

May, 2016



THE MASTER GARDENER™



Josephine County OSU Master Gardener™ Association Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

By Terry Ruiter, President



As the gardening season arrives full on, I'm reminded what a good friend ibuprofen can be! All of my old garden beds need to be topped with new compost. Most of my irrigation lines seem to need replacing. My planning over the winter and early spring is under review. The enticements of the seed and plant catalogues sit on my driveway, if they are not securely in their beds. These careful selections are augmented, of course, by spur-of-the-moment selections at our local garden centers...

The results of all these activities is the work that is the best part of gardening and a surefire reminder of muscles, tendons, and nerves that have not been used much since the garden was put to bed in November!

May also brings activities for members of the Josephine County Master Gardeners Association, beginning with an ice cream social on the 1st in appreciation of the effort put into the Spring Garden Fair. The association will provide ice cream, members should bring their favorite thing to be topped (cake, pie, brownies...) or their favorite ice cream toppings (fruit, chocolate, caramel, sprinkles, pretzels...). If you have an interest in auctioning garden items, please let Sybil Longinotti and Jeffrey Bellamy know. This should be a relaxed and fun afternoon as a thanks for work on the Spring Garden Fair. Lots of effort moved a lot of beautiful plants into the community.

The May board meeting will be held at 9:30 on 3 May in the Auditorium. All members are invited and encouraged to attend and find something to be involved in.

The Young Master Gardeners and K-12 school garden programs (Continued on page 4)

Inside this issue:

<i>Many Classes in May</i>	2
<i>Treasurer's Report</i>	3
<i>Garden Ponderings</i>	3

PERENNIAL MUSINGS

Please come to the board meeting to find out the results of the plant sale and look for the article in next month's newsletter for a more detailed explanation.

Jean and Joan aka J&J

Special points of interest:

- 2016 Elected Officers
- 2016 Appointed Coordinators
- Calendar
- Editor Notes
- Birthdays

MANY CLASSES IN MAY

All classes are held at the OSU Extension Auditorium at 215 Ringuette St., Grants Pass

Classes eligible for Master Gardener recertification and Free to MGs (except for materials fees if needed).

To register: contact the Josephine County Extension Office, 215 Ringuette St., Grants Pass, call 541-476-6613, email: josephine.extension@oregonstate.edu.

Thursday, May 12, **WaterWise Gardening**, Amy Jo Detweiler, OSU Horticulturist from 5:30 - 7:00 pm.

Thursday, May 12, **Creating a Firewise Landscape**, Amy Jo Detweiler, OSU Horticulturist from 7:30 - 9:00 pm.

Saturday, May 14, **Permaculture Basics Workshop**, Karen Taylor & Melanie Mindlin, Siskiyou Permaculture from 10:00 am to Noon.

Friday, May 20, **Plants for Making Baskets**, Diane Wickstrom, Master Gardener, 10:30 - 12:30 pm.

Saturday, May 21, **Gardening the Indigenous Way Field Trip**, Scott Goode, Nourishing Systems, 9:00 - 12:30 pm.



STATEMENT OF POLICY

Information provided by the Josephine County Master Gardener Newsletter is accurate to the best of our knowledge. However, readers must assume all responsibility for their own actions based on information found in this publication. If, and when, a company or product is named in an article, it is not an endorsement from the Master Gardeners, Josephine County, or the OSU Extension Service. Alternate gardening methods are sometimes presented for your information and consideration, but they are not necessarily the only approach to gardening problems.

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EDITOR NOTES

Please submit notices and articles to the editor, Ruth Reel.

You can always e-mail to the editor:

reelsox9@gmail.com

Or mail to: 3990 Galice Rd., Merlin, OR 97532.

Or call at: 541-479-7702

Please let the editor know if you have changed your address, phone # or e-mail address.

Correct email address for Phylis McIntosh: pjmontheriver@gmail.com and

Byron Coulter: byronc6@outlook.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

By John Etchells, Treasurer

Cash and savings totals: As of 03/31/16

Checking: \$10,557

Savings: \$31,371

CD: \$3,615

Total Assets: \$45,543**

Total Income: \$5,305. This comes from: Member Purchases (aprons & T-shirts) (\$2,547), Plant Sales (Annuals, Perennials & Trees) (\$2,156), Dues (\$300), Spring Garden Fair (Vendors) (\$140), Seeds of Spring (\$138), Plant Clinic (Garden Guides) (\$20), and interest (\$4).

Total Expenses: \$3,361. This comes from: State OMGA Dues (\$1,680), Seeds of Spring (Advertising) (\$461), Annual OSU Copy Cost Expense (\$400), Membership Directory (\$290), Awards Banquet (\$200), Plant Clinic (Insects)

(\$196), Newsletter (\$44), Swingers (\$39), Perennials (\$35), Square Processing Fees (\$11), Spring Garden Fair (\$5).

**These figures are based on reconciling checks and deposits to the 03/31/16 bank statements.

**Reminder - When shopping at the Grange Co-Op & Fred Meyer Rewards Programs, don't forget to have them credit your purchases to Jo.Co. Master Gardeners.



GARDEN PONDERINGS BY KAREN PLEASANT, MG COORDINATOR

With Earth Day Celebrations over for another year and taking care of the earth on our minds I wanted to highlight some alternative gardening terms and techniques that people are often curious and confused about: organic, sustainable, biodynamic, forest farming and permaculture. To me you can't talk about any of these alternative gardening techniques without first discussing ecology and each of these gardening systems incorporate concepts of ecology that are designed to work with, rather than against, nature in order to sustain the ecosystem of a garden. Let's start with the basic definition of **ecology**, which is the relationship between living things and their environment. All the animals and plants in an area (the **community**) and their surrounding (the **environment**) comprise an **ecosystem**. Thus, gardens are ecosystems! Even if you don't consider yourself an alternative gardener you most likely incorporate some elements of these ecological gardening techniques into your garden practices. If you want to take

your gardening practices to the next level you might consider incorporating more aspects of one or several of these alternative gardening practices into your own garden: **organic, sustainable, biodynamic, forest gardening (farming), or permaculture**. They all have several unique attributes that set them apart from the other systems, but one thing they have in common is that they involve working with the garden as an ecosystem and being good stewards of the land.

I enjoyed learning about the principles of ecology while in college, and one concept of ecology that really stayed with me is that "everything is connected to everything else" or in other words, something that happens to one part of an ecosystem effects all of the other parts. As gardeners we experience this theory on varying levels as we work in our gardens every year. The kind of biotic factors (living organisms) in a given area is often the result of abiotic (nonliving) conditions of that area. Changes that occur in biotic (plants, animals, bacteria) mem-

Gardening in Eco-Friendly Ways

bers of an ecosystem, together with their abiotic (rocks, climate, sunlight) factors, such as a rise in temperature, can distort the natural balance of the interaction and potentially harm or destroy the ecosystem. This means the absence of one member or one abiotic factor can affect all parties of the ecosystem in your garden too. There are many biotic organisms and abiotic factors that determine the effectiveness of your gardening efforts.

As OSU soil scientist James Cassidy expounded in his soils class for us last fall: it all begins with the soil. The biodiversity of this below-ground environment is the most complex habitat on the earth and soil drives the garden ecosystem. James taught us that the answer to any

(Continued on page 4)

2016 ELECTED OFFICERS

- President Terry Ruitter
- 1st Vice President Jeffery Bellamy
- 2nd Vice President.....Diane Wickstrom
- Secretary Pat Etchells
- OMGA State Rep..... Linda Dean
- OMGA Alt. State Rep..... Jim Porter
- Past President.....John Farias

APPOINTED COORDINATORS

- Treasurer.....John Etchells
- Green House ManagerPeter Pernarelli
- Plant Clinic Wilma Christian
- SOS Garden Seminar..... Terry Ruitter
- CommunicationsChris MacGregor
- Spring Garden Fair.....Sybil Longinotti
- Newsletter Editor.....Ruth Reel
- Hospitality Chairman.....Breezy/Mark
.....Schallheim
- Special Projects.....Sybil Longinotti
- Publicity.....Art Reel
- Historian.....Nancy Pyle/ Linda Price
- County Fair.....Charlie Newsom
- Growers Market.....Hank Smith
- K-12 Program.....Lilly Pattee
- Mentor Committee.....Joan Foley
- Volunteer Hours..... Karen Pleasant
- Computer Coordinator..... Steve Schoen
- Webmaster Pat Etchells/Darcy Heater
- PerennialsJean Kitchen/Joan Foley
- Young Master Gardeners.....Cally Baker/
..... Megan Beasley
- Membership.....Ruth Reel
- Master Gardener Coord.....Karen Pleasant

(Continued from page 1 President's Note)

will continue through the month. If you haven't seen the school gardens, you should take some time to check them out. Each has its own look, but they are all wonderful places...and all could use more help!

The Plant Clinic, both at the OSU Extension Office and the Growers Market, is in full swing. Questions have been coming in at an amazing clip!

While the greenhouse production was finished with the Spring Garden Fair, the perennial program will continue through November. This program makes sure we have plants available for our sales in June and September. Jean and Joan can use help every Tuesday between 9:00 and 11:00 in the coldframe with cuttings, repotting, watering and trimming. It's a great way to learn about propagating perennial plants and kibitz with other gardeners.

While there is much to do with the master gardeners, May also gives plenty of time to enjoy our own gardens. It may be a good time to stock up on some ibuprofen as you do!

(Continued from page 3 Garden Ponderings)

question is organic matter! If we have healthy soil we will have a more productive garden. Poor soil diminishes the life within the soil and dominoes into a less productive garden. Each of the alternative gardening techniques have enhancing the soil as one of their core principles.

Eco-friendly principles and ideals were first espoused in the late 1980's in terms of sustainable agriculture. These practices were established as movements for self-sufficiency and small-scale farming based on a holistic systems approach and ecological principles. Included here would be: organic gardening, sustainable gardening, biodynamic gardening, forest gardening, permaculture and others.

The first alternative practice, **ORGANIC GARDENING**, is a form of agriculture that developed from a desire to improve soil quality and the environment, and from a strong rejection of the use of synthetic chemicals and fertilizers in agriculture. It relies on naturally-sourced fertilizers such as compost, manure, green manure, and bone meal and places emphasis on techniques such as crop rotation and companion planting. Biological pest control, mixed cropping, and fostering natural insect predators are encouraged. The goal is to enhance biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity.

Organic gardening and the use of native plants are integral to another alternative gardening practice (Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4 Garden Ponderings)

called **SUSTAINABLE GARDENING**. A sustainable garden is an organic garden taken a step further. Sustainability isn't a commodity as much as it is a lifestyle. It has immediate as well as long-term rewards. Generally, sustainability is forward-thinking, looking ahead to secure a future for you and yours, getting things to last, making things better than you've found them. When one chooses to preserve and protect resources, to make as little negative impact on the earth as possible, to nurture the planet without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, one has chosen the path of sustainability. Sustainable gardening is one of the most important and effective sustainability practices that we can follow. Its practice and benefits include respecting, and improving the soils, using native plants, shrubs and trees to create beautiful landscapes, feeding one's family fresh, organically-grown fruits, berries and vegetables and utilizing every renewable resource that nature provides, from rain water to gravel.

Sustainability not only embraces organic gardening methods but conservation of resources as well. Sustainability often mimics natural process, utilizing what nature gives us with as little supplement as we can manage. When supplementing natural process is called for, it's done with as little impact as possible; substituting beneficial insects for pesticides or drip irrigation for sprinkler watering. In short, sustainable gardening is a low maintenance, eco-friendly method of growing, harvesting and using a resource - in this case our very earth - so that the resource is minimally depleted, easily restored and not permanently damaged.

Here is a list of broad sustainable gardening principles and practices that will, together or individually, move us closer to the goal of gardening sustainability. Note that the practices are interrelated, that one influences the other; that any two practices result in benefits to a third or more. Not only will the practices here reward future generations, they'll make our gardens healthier and produce bigger yields right now. 1) **Composting** has the most impact of any sustainable gardening practice. Composting yard and garden wastes means less material going to the landfill and more organic material for your soil. Composting helps soils to 2) **conserve water**. Water is precious. It needs to be protected for quality as well as preserved. The sustainable gardener protects water quality by not using herbicides or pesticides that might contaminate it as it percolates through the soil and heads back to the water supply. Sustainable gardeners control runoff with permeable soils.

They use mulch and ground covers to enable soils to hold water, so it does not evaporate or drain away quickly. They design "rain gardens" utilizing terraces, holding pools and raised beds to collect rainwater, allowing it to soak slowly back into the soil. The goal is to use only the water nature provides, in the form of rain and runoff, achieved by harvesting it and storing it until needed. Where rainwater collection is difficult or impossible, the sustainable gardener uses direct water methods—a watering can—or some form of drip or direct irrigation to cut down on evaporation loss.

Nature has designed the perfect plant for your micro-climate: the one that is native to your area. Sustainable gardeners grow 3) **native, climate-appropriate plants**. When growing vegetables, you already choose plants that mature during your area's growing season. Making sure vegetables are hardy and high-yielding inside all your area's climatic, prevailing soil and elevation conditions means you use less soil additives and supplements, less water and less overall effort to see them succeed. 4) **Seed saving** brings you more in-tune with your plants and assures that the seed you'll plant next season has done well this season. Start with the easiest seeds to save: peas, beans, peppers, tomatoes and work from there. Harvest flower seed taken from dried flowers. Scout fields and woodlands for harvest-able native plants and grasses. Learn to identify weeds and invasive plants to prevent accidentally importing them to your landscape. Few experiences are as gratifying as watching seed you grew, harvested and cured, sprout the following season.

When sustainable gardeners 5) **design their gardens and landscapes**, they consider all resource-conserving principles to protect their soil and plants. They use soil-protective, crop-rotating, water-conserving practices. Sustainable design considers where plants are placed. Shade-loving plants are placed in the shadow of tall sun-loving plants, sun-loving plants are planted in places with the best exposure to light. Water-loving plants are grown where moisture collects, trailing plants are grown over terraces. Companion planting is an easy way to control pests and encourage growth.

BIODYNAMIC GARDENING is a form of alternative gardening very similar to organic gardening with the goal to "restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony". It treats soil fertility, plant growth, and livestock care as ecologically interrelated tasks, emphasizing spiritual and mystical perspectives. Biodynamics was the first modern organic

(Continued on page 6)

agriculture and was made popular in 1924 by philosopher Rudolf Steiner in Germany where half of the world's biodynamic agriculture is still widely practiced today. Methods unique to the biodynamic approach include its treatment of animals, crops, and soil as a single system; an emphasis from its beginnings on local production and distribution systems; its use of traditional and development of new local breeds and varieties; and the use of an astrological sowing and planting calendar. Diversity in crop rotation and perennial planting is required; no annual crop can be planted in the same field for more than two years in succession. Bare tillage year round is prohibited so land needs to maintain adequate green cover.

FOREST GARDENING (farming) is a low maintenance sustainable plant-based food production system based on woodland ecosystems, incorporating fruit and nut trees, shrubs, herbs, vines and perennial vegetables which have yields directly useful to humans. Making use of companion planting, these can be intermixed to grow in a succession of layers, to build a woodland habitat. The three main products from a forest garden are fruit, nuts and green leafy vegetables. Intercropping is used to develop a fruit orchard into an edible landscape consisting of the following seven layers:

1. **Canopy layer** consisting of the original mature fruit trees.
2. **Low-tree layer** of smaller nut and fruit trees on dwarfing root stocks.
3. **Shrub layer** of fruit bushes such as currants and berries.
4. **Herbaceous layer** of perennial vegetables and herbs.
5. **Rhizosphere** (underground) dimension of plants grown for their roots and tubers.
6. **Ground cover layer** of edible plants that spread horizontally.
7. **Vertical layer** of vines and climbers.

The seven-layer system has since been adopted as a

common **PERMACULTURE** design element. Established by Australians, permaculture is one of the most influential of the alternative gardening practices as both a design system and a loosely defined philosophy or lifestyle ethic.

Permaculture design seeks to minimize waste, human labor, and energy input by building systems with maximal benefits between design elements to achieve a high level of synergy. The three core tenets of permaculture are: care for the earth, care for the people, and return of surplus (returning waste back into the system to recycle into usefulness). Layers are one of the tools used to design functional ecosystems that are both sustainable and of direct benefit to humans. A mature ecosystem has a huge number of relationships between its component parts: trees, understory, ground cover, soil, fungi, insects and animals. Because plants grow to different heights, a diverse community of life is able to grow in a relatively small space, as the vegetation occupies different layers. Domesticated animals are often incorporated into site design.

Knowledge is the best tool to practice sustainability and take care of the earth. Humans use natural resources faster than they can be replenished. We can all do our part to help. How you maintain your garden or landscape can have important positive or negative effects on the health of the soil, air, water and vegetation that we all use. As Master Gardeners you are privileged to be able to pass on your knowledge to family, friends, neighbors and the community at large. I hope this article will whet your appetite to learn more about these complex gardening techniques that often overlap in practice. Organic gardening, sustainable gardening, biodynamic gardening, forest gardening (farming), and permaculture are all sustainable gardening techniques that will help you to conserve and protect our natural resources. If you incorporate the aspects that intrigue you into your garden, you can become an environmental steward in your own backyard. A quote from my all-time favorite book, *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss, "unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not" sums up my sentiments about how what each of us does as a part of the whole (earth) can have a big impact in the long run for future generations, which leads me back to one of the prime tenets of ecology: "everything is connected to everything else". What we do matters, so think globally, but act locally, even if it is just in your own backyard garden.

May 2016

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1	2	3 <i>9:30, MG Meeting</i>	4	5 <i>National Day of Prayer Cinco de Mayo</i>	6	7 <i>Growers Market</i>
8 <i>Mother's Day</i>	9	10 <i>Perennial Tuesday</i>	11	12 <i>Water Wise Gardening & Creating a Firewise Landscape Classes</i>	13	14 <i>Permaculture Basics Workshop Growers</i>
15	16	17 <i>VOTE! Perennial Tuesday</i>	18	19	20 <i>Plants for Marking Baskets Class Newsletter Deadline</i>	21 <i>Field Trip Growers Market</i>
22	23	24 <i>Perennial Tuesday</i>	25	26	27	28 <i>Growers Market</i>
29	30 <i>Memorial Day</i>	31 <i>Perennial Tuesday</i>				

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to Angie Bifano-Sokol (8), Marlene Ryther (11), John Coleman (12), Joan Foley (15), Craig Ingram (16), Pam Barnett (19), Pattye Ingram (23), Jeana Schorr (25), Ruth Reel (27), Karren Striplin, (28), Laurel DeWolf (29), Sybil Longinotti (31).

And **special wishes** to Gordon Hoefer (7), who will turn 90!!



OSU Extension Service, Master Gardener™ Association - Josephine County, Oregon, 541-476-6613

Our email address is: josephinemg@oregonstate.edu

Our Web Site: <http://www.jocomastergardeners.com>

Read me NOW!



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