

Ashi-niswi giizisoog (Thirteen Moons)

Waabigonigiizis

The Waabigonigiizis begins May 3. This is the flowering moon. Other Ojibwe names for this moon are Zaagibagaimegiizis or Budding moon and Waswugonegiizis or Flowering moon.

Aanji-Minwaabajitoonowin Gegoo Gitigaaning (Renew the good use of something in the Garden)

By Shannon Judd

Purchasing all of the necessities for gardening can add up to a lot of zhooni-ya. Fortunately, there are many ways to reuse items we would normally throw away or recycle.

Here are some ways of reusing various items in your garden:

• **Rain Water:** (pictured) A great way to



recycle rain water from your roof, save money and protects lakes and streams from pollution. The "System" rain barrel is available for sale at cost through the Fond du Lac Environmental Program. The rain barrel is made from 50 percent recycled materials.

- **Old Pantyhose:** Cut them into sections and use them to tie plants to stakes. They are sturdy, but will not hold the plant too tightly.
- **Egg cartons, yogurt containers, last year's plastic seedling containers:** All of these can be used to start seedlings.

Be sure to wash yogurt and old seedling containers before use. Punch two holes in the bottom of containers to allow for water movement.

- **Plastic knives, mini blinds, or popsicle sticks:** Use these as plant markers.
- **Shower curtain:** When transplanting large plants, use an old shower curtain as a skid to help haul the plant between locations.
- **Toilet:** Ok, so the thought of this disturbs some people, but we are doing this at our house this spring. If you replace your toilet, use the old one

as an outdoor double-planter for flowers (the bowl and the back). Use some weather-proof porcelain paint to make it a little more decorative. It will definitely make a good conversation piece!

- **Food Waste:** Instead of throwing your food waste in the garbage, try composting! Composting reduces waste and protects your health and the environment by reducing/eliminating the

need for man-made fertilizers. Wood pallets provide excellent construction material for an outdoor bin. You can

either build your own outdoor compost bin, compost indoors with worms, or purchase a bin (see picture).



The Fond du Lac Resource Management Division has compost bins and System rain barrels available for purchase. Call Shannon

at (218) 878-7123 for pricing

Ishkonigaazowin Gete-miinikaanan (Seed Saving)

By Nikki Crowe

The seeds we save are often referred to as heirloom, open pollinated, non-hybrid, or indigenous. Heirloom seeds are seeds that have been grown out for at least 50 years or have been handed down from at least three generations of family. Some heirloom varieties are for sale in seed catalogs or you can join a non-profit seed saving group or agree to a swap with local growers of good seed. Avoid genetically modified and F1 hybrid seed - these are not good seeds to save, they are often sterile and unreliable in character if they are grown out again.

The idea of owning nature, including the seeds of nature, is not; well, in our indigenous nature. Seeds, like the land, will take care of us if we take care of them. Saving good seeds

promotes our sovereignty, is easy and a responsible thing to do.

Once you have the seed, then you grow the seed, then you can save seeds, save money and save the variety. A few supplies you will need are jars, screen, envelopes, pen, corn starch, cold dark place (like the refrigerator), and resources for seed saving. The resources can be a knowledgeable seed saver; this may be a neighbor or someone you meet at Gitigaan class, the internet; google: seed saving techniques, or by visiting the library for a book on seed saving.

At the April 19 Gitigaan class, I provided a free to download seed saving guide. To obtain your copy, go to www.seedambassadors.org. Good luck on your seed saving. Remember my motto: grow some, eat some, save some.

Nisiwag Gimisenyiminaanig Gitigaan (Three Sister's Garden)

By Nikki Crowe

Three sister's gardening is a traditional Native gardening practice; it is sustainable and good for the soil. Dave Wilsey tells me, "The three sisters planting system are indigenous to the Americas, spanning from northern United States to the countries of South America. I worked with three sisters systems in Ecuador and Peru, as well as in Guatemala and Mexico".

Growing mandaamin (corn), mashkodesimin, (beans) and okanakosimaan (squash) together requires less weeding, watering and returns nutrients back into the soil. The beans add the

nitrogen back to the soil that the corn uses to grow; the squash leaves are large enough to shade out weeds and unwanted insects. The mound that the three sisters grow in retains more water than if planted in a flat bed. Nutritionally, the corn provides carbohydrates, the beans provide protein, and the squash provide vitamins.

A good source of gardening information can be found at the Gitigaan classes held from 5:30-8 p.m. Tuesdays, at the Cloquet Community Center through the end of May. They offer a meal and a presentation on gardening topics.

Upcoming Events: 13 Moons and Gitigaan will be hosting a gardening class "Wild Edibles for the Garden" at 5:30 p.m. May 17 at the Cloquet Community Center. Check us out on Facebook: 13 Moons Ashiniswi Giizisoog

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