



Photo courtesy, Esther Kim

“Weed Dating” is a wholesome event for single people who aren’t interested in the bar scene and are curious about trying something new.

Weed Dating: Singles Meet Over Weeds

At first glance, throwing a “Weed Dating” event appears to be a sneaky way to get gardens weeded for free. The trend sweeping across the country is a gardening spin on “Speed Dating” where singles gather and spend a few minutes with one person before moving on to the next person.

But it’s really a wholesome event for people who aren’t interested in the bar scene and curious about trying something new, says Molly Rockamann, Founding Director of EarthDance Farms in Ferguson, Mo.

“We thought it would be a fun way to get people to the farm who may not be interested in coming out for a normal volunteer day,” she says. EarthDance is a nonprofit that preserves the historic Mueller 14-acre farm in the midst of an urban area that has been organic since the 1800’s. It offers apprenticeships, classes, sells produce through CSA’s and farmer’s markets and offers a variety of programs for the public.

“Don’t plan this if free weeding is your only reason,” she warns, because planning takes a lot of time. Her goal was to create a fun social event and to get people to learn about the farm. Three EarthDance staff were present to run each weed dating event: Rockamann, Volunteer Coordinator Matt Lebon, and Marketing Coordinator Esther Kim, to pull off successfully.

EarthDance staff organized participants by age groups, as Kim indicated on their name tags with icons of different gardening symbols. Every five minutes, Lebon rang a cowbell and participants moved to talk to a new person in their group. The last turn was a “wild card” for people to talk to anyone they wanted.

The weeding part of the event only lasted an hour. Rockamann also included a farm tour before weeding and a BYOB happy hour afterward for people to socialize.

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GOT PLANS TO SELL? GIZMOPLANS.COM MAKES IT EASY TO BUY & SELL ALL TYPES OF DO IT YOURSELF PLANS

Making Money Off Your Ideas

Inventors often tell us they have do-it yourself plans they’d like to sell. Now there’s a way to make money selling your plans. Brian Luoma recently told us about a website, www.GizmoPlans.com, that he and his father, Gene Luoma, developed. It’s a one stop shop for all types of build-it-yourself plans.

You can easily list your detailed plans on the website with photos and videos all at no cost to you. Update your plans at any time, its like your own individual web page that you are in control of.

The website collects an agreed upon percent for each set of plans sold. The buyer pays with a credit card and downloads them onto his computer.

“People from all over the world can look at the DIY PLANS you put together,” says Luoma. “We’re set up for all major credit cards, and we’re able to receive international funds. The only time GizmoPlans.com gets paid is when a set of your plans are sold. Another advantage is there are no mailing costs to you or the customer who’s buying your plans.”

Luoma says just about any type of plan can be uploaded and sold at the site. “Metal fabrication plans; alternative energy plans; plans for a piece of equipment; or even a wood craft pattern. The types of plans or ideas that can be sold are limited only by your imagination.” Any type of plan that

can solve a problem or save someone money is always a good fit. Luoma states, “The more photos and detailed information you have, the more people are likely to buy.”

“You can also place YouTube videos right on your web page,” he says. Gizmo-plans.com was started around 2009 and has buyers and sellers from all over the world signing up to buy and sell everything from plans for teardrop trailers, 4 wheel ATV’s, homemade smokers, lifting device plans like Jib Cranes, and many more too numerous to mention. He also sells plans for his own inventions, including a home-built concrete mixer, wheel crusher, concrete forms, gantry cranes, bridge cranes and numerous other equipment.

Luoma reviews all plans and sales pages to make sure they’re thorough and complete. “I look at each plan and sales page after it’s uploaded and sometimes make suggestions to customers on what to include to help sell their plans.” Another great addition to the website is the “Gadget Gallery”, added for people who don’t have plans but want to show “what they built” for free to inspire others with their unique homemade projects.

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