President's Message

By the time you read this, the Olympics are well over with. All the medals have been given out. For some their dreams have come true, for others they fell a little short of their goal. All of the athletes put in a lot of hard work and a lot of time. None of them would have gotten where they are without the support of coaches, family, and friends and of course their respective countries.

I suddenly had an epiphany on how much the Master Gardener program is like the Olympics. But unlike the Olympics we can all bring home the gold. We have coaches (veteran MGs and Extension agents). We are surrounded by friends and the Master Gardener Association is like one big extended family. We have the support of Oregon State University providing all the technical and scientific data to achieve our goal.

Our goal is to provide education to the public; with the support of family, friends and O.S.U. this goal is achievable. Every program we do -- plant clinic, farmers market, fair booth, Growing Yer Grub, speaking engagements, community garden, seminars, plant sale, etc. is like an Olympic event and we all strive to do the best we can in our event. I think as a group and individually we have all brought home the gold.

Every year our “events” seem to get bigger and better attended. We have helped thousands of people to achieve their goal of growing and harvesting good nutritional food for themselves, family and friends. We should all feel very proud of what we have achieved.

As all of our events end for the year, it’s not too early to start thinking of next year and, just like an Olympian, start thinking of how we can improve for next year’s events. Because, no matter how good we think we are, there is always room for improvement. So let’s all keep striving for the gold.

CCMGA President

Steven P. Hennessey

Master Gardener of the Year

Our Master Gardener of the Year is Rick Werle. This is hardly a surprise to anyone who has seen him working at the Community Garden or keeping the Farmers’ Market plant clinic staffed all season. His friendliness and enthusiasm plus his willingness to share his knowledge and to help wherever he’s needed make it a great pleasure to have him around.
Time for Slug Patrol

Slugs produce 60% of their eggs after the first rains of fall. They hatch in 2-4 weeks but, if laid in October or November, they may overwinter. When you go out each morning to collect slugs, look for their eggs as well, clusters of tiny clear balls hidden near the soil surface or between a pot wall and the soil. Squash them or feed them to your favorite garter snake.

Slugs lay another 25% of their eggs in spring, and the remainder during warm, humid conditions. Fall is definitely the season to reduce their numbers. Mornings are best for collection and evenings are the best time to put out pet-safe bait such as Sluggo.

Al's Garden Center : www.als-gardencenter.com/solutions-and-tips/pests

Message from Tracy

Well said Steven. While you are out in the community striving for that gold, I am here at OSU to fully support you in accomplishing the M.G. mission.

My favorite season has always been summer but it always seems to be gone before I get a chance to do all the fun things I had planned back in spring. With fall quickly approaching we are going to be very busy. Not only with getting our gardens cleaned up and ready for winter, planting bulbs and cover crops and harvesting and preserving our “bounty” but with our educational opportunities as well. As school starts up again and the association sponsoring a school garden grant we will have plenty of opportunities to help educate the young people of the county.

As many of you may already know, my tenure here at OSU is limited due to my husband taking a job in Douglas County. I have so enjoyed my time working with the Master Gardeners over the past 5 years and witnessed your dedication to the program that I decided to stay working with you until we are through our busy season of training our new volunteers and the Garden Seminar in March of 2009.

Looking at the calendar you have realized that we are nearing the end of the Master Gardener year and payback hours are due October 31st. The Policy Guidelines For Payback Hours and the Payback Hours Log Sheet can both be found on the Coos County OSU Extension office website at http://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos. Look to the menu on the left side of the page and click the Master Gardener link. There you will find a link to the two documents at the bottom of the page.

If you have questions or concerns regarding your own payback hours, please feel free to contact me. I can provide you with any information or reassurance you need.

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Tracy Martz
Publisher

Valerie Cooley
Editor
Master Gardeners Judge Landscaping Contest at Kilkich

In June, the Coquille Indian Housing Authority and the Kilkich Residents’ Association held their annual Landscaping Contest and asked Master Gardeners Joanne White, Valerie Cooley, and me to judge it. Last month, at a dinner catered by The Mill, we were officially thanked and awarded certificates of appreciation.

The gardens were judged in two categories, those of home owners and those of renters. Landscaping was rated according to several focus areas including use of hanging plants, best backyards, native plants, use of salmon colors (in honor of their annual Salmon Bake), entryways, general appearance, shrubs, enhancements, etc. It was difficult to judge because there were so many lovely yards, but having the focus areas helped to determine the winners. There are many dedicated gardeners there who have conquered the sand and are growing beautiful lawns, flowers, shrubs, trees and vegetable gardens.

It was a lovely day for a walk outside, and the people were marvelous to talk with. They have some very friendly neighbors in the woods who frequently come to visit. We heard several stories of the elk on the front porches and in the yards.

We learned a little bit about the cranberry bogs and the plank house that is built in the native fashion and used for tribal functions. It was truly an honor to be invited to do the judging.

Joyce Weare

The Best Green Apple

Is there a producing Pippin apple tree around here? Tell Kady's granny at 266-9073 or valeriecooley@verizon.net

Roadside Beauty

It’s strange what I remember sometimes. For example, I remember that the daffodils and iris we see in spring along roadsides throughout Oregon were due to a campaign, and after hours of vain research, and fruitless inquiries, I was directed to ‘Highway Beautification’. What I remember must have taken place after this act became law on October 22, 1965. I was a toddler.

I guess I’m not surprised that no one else could remember either, because a law to create beauty must not be on our priority list at times. The person behind this law was LadyBird Johnson. But listen to what President Johnson said: “We have placed a wall of civilization between us and the beauty of our countryside. In our eagerness to expand and improve, we have relegated nature to a weekend role, banishing it from our daily lives. I think we are a poorer nation as a result... I do not choose to preside over the destiny of this country and to hide from view what God has gladly given.” I think the whole speech is worth reading and pertinent.

At the time of this bill, the Vietnam War, civil rights and lots of unrest seethed. The mood of our country seems to me to be similar to the mood of LadyBird Johnson’s day. It must have seemed a frivolous focus in light of the serious nature of change that was occurring. But LadyBird Johnson saw that beauty affects the mental health of a nation, that crime and poverty and parks and recreation are all interwoven issues. There are many studies today that would back her up.

I’m often caught off guard by how tense our lives seem to often be. I do know that I and others function better when we’re not tense. Closing, I offer a final quote by LadyBird Johnson “Ugliness is so grim. A little beauty, something that is lovely, I think, can help create harmony which will lessen tensions.”

Brook Settle
Garden Thymes

Mini College May Spawn Activists

I’d always wanted to go away to college — stay in a dorm, study with friends in the library, eat in a dining hall — but I didn’t. I commuted and I survived but I still believe that learning would have been easier and more exciting surrounded by friends studying the same things.

So, naturally, Mini-College appealed to me. For every answer I’d found in the Master Gardener training there had arisen two or three new questions. My garden didn’t always behave according to the book, either, and I was my own best customer when I worked at the plant clinic. I needed Mini-College and, this summer, I got to go. Some of the many classes offered were Gardening with Natives, Rain Gardens, Bees, The Urban Landscape, Clematis, and Spiders. It was hard to choose amongst them, except for the spider class. That was my first choice. It was a fine and unusual experience being in a full classroom in which not one person said “Eeeewww” at the close-up pictures. The man next to me named each spider as it flashed onto the screen. When I commented, he said, “Yeah, I know the *Golden Guide to Spiders and Their Kin* by heart.”

Some of the most interesting, dynamic, and heart-warming presentations were in the large hall so everyone could see. In *The Search for Excellence* we saw how our counterparts in other counties have worked with people of all ages to start community gardens, renovate historic gardens, and honor the loyal Japanese Americans interned during World War II with a Japanese Heritage Garden. We saw “Ruth Stout’s Garden” a wonderful movie about a woman’s idiosyncratic but effective approach to gardening.

The most galvanizing presentations were about native versus alien species. In *The Silent Invasion* we learned about Oregon’s campaign to stop the enormous damage being done by invasive alien species. In *Bringing Nature Home* the keynote speaker, without raising his voice or using standard scare tactics, sent chills up our spines by showing how much wildlife — especially birds, butterflies, and other insects — we have lost with our passion for replacing native plants with foreign ones. He showed how we must bring native plants back into our gardens and cities or risk total, irredeemable loss. Both speakers were so compelling that I expect a flock of activists to emerge from the 2008 Mini-College, waving banners saying “Restore Biodiversity!” I hope to see ardent Master Gardeners ridding neighborhoods of thistle and persuading towns to plant salal and wax myrtle instead of Escallonia. It’s thrilling to think that, by doing what we love to do anyway, we might just save the world.

Valerie Cooley

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Douglas Tallamy describes a Bolas spider (*Mastophora sp.*) in *Bringing Nature Home*: “What makes these spiders interesting is the way they hunt. By day, they rest over a leaf splotch, blending in... By night, instead of spinning a web, the Bolas spider hangs motionless beneath its leaf, holding... a strand of silk with a glob of glue at its tip. When an insect flies by, the spider swings the bolas, just as human hunters used to do, and snags the unlucky victim on its sticky end... [They] do not leave encounters with prey up to chance. The probability of something flying right to the spider must be pretty low. So, over evolutionary time, the spider has specialized in capturing particular species of moth. To attract this moth, [it] releases a pheromone that mimics the moth’s sex pheromone. Males moths... on their way to an evening tryst, find themselves at the sticky end of a bolas instead. Even more amazing, [it] can mimic the pheromone of more than one moth species. The spider releases the appropriate pheromone at the time of night that particular species of moth takes flight. Now who could step on such a creature?”
The Silent Invasion

We all know that gorse, French snails, and starlings are invasive alien species but there's more, and worse.

On Earth Day 2008, Oregon launched the "STOP THE INVASION" campaign against invasive species. If you were at the May Plant Sale (and wasn't everyone?) you might have picked up the little booklet, Garden Smart Oregon, an excellent guide to substituting native plants for invasive alien species.

Sam Chan, one of the creators of the booklet, was at Mini-College with a documentary about The Invasion. We saw Yellow Star Thistle rendering thousands of acres in Eastern Oregon worthless and Quagga mussels clogging power plants. We saw lakes packed with Asian flying carp and bullfrogs eating up the eggs and young of native frogs and turtles. It looks hopeless but this campaign — a huge collaboration of governmental, educational, private, and environmental entities — is putting a lot of hope in public concern. And we, as volunteers and educators, can play a big part.

First, check their website www.opb.org/silentinvasion for many links plus shocking but fascinating videos in the Oregon Field Guide archives.

Buy or borrow the CD of The Silent Invasion. It's available through OSU Extension for about $20. Or watch for another re-airing of it on OPBTV.


Use Garden Smart Oregon in your own yard and show it to your neighbors. Use it at the plant clinic. If you have a boat— or fish with someone who does — help wash it off to keep from transferring invasive hitchhikers to other waterways. If we are all vigilant, we can get rid of or subdue many aliens and keep new ones from getting a foothold.

Bringing Nature Home

The keynote speaker at Mini-College this year was Douglas W Tallamy (the chair of the entomology department at the University of Delaware) who wrote a fascinating book called Bringing Nature Home, published by Timber Press ($27.95).

In the book, as he did in the lecture, he stresses the need for home gardeners to plant (or leave) native species in their yards to help sustain wildlife. Native plants support many more insects than do aliens and provide much better shelter for the native birds who depend on the habitat either full time or when they are migrating.

His studies show that almost all terrestrial birds feed their young on insects and that native plants will attract about 1000% more insects than alien ones. Our native insects evolved along with our native plants, their mouthparts and digestive systems perfectly suited to them. They find aliens unchewable and indigestible and must look elsewhere for food. The native birds who prefer those insects, often our favorites, also depart. While a garden without insects seems like a dream come true, for some of us it will also be a garden without birds and, ultimately, any other wildlife.

Tallamy doesn't advocate turning your entire yard into the "forest", just that you should be aware that, in most cases, it is just as easy to plant a native as an alien. Your neighbors, who all have the same seven plants in their yards, probably won't notice. If they do, it might be a positive time to talk about biodiversity and about establishing semi-wild zones of native plants between your yards where insects and birds can flourish.

Cathy Denton

Back East, oaks support 517 species of butterflies; willows, 456; blueberries, 288; alders, 156.

A eucalyptus that supports 48 species in Australia, supports one here; a Melaleuca that supports 409 species in Australia, supports 8 here. Both plants have been in North America for over 100 years but our insects still can't eat them.
Give Thanks for a Garden of Friends

Let us give thanks for a bounty of people:

For children, who are our second planting and, though they grow like weeds and the wind too soon blows them away, may they forgive us our cultivation and fondly remember where their roots are;

For generous friends with hearts as big as hubbards and smiles as bright as their blossoms;

For feisty friends as tart as apples;

For continuous friends who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us we had them;

For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible;

For handsome friends who are as gorgeous as eggplants and as elegant as a row of corn — and the others — as plain as potatoes and so good for you;

For funny friends who are as silly as Brussels sprouts and as amusing as Jerusalem artichokes, and serious friends as complex as cauliflowers and as intricate as onions;

For friends as unpretentious as cabbages, as subtle as summer squash, as persistent as parsley, as delightful as dill, as endless as zucchini, and who, like parsnips, can be counted on to see you through the long winter;

For old friends, nodding like sunflowers in the evening-time, and young friends coming on as fast as radishes;

For loving friends, who wind around us like tendrils and hold us despite our blights, wilts, and withering;

And, finally, for those friends now gone — like gardens past that have been harvested — but who fed us in their times that we might have life thereafter.

For all these, we give thanks.

And thanks to Max Coots,
Minister Emeritus of the UU Church in Canton NY

The Hedgerow:
Bugging My Romantic Notions

I suppose I was no different than many young girls when I read romantic stories. I have no idea to what extent those stories influenced me, but recently, when researching a beetle found in my backyard, I came across a word, an old idea made new that I wanted to share with you. The word is ‘hedgerow’. A more current word for hedgerow is beetleberm. For the smaller yard, the word beetlebump was suggested.

In novels that are British in flavor, a hedgerow was a section of land, often alongside a field, that was not gardened or farmed. Hedgerows were brambles, thickets of trees, grasses and berries where many creatures such as birds, beetles, and other predators of non-beneficial bugs lived. As time went on, and machinery grew more sophisticated, I think we thought we were more sophisticated, too, and we eliminated these green barriers, consequently eliminating a helpful population. Now we rely on pesticides, creating great harm on much of our planet. Most recently we’ve begun to attempt to entice natural predators with such things as bat houses, mason bee houses, and even buying pest predators for our gardens.

At one of my last homes I had an eight foot chain-link fence I hated, so I planted it with elderberry, currants, grapes, and a number of edible plants that would interlink and make a messy hedge that I did not intend to prune or bother in any way. I was deliberately trying to create that hedgerow. As a gardener, you might try planting a clump of grasses (or something less invasive—Ed. note) in your garden that you don’t mow, weed, or disturb in any way where beetles, birds and other beneficial creatures can have a habitat near your garden. I believe creating these habitats may decrease your ‘bad bugs’, and will allow a healthy balance of living things to be a beautiful part of your garden.

Brook Settle
Summing Up the Gardening Year

Throughout the gardening season I note the successes and failures around my yard (the failures are for my masochistic side) to see what I should repeat or change.

The biggest successes were the cuttings I took a year or two earlier from the Extension Office grounds -- salvia, flowering currant (Ribes sanguineum), and cistus (rockrose); geum, Mexican sage, and raspberries from the community garden; and heather from home. If you have not tried propagating by cuttings you might be surprised how easy it can be.

The Marionberries did well even with insufficient sun. Leeks grown from seed are getting larger. Other seed successes were hardy sedum and penstemon 'Esprit' mix. Perennials from seed will give you many plants at low cost and you can sell the excess at the plant sale.

I moved the lavender clumps into full sun even though I had stubbornly tried to keep them in the shade where I could see them. They are much happier now away from my eyes and in the light.

The euryops bloomed well, finally, after repeated failures. I threatened to cut it down many times, not quite sure when to give up on a plant. I also saved a Japanese maple that was growing through a barrel into the ground within a thicket of bushes. I had to maneuver it through the steel bands of the rotted barrel. Now it's doing great!

Greenhouses are garden savers. My tomato, eggplant, basil, and pepper crops did poorly outside but in the greenhouse they were much better. I do have to watch the aphids, though.

Now the bad news. My yarrow is taking over the eggplant/pepper/basil area. It's gotta go somewhere else. The calla lily still has not bloomed. Neither has my dahlia, 'Shadow Cat.' I lost most of the allium and one chrysanthemum over winter. There is still no sign of flowers on the belladonna lily (Amaryllis belladonna). I never saw anything from the sweet peas I planted from the community garden. And the chocolate cherry tomato was not the orgasmic delight I had been promised! Nevertheless, I’ll try again. I believe in giving new veggies a second chance.

I hope you don’t give up because of your failures. They give you an opportunity to learn and there is always next year.

Rick Werle

Some Fall Gardening Jobs

- To cut back overwintering populations, clean up debris around plants that are prone to disease or pests.
- Sow perennial seeds that need cold treatment to germinate such as astilbe, columbine, and delphinium. Mark the spot as they won’t sprout until spring.
- Start planting spring bulbs.
- Take advantage of the first rains by planting trees and shrubs.

If you’re thinking to pot some volunteer seedlings for the Plant Sale and you have the slightest doubt about recognizing them in spring, consider photographing, labeling, and/or pressing them NOW. It will save you the embarrassment of showing up with 12 pots of Giant knapweed or Bachelor’s button for sale.

- If your perennials are free of disease, you can leave the faded growth on them until spring to protect the roots and crown of the plant.
- Drain and put away your hoses before there’s a freeze.
- Start cuttings of your friends’ plants as well as your own.
- Oil your clippers before you put them away.
Master Gardeners of 2009
Classes start January 2009
This training will be in the Coos Bay area

Applications for the 2009 class of Master Gardeners will be mailed after the beginning of October. Registrations are due by the end of November. There will be several classes for current Master Gardeners to recertify for the year.

If you know of anyone interested get them on the mailing list.