

WHAT'S NEW



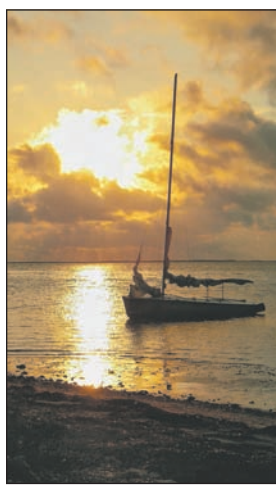
McClatchy-Tribune
Pet Acoustics is an application that plays music designed for cats, dogs and horses.

This app is for animals

Pet Acoustics is an application for the iPhone or iPod Touch that plays music designed to enhance the well-being of cats, dogs and horses. The music was selected with consideration for the frequencies in the animals' hearing ranges and the rhythms and volume levels that appeal to them. It's designed to soothe them in stressful situations such as thunderstorms, vet visits and car travel, or just to enhance the interaction between pets and their people.

Timers can be set to play the music at designated times. Pet Acoustics can be downloaded for \$1.99 at iTunes or www.PetAcoustics.com.
— Mary Beth Breckenridge, McClatchy-Tribune

WILD THINGS



See this and other nature photos taken by our readers at www.tallahassee.com.

INSIDE

TELEVISION & PUZZLES

Today's sudoku puzzle and the daily history feature.
Page 2C

Today's television lineup plus bridge and crossword.
Page 4C

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Thirty years ago, a notion was born that grew into

Native Nurseries



Donna Legare and Jody Walthall started Native Nurseries 30 years ago on a piece of land next to Walthall's family spread on Centerville Road.

Photos by GLENN BEIL/Democrat



Colorful switch plates with nature-inspired motifs, above, and hand-built birdhouses, below, are on sale in the Wren's Nest, the gift shop at Native Nurseries.



Centerville Road business will celebrate on Saturday

By Kati Schardl
ASSISTANT FEATURES EDITOR
Times sure flies when you're building a business that happens to involve doing something you love.

It hardly seems like 30 years have passed since Donna Legare and Jody Walthall began converting a chunk of land next to Walthall's family spread on Centerville Road into what is now a lush, shady oasis and mecca for local gardeners.

Native Nurseries celebrates its 30th anniversary Saturday with hot cider, rosemary cake, the nursery's custom-mixed birdseed for customers to scoop and bag for free, puppet shows, guitar music and more.

"We have customers who have been with us for 30 years," Legare said. "And as far as the

IF YOU GO

- **What:** Native Nurseries 30th Anniversary Celebration, featuring hot cider and organic coffee, rosemary cake, puppet shows, live guitar music, free birdseed and more
- **When:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday; the nursery is open for regular hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Where:** 1661 Centerville Road
- **Admission:** Free
- **Contact:** Call 386-8882 or visit www.nativenurseries.com

history of the nursery goes, it's really the sum of all the different people who have worked here. Several of our current employees have been here more than 20

Please see NURSERY, 2C

Compost acorns, oak leaves



Audrey Post
Ms. Grow-It-All

Q: Recent articles encourage us to avoid raking the bounteous mulch

that falls from the pines and oaks each autumn, but what about the acorns that accompany the leaves? It seems that 100 more little oaks from last year's bumper crop sprout each week under the azaleas and blueberries. What are we to do with the millions of acorns?

A: It isn't the raking but the bagging and removing of mulch from the property that we're trying to discourage. This is one case where raking is part of the solution.

Our resident tree expert, University of Florida/Leon County forester Stan Rosenthal, suggests you compost your oak leaves and acorns and spread the resulting mulch under your azaleas and blueberries.

The heat of the compost pile should kill the acorns and prevent them from sprouting. If the acorns on the outside of the pile do get enough sunlight to sprout, they are easily uprooted when you turn the pile. Then the heat of the pile finishes them off.

That should be enough to prevent a new crop of oak trees under your shrubbery, but if you want to take an additional step for insurance, you could sift your finished compost through a screen of hardware cloth to capture the remaining acorns. Toss the acorns back onto the pile to finish "cooking."

Please see GROW IT, 3C

Use 'lasagna' method to prepare garden beds

By Ed Schroeder
SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

Despite the recent cold winter weather, spring gardening season is really not that far away. Now is the time to prepare your garden plot or bed. This preparation can apply to landscape beds, perennial beds, annuals and especially vegetable gardens.

When breaking new ground or renovating an old bed, you have several choices as how to proceed. The traditional method is to spade up the area. This is a good method to immediately incorporate organic matter, especially into heavy clay or sandy soils. The limitation is that with established beds and shade gardens



Special to the Democrat

It's time to prepare the soil for spring gardening season.

under trees, you cannot avoid cutting and otherwise disturbing plant roots. Also, digging alters the biology of the soil. Plant growth is aided by beneficial fungi that exist in a symbiotic relationship with plant

root systems. So, here is an alternative that you might like to try.

It's called layering, sheet composting, or the "lasagna" method. Pick an area that is suitable for what you want to plant. If the bed will be

replacing lawn all that is necessary is to mow the grass short.

The next step is to block out light so weed seeds don't sprout. This is done by covering the area with overlapping sheets of brown cardboard or five or more layers of newspaper (not the glossy advertising inserts that come with the Sunday paper). Wet down the paper to keep it from blowing away. Immediately add a 3/4-inch or more layer of weed-free compost or comparable material. Followed this with alternate thick and thin layers; fluffy material like hay, straw and leaves, and thin layers of richer nitrogen-containing material such as organic fertilizers, mushroom

compost, soybean meal, etc. Repeat thick with thin until you have a 1- to 2-foot depth of layers. This organic material will break down over time and provide a very fertile substrate for your plants that is only a few inches deep. However, the bed can be planted immediately by simply digging down and inserting your plants into the soil and ready-made mulch. If you give it a few months time before planting, your "lasagna" bed will be in even better condition to receive your new plantings.

■ Ed Schroeder is a Master Gardener volunteer and advisory committee member with the University of Florida IFAS Extension in Leon County, <http://leon.ifas.ufl.edu>.

NURSERY

From Page 1C

years.”

Birth of a nursery

Legare and Walthall met while students at the University of Florida's School of Forest Resources & Conservation. Both were studying wildlife ecology. Even then, they shared a love of native plants. While in Gainesville, whenever an area was cleared for building or development, they would dig up plants and bring them home. When they graduated, the couple decided to forego getting master's degrees in favor of putting what they loved and had learned into practice. They moved back to Tallahassee, where Walthall's mother had offered them a piece of the family property.

“The land was Jody and his sister's horse pasture,” Legare said earlier this week. “It was called the ‘Crazy Corral.’ Jody's mother said she saved that piece of land just for him.

“Over the years, the pasture reverted to woods, and when we started the nursery, it was thickly wooded.”

Right about the same time Legare and Walthall moved to Tallahassee, state forester and native-plant enthusiast Chuck Salter — one of the founders, with former *Tallahassee Democrat* publisher Malcolm Johnson and city editor Paul Willis, of the Upsy Daisy Plant Uplift Society — ran an ad in the paper for his nursery in Madison. It caught Walthall's eye and he went to visit Salter. In the course of conversation, Salter said he wished there was an outlet for his carefully collected and propagated native plants in Tallahassee. “A light bulb went off,” Legare said. “We thought, ‘Well, maybe we can ...’”

And a nursery was born.

Legare and Walthall knew it was a risky venture. When Walthall told his co-

workers at Esposito's Garden Center, where he worked at the time, that he was going to open a business called Native Nurseries, they laughed and told him he should call it Naive Nurseries.

“We made the (nursery) building look like a home from the outside, because if (the business) didn't work, we figured we would live here and get regular jobs,” Legare laughed. “We knew nothing about running a business, but we had both worked at Morningside Nature Center (in Gainesville) and that's how we modeled it. We knew there were already fantastic nurseries here in Tallahassee, with Gene Ellis at Tallahassee Nurseries, and Esposito's. There was no way we could compete with them, so we figured we would make our place more like a nature center.”

Going native

Legare and Walthall found most folks didn't know much about the plants native to this area — but they also found that people were eager to learn.

“The thing about native plants is that they have a more subtle beauty (than non-native annuals or perennials),” Legare said. “Wildflowers aren't usually in full bloom when you're selling them. Photography was a hobby for both of us, and so we developed a lot of slide shows to let people know what native plants look like in bloom and to show how important native plants are to wildlife.”

The couple don't grow their own plant stock — “We don't have the land or the expertise,” Legare said — but use area growers, such as late mentor Salter, current supplier Dan Miller, a retired state worker, and a major native-plant wholesale nursery in Lee. They also sell a carefully chosen selection of non-native plants (no invasive exotics to be found in the inventory) and have branched out with the Wren's Nest, a gift shop stocked with everything from

TALLHASSEE.COM

See more photos from Native Nurseries

the whimsical to the practical for local gardeners.

Walthall also does landscape design on a limited basis, and the nursery is known for its bird and butterfly gardens.

“A major mentor for us was Betty Komarek (founder of Birdsong Nature Center),” Legare said. “We met her when we were in college, and when we started the business, Jody called her and said he wanted to learn how to do a bird garden.

“We planted the Birdsong butterfly garden as our 10th anniversary donation (to the nature center).”

Legare, Walthall and the Native Nurseries crew also lead tours of local native yards and even bring groups to their own yard in Betton Hills. The nursery offers regular classes on how to attract wildlife, how to cook using herbs from the garden, how to make compost and other gardening-related topics.

Three decades in, Legare said the couple's commitment to educating the public about native plants and living in harmony with the environment hasn't ebbed. And they've passed their ideals and passion along to a new generation.

Daughter Vanessa, 24, is a UF graduate who followed in her parents' footsteps, earning a degree in wildlife ecology and working for the Minnesota Conservation Corps. She now works alongside mom and dad at the nursery. Younger brother Joe, 22, is a senior at FSU studying economics and geography.

“They grew up here at the nursery,” Legare said.

Right along with the fragrant native azaleas, shy trilliums, bold woodland phlox and delicate columbine, and the herbs and trees and shrubs, and generations of the cheeky little birds that gave the gift shop its name.

Learn about ‘Hemingses of Monticello’

Walli Beall and Virginia Culpepper of the Last Word Book Club will look at the history of relationships between blacks and whites in the South in a special presentation from 5 to 6:30 p.m. today at Goodwood Museum & Gardens, 1600 Micosukee Road. Beall will review the book “The Hemingses of Monticello,” by Annette Gordon-Reed, which explores the relationships within the Thomas Jefferson household. Admission is \$5. Meet in the Jubilee Cottage; light refreshments will be served. For details, call Jennel Johnson-Pendleton, 877-4202, ext. 225.

— Special to the Democrat

su | do | ku

Enter a numeral from 1 through 9 in each cell of the grid. Each row, column and region must contain only one instance of each numeral.

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

			1	3	6			
	1			2			3	
2					4			
1		7						2
	2						7	
4						9		3
			4					8
	3			6				1
		6	3	9				

Difficulty Level ★★★

Yesterday's solution

2	4	7	3	1	9	6	8	5
3	8	6	5	2	7	9	1	4
1	9	5	8	6	4	3	2	7
5	2	4	7	9	8	1	3	6
8	1	3	6	4	5	2	7	9
6	7	9	2	3	1	5	4	8
9	6	1	4	7	3	8	5	2
7	5	2	1	8	6	4	9	3
4	3	8	9	5	2	7	6	1

Note: Puzzles increase in difficulty from Monday through Sunday.

Today's Birthdays

CBS commentator Andy Rooney is 91. Blues singer Clarence Carter is 74. Singer Jack Jones is 72. Singer-songwriter Allen Toussaint is 72. Actress Faye Dunaway is 69. Actor Carl Weathers is 62. Singer-producer T-Bone Burnett is 62. Movie writer-director Lawrence Kasdan is 61. Newspaper columnist Maureen Dowd is 58. Rock singer Geoff Tate (Queensryche) is 51. Movie writer-director Steven Soderbergh is 47. Rapper Slick Rick is 45. Actress Emily Watson is 43. Rapper-actor LL Cool J is 42. Actor Jason Bateman is 41. Rock singer-musician Dave Grohl (Foo Fighters) is 41. Actress Jordan Ladd is 35. Retro-soul singer-songwriter Marc Broussard is 28. Rock singer-musician Caleb Followill (Kings of Leon) is 28.

Today in History

1784 The United States ratified a peace treaty with England, ending the Revolutionary War.

1898 Author Charles Lutwidge Dodgson — better known as “Alice in Wonderland” creator Lewis Carroll — died in Guildford, Surrey, England, shortly before his 66th birthday.

1943 President Franklin Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill

and French Gen. Charles de Gaulle opened a wartime conference in Casablanca.

1952 NBC's “Today” show premiered, with Dave Garroway as the host, or “communicator,” as he was officially known.

1953 Josip Broz Tito was elected president of Yugoslavia by the country's Parliament.

1963 George Wallace was sworn in as governor

of Alabama with a pledge of “segregation forever.”

1969 Twenty-seven people aboard the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, off Hawaii, were killed when a rocket warhead exploded, setting off a fire and additional explosions.

1970 Diana Ross and the Supremes performed their last concert together, at the Frontier Hotel in Las Vegas.

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