



# Garden Thymes

Coos County Master Gardeners™  
Myrtle Point, OR 97458

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Oregon State University Extension Service

## President's Message: "Change and Challenge"

The year 2009 brings us many changes and challenges. We have a change in our national presidency, our Oregon U.S. senator, our Coos County commissioner, our OSU Extension Master Gardener Coordinator and, of course, the president of the Coos County Master Gardeners.

With change also comes challenge. Our current world and national events have propelled most of us into new and uncharted waters. We have the opportunity to meet these new challenges in our daily lives by the choices we make. Every day we make choices in what we do, what we eat, how we live, and how we react.

New challenges provide us, as Master Gardeners, with new opportunities. We can make a difference in the lives of those around us and throughout our county. Because you are reading this, you are — or are soon to be — a Master Gardener or have a special interest in gardening. Our gardening interest and expertise give us the opportunity to offer advice, encouragement, and education to others around us. We can volunteer at our Plant Clinics at the Extension Office, at the Seminar, plant sale, farmers' market, community garden, and county fair. In our interactions with the general public we have the opportunity to encourage and foster an interest in sustainable gardening and related programs. These positive relationships are, I believe, the most important and valuable aspect of our entire Master Gardener program. It actually is all about service and helping others enjoy and understand the values of gardening.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, I had the privilege of helping present almost \$3,000 from the Coos County Master Gardeners to five Coos County elementary schools to begin or increase their school garden programs. What a treat it was to have the children come to the front to receive their certificates and checks, shake my hand, and be so excited about their future gardens. All those long hours of Master Gardeners growing plants for the Plant Sale and working on the Plant Sale made this possible.

I want to thank Steven Hennessey and his group of officers for the fine work they gave us the past two years. Steven could be quiet and modest but he was always there and knew what was important, rising to every occasion with dignity and charm.

Most of all, we want to give a big, hearty thank you and best wishes for the future to Tracy Martz. Tracy has been with Coos County since 2004 and during this time it has been a pleasure to see her develop and expand the 4-H/MG Extension programs. We will miss her constant enthusiasm, bright smile and "can do attitude" but wish her well in Douglas County. We welcome Kim Phillips, Tracy's replacement, and look forward to working with her.

So, let's start this year with the resolve to rise to the challenges and opportunities presented to us through the Master Gardener Program and "go forth and do good."

**Blair Holman**, Coos County Master Gardener President

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## **Message from Kim**

Dear Master Gardeners,

I have met a large number of you because of my involvement in the 2009 Master Gardener Training. The Coos County Master Gardeners are a great group of people and I am excited to meet and get to know all of you.

Let me tell a little about myself. I am new to Coos County. I moved here in August to take the Bio Science Research Tech position for the Coos County OSU Extension Service. Since then I've been working closely with Linda White on a number of her commercial horticulture research projects. With Tracy moving on to a position at the Douglas County Extension, an opportunity presented itself for me to become further involved in Extension activities by coordinating the Master Gardener program under the supervision of Linda. My position at the Coos County Extension is now two-fold. I'll be the research technician for the natural resource program areas (horticulture, forestry, and livestock), as well as the Master Gardener Coordinator. I certainly am not having any problem keeping busy!

I am excited to be so active in so many aspects of Extension, especially the Master Gardener program because gardening is a passion of mine. When I am not at work, I am busy planning or working in my vegetable garden. Please feel free to stop by my office and say hi. I'm next-door to the Plant Clinic.

**Kim Phillips**

8th Annual Garden Seminar

## **FERTILIZE YOUR MIND**

### ***The Dirt on Backyard Gardening***

In the Hales Center at SOCC, March 28, 2009, 9 - 4

Zoë Ida Bradbury speaks on "Hungry for Homegrown: Putting Local Food on the Table" at 9:00 am

Classes all day

- ♣ Organic Vegetable Gardening Year Round ♣ Drip Irrigation
- ♣ Tomatoes ♣ Dehydrating Foods ♣ Cheese Making ♣ Herbs
- ♣ Soils and Compost ♣ Edible Gardening in Containers & Small Spaces
- ♣ Raising Chickens in a Small Garden ♣ Attracting Beneficial Insects

If you have not already registered for the day just arrive between 8 and 9 am to get signed in and choose your classes.



## 2009 Goals for Coos County Master Gardeners

At our January 13<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting, we discussed five goals to challenge ourselves in 2009. These goals are:



**To increase our Plant Sale profits to \$10,000.** Last year we raised almost \$8,000, so \$10,000 is certainly achievable. We won't increase prices to reach this goal. Instead, we will increase sales by raising more plants, especially tomatoes and vegetables. These sold well last year and customers requested more. We need everyone to be involved in the growing and nurturing of plants so we can attain our goal. Remember, this is our only fundraiser for the year and it provides the funds for all the programs we like to do, i.e., scholarships, school garden grants, Growing Yer Grub, and many others. *(May 16 & 17)*

**To increase our Spring Garden Seminar attendance to 150.** Last year we had almost 125 attendees so getting 150 folks there this year should be attainable. To do this we need to attend ourselves **and** to encourage our neighbors, fellow workers, and friends to go. We might even find more folks interested in gardening! *(March 28<sup>th</sup>)*

**To raise our Master Gardener Trainee graduation rate to 80%.** We have a wonderful 2009 trainee class of 20 this year. They are all involved with their training classes and we have committed mentors working with them to help them through any "rough spots". When class is over, we will need the commitment of all our trainees and mentors to ensure the trainees each put in

60 hours of volunteer work before October 31st. It would be a wonderful sight to see 20 trainees waiting to receive their much coveted Master Gardener badge at our December meeting!

**To increase our attendance at the State Master Gardener Mini-College to at least 10 individuals.** We normally have from two to six members attend mini-college

at Corvallis each year. Let's try for at least ten this year. There are many very worthwhile seminars and demonstrations as well as the opportunity to meet and enjoy members from other chapters. And we do have mini-college scholarships available to help offset the expense of attending, if necessary. *(August 5-8)*

**To win a 1<sup>st</sup> Place Prize for our Master Gardener Fair Booth.** Last year, we received the 2nd place prize for fair booths. I personally thought we should have won first place as Kay and Carol did a superb job of setting up our booth and tying it to the Fair theme. With Kay and Carol's leadership and ingenuity and help from the rest of the chapter, achieving 1<sup>st</sup> place this year seems a reasonable goal. *(July 28– Aug 1)*

We have these five goals to strive for this year in addition to all the other projects and venues we support and maintain. With the enthusiasm and energy of our group, I have no doubt that we can accomplish all our goals in a most exceptional manner!

**Blair Holman**

March— the month God created to show people who don't drink what a hangover is like.

Garrison Keillor

### Two Summer Events Not to Miss

**July 28-August 1, Coos County Fair.** This year's theme is "Country Pride, County Wide."

**August 5-8, Master Gardener Mini-College at OSU in Corvallis**—Meet new and old friends and enjoy interesting speakers and classes.

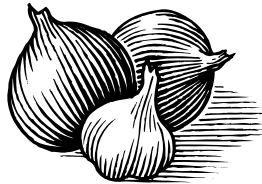
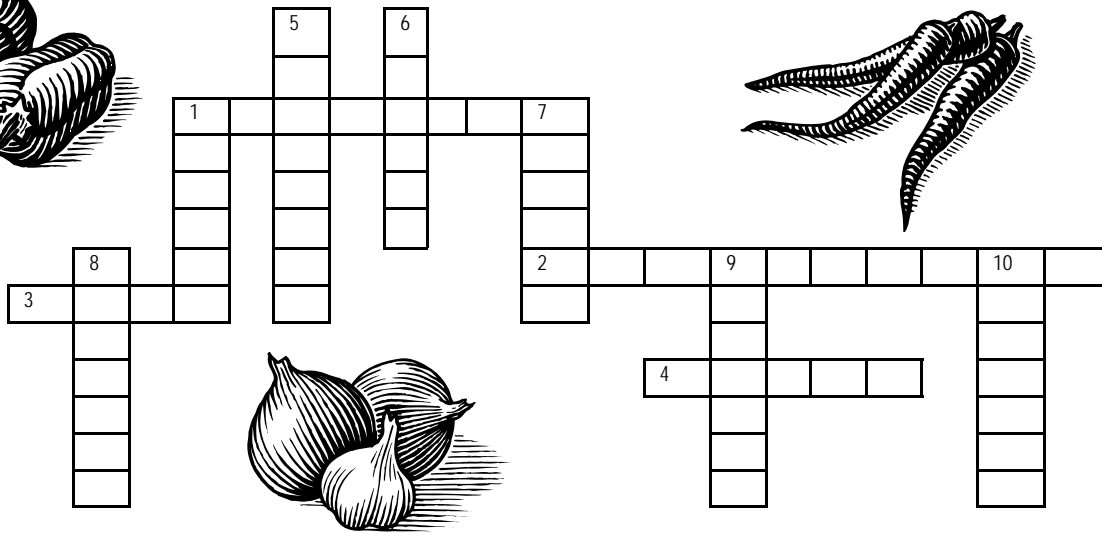
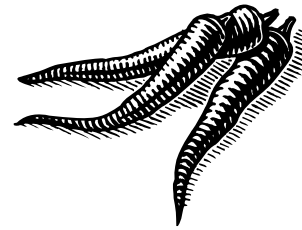
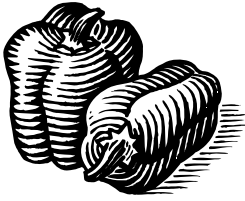


### Feeding the Birds

Some attractive and productive native plants that the birds would appreciate you planting this spring are red and evergreen huckleberries, Western serviceberry, wax myrtle, blueblossom, kinnikinnick, red osier dogwood, cascara, red-flowering currant, willows, madrones, vine maples. See more on Extension's list of native plants online.



## Vegetable Crossword Puzzle



### ACROSS

1. Most known for its use in salads or pickles
2. Green vegetable named for a country
3. Russians make a cold soup out of this vegetable
4. This one makes you cry

### DOWN

1. Rabbits love this vegetable
5. A great producer
6. Once known as the love fruit
7. Grows to maturity in as little as 21 days
8. A slang term for money
9. Popeye's favorite vegetable
10. Tart, but makes a great pie when mixed with strawberries



Joyce Weare

**Damping-Off Disease.** On seedlings started indoors, a fuzzy white growth indicates damping-off disease. The fungus thrives in wet soil with a high nitrogen content and the infected seedlings will eventually fall over and die. To prevent this disease, use a sterile, soil-less media containing perlite to improve drainage and wait until the seedlings are older to fertilize. Good air circulation around plants is a must, so remove seed tray covers as soon as the seedlings germinate.

**Garden  
Hints  
From  
Renée**

**Prune Clematis.** Pruning clematis now in early spring will encourage more vigorous plants this summer. For larger, summer-flowering clematis types such as *Clematis Jackmanii*, prune a new plant's shoots to about 12" from the soil line. For older clematis plants, cut all stems back to just about the previous season's growth, usually under three feet.

**Grow More in Less Space.** To get more vegetables from limited space, try intercropping. Plant quick-maturing crops such as greens and radishes between slower-growing tomatoes and vine crops. As the larger vegetables grow, their shade will help keep your greens from going to seed. By the time they need the whole space, your greens will have been harvested.



## Working Towards the Tomato-Rama & Plant Sale



"Working" towards the plant sale? This could as well say "planting," "growing," "digging," or "nurturing." It takes a lot of verbs to make the Plant Sale happen and a lot of nouns and pronouns, too — people, friends, spouses, you, me, not to mention plants, tomatoes, dirt, pots, boxes, grins, halloos, and pats on the back.

The plant sale — the biggest fundraiser our Association puts on — pays for our projects, books for the Plant Clinic, tools, scholarships, community projects, and more!

### **RAISE PLANTS (our basic verb and noun).**

Remember that our customers expect lots and lots of tomatoes. They buy almost every one we bring, plus most of the other vegetables. What could be a better way to encourage people to grow their own food than to offer them an abundance of healthy, attractive, growing vegetables?

- Continue planting seeds: flowers, herbs, vegetables, shrubs, groundcovers, grasses, ferns, etc.
- Take cuttings from indoor and outdoor plants, separate clumps of perennials, and divide rhizomes.
- Grow extra lest we have as abysmal weather this spring as last year. If we plant more and are vigilant in our nurturing, we might meet our goal of \$10,000. We don't increase our prices, so must increase production.
- Package the seeds you saved last year. Label well.

**COLLECT BOXES.** Shallow ones like those beer and soda come in. We need hundreds of them. People gather plants in them. This is what we want.

**LABEL AND ADVERTISE YOUR PLANTS.** Give plant names plus basic characteristics and growth requirements. Send Katie a photo of each plant in bloom to laminate and display nearby. These photos sell plants!

### **SIGN UP TO WORK THE DAY BEFORE AND AT THE**

**SALE.** There's lots to do — transport plants, answer questions, pre-count plants for the cashiers, guard the door, clean up spills, work the Plant Clinic, make kids' hats, and MORE!

#### SPECIAL DATES

#### ON OR BEFORE MAY 1st

Please give Renée a list of the tomato varieties you'll be bringing.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 15, THE DAY BEFORE THE SALE

Water and weed your plants early.  
Take to Mall.

Bring all the boxes you've collected.

Help transport plants from Renée's to the Mall.

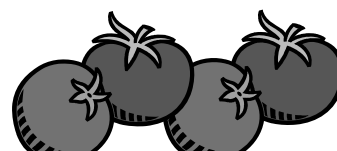
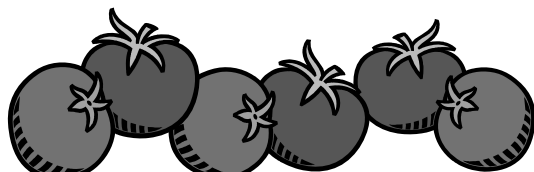
Help label, price, and sort incoming plants.

#### SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MAY 16-17, THE SALE

Wear MG tee shirt and badge.

Work hard. Smile. Buy lots of plants. Have fun.

For more information on Master Gardener events or if you are a Master Gardener and need a contact list for other Master Gardeners, contact the MG plant clinic at 572-5263 X 295 or Kim at 572-5263 X 286.





## Seed for Thought

Ever wonder what's behind the name of the tomato 'Mortgage Lifter'? While perusing online seed catalogs, I came across the story in the Nichols Seed Catalog (where I also spotted Oregon Spring tomato seed packets on sale for 75 cents each!) It seems that during the 'Great Depression' a garage mechanic by the handle of 'Radiator Charlie' with no former plant cross-breeding experience cross-bred four tomato varieties, and created a truly worthy plant. He began to sell these for a dollar apiece and in six years he paid off his mortgage! This story encourages me, in light of the upcoming Master Gardener 'Tomato-Rama', our Coos Chapter goals of increased sales, and the need for each of us to contribute our best growing efforts.

Did you know that prior to 1900 people did not consider yellow corn to be fit for human consumption? According to the Victory Seed Company online catalog it was considered animal feed!



I came across this fact while looking for a short-season, cool-weather corn and wondering whether "Indian corn" might be edible fresh, rather than just as a dried and ground corn. I know many of the breakfast grains we eat now were once considered animal food.

When you choose seed for your garden, trying something 'new' might not really be new, I guess. What I'm thinking of is another Victory Seed Company catalog fact, that purple and yellow carrots were well known in Western Europe and China by the 1300's. They spread there, as other carrots did, from Afghanistan, Persia, and Pakistan. Orange carrots are really good for you, but now there's a red carrot with even more 'good for you' lycopene in it. I hope you'll try at least one 'new' vegetable in your garden this year. Happy growing!

**Brook Settle**



## Heaven Scent

Working as a gardener has minute-by-minute ups and downs. One minute I'm feeling like such a klutz, dropping tools, getting tangled up in berry vines, bumping my head repeatedly on the rear door of my car, and then – adding insult to injury – my shoe laces come untied when I'm up to my elbows in pruners, loppers, and buckets of weeds. In order to tie them, I would have to put down everything that I have so carefully balanced in my arms. Instead, I take the chance and walk on, laces flopping about. Almost immediately, I step on the unruly devils and, to keep from falling, I drop my load. But that's not enough. I stumble over a bucket of weeds and fall anyway.

The upside to this is that, in another minute, when the mess is tucked away in my car, I look onto a nicely mowed lawn that shines in the sun like a field of emeralds. Flowers adorn the borders, posted like a color guard. After my war with the equipment and having to scurry under the "time-is-money" pressure, the calm in the garden soothes and smooths out my sprung nerves. On the drive home, I bask in the smell of fresh cut grass on my fingertips. Aahhhh! Heaven Scent.

**Kay Ellen Pace**

## The 3rd Annual Spring Gardening Series

This three-part series — **Starting a Kitchen Garden** — began in February with Jennifer Ewing teaching how to prepare your garden beds.



The series has continued with "Planting Your Garden" on March 21st and "Compost" will be the final segment on April 18. Attendees are learning how to plant, harvest, and store produce, how to deal with pests (Integrated Pest Management), and how to make and use compost.

Classes are Saturdays, 12-2, at the Coos Bay Public Library and are free. They are co-sponsored by the South Coast Community Garden Association and the Coos County Master Gardeners.



## Translating Catalog Terminology



"A favorite of birds" means "Avoid planting near cars, sidewalks, or clotheslines."

"Grows more beautiful each year" means "Looks like roadkill for the foreseeable future."

"Zone 5 with protection" is a variation on the phrase "Russian Roulette."

"May require support" means your daughter's engineering degree will finally pay off.

"Moisture-loving" plants are ideal for landscaping all your bogs and swamps.

"Carefree" refers more to the plant's attitude than to your workload.

"Vigorous" is code for "Has a Napoleonic compulsion to take over the world."

"Grandma's Favorite" — until she discovered free flowering, disease-resistant hybrids.

From [www.gardendigest.com](http://www.gardendigest.com)

## Wildflowers and Wild Walks

**The Native Plant Society of Oregon, Umpqua Valley Chapter** has field trips on 3rd Saturdays. For info, call Sam Friedman at 541-673-0589 or visit <http://umpquavalley.npsoregon.org/>

**Early May — NPSO** native plant sale in Roseburg; check website.

**The Glide Wildflower Show** is April 25-26.

**The South Coast Striders' Hikes:**

**March 28** -Golden and Silver Falls;

**April 25** -Rocky Peak;

**May 16** - Euphoria Ridge;

**May 30** - Panther Ridge-Hanging Rock.

Call Don Luce at 266-8201 or [www.coostrails.com](http://www.coostrails.com).

**Fred Bowen**, the plant identification teacher for the MG classes, has three lovely walks in Curry County in April and June. Call him at 541-247-8910.

## Check Dates on Vegetable Seeds

As winter turns into thoughts of spring and getting your hands into the soil, it's a good time to collect the seeds you have and begin to plan your vegetable garden. Don't throw away last year's seeds before you check which are still good. Then review your seed catalogs to fill in the empty spaces.

Seeds dated 2005 that are good for 4 years: Radishes

Seeds dated 2005 to 2006 that are still good: Brussels Sprouts, Squash

Seeds dated 2006 that are good for 3 years:

Asparagus, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Cucumber, Gourds, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Melons and Watermelons, Pac Choi, Pumpkins, Rutabagas, Tomatoes, Turnips

Seeds dated 2007 that are good for 2 years: Beets, Cilantro, Eggplant, Parsley, Peas, Peppers, Rhubarb, Swiss Chard

And finally, seeds dated for 2008 (last year) that are good for one year only: Artichoke, Corn, Parsnips, Spinach

**Joyce Weare**



## Pacific Power's Pruning 101

The pictures in your pruning guide may not look like these but, to the power company, these are perfectly correct shapes. While home gardeners prune for beauty, safety, fruit production, health, shade, and wind protection, arborists hired to protect the power lines prune primarily for safety. They also strive to protect every tree's health, maintain its natural growing habit, and prevent or discourage re-sprouting near the wires.

If this style of pruning doesn't appeal to you, plant future trees far enough away from power lines to avoid it. Any tree that gets over 25' at maturity should be planted at least 25' away from overhead lines; a 35' tree at least 50 feet away. You can get suggestions by calling 1-888-221-7070 or visiting <http://www.pacificpower.net/File/File437.pdf>.



Garden Thymes

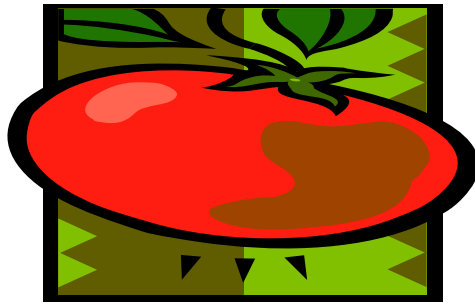
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<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos/Mg/index.php>

# Coos County Master Gardeners™ Association 6th Annual Tomato-Rama & More

Many Varieties  
of Tomatoes  
Annuals  
Perennials  
Flowers of all  
Kinds  
Herbs



Vegetables  
Vines  
Shrubs  
Houseplants  
Groundcovers  
Sedums  
and More

Kid's Garden Hats Saturday 12-3

# Plant Sale

Garden  
Questions  
Answered

Saturday  
May 16th  
10-6

Pony Village Mall



Sunday  
May 17th  
11-4

Garden  
Questions  
Answered

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