

# Garden Beet

Newsletter of the Jackson County Master Gardener™ Association • May 2010

## Designing a Cottage Garden



Cottage gardens are gardens of simplicity. They were originally farmyard gardens, owned and grown by the housewife, jumbles of plants that could be grown from seed collected and kept and shared with neighbors and friends. There were no fancy plants from nurseries. These were gardens of the common folk. And common folk loved to fill their garden with a riot of color.

These gardens weren't graphically designed in subtle shades of colors chosen to match the draperies. Well-loved plants were all tossed into a small patch of ground to thrive and survive, tightly packed together to get as many plants into as small a space as possible. That's what gives the "look" to a cottage garden. It's that jumble of blooms and leaves, that unkempt look with every plant loved and treasured but allowed to express itself.

There are some well-kept secrets about cottage gardens.

**Fact one:** Cottage gardens came to us from England and they were modeled after the gardens of the poor.

**Fact two:** These gardens were not

designed. They grew unplanned.

**Fact three:** Any plant the gardener could find, scrounge, or exchange was used. There were no plant lists. These people struggled to eat; they didn't have time to collect coordinating annuals and perennials.

**Fact four:** There wasn't much space for ornamental gardens because most of the land was used for food production so the family could eat. The plants in the cottage gardens were tucked in as closely together as the poor housewife could get them and they grew into a mad profusion of blooming wonder.

**Fact five:** Cottage gardens were "adopted" as a style by designers who "gentrified" and "civilized" it into designs and color-coordinated plans to sell to their richer clients. Eventually, middle-class gardeners adopted this garden trend and the so-called "cottage garden" was born.

So, if you want to create a cottage garden, you're as capable of doing it as anybody else. There are no magic plans for a cottage garden. Each garden is tailored to and by the owner. Each garden is designed to fit the needs and budget of the owner and each and every one of us can create one.

If there is one rule for succeeding with a cottage garden design, it would be to plant things a little closer together than recommended. The plants will grow up together quicker, there will be less bare ground and the garden will be full faster. One additional suggestion, get rid of the lawn and widen your beds so there are no bare spaces in the garden. Plant every bit of space

with as narrow pathways as you can tolerate. You can create a magical cottage garden by simply going into your garden and growing the plants you love. Grow a little bit of everything in the same garden and add a ton of annual seed to give that overflowing look.

**Grow the most fragrant roses** you can find. Use them as background plants and as climbers on fences and wherever you can fit them. Put clematis on fences and let it wander and grow up and over taller perennials and the roses. It's hard to imagine a cottage garden without delphiniums and the more lilies the better. Be sure to include some lavender. Beebalm is one of the classic cottage garden plants. And every garden had as many phlox as possible and hollyhock scattered throughout.

Plant annual seeds, such as asters and zinnias, between the perennials. Use big tall ones. Cosmos is a self-sowing annual that is almost a must in any cottage garden plan. Baby's breath is easy to grow from seed and wonderful for cutting and drying. When the perennials are finished blooming, the annuals will announce their presence.

And after those, you simply add the plants you enjoy in whatever color you like. It's a cottage garden---it's about a riot of color and enjoying what comes along!

Read more: <http://www.gardening-tips-perennials.com/cottage-garden-plants.html#ixzzojcXSa7Kj>

**Jane Moyer**  
*Master Gardener 2005*

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Consider the many special delights a lawn affords: soft mattress for a creeping baby; worm hatchery for a robin; croquet or badminton court; baseball diamond; restful green perspectives leading the eye to a background of flower beds, shrubs, or hedge; green shadows - *"This lawn, a carpet all alive, with shadows flung from leaves - as changing and as spellbinding as the waves of the sea, whether flecked with sunlight under trees of light foliage, like elm and locust, or deep, dark, solid shade, moving slowly as the tide, under maple and oak. This carpet!"*  
- Katharine S. White, *Onward and Upward in the Garden, 1979*

I like my lawn. There - I admit it. And I'm not getting rid of it.

Some days in Master Gardener country, I feel guilty that I have a lawn. We have programs and talks about lawn alternatives, edible landscapes, lawn removal, and the water, fertilizer and pesticide sins of lawns. We even refer to it as "the L word". When did my lawn become profane? I worry we'll get to the point of having to hide my secret lawn behind a high fence or a visual screen of corn plants.

But nothing else that grows will take the foot abuse of a lawn. Lawns are great for playing ball, running through sprinklers and having a grandkid picnic. Lawns set off borders, shrubs and trees. (Can you have a border without the lawn to border?) And I just like the way grass looks.

I'm not taking it anymore. And I suspect some of you share my lawn love. Not a lot of lawn, mind you. And certainly not a perfect lawn, either, but a sustainable lawn; a lawn in concert with the sustainable gardening approach advocated by Master Gardener training. That is, one that minimizes inputs of energy, pesticides and fertilizers. One that is mostly self-sustaining. One that isn't "perfect", but meets the use and aesthetic goals I've set. And one that recognizes that we must reduce our use of irrigation water and our carbon footprint.

If you are, like me, a secret lawn lover, there are ways to do it sustainably. I'll write about that next month. This month, my grandson wants me to play catch on the lawn.

**Bob Reynolds**  
*OSU Agent*  
*Master Gardener 2005*

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# President's Message

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It was, once again, a fabulously successful Spring Fair. Many thanks to all of you who worked on the committees, in Gramma's Garden, the greenhouse, and at the Expo Center. Special thanks go to Maryen Herrett, Trisha Mullinix, and Mel Harder for their efforts in organizing and running this outstanding show. The quality of the Fair never ceases to amaze me. All of our members should have a great deal of pride in an event that was both classy and well done.

May is a special time at the Extension Center. Our demonstration gardens are in full bloom, and prettier than ever. If you get a chance, come out to the Extension Center and see what your fellow Master Gardeners have been doing. If you find a garden that you particularly like, and want to learn more about it, you can become an apprentice in that garden. The head gardeners always need more help. There seems to be a misconception in the organization that an apprentice must be someone from the current class who is putting in his or her volunteer hours to qualify for their orange badge. But that isn't the case. The Apprentice Program was created to provide educational opportunities for all members, manpower for the head gardeners, and a means to a maintain interest, as well as the retention of our seasoned veterans. So come on out, look over the gardens, and become involved.

**Ron Bombick, President**  
*Master Gardener 2006*



*A Farewell to Clarence Wood*

## Garden Tour Garden Tour Update

With all the rollercoaster weather we have been having lately, it was a real treat to have such a beautiful day for our first garden tour of the year!

Over 30 of us met bright and early this morning and were treated to some pretty spectacular gardens (and I only managed to get us lost once!!!!) Our first stop was to the delightful garden of Bill Coleman and Dale Wessels. Meanderings gravel paths take you through closely planted beds of beautiful shapes and textures featuring a variety of blooms and leaf colors. You will find a beautiful selection of Japanese Maples placed in pots around the garden. An Italian fountain provides a focal point and things just expanded from there. Beautiful 'garden rooms' add to the ambiance of this garden retreat. Truly, it is a garden you can easily spend a day, or a lifetime, enjoying! Thank you Bill and Dale for allowing us the opportunity to share in your creation!

Next stop was the jaw dropping garden of Roger and Fran Hutchings. Here, we found an array of rock gardens crammed with drought-tolerant alpine plants and wildflowers. There are over 100 different species of penstemons in and around the garden! Sometimes called a crevice garden, plants thrive in a mixture of pumice, fine gravel and decomposed bark and, of course, rocks! Also of note were the 35 year old camellia and Rhododendron planted by the front door—just spectacular! Clearly, a 'nirvana'! Thank you Roger and Fran!

Next up (and this is where I blew it trying to find this garden, even though I had been there a couple of months before!) was the delightful garden of Sandi and Gary Whittle.

What a view from this vantage point! Sandi has done most of the planting and selection herself and loves variety which is evident throughout. We delighted in the koi pond and got to meet her beloved 'Gilligan' who came for a pet and some treats! Beautiful Japanese maples line the backside of the pond and create a beautiful backdrop to all the koi! Thank you Sandi for being such a delightful hostess and sharing your wonderful garden!

Next tour will be Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, when we will go to Eagle Point to view the Pipal garden. Much of their 20 acres remain in its natural state, with pines, oak, madrones and grasses. The developed garden includes 146 roses of all kinds, lilacs, rhodies, viburnum, dianthus, flowering trees, a koi pond adjacent to the natural swimming pool and waterfall and so much more! You won't want to miss it!

All I can say is that it is a good thing that I have found so many inspiring gardens to tour! ...Something has to make up for my lack of direction!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Judie Richardson-  
Loveless**  
*Master Gardener 2008*

# Garden Letter



Until my sister asked to read some of my old Garden Letters, I hadn't realized they told stories of my life, as she said! As I re-read them, I could see what she was saying. In general, my reasons for writing letters to you is to tell you about gardening at Extension, or about things that happen there. I try to add interesting bits of information I have come across that seem to want to be shared.

Gardening has been part of my life all of my life. My grandparents, who came to this valley in the early 20's, were gardeners. Grandpa gardened on a 3-acre piece on Poplar Drive in the late '40s and sold produce and fruit to supplement his retirement.

I remember long straight rows guided by string, and water from the irrigation ditches on special days. We raced the water down the rows when it was ditch day. And of course there were wonderful meals of corn or green beans and cornbread for lunch. My Mama worked full time, so summers and after school we were often at our Grandparents'. I don't recall being asked to work in the garden, as Grandpa was very serious about his garden. Grandma welcomed us when we asked.

Mama gardened too, but different than Grandpa. Soft flowing lines of flowering shrubs and perennials. There was always something blooming in our tiny yard on Grape Street. It was her pleasure and joy and enjoyed by all who passed by.

I took this time to remember, prompted by an excerpt found in the April issue of *Country Living* magazine. In a memoir, [Gardening for A Lifetime](#), by Sydney Eddison, copyright 2010 Timber Press, she speaks of her gardening life. She is aging, and finds her lifelong garden is more than she can physically handle. I connected, and know there are other Master Gardeners facing the same situation.

Gardens change and so do we. I am currently making some adjustments in the Wanda Hauser garden that have led to removal of overgrown plants, and am trying to figure out how to replace them or change the design. This article prompted me to again review my garden at home, too. You will recall from past letters that we have moved several times since returning to Oregon. We've gone from

generous land to smaller land, and we're now in town on a small corner lot, all prompted by life and health changes and aging. Still we garden.

I can see the excitement and energy in this year's new class. I am envious. My Mama used to say, "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak". I understand what she meant more clearly every day.

All this remembering has prompted me to consider just how we can continue gardening as we age. How shall we prepare for the day when we cannot continue with the same activity level? Can we reduce our gardening area? If not, how can we change it so we can manage? Can we afford help? Can we find plants that don't have to be staked or deadheaded? Substitute shrubs? Perhaps we will only be able to garden with our magazines and books. I hope not, but if it comes to that, I will, as I love reading about the plants and gardeners who write their stories.

Those new young class members may also want to pause before jumping in with both feet to consider the size and content of their gardens, as the years pass by so quickly. Fortunately, as we change, so do the gardens, and there will be opportunities to fine-tune our gardens to express our interests and our abilities.

One of the advantages of the Apprentice Program is the help in the gardens. We really do appreciate the help. We need fresh enthusiasm and we can share experiences and learn things together. Besides the help, we look for commitment. You don't have to be a new class member to be an apprentice. Maybe you have more time and interest to spend now, so come on out on Wednesday morning and ask to join in. We want new people who are willing to advance the gardens into the future. Some of us have been doing this a long time now. The gardens are shared with all who come to the Extension buildings and grounds; we hope they can see how things grow, what they look like, and what will grow well in this valley. The gardens extend all of our learning experiences and bring joy and nourishment to our souls.

Come visit the gardens. You are welcome.

**Cora Lee**  
*Master Gardener 1994*

# Digging for Gold



There's nothing more exciting than unearthing golden treasures tucked deep within their earthly hold. And there's nothing better than sharing such "sweets" from the soil of your own garden.

Who'd guess that such could come from only a mere slip of a plant? But a slip is all it takes to start *Ipomoea batatas*, the rich reddish-orange fleshed root related to the American morning glory.. Although its appearance is likened to that of the yam, the sweet potato's frequent mislabeling in the produce section of markets is its only tie to the true yam that grows in its native subtropics of Africa.

Despite their more hardy nature, sweet potatoes are frost sensitive. Mid May is the best time to set out slips in this area. Even with our borderline length of growing season, there are varieties that will mature by harvest time.

First you need slips. These are sprouts that have come from the original tuber. You can start them yourself, but you're likely to get a much better crop purchasing disease resistant slips from a reputable nursery.

To get a head start with sturdier plants, acquire slips towards the latter part of April (2-3 wks prior to last killing frost). Plant in 4" pots filled with a good organic potting soil. Moisten well with a weak solution of 1 part fish fertilizer/2 parts kelp powder. Keep evenly moistened in a warm well-lit location.

Sweet potatoes tend to sprawl engulfing all within their reach. You'll need to select a generous space where their tender vines and roots have ample room and won't be disturbed. This might mean temporarily rerouting your canine's regular racecourse

routine, but they usually understand when offered a share in the harvest's spoils.

While you're waiting for the soil to warm, fork in a generous amount of compost and an extra helping of bone meal. A raised bed adorned with black or green mulch film makes the most ideal planting space. If you don't have a raised area, slips can be placed in 12" deep trenches where soil is "hilled up", (leave 10-12" stem exposed), as they grow. For confined spaces, cultivate in large-deep containers, such as half whiskey barrels or trough planters. Whatever your space, it should be one that receives full sun.

After the last killing frost, and the soil is at least 55°, you can put slips out. Cut openings in plastic about 16" apart, or directly in trenches, place rooted slips. Cover with soil leaving 12" of plant exposed.

Side dress vines with a well-balanced organic fertilizer or rich compost that's not high in nitrogen, unless you're seeking leaf propagation instead of root production. Water well.

Vines should receive a generous 1" of water about once a week. Feed again in July. Although relatively pest free, you'll need to remove weeds until a sufficient shade snuffs them out beneath its vining canopy.

Discontinue watering mid August to discourage root cracking. About 90-100 days after planting, sweet potatoes should be ready to harvest. After it cools in autumn, but before a frost, carefully loosen soil starting about 18" from center of plant. Gently remove roots without scarring them.

Brush excess soil from skins then cure in a warm-dry area about 10 days in 70% humidity. Remaining soil may be gently rubbed off but do not wash roots. Store at 50-60°.

## Sources:

[www.territorialseeds.com](http://www.territorialseeds.com)  
Georgia Jet Sweet potato slips, 80-90 days maturing  
Black, green and biodegradable mulch films

**Sydney Jordan Brown**  
*Master Gardener 2000*

## Recipe:

### Chile Roasted Sweets

4 sweet potatoes, washed, cut in half crosswise then in 1/2" lengthwise wedges

1 TB extra virgin olive oil

3 cloves garlic, pressed

1/2 tsp Kosher salt

ground sweet and chipotle chili powder

Mix oil with garlic and salt then set aside.

Steam potatoes or cook in microwave until slightly tender. Do not overcook.

Preheat oven to 400°.

Gently toss potato wedges with oil mixture then sprinkle with desired amount of chili powders.

Roast on oiled foil-covered heavy roasting pan for about 20 minutes until edges start to brown and wedges are soft.

Serve immediately.

About 4-6 servings

# HERBAN RENEWAL

## Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*)



At the moment, I'm unable to think of many gentlemen in the herb garden but I come up with several ladies including Lady's mantle, Lady's smock and Lady's bedstraw.

Lady's bedstraw, a hardy perennial that grows to Zone 3, is mostly seen along roadsides and dry grasslands as well as stream banks throughout western continental Europe, the coastal areas of Great Britain, southern Canada and the eastern and northern portions of the United States. (In some areas of the eastern United States it's even considered a weed. Imagine that!) The herb grows to a height of one to three feet but generally ends up sprawling into a rather tangled mass. It prefers a deep rather rich well-drained soil of neutral to slightly alkaline pH and grows best in sun or light shade. If it likes where it's growing, it can be invasive. The pale green leaves are narrow and from one half to an inch long with bristles on the tips and with slightly hairy undersides. The leaves grow from the nearly square somewhat woody stems in whorls much like sweet woodruff or madder. The flowers which appear in midsummer are bright yellow and honey scented. The small flowers in panicles are attractive and give the plant a delicate and airy appearance in the herb garden. The fruit has two lobes with two seeds which, after scarification, can be planted in the spring or fall. A faster method of propagation is to divide the underground slender runners and plant them. The herb has never been cultivated on a large scale and is now grown mostly for historical interest and craft purposes.

Lady's bedstraw shares many traits with sweet woodruff and madder; all are members of the Rubiaceae family. Lady's bedstraw is a dye plant like madder and when four to six ounces of the thin roots are boiled for two hours in a gallon of water a variety of colors ranging from coral to red to plum can be obtained depending upon the mordant used. The dye has been used for many purposes; perhaps the most interesting is the American Indians used it to dye porcupine quills. The flowers also produce a yellow dye which I'll refer to later. Lady's bedstraw, like sweet woodruff, contains the chemical coumarin in its leaves, which is an anti-coagulant and has a vanilla or new-mown hay smell when the plant is dried. This pleasant aroma led to important uses as a strewing herb. One folklore story says that the plant, one of the "Cradle Herbs," originally had a white flower

but, when Mary used it in the Christ child's bed, the flowers turned yellow so the herb became known as Our Lady's bedstraw.

Another, somewhat more prosaic, story tells us that the name derives from women of rank using it for stuffing mattresses. It is still used to stuff herb pillows and Cyrus Hyde of Well Sweep Herb Farm in New Jersey claims that the heat of a person's head helps release the soothing vapors. Lady's bedstraw has a reputation as a soporific i.e. sleep inducer.

This herb has been called cheese rennet or renning for good reason. A decoction of the whole plant (sometimes with the addition of stinging nettle juice) acts as rennet to curdle milk in cheese making and the dye from the flowers gives the cheese a yellow color. The dye was also added to butter. At one time the flowering tips were distilled with water to produce an acidic liquor which was supposed to be a pleasant summer drink. Doesn't sound very good to me!

Lady's bedstraw has had a few other names. It has been called maid's hair attributed to the saying prevalent in early Tudor times; "maydens did wear silken callis to keep in order their hayre made yellow with dye." It has also been called yellow bedstraw and the comical name petty mugget from the French petit muguet or little dandy. The name Galium may be derived from galion, a plant mentioned by Dioscorides as being suitable for curdling milk. On the other hand it may be from the Greek word, gala, or milk. Verum means true.

And, oh yes, Lady's bedstraw has been used medicinally for epilepsy, hysteria, and the treatment of gravel, stone and urinary diseases as well as gout. The red dye has been used as a styptic which leads me into the theory of the Doctrine of Signatures. Early herbalists thought that if a plant resembled some part of the body, in form or color, it should be used to treat maladies located in that part of the body. Thus, a red dye would stop either external or internal bleeding.

This is belied by the presence of coumarin, an anticoagulant. So much for the Doctrine of Signatures!

This lady, sans bedstraw, wishes each of you ladies a Happy Mother's Day.

**Ellen Scannell**  
Master Gardener 1986

## Book Review

# From the Window Seat

## *Peonies* by Allan Rogers

If you have yet to succumb to full-blown 'peony lust', *Peonies* by Allan Rogers may send you right on over the precipice. It is not the photography (although the photos are very nice), but it's the well-written celebration of these remarkable plants which makes the reader appreciate this remarkable plant, a true horticulture giant.

Rogers devotedly describes the attributes of peonies: colorful, bold foliage ideal for filling in after the fade of spring bulbs, the magnificent blossoms of the 3000 cultivars, a range of 5 distinct fragrances, drought and deer resistance and, most of all, longevity.

The history of the group is fascinating, too, starting with the namesake, Paion, a young physician in Ancient Greek mythology, who knew all the herbal remedies available to the gods. Since 200 B.C., peonies have been cultivated by the Chinese for alleviating 20 medical ills. The modern commercial success of the group stems (pardon the pun) from its amazing endurance as a cut flower in the bud stage in cold storage, opening out weeks later when put in warm water.

Rogers continues with chapters on 150 proven varieties and ones likely to be desirable in the future, their hybridization being a slower process than with many other plants. There are other chapters on breeders, cultivation, propagation, commercial production and international sources round out the book.

If you can't find a place for a peony of your own in May and June, look for locally grown cut flowers at our growers' markets.

## **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.*

## Master Gardener Profile

# Marjorie Luce

## In Memorium

Marjorie Sandfort Luce passed away peacefully at the Health Center of the Rogue Valley Manor on March 25, 2010. She was born on February 4, 1925 in Humboldt, Nebraska, to parents Gertrude Schuetz Sandfort and Carl H.N. Sandfort. Marjorie is survived by sisters Lucile Lathrop of Kearney, Nebraska and Ethel Johnson (Don) of Lemon Grove, California as well as nieces, nephews and numerous cousins. She was preceded in death by her husband, Dr. James C. Luce, and a sister Dorothy Sandfort.

Marjorie graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan University and Bryan Memorial Hospital as a Registered Medical Technologist. She came to work at the Medford Clinic in 1950. Prior to this, she worked at the University of Michigan in influenza and polio research. She was a lifetime member of the United Methodist Church and an active volunteer community member, serving on the Jackson County Juvenile Board. Following the death of her husband in 1989, she became active in WinterSpring, helping others with their grief and loss.

Marje was a leader and a mentor in the OSU Master Gardener program, serving in many capacities both at home and across the state and nation. She served as President of both the Jackson County Master Gardener Association and OMGA, and helped to bring the second national meeting of Master Gardeners to Oregon in 1989. She initiated the development of the Search For Excellence program to recognize excellence in education in Oregon's Master Gardener chapters. She was also instrumental in establishing Jackson County's OSU Plant Clinic. She became a board member of the E.R. Jackman Foundation at OSU, helping to raise and manage funds for the OSU College of Ag Sciences.

A lover of cats, horticulture, travel, theater, and music, Marje was never afraid to take the leadership responsibility when asked, but also gave continual support and provided behind the scenes help wherever needed. She will be missed.



*Marjorie Sandfort Luce*

Marje will be joining Jim at rest in the Arlington National Cemetery. A celebration of life service will be held at the Rogue Valley Manor on May 13 from 2-4 pm. She suggested that in memorium, a tree or flower could be planted to show our love for the earth.

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

I get my water from a well. By the end of last summer, my faucets were coughing and sputtering every time I turned them on. Greg Jones, SOU climatologist, told this year's class that we are in the third year of a drought. Even though March and April were rainy, we are still well below average for the water year. It's time to look again at my water practices.

I have always considered myself to be an economical water user. After all, I can brush my teeth using a half-cup of water (Girl Scouts), take a "navy shower" (military brat), and I have drip irrigation (Master Gardener). Then I met Janet Rantz and realized that I was a water-conserving wimp!

In one of her previous lives, Janet lived in the Owens Valley, just north of the Mohave Desert, where she had to be a true water conservationist. The habits learned there stayed with her as she settled in the Rogue Valley where our hot dry summers are mild by comparison.

From Janet, I learned that a lot of water goes down the kitchen drain in the normal course of events. And much of it could be captured and reused. How often do we let the water run to get hot? Or heat water for a cup of tea and pour the rest down the drain? Thanks to her, I now have a small bucket in my kitchen sink, one in the laundry room sink, and a large one in my shower, each for collecting "graywater".

In Oregon, at the present time, DEQ regulations allow such graywater to only be used inside the house so that it will eventually go into a sewer or septic tank. On June 12, 2009, Gov. Ted Kulongoski signed into law legislation (House Bill 2080)

legalizing the use of graywater for beneficial purposes and the DEQ has developed a work plan to address HB 2080's requirements, including the development of new graywater rules. Because of the human health (think salmonella, E. coli, campylobacter, etc.), environmental, and technical issues associated with graywater use that the advisory committee must consider, DEQ expects the rulemaking process to take about two years, with adoption of final rules tentatively occurring in the fall of 2011. If you are interested in learning more, here's the DEQ web site for graywater: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/wq/reuse/graywater.htm>

Some people choose to ignore the law and use their own graywater as they wish; some choose to wait for these new graywater rules. Regardless of which group you fit into, at the present time, we can all legally do our part to reduce our water consumption.

**Reduce** Just having a bucket sitting in the sink has made me much more conscious of the amount of water I use. I have been reminded to mulch the plants in my garden deeply to reduce the amount of water they need, to reduce the size of my water-sucking lawn, and to plant low-water native plants.

**Reuse** I can dip some of the unused clean water out of my kitchen bucket for watering my house plants, filling the dog dish, or cleaning.

**Recycle** Water from the shower (only slightly gray) can be used to mop floors, flush and/or clean toilets, and bathe the dog.

**Jane Moyer**  
Master Gardener 2005

## Classes in May

April showers bring May flowers (and lots of other blooming, sprouting, fruiting, growing garden creations)....but the questions then become "What do I do with them? Where do I even start?"

On **Saturday, May 8, Chris Hubert**, from Quail Run Vineyard will teach how to take **Summer Care of Grape Vines**. Learn the most important grape management techniques after pruning. The proper summer management of grape vines includes early season shoot thinning, controlling head suckering, training vine growth for the rest of the season and controlling crop load. This class will take place entirely in the vineyard so come dressed for the weather.

**Thursday, May 13** brings **Designing a Flower Bed** with Master Gardener and Landscape Architect **Bonnie Bayard**. Planting design considerations and how to put plants together to create a pleasing and effective design will be discussed. How to use the *Sunset Western Garden Book* in planning a design will be taught. **Bring large cuttings of flower bed plants you already have and a copy of the *Sunset Western Garden Book* if you have one.** Bonnie will lead the class through an exercise to demonstrate how she uses the book to plan a flower bed.

At the writing of this article, the schedule for OSU Extension classes in May had not been put together yet. By the time you are reading this, though, the schedule should be on the Extension website (<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/>) and probably in your mailbox.

**Jane Moyer**  
Master Gardener 2005

# Foolproof Way To Grow Cilantro!!!



Wouldn't it be nice to have fresh cilantro growing right outside your kitchen door? Whenever you wanted to fix Mexican salsa or guacamole, or a Middle

Eastern yogurt sauce for your lamb kabobs, there the lacy, sweetly pungent leaves would be, ready to harvest.

But if you've ever tried to grow it, you've probably noticed that cilantro yields a fast crop; plants are barely up before they try to flower and set seeds. So those tasty leaves aren't around long, especially in warm weather.

Grow cilantro as you would mesclun.

Sow seeds thickly in a wide, shallow container; then, as soon as plants are 3 to 4 inches tall and sporting a couple of cuttable leaves, use scissors to cut off some foliage for cooking.

Shear from a different section of the container every time, rotating the pot as you go and never letting plants in any area mature. By the time you get back to the first section harvested, new leaves will have appeared.

## Cilantro growing tips

1. Select a bowl-shaped container at least 18 inches wide and 8 to 10 inches deep.
2. Fill the pot with a fast-draining potting soil; mix in an organic granular fertilizer.
3. Before seeding, moisten the soil using a fine spray from the hose. Because the seeds are fairly small, mix them in a bowl with sand (3 parts sand to 1 part seed) so they'll disperse more evenly. Sow the seeds, then cover lightly with soil.
4. Gently mist the soil so as not to displace the seeds.
5. Place containers in full sun or, if you live in a hot climate, light shade. Seeds should germinate in 7 to 10 days.
6. Harvest at least weekly to keep leaves coming. Using this method, it's possible to harvest four crops of cilantro from a single pot. Got to <http://www.sunset.com/garden/flowers-plants/better-way-grow-cilantro-00400000017171/> for more information.

## Master Gardener Profile

# Myrl Bishop

Although many of our Master Gardeners are former residents of California, Myrl is a "Southern girl". Born in Charleston, South Carolina, she has spent most of her life in Texas, except for a few years in Illinois.

As residents of the Gulf Coast there, Myrl's mother was baffled about how to grow a garden in sand, when it had been so easy in her home state of Illinois. And so, despite an interest in gardening, there wasn't much success, says Myrl.

Following high school, Myrl married a local boy, who was in his family's shrimp boat building business. After all, they were living in what was, at the time, the "shrimp capital", so it seemed like a great business venture. But the laws and previous agreements with Mexico changed, and the shrimping business did, too.

With two young children to care for, Myrl nevertheless enrolled at Texas A & I (now a part of Texas A & M), with a dual major of English and Biology, receiving a degree in Education. She entered the teaching field, and taught for 27 years. It was especially gratifying to Myrl to eventually return to the same high school from which she had graduated, and teach Biology in the same classroom where she had been a student. "Same room, same microscopes, and some of the same faculty!" Myrl says with a laugh.

But the veteran teachers gave her a lot of support and a new perspective, which she appreciated. Myrl also went on to earn her Master's degree through the National Science Foundation and to teach Marine Science.

During this period of time, Myrl met Peter, her husband-to-be. Peter had received his PhD at Oregon State, and had taken a job in Texas. Their children knew each other, and the couple met at a canoe club. Peter loved the Pacific Northwest, and Myrl knew when she married him that she would become an Oregonian when they retired.

That relocation occurred in 1999. Although Myrl had become a Master Gardener in Texas in 1993, she enrolled in the Jackson County program in 2000 to learn more about this new climate and soil she encountered. Growing tomatoes and learning about companion planting in the Rogue Valley were just two of her new adventures.



*Myrl Bishop*

Myrl became active in JCMGA, including developing and teaching programs in vines and plant anatomy, as well as enthusiastically participating in the Ashland Growers Market, the Plant Clinic, and reviewing gardening books for *The Garden Beet*, areas that she is still loves.

She is especially appreciative of the opportunities that JCMGA offers members to grow, evolve, and pursue different interests. This enthusiasm carries over to the Ashland Garden Club, too, and still another new interest: art in the garden. We are lucky to have this versatile and eager member in JCMGA!

**Carol Oneal**  
*Master Gardener 2002*

## May in the Plant Clinic

# New Recording Sheets and Code Modifications

The Plant Clinic recording sheets and the new problem codes are in place. Thank you to all who gave time and suggestions to make the codes more accurate. There are several reasons why code modification was necessary. Firstly, to make the Master Gardener program more focused and aware of the type of problems coming into the Clinic. Secondly, to better prepare our volunteers and make sure they have access to the necessary information. Lastly, to be able to predict and record recurring patterns and changing conditions throughout the year(s).

When filling out the form, the most important point to remember goes back to one of the first things we learned in class. That is, to identify the plant. It will fall under one of following categories:

**FRUIT AND NUTS** – includes all edible bearing fruits and nuts such as strawberries, raspberries, walnuts, cherries etc.

**HOUSEHOLD** – any problem that occurs inside the home such as bedbugs, rodents, weevils, ants and house plants.

**LAWNS** – any problem dealing with grass that is mown

**ORNAMENTAL** – any outside plant that is ornamental in nature and does not produce an edible crop such as roses (petals to be eaten fall under vegetables), daffodils, photinia.

**TREES** – all ornamental plants with trunks not producing an edible crop

**VEGETABLES** – all plants producing edible crops and may include calendula, herbs, sunflowers.

**MISCELLANEOUS # 1** – requests for pamphlets, handouts, printouts and soil tests

**MISCELLANEOUS # 2** – requests for phone numbers, addresses, Spring Fair, Winter Dreams etc.

The second set of codes describes the reason the problem is occurring.

**CULTIVATION** – the care or lack of a plant receives and includes weather, watering and fertilizing.

**DISEASE** – biotic: fungus, bacteria or virus.

### IDENTIFICATION

**SOILS** – find out what type of plant the clients wants to grow.

### PRUNING/GRAFTING

**VERTEBRATES** – rodents, deer, gophers, birds, dogs.

**WEEDS** – any unwanted plant

**MISCELLANEOUS** – anything that cannot be placed in the other categories

These codes were used during the months of January, February and March during Plant Clinic Mentor training. Several changes were made based on the observations of mentors. Their input and suggestions were invaluable and we thank them. The final codes are a culmination of their ideas and will remain in this form until the late fall when they will again be reviewed and analyzed. As you work the Plant Clinic If you have any clarification suggestions or ideas, please make sure to give us your input in the fall.



A sample problem received in the Plant Clinic, cherry with leaf spot and shoot dieback due to *Pseudomonas syringae*. It was caused by overwintering bacteria on diseased twigs branches and twigs and exacerbated by injuries caused from improper pruning, frost, unsuitable soil or inadequate nutrition. The classification is a **Fruit and Nut with Disease**.

**Wendy Purslow**

*Master Gardener 2006*

# Splinters from the Board

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## Jackson County Master Gardener Association Board of Directors Meeting – April 2, 2010

### Officers' Reports.

**President (Ron Bombick).** Bonnie Martin was accepted as the representative from the 2010 class.

Because of an error in scheduling, the next Board meeting will be on May 5 at 10 am in the Resource Library. Since no one in JCMGA was notified of the deadlines for Search for Excellence, we won't apply this year because of the amount of time required to handle the paperwork and to organize the presentation.

Both Clarence Wood and Marje Luce have past away. OMGA will have a special recognition for Marje Luce. JCMGA is having a celebration of Clarence's life in April.

An e-mail will be sent to all members to rectify an error: all members in good standing of JCMGA will be offered free admission to the Spring Fair. The Spring Fair committee was considering the objective of the fair (to raise money) and was trying to stop people who are no longer members of the association from using their orange badge to get in free. Haydn Lee and Cora Lee appeared before the Board to argue that this is an inappropriate demand.

**OMGA Representative (Bill Hunt).** Gail Langelotto will be editing the new MG handbook and will not be coordinating the Mini-College after 2010. People working with youth under age 18 must have a background check. A new, improved website for OMGA is being developed.

**OMGA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Dave Rugg).** A memo of understanding that Gail will become an advisor to OMGA has been signed. Taking over the MiniCollege by OMGA will be challenging because communications around the state are very difficult and it's hard to get people together. A presentation about Marje Luce will be offered at MiniCollege 2010. A history of OMGA is housed in our archives. Dave's hoping that at least 30 people from Jackson County will attend the upcoming MiniCollege.

### **OSU Extension Agent (Bob Reynolds).**

Well over half Bob's salary is paid for by fees from JCMGA activities. We've lost about 5 people in class due to health crises and people being called back to work. There are four on-line classmates.

### Committee Reports.

#### **Apprentice Coordinator (Judy Wallace).**

Anyone looking for a senior apprentice for a garden can contact Judy for a form that she'll use to find an apprentice from among veteran master gardeners.

#### **Community Outreach (Jan Purkeypile).**

Jan identified three opportunities this month—Fred Meyer's Fuschia Saturday, Earth Day, Phoenix Organic's Little Green Homeshow. We will not participate in any of them

#### **Gramma's Garden (Sharon Maurin).**

There'll be a post-Fair sale of "left-over" Gramma's Garden material in May.

**Greenhouse (Jane Moyer).** The new Greenhouse lights were much hotter than the old, resulting in a loss of plants.

**School Grants (Barbara Davidson).** Ron read Barbara's e-mail noting that schools have received the information about the Seed Money grants and that she's received two applications. The scholarship search is beginning.

**Plant Clinic (Wendy Purslow).** Wendy has developed a tally sheet for the questions received in the Plant Clinic and Grower's Markets. There's an increase in questions about vegetables, particularly their cultivations. The Plant Clinic (open M-F, 10 am-2 pm) is fully staffed for the summer.

**Gardens and Grounds (Nathan Swofford).** After looking at several weed management strategies, Nathan has nearly decided to purchase machinery that will provide thermal weed control, using propane-generated steam. It's the size of lawnmower and will cost about \$800. With it we'll be able to demonstrate another type of weed control.

**Winter Dreams/Summer Gardens (Michael Riding).** Michael asked for input on speakers and themes for WD/SG.

**Treasurer (Jim Scannell).** We need clarification on who decides on specific expenditures, activities. Ron will call a meeting of the Executive committee to discuss this in the context of our bylaws and IRS's non-profit regulations.

**Judy Wallace**  
*Acting Recording Secretary*  
*Master Gardener 2007*

Return Service Requested



**May 9**

## ***Calendar of Upcoming Events***

**Friday May 7**

Board Meeting, 10:00 am—Noon

**Saturday May 8**

Summer Care of Grape Vines  
Quail Run Vineyard  
Chris Hubert (see page 8 for more information)

**Sunday May 9**

Mothers Day

**Thursday May 13**

Designing a Flower Bed  
Bonnie Bayard (see page 8 for more information)

**Thursday May 13**

Celebration of Life for Marjorie Luce  
2:00 pm to 4:00 pm @Rogue Valley Manor  
(see page 7 for more information)

**Saturday June 5**

Pipal Garden Tour  
(see page 3 for more information)



### **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!