

COMMENTARY

Nurse objects when mother threatens girl with flu shot

DEAR ABBY: I'm a nurse who has been providing flu vaccinations for customers in a big box store. Most of them regard us health-care workers as people who want to keep them healthy. My problem is parents who use me as a threat of punishment for their kids.



I have had parents drag their screaming, crying kids over to me, telling them that if they don't behave they are going to "make me" give them a shot. One woman pulled her daughter by the arm, sat her in the chair and said, "OK, give her a shot!" The little girl's eyes filled with tears and she panicked. I looked the woman in the eye and told her I didn't appreciate her making her daughter afraid of me. I told the little one that sometimes we have to take medicine that might hurt us or taste bad, but only because we hoped it would make her better. Then I assured her I

wasn't giving her a shot. The woman laughed nervously, said she was "just joking" and rushed her child away.

I worked hard to become a nurse and my goal is keeping people healthy. Parents: PLEASE don't use health care workers as punishment. You're not helping us to do our job when you can't do yours. — NOT THE BAD GUY IN CLINTON, TENN.

DEAR NOT THE BAD GUY: It's unfortunate, but some parents do this not only with health care workers, but also with police officers, and it's an unbelievably stupid practice. To make a child fearful of the professionals they may at some point need is counterproductive and poor parenting. If a child is acting up and being disruptive in a public place, a better solution is to remove him or her from the premises until you have regained control of the situation.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Briefs
BY THE DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

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Submitted photo

From left, Lois Ware, of Momence, Flower Show Consultant; President Carol Yee of Garden Clubs of Illinois; Flower Show Co-Chair Gayle Fischer, of Bourbonnais; and Josie Barnett, of Bourbonnais.

CLUB NEWS

Kultivators win national flower show award

Kankakee Kultivators' most recent Standard Flower Show, exhibited in Kankakee's Civic Center during last year's Rhubarb Festival, has won the National Garden Clubs Inc. Standard Flower Show Achievement Award for garden clubs of 50-99 members.

Co-chair for the winning show and vice-director for Garden Clubs of Illinois District 8, Gayle Fischer, said only six garden clubs in the U.S. earned this honor.

Seven Kultivators attended the summer meeting of Kultivators' state organization, Garden Clubs of Illinois, where they received the news of the award, its accompanying certificate,

and an over-sized purple ribbon rosette.

Meanwhile, the Kultivators are inviting members of the public to join them for their Sept. 11 general meeting, which will be a day trip to the Morton Arboretum. Travelling by motorcoach, they will leave Kankakee from Hobby Lobby's parking lot at 8:30 a.m. and arrive at the arboretum around 10 a.m.

The group will take an open-air tram tour with a guide. After lunch there will also be an easy-walking tour and/or time for participants to stroll as they wish, to visit specific areas of individual interest.

Transportation, tours, and lunch all are included in the cost of the trip, which is \$43. Participants will arrive back in Kankakee at about 4 p.m. To make reservations call 815-932-4695.

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GARDENING

Hard work pays off for farmer

Deer Creek Organics now selling to Whole Foods

BY STACI BRADBURY
sbradbury@daily-journal.com
815-937-3391

"Farmers don't quit," Jeff Franklin said, surveying the long rows of dark green evidence supporting this claim at his feet.

The kale stood like a silent army.

He didn't quit during his first 100-hour work week. Or his second.



The Daily Journal/Mike Voss

A worker carries cartons of freshly picked kale from a field at Deer Creek Organics in St. Anne.

STONEBROOK
FARM

LIFE, UNPLUGGED

Nope, he battled on for five years at that pace to launch Deer Creek Organics, working full time at the Kankakee Nursery and on the farm in St. Anne.

He finally took the leap to work exclusively at the farm last year, when he reached "the point of exhaustion" and the 80 percent expansion of the operation demanded his full attention.

The tall farmer shook his head and shrugged modestly when his sister-in-law and marketing manager, Lorene Franklin, brought it up.

"Sometimes it was only 80 hours," he said.

Eight years after he started working his uncle's farm near St. Anne, he's expanded from 10 acres to 45. They've snagged Whole Foods as a customer, now providing 60 percent of their local kale sold in Chicago-area grocery stores.

And they're finally making money.

In a way, Deer Creek is the startup of the organic farming world. Though usually associated with tech businesses, the term startup encapsulates a young business that's scrappy, innovative, persistent despite launch risks and now growing quickly.

The secret to their viability is infrastructure born of

Jeff's unique creativity.

Take the kale, for example. A welded-together structure — which they've dubbed the USS Kale — gets wheeled behind a tractor. A little roof shades the kale as it's picked by one of 20 workers, who rapidly strip leaves from the off-white stalk and deftly bundle them together into a hefty bunch. The remaining naked stalk looks like a baby palm tree in the soil, with only the top leaves remaining.

Each rubber banded bundle is labeled with a tiny, numbered tag, which can be used to trace the bundle back to the exact date and place it was picked.

That's one reason the farm earned certified for using Good Agricultural Practices, in addition to being certified organic. GAP is a voluntary set of federal guidelines which regulate food safety and production on the farm.

In other words, GAP certification is assurance that the produce you're buying is farm-to-table.

The extra certification makes sense for Deer Creek, which sells primarily to grocery store distributors. Many grocery stores prefer or require GAP certified produce, Gapcertification.com reports.

Once on board the USS Kale, a worker submerges the kale into cold water to reduce the field heat. Boxes are then cooled overnight, getting down to 36 degrees in a clever fridge that Jeff created by putting modified air conditioners and insulation into the walls of an old corn crib.

The USS Kale also has a generator and microwave on it, so workers can bring their lunch to the field and warm it up.



The Daily Journal/Mike Voss

Jeff Franklin talks about organic farming at Deer Creek Organics in St. Anne.



The Daily Journal/Mike Voss

Barry DeYoung cools freshly picked kale next to the field by dipping it in cool water before it's transported to the cooler at Deer Creek Organics in St. Anne.

"Efficiency is the only way we can make it," Lorene said.

Creating efficiency to scale with the farm's production is Jeff's passion. He knows how much labor and fertilizer costs for each

of his eight crops — kale, beets, celeriac, parsnips, Italian parsley, leeks, dill and cilantro. He studies the yield for each, and expands the most profitable.

"It's a healthy way to make a living," Jeff said.

Five tips for organic farmers

1. Top priority! Buy and read the book, "The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook" by Richard Wiswall. Can be purchased on Amazon.
2. Plan on needing more money than you think you will need, so have a good source for money.
3. Prepare for a long-term investment of time, so don't give up in the beginning. Be prepared to work long hours for success.
4. Gather a good support of family and friends who can help out physically, financially, with moral support, and networking.
5. Continually experiment with new crops to find out what's new and what's working.



The Daily Journal/Mike Voss

A worker harvests Italian parsley in a field at Deer Creek Organics in St. Anne.

Farm to fork: Tomato, avocado and corn salad

Avocado, Tomato and Corn Salad

From www.the-girl-who-ate-everything.com

- 2 cups cooked corn, fresh or frozen
- 1-2 avocados, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 cup finely diced red onion

Dressing:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lime zest
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Combine the corn, avocado, tomatoes and onion in a large glass bowl. Mix together the dressing ingredients in another bowl, pour over the salad, and gently toss to mix. Chill salad for an hour or two to let flavors blend.



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