

Preening the late summer perennial garden

I am not one to primp and preen in front of the mirror, but I will certainly do it for my plants this time of the year. It has undoubtedly been a long hot summer and many of our plants are looking a little ragged for it. We can do a little preening now to give some of our annuals and perennials a facelift for fall.

As temperatures return to normal your annuals and perennials will respond nicely but first, we need to get rid of the old, ragged growth. I always keep up with dead-heading the spent blooms of annuals that are in containers so the plant will produce more blooms; and this time of the year many of them get cut back to encourage new, lush growth for the latter part of the season. A dose

of water-soluble fertilizer will help with growth, color and additional bloom set, too. In a matter of a couple of weeks it will look like you have a whole new set of containers to enjoy through fall.

Herbaceous perennials will also respond to some late summer pruning. Leave

those coming into bloom, like golden rods, aster, mums and helianthus; but go ahead and clean up the perennials that have finished blooming or those inclined to repeat bloom throughout the season. I regularly clean up perennial geraniums, salvias, eryngiums, gaillardia, Shasta daisies and others so they sporadically bloom all summer. Others simply benefit from having diseased or damaged foliage removed for aesthetics in the gar-

den. Some I intentionally leave to go to seed for the birds, specifically the coneflower.

Take note that I am referring to annuals and perennials in the garden and not woody shrubs and trees. I do not recommend any clean-up of woodies (unless the wood is dead) at this point, it is too late in the summer season to attend to these matters. Instead, we should wait to do any of these chores until after several hard frosts and dormancy has occurred. Pruning woodies too early in the fall may result in new growth that will be killed by frost; plus, this year plants are under stress due to drought conditions so encouraging new growth will only add to already stressful situation. Traditional hedging shrubs like taxus, boxwood and hollies should be left alone for now, as well. Wait

until several hard frosts occur then you can shape them up for winter.

The rush to mulch is usually something we think about in the spring of the year but consider tackling this chore now. Be sure not to pile mulch too high or directly around the base of the trunk. We want to see the natural flare of the trunk. We do not want to see what looks like a telephone pole sticking out of the ground.

Remove the suckers from the base and branches of sucker prone trees. Suckers will compete for resources from the parent tree and if these trees are under stress we certainly don't want to add insult to injury. Suckers are unsightly but they are also competition.

And, finally, get those summer weeds under control. Controlling weeds now and prevent-

ing flowering and seed production will go far in overall weed management. Prevent late summer seeding and you prevent next year's annual weed crop. If nothing else, deadhead anything about to set seed; pull the easy stuff after a rain; and use spot treatments of a herbicide to kill your hard to control perennial weeds. Many late summer perennial weeds are most effectively controlled during their fall growth cycle because they are trying to store energy before winter. This means they will take in the herbicide more efficiently.

For continued control you can use corn gluten preemergent products to safely prevent weed seed from germinating. The corn gluten products also provide small amounts of nitrogen which will benefit the desirable plants in the garden.

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Bill Gatton Foundation gives \$11M to Kentucky FFA Foundation

FRANKFORT — The Kentucky FFA Foundation will receive an \$11 million gift from Bill Gatton Foundation, the largest donation to any FFA Foundation in U.S. history. The gift will create unprecedented opportunities for the more than 24,000 Kentucky students who participate in the FFA program in schools across the Commonwealth.

The donation was announced during a news conference at the Kentucky State Fair. Kentucky FFA Foundation Executive Director Sheldon McKinney shared that the funds will be used to grow current programs and add new opportunities for FFA members, including:

Enhancements to the Kentucky FFA Leadership Training Center and the FFA camp experience;

More FFA camp scholarships for individual members and chapters;

Increased prize money for state winners of Career and Leadership Development events;

A foundation-led bus tour to the FFA Washington Leadership Conference for up to 100 students, as well as scholarships for students with financial need; and

Muhlenberg and McLean County FFA chapters will have a Forever Blue endowment (managed by the foundation) that will provide annual funds for those chapters in perpetuity.

The Kentucky FFA

Leadership Training Center located in Hardinsburg, will be renamed the Carol Martin Gatton Kentucky FFA Leadership Training Center in honor of this historic gift.

“Mr. Bill Gatton has a legacy of leadership, inspiring philanthropy and a deep love of Kentucky,” said McKinney. “This gift to Kentucky FFA, which was a piece of his leadership development, will offer life-changing opportunities for generations of future FFA members. The Carol Martin Gatton Kentucky FFA Leadership Training Center is a place that has grown thousands of Kentucky FFA members into true leaders in their homes, communities and our state. Mr. Gatton’s gift will ensure that we continue to

thrive.”

"We are so grateful for this gift and excited for the opportunities it will open up for the students across Kentucky who are learning and growing through the FFA program," said Beth Hargis, associate commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education. "Whether it's through career skills workshops or hands-on leadership programs, our students will benefit from opportunities to help guide them down the road to success. Agriculture has a nearly \$50 billion impact on Kentucky's economy. Students who participate in FFA programs are learning valuable skills for their future and helping ensure the food

supply for our country."

Gatton served as Kentucky FFA State President in 1950. He went on to tremendous success as a businessman but is best remembered for his philanthropy. This gift from the Bill Gatton Foundation will give tens of thousands of Kentucky FFA members the opportunity to use FFA as a springboard for their own successes as entrepreneurs, leaders, and members of their communities.

FFA is a student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership. In 2024, Kentucky FFA members earned more than \$13.2 million through work-based projects and completed 26,489 hours of community service.

The Marion County Clerk Office will be closed Saturday, August 30th and Monday, September 1st in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

Notice to Marion County Taxpayers

Chad G. Mattingly, Marion County Clerk, and the 2024 Marion County Fiscal Court, pursuant to KRS 424.330, announce that an ad for the 2024 Delinquent Real Property Tax Bills (Certificates of Delinquency) will be published in the Lebanon Enterprise on Wednesday, August 27th, 2025, and a list of delinquent taxpayers on September 3rd, 2025. The list of Certificates of Delinquency is also available for public inspection during the hours of 8:20 AM to 4:20 PM Monday through Friday and 8:20 AM to 11:50 AM on Saturday (except for holiday Saturdays) at the County Clerk's office located in the David R. Hourigan Building at 223 N. Spalding Avenue, Suite 102. There will be a tax sale on October 8th, 2025, at 9:00 AM at the Marion County Clerk Office. The sale will allow third party companies or other individuals the opportunity to purchase any delinquent tax bills that have not been paid by October 7th, 2025. If you are a taxpayer who has a delinquent bill, you should try your best to pay that bill before the October 8th sale date to avoid additional fees you will have to pay to anyone who may purchase your bill before they would release the tax lien that they would have on your property. Anyone wishing to pay their delinquent tax bill before the sale date can pay in person at the Clerk's office by the close of business on Tuesday, October 7th, 2025. Forms of payment we accept are: Cash, check, debit cards (\$2.50 additional fee), and some credit cards (additional fee). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the County Clerk's office at 270-692-2651.