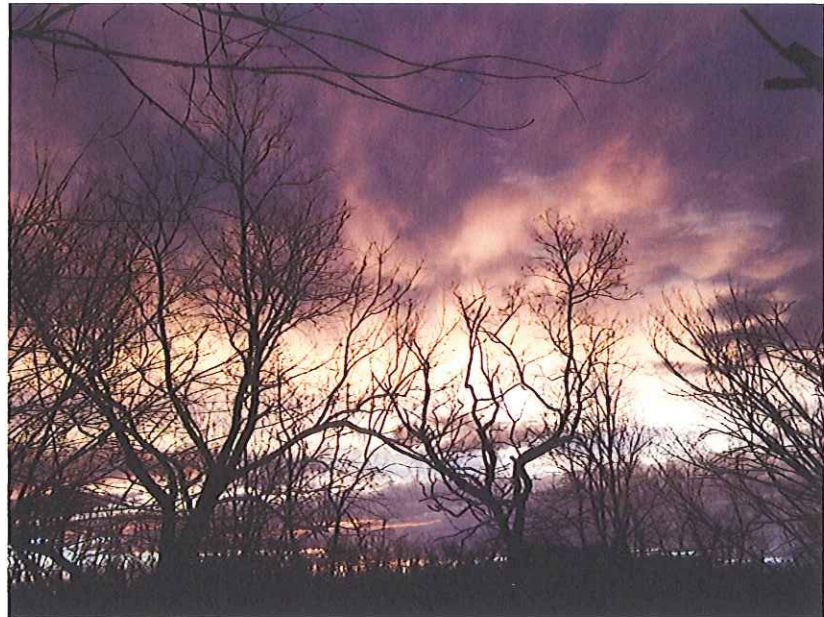
WINTER EDITION

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Hillgate Farm

Hillgate Farm is dedicated to preserving the sustainable farming lifestyle, to promoting education of the natural world and supporting those developers that construct for sustainability by creating building designs based on the surrounding landscape and culture of the area.



Hillgate Farm at dusk

In Honor of the Wayne National Forest

For as long as I can remember, the Wayne National Forest has been a favorite location for my family. The Ironton District consists of approximately 100,000 acres located in Lawrence, Jackson, Gallia and Scioto Counties. There are lakes for fishing including the 100 acre Timbre Ridge Lake and Lake Vesuvius, both in Lawrence County. There are backpack hiking trails, boat ramp facilities, newly renovated campgrounds, horse trails, an abundance of plant diversity, historic areas like the Vesuvius Furnace and yearly events such as the Fishing and Fun Day. Whenever the stress of daily life seems to close in, the National Forest is the prescribed medicine. Being within a quiet forest surrounded by large trees, singing birds, and curious wildlife often seems like a mys-

tical place compared to the noisy, congested developed areas of southern Ohio. The forest is a comforting, safe haven for writing, photographing, journaling, contemplating, or just resting.

How lucky we are to have such a place among the multitude of habitats, each with a character all its own—the wetlands, streams and valleys, deep woods, old growth, multitudes of wildflowers, beautiful vistas, lakes, ponds, a diversity of trees and plant life, and my all time favorite—quiet.

This is our home, it is our job to honor the forest, care for it and protect it for the future.

Recommended Reading.....

The Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America by E. Lucy Braun, botanist for the Cincinnati University 1939-1958.

Reprinted by Blackburn Press.

