

## ask MARY BETH

### Cleaning fluid will remove ink

**Q:** I got ballpoint pen ink on a favorite sweat shirt. How can I remove it? I've heard about using hair spray to remove ink, but I don't know how that works.



MARY BETH  
BRECKENRIDGE

- Maureen Segal  
Wadsworth

**A:** The old advice of using hair spray to remove ink is a perfect example of why home remedies aren't always the best. Hair spray formulations differ, as does the makeup of fabrics. While the alcohol in hair spray may remove the ink, some hair spray brands contain ingredients that can leave their own stain or remove dye from some fabrics.

The Soap and Detergent Association recommends you use either denatured alcohol or cleaning fluid instead. Denatured alcohol is available where paint is sold. Cleaning fluid, sometimes called spot remover, is usually available at stores that carry a good selection of laundry products, or ask a dry cleaner.

Use one of these two methods:

- Sponge the area around the stain - but not the stain itself - with the alcohol or

cleaning fluid. Then place the stain face down on clean white paper towels. Apply the fluid to the back of the stain so the ink bleeds onto the paper towels. Replace the towels frequently until the stain is gone.

- Or, place the stained portion of the fabric over the mouth of a jar or glass. While holding the fabric taut, drip the fluid through the stain so the ink drops into the container.

After using either method, rinse the fabric thoroughly and launder. You might want to add a type of bleach that's safe for the fabric to the wash. Don't put the garment into the dryer until the stain is gone completely.

Have a question about home maintenance, decorating or gardening? Akron Beacon Journal home writer Mary Beth Breckenridge will find answers for the queries that are chosen to appear in the paper. To submit a question, call her at 330-996-3756, or send e-mail to [mbrecken@thebeaconjournal.com](mailto:mbrecken@thebeaconjournal.com).

## the SHELF

### Book offers guide from seed to table

Some books will teach you how to grow a vegetable garden. Some books will tell you how to cook the fruit of the harvest. But it's a rare book that guides you through the entire process, from seed packet to serving dish.

*Grocery Gardening: Planting, Preparing and Preserving Fresh Food* does.

The book represents the work of four people who share a love of gardening and food: lead author Jean Ann Van Krevelen and collaborators Amanda Thomsen, Robin

Ripley and Teresa O'Connor. Interestingly, even though they'd never met in person, they managed to share and organize their collective wisdom in just 60 days.

The book covers the basics of gardening, offers recipes for the fruits, vegetables and herbs that might be grown in backyard gardens and teaches how to preserve that yield to extend the enjoyment of the harvest. Having all that information can help gardeners choose crops that are more likely to grow well in their gardens and more likely to be eaten.

*Grocery Gardening* is published by Cool Springs Press and is priced at \$19.95 in softcover.

- Mary Beth Breckenridge

## what's NEW

### Dog-e-Minder can track pets

Your dog can't tell you the last time it was fed, but Dog-e-Minder can.

With the press of a button, the device records the time and date when the pet is walked, fed or medicated. It also stores your dog's name and your phone number, so it doubles as an ID tag.

The device can be attached to a key chain or collar and has a waterproof casing that the manufacturer says will stand up to swimming and pet play.

Dog-e-Minder is available in four colors (black, blue, pink and red) and can be ordered for \$19.95 plus shipping at <http://www.dogeminder.com>.

- Mary Beth Breckenridge

