

Creating a privacy fence is easier, cheaper than you may think

With more and more people using their yards as outdoor kitchens and outdoor living areas, privacy is a major concern. You can go through the expense of installing a physical wooden or resin fence or you can opt for an easier and less expensive solution: a living fence made up of plants.

As an example, I am trying to hide an unsightly area in my yard that includes an air conditioning unit and water softener. I decided to use a fast growing shrub called Cherry Hedge. You also may know them as Surinam cherry. They make one of the toughest hedges that you can get, this is especially important in Florida. This plant belongs to the Eugenia family, which is known for



GARDEN NOOK
JOE ZELENAK

fast and easy to prune hedging material. The Cherry Hedge can endure heavy shade or full sun with ease. These plants will grow quite rapidly once established. You can aid your plants future growth by planting your new plants in a good quality-growing medium (ie: cow manure) or by using a good quality topsoil.

Spacing of your plants is a matter of personal decision but the general rule is from 18 inches apart for a fast

effect hedge up to 24 inches apart for a more economical scenario. Once established, these plants can grow up to 2 feet or more per year. As with all new plantings, watering daily during the first few weeks of planting is critical to future development of the plant. Once established, a couple of times a week will probably be sufficient.

Once your plant starts to rapidly grow you are going to want to shape and prune the plant on a regular basis. The right tool for doing this will be essential for good results. You can use a good quality electric hedge shear or you might opt to trim the bushes by hand. If you decide the latter, be sure your shears are sharp so you cut the branches and not rip them. You can shape the hedge to

your liking and you can be as creative as you like. Since these bushes can grow from 3 to 8 feet in height, you have lots of options for creativity!

There is one more bonus I forgot to mention: the plants grow small cherry like berries that are edible. The fruits are often used in jams and jellies. It's almost like the perfect Florida plant! They are also very tolerant to high winds, which is one more added bonus in our area.

Joe Zelenak has more than 30 years experience in gardening and landscape. Send e-mails to hometowngarden@gmail.com or visit his website, www.hometowngarden.com.

Chamber to host health, wellness expo

For Hometown News
NewsFP@hometownnewsol.com

MARTIN COUNTY — The Stuart/Martin County Chamber invites community members to discuss, discover, and get up to date on the latest in health care, maintenance and natural practices at the sixth annual Health & Wellness Show on Friday,

Sept. 19. The show will feature presentations from medical experts, demonstrations, organic & homeopathic methods, elder care support, traditional medical practices and more. The show will kick off with a breakfast for Chamber members from 7:45 a.m. to 9 a.m. and is free to the public from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. A variety of

vendors will fill the Grace Place Connection Center on Salerno Road in Stuart with the latest information on health care, fitness and new medical practices on the horizon. From local doctors and physical therapists to senior living facilities and yoga studios, the Health and Wellness Show will have something for everyone.

Sponsorship opportunities are

available. Booth space is \$200 for Chamber members and \$300 for non-Chamber members. Various sponsorship levels and benefits are available as well.

For more information on sponsorship or table space, call (772) 287-1088, Ext: 111 or email LisaT@stuartmartinchamber.org.

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Reminder for coastal residents to be sea turtle friendly

For Hometown News
NewsFP@hometownnewsol.com

TREASURE COAST — Sea turtle-friendly lighting requirements remain in effect during nesting season. These requirements are in effect from March 1 through Nov. 15.

Research has shown that improper

beach-front lighting greatly increases sea turtle disorientation and mortality. Sea turtle disorientation reports for the 2014 nesting season are available on the St. Lucie County Extension office website at <http://stlucie.ifas.ufl.edu>. These disorientation reports are not generated by See **TURTLE, page 25**

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