HOME AND GARDEN CALENDAR

Toy show

The Bloomfield Hills Toy Show will take place 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 31, at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, 1100 Lone Pine Road at Telegraph in Bloomfield Hills.

Admission is $4 for adults, free for under age 12. Early bird admission, $10, gets you in the night before and before 9 a.m. the day of the event.

Toy dealers from Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana will be displaying items. Vintage tin, die-cast, press-steel, plastic, battery-operated, wind-up, and cast-iron toys will be featured, as well as advertisements, figures and other fine collectibles.

Call (248) 646-1047 for dealer or other information.

Native plant sale

Oakland Land Conservancy will have its fourth annual Spring Native Plant Sale 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 1, at the Pontiac Pancake Shelter, near the Pontiac Library at the southeast corner of Pike and Mill in downtown Pontiac.

Proceeds will benefit the conservancy's land stewardship program and will be matched 50 cents to every dollar through a challenge grant from the Carls Foundation. Admission is free.

The plants are all native genotypes and are from Wildtype Nursery in Mason, Mich.

Call Oakland Land Conservancy at (248) 601-2816 for information and a plant list. Co-sponsors of the event are the city of Pontiac, Clinton River Watershed Council and Wild Ones Natural Landscapers (Oakland County Chapter).

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Dryers need continued maintenance

Consumers frequently ask questions.

One writes: "Our G.E. heavy duty large capacity electric dryer (Model No. Dde5100Ralwh) takes forever to get hot now and sometimes not at all."

Appliance Doctor

Joe Gagnon

Another consumer asked a related question: "I have a Hotpoint gas dryer that is about 10 years old. It seems to take a lot longer to dry the clothes now. Is it worth repairing? Can I do it myself?"

On this subject of clothes dryers I must tell you that I receive many hundreds of inquiries just like the samples above.

Dryers are probably the most dangerous major home appliance in the American home. In just the past 20 years, we know that over 500,000 house fires have resulted from an improperly operating clothes dryer.

This high number should make each and every one of you aware of potential dangers. The two questions asked are a sure sign that something is wrong and indicate that the matter should be looked into.

Another sure sign – and even more dangerous – is a clothes dryer which starts to make sounds which are not normal, such as screeching or thumping noises.

More often than not, problems are created by a dryer which is not vented properly or the unit has a plugged up vent line, which can quickly accumulate a lot of lint inside the dryer.

When this happens, you have all the makings of a serious potential dryer fire.

With the spring weather on us, we find bird's nests and little critters getting inside the vent line due to the lack of a vent flapper or the vent stays open because dirt has accumulated on the hinges.

You as a homeowner have a responsibility for cleaning these areas and making sure the dryer cabinet cavity is not filled with lint. Many service shops will show you how to take the cabinet apart for easy cleaning with a vacuum cleaner.

Screeching and thumping noises usually indicate a moving part which is becoming worn and needs replacing.

I caution you to not wait any longer if this is the case.

Some dryers are known to accumulate lint right next to the electric heating elements, which, if left unchecked, can result in an almost certain fire.

You can take a leaf blower, set it on low, open the dryer door and blow out the inside drum.

Be sure to set the dryer for the "air-dry" cycle, then turn on the dryer for 10 minutes. A lot of this lint will be blown to the outside.

I believe that only 20 percent of homeowners clean out the lint filter every time they dry a load of clothes. Very few people ever clean it with soap and water.

An unclean lint filter means extra energy is consumed for each load.

Lint builds up quickly inside the dryer's cavity, the motor can overheat and all moving components receive extra wear and tear.

Let me assure you that you will be spending money on repairs or a new dryer way before the unit reaches normal obsolescence.

Think about how many lives we could save if everyone read and followed the advice mentioned here in this newspaper. It's a fact that many people die each year from dryer fires and a sad fact it is.

It is a simple thing to keep the dryer clean and operating safely with just a little do-it-yourself maintenance.

Remember, too, that most homeowners turn on the clothes dryer and go outside the home or fall asleep for the evening.

A fire ignited inside the dryer is very quick and spreads faster because the blower may still be operating and helping to spread the flame. (You can't smell or feel it if you're not near it.)

Another potential fire hazard are the items placed near or on top of the dryer. Please keep these areas clean of anything that can add fuel to the fire.

In my many years in the appliance industry, I have seen homes burnt to the ground, talked with people who have suffered severe burns and felt the tragedy in other people's hearts.

I have always been critical of manufacturers of these products and will continue to be until they do what I know they can do: Build a clothes dryer which will warn or extinguish or anything that will prevent this happening.

If you should ever have a dryer question, please call me anytime.

The number is at the end of this column.

Stay tuned.

Joe Gagnon is host of Ask The Handyman on Infinity Radio AM 1270 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays and Sundays. You can hear his tips on WWJ 950 on weekdays. You can call him on his show at 1-248-356-1270.

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DOLLS

FROM PAGE C1

childhood toys, Napier said. "It's the same type of feeling," Napier said. "You're protecting your history."

With the price of collectibles, you can buy items back from your youth. "It's really the discovery of the doll that adds to the collection," Napier said.

Collectibles vary in styles, ranging from the early wooden to celluloid, to glazed porcelain, hard plastic and vinyls, among others.

The doll's clothes also reflect the time period of the doll, Napier said. "The clothes really were indicative of the styles of the time," Napier said.

The doll luncheon on June 1 and show and sale on June 8 are ways to experience doll collecting. Napier expects about 130 dealer tables at the show on June 8 with about 100 different dolls at each table. Doll appraisals will be available for free at the luncheon and for $3 at the doll show. The lunch is open to the public. The luncheon focuses on fashions in the late 1800s when bordellos were popular, so the theme is "My Auntie's Scanties." Pam Yockey will be the guest speaker.

Lunch will include two free doll appraisals for anyone attending. A souvenir doll, door prizes and centerpieces will be included. At the doll show on June 8, thousands of antique, vintage and modern collectible dolls and bears, doll clothes, books and accessories will be available at 130 tables of merchandise. Napier also encourages anyone interested in doll collecting to attend the Renaissance Doll Club's monthly meetings. The group meets at 10 a.m. on the first Tuesday of the month at Busch's Market, on the southeast corner of Six Mile and Newburgh, in Livonia.

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