

DIRTY FINGERNAILS AND ALL

Good weed, bad weed

BY SIOUX ROGERS

I was looking to write an article on beneficial weeds in the garden and began my Internet search with "Good weeds vs. bad weeds." You might guess that the Internet's interpretation of "weed" was marijuana, not exactly the topic of the day. So I re-worded my search to "noxious weed vs. healthful weed," or something like that. The article below was just what I was looking for. Now I do not need to re-invent the wheel.

I spoke to the very kind author, Randy Fritz, who has a garden blog site (www.RealFoodForLife.com). It is with his full written permission that his article is printed below. Portions have been deleted due to space.

Good Weed ... Bad Weed

I've had an on /off relationship with weeds recently and now I'm at it again. My attention has now gone to yet another weed. This one's not so pesky to your lawn and it tastes much better. Actually it tastes almost exactly like spinach – particularly when cooked – and again, it has all kinds of nutritional value andit's free.

I first heard its name locally as Lamb's Quarters. I don't particularly like that name but you can also call it fat



hen, nickel greens, pig weed, dung weed or white goosefoot. Some of these names I also don't love.

It now grows wild in North—and probably most people unknowingly just pull it out of the garden. You can recognize the plant when it is young because the center of the top is feathery looking with a purple tint. The picture is of a younger plant.

If allowed to mature Lamb's Quarters produces a head of thousands of black tiny seeds. You can eat these seeds and they are highly nutritious. Actually its species is closely related to Quinoa – a super grain that many people are familiar with. I haven't tried harvesting the seeds yet since it is so scarce but in some parts of the world it is cultivated. It has been eaten, perhaps unknowingly, since the Iron Age.

One cup of raw Lamb's Quarter

leaves contains:

- 80 mg of Vitamin C
- 11,600 IU of Vitamin A
- 72 mg of Phosphorus
- 309 mg of calcium as well as good amounts of thiamin, riboflavin, niacin and Iron.

The season is getting along but I encourage you to find some young plants and try it out. You may like itand of course its free!

The following paragraphs, also written by Randy Fritz, are excerpted from a previous article Dandelion Madness:

Every morning, particularly in the spring, you can catch me scampering around my front lawn in my bare feet. Yes this is fun and yes, this is good for you (for at least five reasons I can think of) but no, and this is neither March madness nor spring maypole dance thing going on.

The reason I'm out there on my lawn is because I'm harvesting dandelions for my breakfast smoothie.

There are at least seven reasons why I am digging up dandelions, which include:

1. It keeps my neighbors happy. I think dandelion flowers look great—that perfect solitary yellow bloom against a background of green ... but if there were too many flowers, my neighbors who don't like them, might revolt.
2. It helps the environment. Assuming you do want to stay friendly with your neighbors, pulling up dandelions is an alternative to soaking up the ground and water table and general environment with deadly toxic chemicals.
3. I'm thrifty. I don't have to pay for herbicides.
4. I'm very thrifty! (cheap) Using dandelion reduces the amount of greens I have to buy for my smoothie. Spinach, the main ingredient of smoothies, is a great value considering all the nutrition and benefits but dandelions are ... well... FREE!
5. I like to feel great. There are tremendous health benefits to dandelions. The dandelions' scientific name *Taraxacum officinale*, means the "Official Remedy for Disorders". It has such a long list of benefits that I have to list them later. There are benefits to the root, the leaf, the flower and the stem.
6. Dandelions are tasty. The leaves, when young, are not too bitter, the flowers are sweet. Even the root, if roasted, is quite palatable. Some people use it as a substitute for chicory.



7. I'm efficient! (lazy) With one small act, I reduce grocery shopping, I reduce weed killer shopping, I reduce herb remedy shopping, I save money, I get healthy, I enjoy the sun, I enjoy the fresh air, and it feels good on my feet!

A short list of the health benefits of dandelion is:

- Prevent or help with liver diseases, such as hepatitis or jaundice.
- Act as a tonic and gentle diuretic to purify your blood, cleanse your system, dissolve kidney stones, and otherwise improve gastro-intestinal health.
- Assist in weight reduction.
- Cleanse your skin and eliminate acne.
- Improve your bowel function, working equally well to relieve both constipation and diarrhea.
- Prevent or lower high blood pressure.
- Prevent or help with anemia.
- Lower your serum cholesterol by as much as half.
- Eliminate or drastically reduce acid indigestion and gas buildup by cutting the heaviness of fatty foods.
- Prevent or help with various forms of cancer.
- Prevent or help control diabetes mellitus.

Because most parts of the dandelion help your liver and because the liver has at least 50 functions in the body, the benefits could go on for pages. Some people also consider that the dandelion is nature's long-term mechanism for balancing out your soil. Its roots go down far deeper than the lawn and bring up lots of minerals that help your soil when they die. It's those minerals that are good for your liver and the rest of your body. Pretty good and did I mention its FREE!

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Grace Christian Schools Benefit Auction

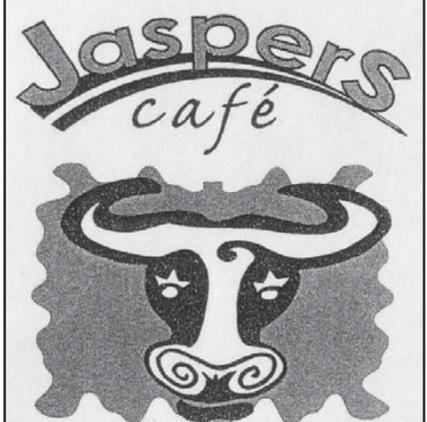
**Saturday, April 17
4 to 7 pm**



Grace Christian Schools announces our upcoming 2010 Benefit Auction- "America the Beautiful," celebrating the birth of our great nation and the beauty that abounds from "sea to shining sea!" The public is invited to attend the auction on Saturday, April 17, 2010 at the Cascade Christian High School Pavilion located at 855 Chevy Way, Medford. Admission is free!

The Silent Auction, scheduled from 4 pm- 7 pm, will feature hundreds of creative gift baskets and keepsake artwork prepared by our Grace Christian School and Cascade Christian High School students, as well as outstanding products and services from local and regional merchants. Dinner will be available for purchase from 4 pm- 7 pm. The Live Auction will begin at 7 pm and will include vacation packages, dinner parties and special collectables that fit every budget. Coffee and dessert will be available throughout the evening.

The money raised at our auction will be used to support student financial aid, athletics, new technology, resources for our libraries, and to enhance music and art programs as we seek to provide a quality Christian education to the children of the Rogue Valley. The doors will open at 4 pm, and all are welcome! Pre-registration can be made by calling Lashell Darby at 541-772-0606 or email GCSauction@aol.com



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