

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter June, 2020

Green thumbs up

Self-isolation, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, deprives many of us of our daily routine and responsibilities and having no schedule and no goals to achieve for the day, it has a potentially detrimental effect on our mental state.

Fortunately, there are some activities which many people can engage in, and that may give us a sense of responsibility and a structure to our day.

One of the activities that suddenly exploded in popularity is home gardening.

Apartment-bound horticulturists say that running a home garden provides an escape from reality, gives a tremendous sense of achievement and helps with family bonding. It forces you to slow down and observe nature, how it grows and works. It's therapeutic and on par with meditation.

The uncertainty of the future is hard for people right now, so it is helpful to see something start and grow and see it bearing the fruit of our care and attention, rewarding us in more ways than one.

Gardening skills carry over into our regular lives, with all the rules, time management, using the right tools for the right job, etc.

Research has found that a level of Cortisol – a stress hormone in our body – drops dramatically when we engage in gardening. Also, a separate study has found that breathing in a bacteria naturally occurring in the soil, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, increases levels of “happy hormone” Serotonin and reduces anxiety.

Routine exposure to harmless bacteria in the soil, trains our immune system to ignore benign particles like pollen or skin cells from our pets, preventing allergic reactions.



Indoor gardening is very easy to set up. Most vegetables need at least 6 hours of sunlight, so pick a good spot. Plant seeds in a damp soil and avoid over-watering the soil. Start with small pots and don't plant more than you can handle looking after. Also plant the seeds at different time intervals to ensure a steady supply of the food you've grown.

June is still a good time to start growing tomatoes, peppers, lettuce and peas, as well as a variety of herbs.

In general, there is just a huge benefit from gardening. You get the product; it improves your mental and physical condition and brings an appreciation for nature.

Article by Marek

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons on the net!*

Indoor gardening easy guide!:

<https://www.planetnatural.com/growing-indoors/>

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: Recently, due to the Corona “panic,” we’ve had to shift some of our lessons to the Internet – Skype, Zoom, etc. This move was the only way to sustain lessons for some of our students. So, how was it? The verdict for net-lessons is not good. I can see how “webinars” with a single speaker might work (aside from technical problems, freezing images, scratchy sound, etc), but for two-way conversation lessons, it’s a definite NO from me! Thankfully, we are more-or-less back to normal, back to face-to-face, and that’s a big relief for all of us!

Junko Says: I’ve been tackling the task of making 100% rye bread for a month now. As handmade bread lovers generally say, that’s a difficult task! The yeast doesn’t even make the bread rise! My first 3 loaves were awful; they were almost like blocks of stone. After these experiences I imagined it may require more water to succeed, so I checked the internet. Yes, I found it requires 1.5 times more water, and warm not cold. My 4th loaf came out almost like real pumpernickel!!



Marek Says: With the advent of the Coronavirus, the popularity of UK properties with gardens has soared recently. People are no longer interested in living in cities and densely populated areas, favoring out-of-town houses with ample private space around the premises, even at a price of a longer commute to work and higher costs of ownership. The trend will wither over time, but people will still see the value of having a piece of nature at their doorstep.

Darrin Says: With life seemingly returning to 'normal' and schools throughout Ehime reopening, I must admit I'm a bit sad to see my daughter return to school. We spent a lot of the enforced holidays doing many things together and we made many precious memories. We really enjoyed many visits to Ishite River riding our bikes along the river. It became our favourite place in Matsuyama. There are so many different nooks and crannies to explore.



Mandey dit: La saison des pluies est arrivée. Il est donc temps de réfléchir aux vacances d'été. Toutefois, comment peut-on imaginer nos vacances dans le monde d'après?? Personnellement, j'espère aller à la plage et profiter de l'absence de touristes. N'oubliez pas, il suffit juste de trouver quelque chose qui vous plait. Amusez-vous bien.

ACROSS

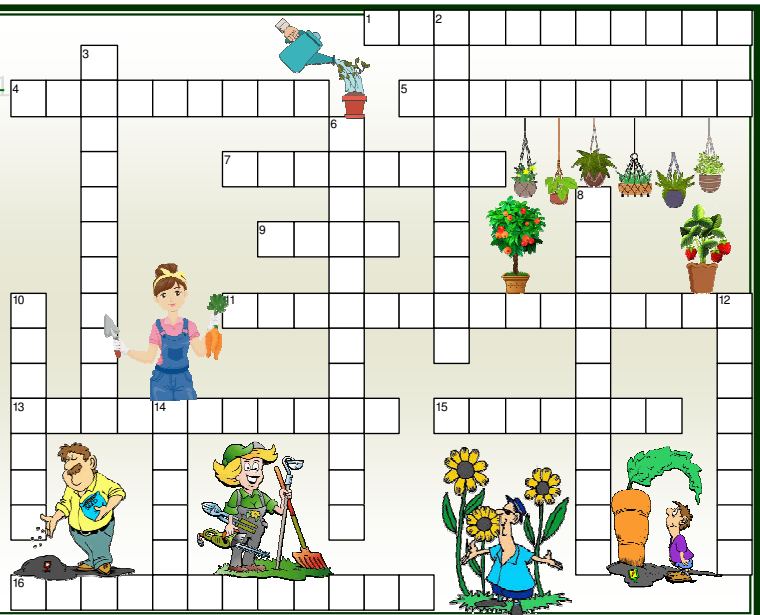
- 1 more than a possibility of becoming actual
- 4 come into existence
- 5 and non- threatening
- 7 stop from having
- 9 slightly wet
- 11 people who cultivate plants
- 13 causing harm or disadvantage
- 15 worry, stress, nervousness
- 16 an expression of gratitude

DOWN

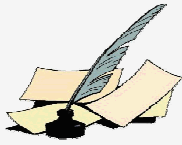
- 2 very large in size, degree, amount, etc.
- 3 to gain success
- 6 in a very impressive manner
- 8 towards curing or restoring health
- 10 a close relationship
- 12 quick without warning
- 14 take no notice of

Play A Game!

Find the answers on P1



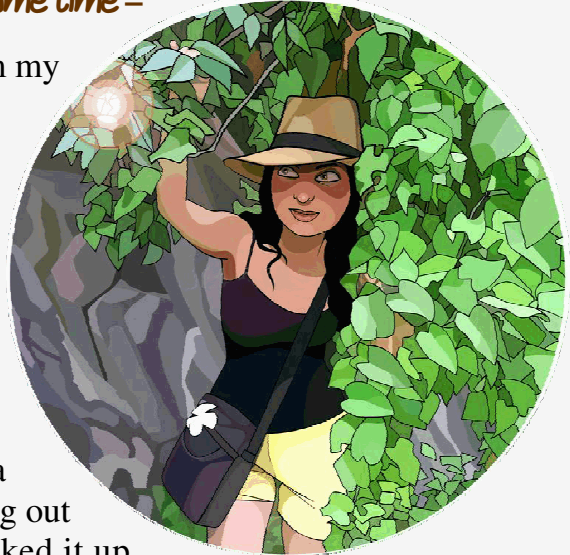
(print version [here](#))



Crossroads Writers' Corner.

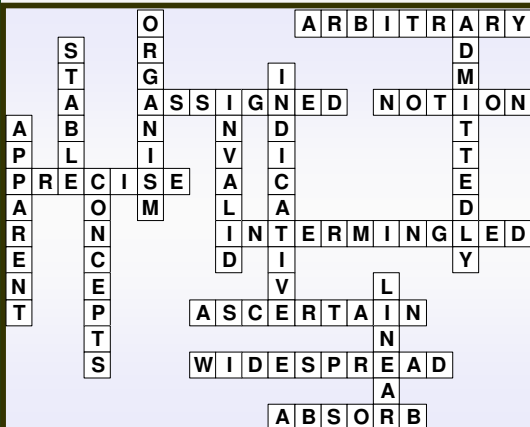
This is a place for you to get creative and get "published!," and...., contribute to our monthly Newsletter, all at the same time –

It has been almost a week since I got separated from my research team. I am lost in the biggest swamp in the world with only a few supplies that were necessary for my research. I've depleted what little food I brought yesterday, and I must find something that would give me energy in order to survive. As I walked around the place, I came across a fallen tree which was half rotten. I cracked and removed the bark of the tree assuming that there would be bugs hiding underneath. My assumption was right, but it wasn't what I had expected. The bug was as big as a person's thumb and there were two tentacles sticking out of what I presumed was its head. I reluctantly picked it up and put it into my mouth. As I chewed, a pungent smell and slimy ooze filled my entire mouth. A strong disgust I've never felt before made my body shiver, but I focused on swallowing the thing. This was no delicacy and I promised myself that I would never eat it ever again.



Story by S(A)2's **Natsuki Fukui**

(answers to last month's puzzle on P3 – 1d, 2d, 3a, 4c, 5d, 6c)



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 2 of any value, form or degree
- 6 appointed or allocated to
- 8 vague idea
- 10 very accurate
- 12 combined into one
- 14 discover, find out with certainty
- 15 widely circulated or distributed
- 16 take in

DOWN

- 1 a living thing
- 3 acknowledged
- 4 resistant to change
- 5 to point out or reveal
- 7 having no truth or legitimacy
- 9 clear
- 11 derived or inferred ideas
- 13 relating to lines



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See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.