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Gardening

John's garden grows

By Pat Leuchtman
leisure Columnist

John Zon has been gardening on Grinnell Street in Greenfield for 28 years, almost as long as he has worked at Greenfield Tap & Die. He used to be my next door neighbor and he watched me start my first garden.

He had a good laugh over the garden fence because we belong to such different schools of gardening. I belong to the jungle school (in spite of my mulching), and he cultivates "once a week, whether the garden needs it or not."

Though we approach gardening differently, I have always been a great admirer of John Zon's garden. It is beautiful and neat. A weed doesn't dare get too uppity. And it produces! The Zons raised six children on produce from that garden. It is smaller now that they are grown and on their own, but the Zons still grow a good portion of their own vegetables with enough surplus to give away.

I know about their generosity because they gave me my first parsnips. I admit to being very dubious at first, but I am now a confirmed parsnip lover.

We used to compare notes when we were neighbors, and when we returned to Greenfield on occasional visits, we stopped by to see the garden and give the kids and Zon a chance to razz each other about the current baseball season. This summer I stopped by to get his expert advice about raspberries. About a quarter of his garden is a strong, healthy raspberry patch with the sweetest berries I've ever tasted.



Picking berries from his raspberry patch is John Zon of Grinnell Street.

leisure Photo by Betsy Reilley.

First I was treated to a brief tour of the garden, the rhubarb patch and the asparagus patch that is over 15 years old. Zon told me a man in Deerfield was giving away roots with directions for planting. "I was told to dig a trench about a foot deep, put in the roots and then cover them with 5 or 6 inches of soil and a layer of fertilizer. A week later I repeated the process, bringing the asparagus bed level with the rest of the garden. I followed directions and the asparagus has done really well," he said.

The rest of the garden does really well, too, although this year things got off to a slow start. "With so much cold in June we had to replant some of our beans and squash. I know a lot of other people did, too. It used to be I'd plant the garden by date. I'd start on April 15 putting in peas, parsnips and radishes, but I can't seem to do that anymore. I still put in the garden by stages, though, because I do all the digging

by hand and I do a little at a time, adding 5-10-10 fertilizer before I plant."

Finally there is the raspberry patch. Here Zon mulches, using all his autumn leaves. He doesn't find it necessary to do any other fertilizing. The decomposing leaves provide the berry bushes with everything they need, besides keeping the roots cool and moist. "I don't have to worry about watering the bushes even when the weather is very dry," he said.

The berries came with the house so Zon isn't sure of the variety, but they start bearing about July 4 and last for a month or so. In the fall, after the harvest is in, he cuts out all the old canes, right at soil level. I doubted my ability to distinguish the old canes from the new, but he said it would be no problem because "right after bearing, the old canes start to dry out and die."

Continued on Page 13

Books

Gloucester story fresh as a breeze

By Mary Metcalf
leisure Columnist

Kim Bartlett's "The Finest Kind" is about hard work and hardy men. Independent, individualistic, skilled and feisty, the Italian-American fishermen of Gloucester go down to the sea to earn their living year round. This group portrait, drawn by a man who has shared their lives, is fresh as an ocean breeze, a bit of history worthy of preservation.

Gloucester, on Cape Ann, was settled in 1623. It's fine harbor has been used by fishing ships for over 300 years. Once a ship building center, it is still the port for a dwindling fleet of wooden-hulled trawlers.

Victims of age and costly repairs, the ships bear crews of persistent men who fish in all kinds of weather. Battling wind and wave, these fishermen extract from the sea both livelihood and a rare sort of self-definition. In this man's world existence is chancy, struggle with the elements an every day thing.

Bartlett sets down in Gloucester, introduces the waterfront, the hard-working trawlers as they move in and out of the harbor for a day's or a week's work. We meet skippers and crew: Santo, who came to Gloucester from Sicily when he was 18, and who learned early, "... don't trust anyone in the fishing business; even your best friend will

**The Finest Kind:
The Fishermen
of Gloucester**
By Kim Bartlett

Avon, 251 pages, Paper \$2.95

**A Treasury of
Nostalgic Collectibles**
By Charles J. Jordan

Yankee, 155 pages, Paper \$9.95

**It's A Pig World
Out There**
By Phyllis Demong

Paul S. Eriksson, Publisher,
128 pages, \$4.95

**Celebearties &
Other Bears**
By Phyllis Demong

Paul S. Eriksson, Publisher,
128 pages, Paper \$3.95

lie if he's on fish." And Tommy who listens to tapes of Italian opera while at sea, Anthony who dreams of being a hockey player, and others.

Ashore we meet wives, dealers, those who congregate before dawn at Dunkin' Donuts, as well as those who make Fisherman's Wharf home.

Bartlett's record of talk and dreams and frustrations and raw courage is fascinating. So too his descriptions of what it's like to be aboard a trawler which is part of the offshore fleet and travels miles, some 20 hours, "... steaming out of Gloucester into a winter Nor'easter ..." before it reaches the Grand Marann Banks where the real work begins: locating the fish, towing the nets, hauling them in, sorting, gutting, icing the catch for the return trip.

This visit to Gloucester is touched with nostalgia for a way of life all but gone by, a way still practiced by a few of the town's "finest kind."

Nostalgia of another sort may catch your fancy. From Yankee magazine's book division comes "A Treasury of Nostalgic Collectibles: Author Charles Jordan, explores 19 different sorts of Americana worth collecting for love or money. Whether it's old sheet music, circsiana, old photographs or music boxes or baseball cards, Jordan's illustrated opus presents the facts, values, sources, and societies (when they exist). Pointers and cautionary words for the would be acquirer are included.

Jordan's pleasantly jaunty style, a wealth of information plus plenty of illustrations of some odd, sometimes charming bits and pieces of our past makes this one fun for

browsing, valuable for the collector.

And, just for a Lark, take a look at two bits of foolishness from Paul S. Eriksson, Publisher, Middlebury, Vt. Written and illustrated by Phyllis Demong, the raffish books play with words. "It's A Pig World Out There," introduced by a cover illustration of a smug, plump porker, speaks of Frankenswine, Lizzie Boarden, Hamlet and "... also of other miscellaneous matters."

As the publisher says, "In this controversial Olympic year, we are happy to be able to offer this important title."

Also good for a laugh or two is an earlier book from Ms. Demong, "An Unexbeargated, Compbearhensive, Incompearable Book of Celebearties and Other Bears." View bear portraits of Elizabeth Bearett Browning, Beart Parks, Bridget Beardot and others. □

Current best sellers

FICTION

- 1 "Rage of Angels," Sidney Sheldon
- 2 "Random Winds," Belva Plain
- 3 "The Bourne Identity," Robert Ludlum
- 4 "The Spike," De Borchgrave & Morse
- 5 "Princess Daisy," Judith Krantz
- 6 "The Ninja," Eric Van Lustbaden
- 7 "Sins of the Fathers," Susan Howatch
- 8 "No Love Lost," Helen Van Slyke
- 9 "Kane & Abel," Jeffrey
- 10 "The Cradle Will Fall," Mary Higgins Clark

NON-FICTION

- 1 "Thy Neighbor's Wife," Gal Talese
 - 2 "Free to Choose," Milton and Rose Friedman
 - 3 "The Real War," Richard Nixon
 - 4 "Nothing Down," Robert Allen
 - 5 "Will," G. Gordon Liddy
 - 6 "Men in Love," Nancy Friday
 - 7 "Craig Claiborne's Gourmet Diet," Claiborne & Franey
 - 8 "Shelley," Shelley Winters
 - 9 "How to Become Financially Independent by Investing in Real Estate," Albert Lowry
 - 10 "How to Get Pregnant," Sherman J. Silber
- (Courtesy of Time, the weekly news magazine)

Gardening/Continued

Continued from Page 6

"At the same time I cut out the old canes, I cut the new ones off at about four feet. The longer tips don't usually bear many berries and by cutting off the tips you channel the strength of the plant into the bearing part." He said the canes could also be cut off in the spring, but he preferred doing it in the fall.

Zon keeps definite paths cut through the berry patch. It makes picking a little easier, but he explained that it was very important that the plants have enough air circulation and sun. "I had one section

that got very thick and it stopped bearing, but as soon as I took out the overcrowding bushes, it came right back into production.

"The hardest work in the berry patch is keeping them picked. You've got to do it every day. And you have to hope it doesn't rain too much. Raspberries are very fragile, and it only takes three days of rain and you can lose the whole crop to mold."

Keeping all the berries picked sounds like pleasant work to me and I hope I'll have lots of it to do, now that I can go back and rejuvenate my own overgrown patch. □

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