

Garden Beet

Newsletter of the Jackson County Master Gardener™ Association • August 2009

Master Gardener's Picnic and Barbecue

August 29 at 5:00 p.m.

It's August! It's hot but, every once in a while, the feel of fall is in the morning air. The gardens are bursting with produce, some ready for picking, some with still just a promise. Master Gardeners have been bustling around the

Extension grounds for months in the never-ending quest to make it ever more beautiful and productive. It's time for some fun before the fall rains drive us indoors!

Circle, star, and highlight **5:00 p.m., August 29** on your calendar—it's the date of the annual JCMGA Picnic in the OSU Extension arboretum. Plan now to ignore for one fun-filled evening the fact that your zucchini is turning those cute little six-inchers into something that could be made into a small submarine and your tomatoes are producing enough to feed the whole neighborhood. We've worked hard for months and now it's time to socialize. Vickie Belknap and the Social Committee are planning a casual, inviting, cool, refreshing, old-fashioned summer picnic and barbeque with everything provided. All you need to do is show up and have a good time.

The menu will consist of grill-your-own hamburgers, hot dogs, and veggie burgers, salads, watermelon,



and lemonade. Vickie, with her typical sense of humor, added, "Help with grilling will be provided for those who need it. And if anyone wants something with a little more boost to it, BYOB."

Vickie also stated, "Some light entertainment may float through." but, the main entertainment is YOU! A chance for great conversations with fellow gardeners over the grill and around the picnic table will be the main attraction. Too often, our talk at the Extension centers on the job we are trying to accomplish or we are together for a presentation with only brief moments for conversation. This is a chance to really get to know some of the truly amazing people who are Master Gardeners. The catch is that this can only happen if you are there!

The Social Committee needs to know how much food to buy, so please call Vickie Belknap at 830-4064 or Joanie Kintscher at 245-0489 to let them know you will be attending. Children are welcome.

Jane Moyer
Master Gardener 2005

OSU Research and Extension and
the Master Gardener's Annual
OPEN HOUSE



Saturday, September 12

For more information, or to assist with the preparations, contact Judy Wallace—ranchwallace@gmail.com

OSU Extension Service & Jackson County Master Gardener Association's

11th Annual Gardening Symposium



Saturday, November 7, 2009
A full day of garden classes
RCC/SOU Higher Education Center
101 South Bartlett Street
Medford, Oregon

Class descriptions & registration materials will be mailed in September

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To answer or not to answer—

Can you tell me how to manage the weeds in my pasture?

The fir trees in my woodlot are turning brown. What should I do?

Which nursery has the best quality plants?

How do I preserve my tomatoes so I can keep them all winter?

What are the medicinal uses of this herb?

What do all these questions have in common? All are questions that a Master Gardener shouldn't answer.

1 and 2. Timber and agricultural questions should be referred to the appropriate agent—as Master Gardeners we answer questions related to urban horticulture. And then only giving science-based answers supported by Oregon State University. Answering questions beyond our training and expertise is a disservice to the public.

3. You and I both have our favorites. However, as representatives of OSU, we can't recommend one commercial vendor over another. But what we can and should do is educate folks so they can make judgments themselves about which plants are healthiest and the best buy for them.

4. Master Gardeners have been trained in growing plants, including vegetables, from selection to planting on to harvesting. But once the vegetable is harvested, it is beyond the training of a Master Gardener. This is a good opportunity to educate the public about another one of Extension's outstanding programs—the Family Food Education Volunteers who have been specifically trained in safe and healthy food preparation and preservation.

5. And finally, we're not trained in medicine, and any ideas we have personally about using plants to treat ailments should be kept to ourselves when we're responding as a Master Gardener. Suggest instead they take their questions to a medical professional. Or, they might take one of the Extension classes in Healthy Aging or Medication Management.

As Master Gardeners, we all have a service orientation that leads us to always want to satisfy our client, whether in the Plant Clinic or informally in the neighborhood. That's a really good trait. Master Gardeners

have developed a reputation in the community for being able to find the answer, and the answer that can be counted on. That's a trust we should be proud of, and should guard and foster through outstanding service in urban horticulture.

Bob Reynolds
OSU Agent
Master Gardener 2005

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The *Garden Beet* is published monthly by the OSU Jackson County Master Gardener Association, Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, Oregon 97502. Phone: 541-776-7371.

Publishing Information: All articles and photos are due by the 10th of the preceding month. Articles should not exceed 400 words per column and should be emailed to one of the proofreaders listed above. Photos should be 300 dpi in jpeg or tiff formats. If a photo needs to be scanned, it should be dropped off at Extension in Bob Reynolds office no later than the 10th of the preceding month. If a photo needs to be taken, please contact Carol Orsetti at the email address above.

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President's Message

One of the duties of a president-elect is to chair the Awards Committee. We are the ones who plan the agenda for the fall banquet, select the hall where the banquet is to be held, decide how the food is to be provided, and, of course, select those Master Gardeners who are deserving of some public recognition. I would like to request that anyone in the organization who has witnessed a member who you think deserves this recognition, to please email me the name of this person and the reasons why you think that they should be considered for an award. You don't need to be a head gardener or chair a committee to nominate someone. Please send your nominations to ronbombick@msn.com by September 1, 2009.

I can't help but notice the number of volunteers who work at the Extension Center on Wednesdays who are not wearing their identification badges. All Master Gardeners are expected to wear your badge whenever you are on the Extension Center grounds. This helps not only to identify you as a Master Gardener, but helps everyone to learn who you are and call you by name. If you have lost your badge, see Bob Reynolds to get a new one.

Hopefully everyone has circled August 29 on their calendar. This is the day of our BBQ and picnic at the Extension Center, and one of our biggest social events of the year. I hope to see all of you there. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Ron Bombick, *President Elect*
Master Gardener 2006

(substituting for Rollin Mack, president)



One of the highlights of last July's Garden Tour

Garden Tour Garden Sharing

Saturday, August 8th at 9:45 AM!

Gardens are meant to be shared, that's why I like arranging garden tours! And when some people enjoy these tours as much as I, then that makes it all worthwhile! For the 40 or so folks that attended July's Master Gardener's Garden Tour, I think all would agree that the day was extraordinary and the gardens magnificent! Each of the five gardens was unique in its own magnificence, from the grandeur and serenity of the White's three acre garden, the whimsy of the Lee's un-typical city lot, the splendor of the Rawls garden, the contentment of walking the meandering paths of the Heath garden and the downright awe-inspiring Harman garden...what sights to behold!!!! We each came away with inspiration for our own gardens! Thanks to all!

And, of course, there was June's garden tour of The Herb Pharm and Jim and Dottie Becker's Goodwin Creek Gardens in Williams. A comprehensive tour of the Pharm factory proved to be very informative as to the ever extensive medicinal value of herbs and how they are prepared into tinctures to be shipped all over the country! The spectacular demonstration garden tour was lead by the extremely knowledgeable head groundskeeper, Dave. We ended the Pharm tour by enjoying our bag lunches amongst the beauty of mesmerizing surroundings!

Jim and Dottie Becker have numerous recognitions locally and nationally for all their contributions to the gardening world. We were treated to Dottie's special lavender cookies and lemonade along with a story of how it all started!

And now you are in for yet another treat in August. Please mark your calendar on **Saturday, August 8th** for a tour of Dave and Cathy Odom's garden in Central Point and Gordon and Cindy Wood's garden in Medford. **We will plan to meet at 9:45 AM** at the Pilot Rock Truck Stop by the entrance to Jackson County Fair Grounds at Central Point Exit 33 off of I-5. We will then caravan at 10 AM to Central Point and then to Medford.

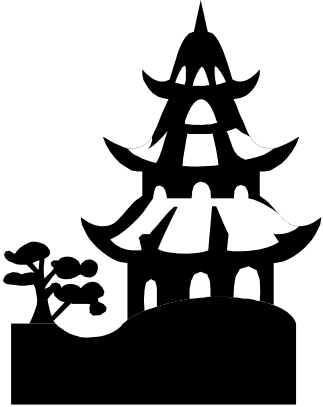
When Dave and Cathy purchased their three acre property in '03, it was a house in the middle of a pasture. They kept 3 trees and transformed about an acre into a paradise creating a forest out back, a pond and waterfall, a mixed garden of perennials, annuals, shrubs and trees along with a vegetable garden, grape arbor and lots of berries!

Gordon and Cindy Wood will share their garden and show you how they created paradise on a city lot with 2 waterfalls, stream and pond, perennials, annuals, trees (including 11 Japanese maples) and shrubs! They purchased their home four years ago and it has been a work in progress since day one!

Please email me at judie@judie-richardson.com prior to Thursday, August 6th to reserve your spot for this exciting tour! Come, be inspired!

Judie Richardson-Loveless
Master Gardener 2008

Garden Letter



Salutation of the Dawn

August! The full heat of summer. Even early sun is warm and by noon it is shut-down time. Many plants stop what they are doing by 86 degrees. Their leaves fold or wilt and they take up survival mode. We need to take their advice. Don't forget your sunscreen and hat, keep hydrated, wear a cover-up, and seek shade during the hottest hours of the day. Early morning and twilight are good gardening times. It's mainly deadheading and general overlook, and the occasional sneaker weed.

August is a down time in the garden. The planting and heavy weeding are done. It is a good time to take a serious look at things. To see. A time to consider encouragement, replacement, moving, and additions. The bulb catalogs arrived in June, some say too early. The idea was to choose for next year when the blooms were still fresh in your mind. I filed mine for later reference, as the season was too demanding to consider them at that point. Maybe now in my shady spot I can consider what to do.

It is also a time to consider the water situation. Fix or plan for a more efficient usage. A number of extension pieces have been added in my garden to compensate for the second year growth of plants that have far outreached last year's size. It's a jungle this year. I'm pleased because that is what I wanted, but the demands for water delivery are different. A hot day is refreshing to check the system, running through the sprinklers like a child. Normally the water goes on at 3 or 4 a.m. when it is cool and quiet with little or no wind, allowing the plants a drink and time to dry off. That early is too early for checking water systems! But checking is something you need to do fairly often as adjustments are needed all summer, depending on the weather.

August is the beginning of harvest in the kitchen gardens. Most of the cool weather crops have folded. The tomatoes are coming on and it is time to close the car windows in North Carolina to prevent "squash front seat". It is exciting and delicious to eat home grown produce.

The Farmer's markets have grown in this area and we have several open on different days and times to make it easy to have the freshest produce available if you are not growing your own.

Is it always this way? Looking forward? Looking back? What's new? What's next? What was? How to fix it?. I have a saying that has been part of my life for many years that I try to live by. I read it often to remind myself. It is from the Sanskrit, also called The Salutation of the Dawn.

Look to this day, for it is life,

The very life of life.

In its course lie all of the realities
and truths of existence...

The joy of growth, the splendor
of beauty, the glory of action.

For yesterday is but a memory
and tomorrow is only a vision

But today well-lived makes every
yesterday a memory of happiness

And every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well, therefore, to this day!

August is a good month to focus on yesterdays and tomorrows in the garden. Our gardens feed our hunger and our souls. Today, well-lived, is a credo that is worth doing.

Our gardens at Extension are full and productive right now. The lavenders are in color.

Sharing garden produce is in full force. Even in our recession, there is a wealth of plenty.

Come enjoy the gardens at Extension.
You are always welcome.

Cora Lee
Master Gardener 1994

Fire 'n Ice



With August's sun braising the garden to a burnished ripeness, the blasting breath of a hot air balloon overhead momentarily reminds me of another such flamboyant sphere; the fiery winter radish.

If you've never tried winter radishes, you'll be delighted with an incredible new taste. Like fire n' ice, these babies are full of spicy sweetness with an icy-crisp crunch. Unlike their spring cousins these winter beauties may also grow to gargantuan balls. Some may be as large as a baseball, and consist of a variety of variegated colorations ranging from brilliant crimson, to white and green.

Although propagating winter radishes isn't very complicated, it can be a bit tricky because of the time they should be started in our area. With August's raging inferno outside, it's a challenge to germinate seeds. So the main ingredient for successful germination is finding a cooler location. Any shady spot or one that might receive afternoon shade (or creating one with shade cloth) is the first and most important ingredient.

Since radishes (especially the larger winter type) do best in loose soil so they can fatten up quickly, a well-prepared seedbed is worth the extra preparation time. Your labors will be rewarded with large, tender well-shaped roots rather than woody disfigured ones. Working in a good amount of well-rotted compost is the best as fresh manures or green fertilizer usually result in hotter radishes.

After preparing the seedbed, sow seed about ¼" deep and cover with fine compost or mulch. Water well with a weak solution of fish emulsion and kelp powder. Use shade cloth, or a winter weight floating row cover to keep soil cool enough to encourage sprouting. This protective covering also discourages those marauding travelers looking for a free meal.

Since radishes are shallow rooted, it's imperative that the soil stays consistently and continually moist. A soaker hose left on the most minimum ooze will do the job along with keeping the bed covered. Winter radishes sprout very quickly when content, so don't be surprised if you see little leaves popping up in a few days with these kinds of cooler moist conditions.

As soon as your seedlings are about ½" or so high, thin them promptly as they don't prefer crowded gatherings that may leave them in a pithy mood. The wide-open spacing will keep them sweet and tender. Encouraging rapid root growth also deters attacks by root maggots.

Although spring radishes are best when plucked at a small size, winter radishes aren't ready until similar roundness to that of a turnip or beet. Their exact size depends on the variety but when most are about 2½"-3" in diameter, they're large enough to graduate to your dinner plate.

By mid to late October, you should be able to start sampling your first winter radishes. Similar to turnips in exterior, their thin skins are best peeled, except for the Black Spanish whose ebony covering is quite edible. After a few frosts, you'll find winter radishes even sweeter. In fact, you can leave them in the ground and enjoy them throughout the winter months. Their crisp colorful spicy-sweet flesh will dazzle an appetizer, a salad as well cooked side dishes.

So if you're looking for a new late season taste sensation, as well a spectacular show of color, serve up some radiant spicy-sweet winter radishes.

Sydney Jordan Brown
Master Gardener 2000

Recipe:

Radish Marinade

2 cups (about 4) winter radishes thinly sliced

3 scallions, sliced

2 cloves garlic, peeled and pressed

1 TB grated fresh ginger root

¼ cup rice wine vinegar

2 TB honey

1 ½ TB sesame oil

1 TB tamari

Combine last six ingredients and mix well. Pour marinade over radishes and place in container with tight fitting lid. Shake until all is coated. Cover & refrigerate, marinating for at least 1 hour (longer is better). Use within a week.

Seed Sources:

Territorial Seeds
www.territorialseeds.com

Johnny's Selected Seeds
www.johnnyselectseeds.com

Seeds of Change
www.seedsofchange.com

HERBAN RENEWAL

Epazote (*Chenopodium ambrosioides*)



There are some flavors in the herb world that are either loved or hated such as cilantro and epazote. Since the taste of epazote is often described as "assertive" or "acquired," a warning culinary flag goes up, but with this herb there are additional flags. Keep reading.

Epazote, a hardy annual which sometimes behaves as a short-lived perennial, is native to Central and South America and the Caribbean. It is cultivated in this country, especially in Maryland, and in China. Although it likes sun and heat, it is very adaptable and often survives mild winters. It can grow under nearly all conditions and zones in soils ranging from pH 5.3 to 8.7 and tolerates drought conditions. In case you've missed it, this herb is often considered a weed. It reaches a height of 4 or 5 feet but should be pinched back for bushiness. It tends to sprawl, so is kept in an inconspicuous area of the garden—if kept in the garden at all! One plant is adequate.

Epazote resembles a small tree with its woody trunk and multi-branched stems. The narrow spear or lance shaped, dark green, sticky leaves are coarsely toothed and about 5 inches long; deep red blotches are sometimes found on both the leaves and stems. In summer the tiny yellowish green flowers appear in round clusters followed by a small, greenish brown, dry fruit which contains small black seeds. This member of the Chenopodiaceae family, which has about 150 species, self seeds readily with germination taking about 3 weeks. The seeds may be planted in either spring or fall but purchased seeds are not always viable. This herb grows well in average to poor soil and does not need fertilizer which may distort the shape of the leaves as well as reduce flavor. The odor of the plant leaves something to be desired; the smell has been described as pungent, acrid, strongly aromatic and like turpentine. Pests don't bother the herb—they don't like the smell. It is interesting to note that when epazote is dried it doesn't lose its pungency and cats react to it like catnip. Epazote is an allelopathic herb that can inhibit germination of nearby plants. Handling the plant can cause dermatitis and skin allergies.

The essential oil from epazote contains ascaridole which, though toxic, was used to treat a variety of ailments including stomach pains, colic, hemorrhoids, snakebite, insect bites, athlete's foot and asthma. It was used as an expectorant, antifungal, fumigant for

mosquitoes and as an addition to fertilizer to deter insect larvae. Its main use, however, was for the treatment of intestinal worms and parasites, in both animals and humans. Early settlers on the east coast used it to treat their children for worms. Epazote increases perspiration and relaxes spasms but, in excess, causes dizziness, vomiting, convulsions and death. Some countries have legal restrictions regarding this herb.

In spite of all the warnings, epazote is used for culinary purposes. The Mayans use the entire plant for flavoring and a pinch is popular in corn, seafood, soup, sauce, mushroom and especially bean dishes where it not only imparts a distinctive flavor, but is supposed to reduce flatulence. The herb was little known in this country until Diana Kennedy wrote The Cuisines of Mexico and called epazote "the accent herb of Mexico." More recently, epazote has been described as one of three "secret ingredients" of Mexican and Caribbean cooking; cilantro and cumin are the other two. Red flags are still out on this herb. Epazote does not have the GRAS (generally regarded as safe) designation and has the dubious honor of being listed in some of the classic poisonous plant books. Dr. Arthur Tucker, a highly respected herb expert, says, "This herb should not be consumed until further studies determine its safety."

Epazote has several common names such as American wormseed, Jesuit tea, Herba Sancti Mariae, Mexican tea, wormseed, Jerusalem oak and goosefoot. The genus name is derived from the Greek words *chen* and *pous*, which mean goose and foot, describing the leaf shape. The Spanish name, *epazote*, is derived from an Indian word for skunk. In spite of the smell, this plant has been used as fragrances for lotions, detergents, soaps and perfumes. Go figure!

Epazote is generally not found on the spice and herb shelves of grocery stores, although I recently saw it at Penzeys Spices and their information about it states, "Epazote is traditional for Mexican cooking, adding a sweet, mild flavor to each dish." In spite of that glowing mouth watering description, I'll take Dr. Tucker's advice when making my next Mexican meal.

Ellen Scannell
Master Gardener 1986

From the Window Seat

A Heritage of Flowers

"Old fashioned flowers for modern gardens" is the subtitle of this book by Tovah Martin, Gaia Books, Limited, London, 1999. Perhaps I was drawn to this ten year old book because many of my summer flowers are included in it.* I want to recommend it because these flowers have a timelessness that transcends trends, adding grace to any landscape. They often evoke memories from our childhoods in our grandma's gardens (1940's, Johnson Street, Decatur, IL!).

Many such flowers have gone out of fashion, replaced by newer versions which, however much improved, lack some of the essential qualities which made them popular in the first place: simpler forms, subtler colors, stronger scents, hardiness and resistance to insect damage.

Part One of this delightful publication is an excellent history of how and why these desirable flowers were first transported around the world. A section on propagation describes ways we can keep these treasures alive today. Part Two is a directory of about 80 heritage favorites. A brief history of the plant's origins, growing needs, and recommended varieties provide the specifics about each kind.

My four o'clocks, once known as 'marvels of Peru!' Nicotianas, were popular for their strong evening scent and their leaves ability to deter aphids. The source list, unfortunately, is for England only. Locally, I have found some heirloom flower seeds at nurseries. Select Seeds' catalogue specializes in a large variety of "heirloom treasures for modern gardens." Often those of us who grow some of these are eager to share seeds and cuttings. Four o'clocks anyone?

Mryl Bishop

Master Gardener 2000

**Normally, the books I review are new on the shelf and readily available at Barnes and Nobel or Bloomsbury's. Once in awhile, I recommend an older book like this one, which might be found in a used bookstore or at the library. If not, it is likely to be available at Amazon, Powell's or the ABE, Advanced Book Exchange, on line.*

Joanie Kintscher

Imagine an eight-year-old girl traveling alone by train from Oakland, California to Fresno so that she could spend time on a family friend's farm. Now imagine that girl helping the friends to grow cotton, melons, and alfalfa, as well as work with them in the vegetable garden.

Child labor? Hardly! To Joanie, it was heavenly fun. She grew up in urban Oakland, and first developed a love of the land and growing things while spending time with her grandfather on his farm in Lodi. She loved her time in Fresno so much, she managed to extend her summer visits a week at a time, until she asked if she could just stay and go to school there. After all, she had to tend to her own quarter-acre plot, which she had planted with zinnias.

But that dream didn't come true, and she returned to Oakland for school at the end of each summer. In high school, she met Paul. They attended the same college, married, and moved to their own 1.75 acre "farm" in Danville. There, they grew much of their own food. Their two children became active 4-H'ers, and Joanie and Paul were both 4-H leaders. Because her son chose to raise Angora goats, Joanie learned to spin and work with animal fibers.

The family moved to Napa, to share an 8.5 acre property with her parents, plus a sister and her family. Joanie's interest and skill in fiber arts grew, and she taught in this field at Napa Valley Community College. Classes were held at the family farm for as many as 50 students a week. They raised alpacas, sheep, rabbits and Angora goats to provide fiber for the classes, plus continuing to run a sustainable farm. Joanie also shared her fiber and gardening expertise with the local Waldorf Community. In 2000, Joanie became a California Master Gardener.

After the death of her parents, and the sister and family relocated, the Kintschers moved to the Rogue Valley to be halfway between their daughter in California, and their son, who is with the Eugene Symphony.



Joanie Kintscher

On their 1.75 acre place in Jacksonville, the Kintschers raise vegetables and flowers, enjoy their 80-year-old house, and Joanie continues her interest in fiber arts. She has just been elected to the Board of Directors of the Ashland Co-op, which provides an outlet for her interest in sustainable living.

She's also a Mentor in the Kitchen Garden, serves on the Social Committee, and is in charge of *Garden Guide* sales.

Carol Oneal

Master Gardener 2002

(substituting for Margaret Mack)

Membership Changes

Please add:

Marilyn Moore
596½ Helman Street
Ashland, OR 97520
(541) 488-2629
chefmare@mind.net

Contact Changes:

Phillip White
c/o Law Office of
Amrit Sidhu
PO Box 2839
White City, OR 97503

If any of your contact information changes, please notify Judy Williams at notimeflat@apbb.net or 846-6722. Thank you.

Learn how to live more responsibly

ON THE LAND

This 10-week course provides training for 40 southern Oregon residents on topics such as local ecology, tree care, fire hazard reduction, pasture management, biomass utilization, maintaining and improving water quality, dealing with noxious weeds, encouraging wildlife on your property, and more

Deadline to register:
August 24, 2009

Program Dates:
Sept 9–Nov 23

For more information and applications, call
541-776-7371

Classes in August

Mention the title "Wildflower Lady" and who comes to mind? **Lillian Maksymowicz**, of course! And it's a well-earned title. Besides being a member of the Jackson County Master Gardener Association, a past presenter at the Winter Dreams Summer Gardens Symposium, and the head gardener of the Wildflower Garden at the OSU Extension, Lillian also pursues her lifelong passion by being a member of the California Native Plant Society, the Native Plant Society of Oregon, the North American Rock Garden Society, and the Alpine Garden Society (UK). She leads numerous wildflower hikes in Southern Oregon and Northern California, presents at local garden clubs and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at SOU, and has participated in numerous wildflower tours in the U.S., Europe, Asia, Central and South America.

Lillian will be presenting again for JCMGA on the evening of **August 6 (7:00–9:00)** in the **OSU Extension Auditorium**. She will be speaking on **Wildflowers in the Home Garden**. Master Gardeners wearing their badges will be admitted free. Others who attend will be charged \$5. Refreshments will be served.

Jane Moyer
Master Gardener 2005



OUR WRITERS SPEAK UP!

The *Garden Beet* writers want to know what **YOU** want to read about! If you have any topics you would like to know more about, or if you just want to tell the writers how much you enjoy their column, find their name and contact information in this year's membership directory and let them know!

FFEV Classes for August and September

Jackson County Family Food Education Volunteers will offer three classes during August and September.

Both these classes will be held at the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point OR 97503.

Cost is \$10.00 per class. These will not be hands-on classes but participants will take home instructions and recipes.

For registration call the Southern Oregon Research and Extension Service, 541-776-7371.

Low and No Sugar Preserving

Tuesday August 18, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Instructor: Jackie Greer

Many of us are cutting back on sugar due to diabetes or just wanting to stay healthy. Come learn when it's safe to cut back on sugar in preserving and when it is not. Learn about pectins and methods for safely cutting back.

Tomatoes and Salsa (including fruit salsa)

Tuesday September 29, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Come learn safe techniques for preserving your tomato bounty. Tomatoes are considered borderline in acidity, so learn how to compensate for that. Come learn how to safely preserve tomatoes in combination with other ingredients such as peppers, onions, and fruits.



Five inches of rich purple per flower and twelve flowers on a young Clematis jackmanii. A summertime favorite." Photo submitted by Myrl Bishop, MG 2000

Apprenticeship Program Goes to Mini-College

The Apprentice Program was submitted to OMGA this year for recognition with the Marje Luce Search for Excellence Program. Great News!! Along with five other programs on various topics submitted by Master Gardener chapters in the state, we were judged to have an "Excellent" program.

With the wonderful help of our Head Gardeners, our Apprentice Program allows gardeners to learn more about a specific garden as they work together. After the required 12 hours are fulfilled, gardeners have the option of moving on to another area to enjoy a different kind of gardening and meet a new group of people. Or, they may stay in the same garden and perhaps, in time, become a Head Gardener themselves.

This same idea applies to the "administrative" side of JCMGA. Master Gardeners may apprentice in various positions at Spring Fair, on the *Beet* staff, or on any one of our several committees that keeps our organization going.

We will have a few minutes at Mini-College on August 7th to explain how the Apprentice Program works and how other counties can integrate it into their Master Gardener programs.

This is a good time to think about what your needs may be for next year and fill out a request form for your particular area, social events or garden. Forms are available from Judy Wallace, your water and iced tea lady on Wednesdays.

Good Job Everyone !!

Judy Wallace

*Apprentice Program Chair
Master Gardener 2007*

Master Gardener Profile

Chris Alvarez

As a child, Chris lived in Portland. His memories include having a large garden, his mother canning lots of the harvest, and getting his first love of the land from his dad, who worked on a dairy and turkey farm.

In his early teens, Chris moved to San Mateo, California with his mother. He lost touch with gardening at that point, and became immersed in sports. In high school, he became interested in food preparation, and wanted to become a chef. In Junior College, he pursued Culinary Arts, and landed a job on the San Francisco wharf, preparing seafood.

From that point, it was onward and upward, working for the Hilton Hotel in many locations in the U. S. and overseas. He returned to California, where he was an Executive Chef for several years. His wife was with a large oil company, so life was on the fast track.

Then life changed dramatically. On September 11, 2001, Chris was on a plane bound for Texas. He was going to a wedding; his wife was at home with what was thought to be a non-serious case of pneumonia. Without explanation, Chris's plane landed at the nearest airport, and passengers learned from the terminal's TV what had happened on the East Coast.

Chris rented a car, went to the wedding, then learned that his wife had taken a turn for the worse and was hospitalized. Since no planes were flying, he drove back to California to find his wife in a life-threatening situation. She survived, but their experiences caused them to re-evaluate their priorities, and ask whether they were doing what really mattered to them. Their answer was "No", and they decided to quit their jobs, find a dream property, and become more others-centered.

They considered Portland, New Zealand, Honduras, and other places, but ended up on a neglected property in Jackson County in 2002, with their dogs, 90-year-old tortoise and pet alligator. Their first garden, dug by hand, yielded 2500 pounds of vegetables, 98% of which was donated to ACCESS.



Chris Alvarez

Each year has yielded more vegetables—last year, they donated 5000 pounds to food banks and charitable organizations. Chris has 300 tomato plants in the ground this year, and hopes for an even bigger yield. He's putting forth a challenge to all Master Gardeners to raise some food to donate to others. You can tell him if you're taking up the challenge when you see him preparing the food for our annual picnic and BBQ on August 29!

Oh, yes, and in his spare time, Chris has planted a 2-acre orchard, which he'd be delighted to have used as a teaching tool for Master Gardeners.

Carol Oneal

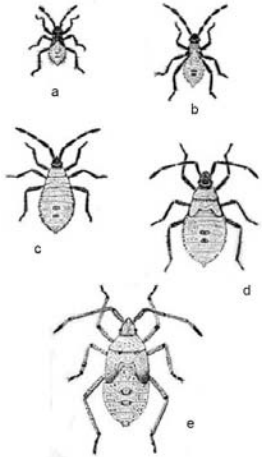
Master Gardener 2002

*(substituting for
Margaret Mack)*

Squash Bugs



Adult *Anasa tristis*



Life cycle of the squash bug



Anasa tristis adults cover a pumpkin and will over-winter to produce next year's generation



Leaf damage caused by feeding nymphs and adults

Hot weather during the last week of June brought with it a familiar pest to gardeners—squash bugs. A true bug of the Hemiptera order, squash bugs (*Anasa tristis*) are a common pest in the garden. Using their piercing mouth parts to feed, the squash bug weakens plants by causing leaf necrosis and scarred fruit. Heavy infestations of squash bugs will cause a plant to loose runners, wilt and in some cases, die. Hiding under debris in sheltered garden spots they emerge in the spring to mate and find a place to lay eggs. Damage is limited to members of the curcubit family such as summer and winter squash, melons and pumpkins. They are difficult to control using chemical means as the bugs and egg masses are difficult to reach. The best control is achieved through cultural practices and garden sanitation. Knowing the life cycle of the insect is most important for control.

LIFE CYCLE: The first sign of an infestation is the discovery of mating adults scurrying around the base of the plant. Destroy any that are found before they have the opportunity to lay eggs on the plant leaves as the female is capable of laying up to 250 eggs a year. Squash Bug eggs are red to rust colored and about 1–2 cms long and are usually found in groups ranging from 10 to 30 on the undersides of leaves. The eggs will hatch about a week or two later into nymphs which are wingless, have blacklegs, and are covered with a white powder. They grow rapidly, feeding on plant juices and, after several moltings, emerge as adults. The average time from egg to adult is four to six weeks. Each bug has one generation a year with the offspring over-wintering to lay eggs the following spring.

CONTROL: Inspect plants often for signs of squash bugs. The easiest and most cost effective control method starts at the beginning of the life cycle.



Anasa tristis eggs



Nymphs covering a squash blossom

* Egg casings are fairly easy to spot. The reddish color of the eggs is distinct against the leaf and are easy to dislodge. Pick off and destroy egg masses as soon as you see them. If eggs are left to develop they will hatch and feed on plant juices.

* Handpick and destroy adults. For easy disposal, take a container of soapy water into the garden with you in which to drop the adults. Place boards or shingles randomly in the garden for adults to use for nighttime shelter. Check in the morning and handpick or vacuum any found hiding under the board.

* Use a trellis for vines to help keep the plants off the ground and less accessible to the insect.

* Row covers early in the season while the plants are young and do not need pollinators will deter the adults from laying eggs. The plants will establish their root system and be stronger if they are attacked. Remove the row covers once the plants begin to bloom.

* Encourage the parasitic tachinid fly, which lays its eggs on the undersides of squash bugs. The fly is attracted to small flowers so let broccoli or kale flower. Other plants that encourage the fly are alyssum, daisies, dill and mustard greens and other members of the *Brassica* family. Buckwheat is another proven food source for the fly and organic farmers plant it amongst squash vines.

* Diatomaceous Earth, clay sprays and Neem oil have had limited success—handpicking and prevention is the most effective method for eliminating squash bugs

* Plant more resistant squash varieties such as *Early Summer Crookneck*, *Improved Green Hubbard* or *Butternut*. Squash bugs prefer pumpkins and squash but will attack all other cucurbits.

Wendy Purslow

Master Gardener 2006

Splinters from the Board

Jackson County Master Gardener Association Board of Directors Meeting – July 1, 2009

Officers' Reports.

Present-Elect (Ron Bombick). President Rollin Mack and Margaret, after good treatment results, are now waiting for her health to improve enough for a bone marrow transplant! Good news! The brochures with the updated extension map and the reprinted Garden Guide will be available for the Jackson County Fair and the Extension Open House. The Trees & Shrubs Garden Guide group decided to dedicate the book to Marjorie Luce. She served as OMGA President, plant clinic program coordinator, as well as in several other areas. Miriam Hawk, the recipient of the JCMGA Scholarship this year, will be invited to this year's Banquet as an Honored Guest, along with her parents, in lieu of attending the BBQ.

Treasurer (Jim Scannell). Jim Scannell distributed the financial report for June. Financial assets at the end of the month were as follows: CD's—\$61,299.31; Checking—\$34,047.75; Savings—\$53.22; Petty Cash/ Prepaid Postage—\$144.94; Total—\$95,545.22.

OSU Extension Agent (Bob Reynolds). Elderhostel, a tour program for people over 50, is developing a program for the Rogue Valley next year. It will concentrate on growing plants with grandparents and grandchildren. Know anyone who would like to become a Master Gardener? Refer them to Bob at the Extension office. Most new students come from personal recommendations. The Extension table needs to fill a couple of spots at the Jackson County Fair on July 21–26.

OMGA Representative (Bill Hunt). OMGA held their June 6th meeting in Gold Beach. OMGA has developed a brochure to highlight statewide activities. OMGA will pay for the new PNW insect handbook for all chapters. The Search for Excellence awards will be shown at Mini College, including Community Gardens, Planting a 'Hell Strip', Celebrating Seeds, and our own Apprentice Program. The last *Gardener's Pen* printing was askew on addresses and the upside down inside portion of the newsletter. Distribution via

email was discussed. In addition, this year's JCMGA class did not get incorporated into the mailing list and, therefore, members did not receive copies. The dues for 2010 will stay the same.

Committee Reports.

Gardens and Grounds (Nathan Swofford). Sam Ward has put in an official request for a new chipper/shredder for the Compost Garden. Discussion included many areas of concern, primarily the liability issues of injury and cost. Richard Brewer and Ron Bombick have come up with 3 specific areas to cover:

1. Safety equipment, covering eyes, ears and a ventilator
2. Liability statement and hospital emergency plan

Minimum of 3 people trained for such equipment

Jody Willis suggested the use of a rental machine. The possibility of a joint purchase with Hanley Farms was suggested. It was agreed that Nathan, who will be gone until the middle of August, should look for a chipper/shredder, reporting back to the Board.

Apprentice Program (Judy Wallace). We are allowed 5 minutes to present our Apprentice Program at Mini College's Search for Excellence. The Open House is scheduled for September 12th. Stan Mapolski, the Rogue Gardener, will be there again. It is the same weekend as the Jacksonville Yard Sale.

Greenhouse (Ken Thompson). Ken reported that the Greenhouse and the Prop House are both in sad disrepair. He would like money allocated to repair or replace both.

Past President (Barb Davidson). (Ron Bombick reporting.) Eleven Mini College scholarships have been requested. Jane Moyer is updating the poster board that we take to fairs and other public gatherings to advertise JCMGA.

Garden Beet (Carol Oneal). July's *Garden Beet* will be a bit late as Cheryl has a broken foot. Everyone wished her well.

Gramma's Garden (Jody Willis). Jody submitted her resignation effective immediately and said thank you to everyone. She said that Sharon Maurin, Janet Rantz and Carolyn Trottman will co-chair Gramma's Garden next year. Bob Reynolds said that Jody brought an 'educational component' to the program and really made our program shine. Well done, Jody!

Winter Dreams (Janet Rantz). Winter Dreams is scheduled for November 7, 2009, at the RCC/SOU campus with a registration fee of \$40.00. There will be a 'box lunch' buffet this year and there is no parking limit on Saturday.

A request Ron asked for volunteers for the Awards Committee. Suggestions for awards may be submitted via email or regular mail with a short explanation as to 'why' the award should be given. He also asked for nominating committee volunteers. A president-elect is especially needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

Judy Wallace
Acting Recording Secretary
Master Gardener 2007

**JACKSON COUNTY
MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION**
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Master Gardener
Picnic and BBQ
August 29

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Wednesday, August 5

Board Meeting, 9:30–Noon

Thursday, August 6

Wildflowers in the Home Garden

7:00–9:00pm

—Lillian Maksymowicz, Master Gardener

Saturday, August 29

Master Gardener Annual Picnic and Barbecue

—Extension Arboretum

Thursday, September 10

Feng Shui in the Garden

7:00–9:00pm

—Bonnie Bayard, Landscape Architect

Saturday, September 12

OSU Open House

Thursday, October 13

Growing Berries in the Rogue Valley

7:00–9:00pm

—George Tiger, retired OSU Extension Agent

Saturday, November 7

Winter Dreams/Summer Gardens Symposium

RCC/SOU Higher Education Center

Tuesday, November 10

Managing Weeds Around Your Home

7:00–9:00pm

—Bob Reynolds, Master Gardener Advisor

Tuesday, December 8

Maintaining a Home Greenhouse

7:00–9:00pm

—Don Shaffer, Master Gardener



OSU Open House
September 12

*Qualifies for recertification
Unless noted, all classes will be held in the Extension Center

JCMGA website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/mg/>