

GARDENING, OUR COMMON GROUND

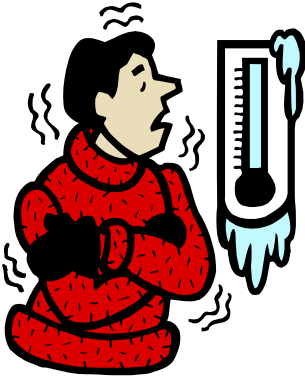
Central Gorge and Wasco County Master Gardener™ Associations

Volume 9, Issue 3

February 2007

Early Signs of Spring

I suppose it is too early to think that we have seen the last of winter's snow, ice, and cold, but there are some signs that spring is coming. Here's my list:



- It is still light at 5 pm, and we see the sun more often.
 - Ants have invaded my house.
 - Last Friday (Jan. 19), the first day that week that the thermometer nudged above freezing, I discovered my 'Copper Beauty' witch hazel was blooming. The gold and russets flowers were vivid against the snow.
 - Bicyclists are out in force on Hwy 30 between Mosier and Rowena.
- People are thinking about garden sales and garden projects. (See pages 2 and 4 for Master Gardening opportunities.)
 - It's time for yard and garden shows. Portland Home and Garden Show at the Expo Center February 21-25, 2007. Check www.otshows.com for further information. The Northwest Flower and Garden Show at the Seattle Convention Center February 14-18, 2007. www.gardenshow.com is the website for further information.
 - Master Gardening classes have begun in Hood River (the class list was in the January newsletter) and classes in The Dalles start on Valentine's Day (see page 7.)



What signs of spring are you seeing? Send in your reports.

What's Inside?

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President Elect - Kathy
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Secretary – Audrey Schneider
Treasurer – Anne Saxby
State OMGA Representative –
Cindy Collins
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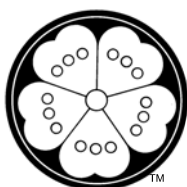
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Our Mission

- Increase our knowledge in
home horticultural
practices.
- Educate home gardeners.
- Promote sustainable
gardening techniques.
- Create an atmosphere of
enjoyment.



Thoughts From Your President Dede Garcia

The new year has begun and classes here in Hood River are in full swing. We have 22 new Master Gardener trainees. There are many from White Salmon, as well as Cascades Locks and Stevenson. Several new trainees are from the Parkdale - Odell area, and of course we have new members from Hood River. It looks like we have all areas of the "Central Gorge" well represented.

Hopefully the coldest days of the winter are behind us, and we can start making plans for spring. I may be a little ahead of myself here, but I am anxious for more sunshine and warmer days. And while most of us have been hibernating, Rita Saling, Sandi Rousseau and Anne Saxby have been hard at work planning and grant writing for the Japanese Heritage Garden. Plans for this wonderful new addition to the Learning Garden at the Hood River County Extension are coming together faster than expected. It seems that many people in the community are excited about this new garden and are anxious to see it come to fruition.

Have a great month. Spring is coming! Dede Garcia

CGMGA Board Highlights Audrey Schneider, Secretary

Election results. Dede Garcia, President; Kathy McGregor, President Elect; Anne Saxby, Treasurer; Audrey Schneider, Secretary; Cindy Collins, OMGA Representative; Glenda Ryan, OMGA Alternate Representative. The proposed By-laws were approved with some corrections that were distributed the end of December for member review.

Japanese Garden. In December, Toru Tanaka of the Portland Japanese garden visited the proposed site for this upcoming addition to the Learning Garden. For the latest Japanese Garden news, chat with Rita Saling or Sandi Rousseau.

For sale. There are still some MG t-shirts which can be purchased for \$12 at the scheduled Wednesday evening or Saturday classes.

Wanted 'Garden Blunders—Dead or Alive' By Pam Crider

For a Community Education class I'm leading late in March. I know none of us Masters are guilty of any garden blunders. If you have any tales from Plant Clinic or gardening friends that you would share, I would love to hear them. The blunder and the proper method to deal with them would be wonderful. Please write to me at; pam-crider@email.com. Thanks much, Pam

See page 5 for information on CGMGA Spring Fair and Plant Sale.

Thoughts From Your President Cheri Austin

Now that the holidays are past for another year and there are only 338 days as of this writing (Jan. 21) left until Dec. 25, 2007, it is time to switch gears and think gardening. Wasco County MG classes begin Feb. 14th at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Remember to come prepared and bring an extra sweater. It always seems to get cooler in the afternoons. I am excited about classes starting, but I am even more excited that spring will be here soon. The cold weather has been a little more of a challenge this year when electricity wasn't very dependable. It is necessary to keep your pipes and water from freezing and breaking in the greenhouse.

According to my husband, gardening is really fun. He is already working on changes when construction begins on the new greenhouse. With the new greenhouse comes a new garden. I began a list last spring when I learned that I would be moving. I will be starting from scratch; so the first thing will be deer fence. Moving into deer country will present me with new challenges. I hope I'm up for it. I look forward to seeing everyone in class. Let's make it a good year.

Quarterly Meeting Highlights Ronnie Smith, Secretary

This info is from the Quarterly Meeting on January 15th:

1. Cindy Brown of Hughes Feed & Grain presented a very informative and interesting program on types of grass seeds, on lawns and lawn care. She told us of some relatively new products that are natural-based fertilizers and, therefore, are non-toxic to pets and children.
2. Cheri Austin announced that Pam Manning has agreed to chair the Seeds and Soils Committee, but could use a co-chair. Due to personal conflicts she is unable to assume her duties until April 1st. If anyone is willing to help get this organized, please call Cheri.
3. Bill Marick told us about the Youth Transitional Housing Yard Project (see p.4).
4. Dick Scherzinger gave a brief presentation on the growing and care of amaryllis to keep them in bloom from year to year. By the looks of all the beautiful blooming plants at his house, he certainly appears to know the secret!
5. We will be doing the "Rose Pruning Clinic" at Sorosis Park this spring. Date will be announced at classes.
6. Miranda at Hughes Feed & Grain (541-296-5411 Tue-Sat) has goose/duck manure mixed with straw available.
7. We will participate in Plant Clinics at the Farmers Market in The Dalles this year. The Market will be on Fridays at the Chamber and will run from April 13th to October 1st

More Wasco County News on next page

Officers

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<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/hoodriver/>

or

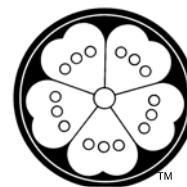
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Our Common Ground Joint Newsletter of Central Gorge and Wasco County Master Gardener Associations

Judy Davis, editor
rjdavis1@mac.com
541-478-0133

Deadline: The second-to-last Monday of the month.

Printed on recycled paper.



Wasco County Master Gardener™ Association News

(Continued from page 3)

Wasco County Mentors

By Janet Probstfield

Mentors needed. As the New Year and another class season is upon us so is the need for Mentor's to assist our new applicants for 2007. Veteran Master Gardeners, you will be receiving a call in early February to ask your assistance. Please give this careful thought and please be receptive to mentoring this year.

Also if you are interested in being on the mentor committee, please contact me.

Social. Along with classes beginning soon comes our annual Social to become acquainted with our new applicants. This social is for new Master Gardeners to meet their mentors, our officers, extension agent and other veteran members of our group.

Our social will be Monday, February 12th, 5:30 pm at St Paul's Episcopal Church (where our classes are held) in the upstairs classroom. We will enter upstairs through the main door. This is different than in the past but should be more intimate. Please plan to attend and bring a finger food or dessert if you can.

Please contact me for more details if necessary.
pros@charter.net 541-296-4579



Needed: A Few Master Gardeners Willing to Work With Youth.

By Bill Marick

A project has been approved to assist, educate, train and help some young adults plan and put in the yard at the Oregon Trail Youth Transitional Housing. We will be working with the youth who reside there to plan the yard, select various plantings, and direct their planting and care of the yard. This is at a duplex at 1710 & 1712 E. 10th, and the yard has been completely destroyed in the remodel-

ing process. Not that the yard was in very good shape before the project started. We will have up to 6 youth residing at the duplex at a time and they will be providing the labor to do the project. I would like to see them involved in the planning process and want to see a lot of education taking place to help the youth understand what goes into the whole gardening process.

This is an opportunity for pay back hours. I have two MGs who have already volunteered and could use up to four more. Anyone interested can call me at 541-298-5733.

Meet Cheri Austin

Wasco County MGA President

I became a Master Gardener in 1994. I needed to keep busy after I stopped working because of Multiple Sclerosis. I have been very active during this time in educating home gardeners and kids on everything from fruit and vegetable gardening to pruning to worm composting. I have served on the executive board for 9 years and on several different committees. In 2000 I was voted the Wasco County Master Gardener of the Year. I can be heard monthly on the KODL Coffee Break giving garden tips and promoting the Master Gardener program. Last year I was recognized by the OSU Extension Master Gardener program with the State Behind The Scenes Award.

Master Gardeners has been great therapy for my M.S., and I really enjoy being part of a great group of people.

Editor's Note: I am looking for someone who is willing to talk with or email leaders of the WCMGA, gather some information, and write a short article about each of them. This helps us know the leaders of our organization better. Please let me know if you are interested in this job. Judy Davis, rjdavis1@mac.com, 541-478-0133.



Give weeds an inch and they will take your yard.

Should I weed the lawn or just say it's a garden?

Unknown

Buckwheat Halts Weeds

By Debbie McDonald

New research by a team of Cornell University researchers finds that buckwheat can aid farmers and gardeners in weed suppression. As reported in *Organic Magazine*, the Cornell U team found that a solid buckwheat stand suppresses all annual weeds and deters some troublesome perennial weeds such as quackgrass, nutsedge and my number one challenge, Canada thistle. The Cornell U team suggests two successive plantings of buckwheat starting in early June, followed by oats or wheat in fall results in a weed-free bed of loose, friable soil the following spring.

You may have seen buckwheat growing in the Learning Garden where Scott regularly plants a cover crop demonstration. This was my first introduction to buckwheat. This past season I planted buckwheat in one of my raised beds as a cover crop and was very pleased with not only the weed suppression, but the number of beneficial insects the small white flowers attracted. In the fall I pulled the plants, shredded them and worked the organic material back into the soil to finish composting over the winter.

This coming spring my husband and I plan to test the Cornell U findings and expand our buckwheat plantings to a hillside on the edge of our garden area where the Canada thistle resist all of our efforts to eradicate it. We don't mind the volunteers that come up from buckwheat seed but, if you want to avoid volunteers, the Cornell U team says to mow the buckwheat after no more than five weeks of growth.

If you are interested in purchasing buckwheat seed, you can buy it locally at Hood River Supply or by catalog at johnnyseeds.com or groworganic.com to name a few.

Mid-Summers Meditation

By Christine Bluestone

Regarding the colors of deep summer
hues of saffron, lavender,
melon-pink bordering on orange.

The flowers of the meadow
open their throats
voicing their love croon
to insects that abound.

The air seems heavy,
only the buzz of many wings
to mark the moment.

The sun's zenith hour is upon us,
a time for rejoicing the fruition
of life & harvest.

We gather the herbs
in their full flowering energy
to store for dark winters day.
Cool soft breezes caress me
beneath my sheltered shade,
sanctuary from the honeyed mid day sun.

Breezes run through the trees
an exhalation,
the breath of Earth.

Prana of power
to push the sails of ships
and spread the downy flowers seeds
among the fields.

July 27th 2005



Central Gorge MGA Spring Fair & Plant Sale

By Anny VanNatta

It is time to start thinking about our 2nd Annual Spring Fair & Plant Sale. It is scheduled for the Saturday before Mother's Day, May 12, at the Hood River Extension office and parking lot. The main event is the plant and gardening gift market with opportunities to visit the Learning Garden. This year we would like to include some Vendors in the parking lot.



The event offers payback hours, not only during the Fair, but also in planning, set-up (the day before), and work-parties. It is a major fund-raiser for CGMGA, and plants not sold can be saved for the Garden Tour's Plant Sale. Last year's event was great fun and very successful. Please begin thinking of ways you would like to help.

A brainstorming and information session will be held soon. A display board of information will be set up at some Hood River class meetings.

Ideas, questions and volunteers are encouraged. Please contact Anny VanNatta at gardennanny@coho.net, or call 503-452-1848 .

Books About Butterflies

By Kathy McGregor

At a conference I attended in Bend last fall, called The Nature of Words, I was fortunate to listen to a reading by Robert M. Pyle, a scientist, naturalist, and writer. Inspired by Alison's butterfly photos and discussion (at the Hood River Entomology class on Jan. 17), I am recommending the following books by Pyle:

Chasing Monarchs: Migrating with the Butterflies of Passage. (This tells the tales of his voyages following the monarchs. He'll get a call from Nevada: "They're here!" and off he goes.) 1999. Houghton Mifflin.

The Butterflies of Cascadia: A Field Guide to All the Species of Washington, Oregon, and Surrounding Territories. 2002. Seattle Audubon Society.

The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies. 1981. Knopf.

Butterflies: A Peterson Field Guide Coloring Book. (With Sarah Anne Hughes and Roger Tory Peterson). 1983. Houghton Mifflin.

For general insect enthusiasts, he also wrote the text for: *Insects: A Peterson Field Guide Coloring Book.* 1993. Houghton Mifflin.

For more about the author, go to his website: <http://www.cwu.edu/~geograph/pyle>.



*Kind hearts are the garden, kind thoughts are the root,
Kind word are the blossoms, and kind deeds are the fruit.*

John Ruskin

This I Believe

By Debbie McDonald

In a 1950's radio program of the same name, Edward R. Murrow invited Americans from all walks of life to share the personal philosophies and core values that guide their daily lives. National Public Radio (NPR) in collaboration with two other groups has resurrected the program and I enjoy listening to folks read their essays once a week on air with titles such as "Peace begins with one person," "Untold acts of kindness," "Music makes me come alive" and "Baking by senses and memory." The stories behind the beliefs are often fascinating, emotion invoking, and surprising.

I began asking myself what I would write and why, if I wrote a short essay of what value guides my daily life. My first thoughts were of religious beliefs, family values and love. All universal topics but my search kept bringing me back to the deliberate everyday pursuit of joy.

I have learned that I have a choice every day to look for the things that make me happy or to look for the things I can complain about (which are much easier to find.) I ask myself "what can I notice that is good, what makes me smile, what makes me grateful for this day?" Now, I'm not a Polly Anna that sugarcoats everything. I don't have a pair of rose colored glasses to make me feel all warm and fuzzy no matter the landscape. I'm a realist and I know there's a lot wrong in this world. But I'm also an optimist so I make the choice to look for the good, the positive, and the joy.

I think that's why I have a passion for gardening. I save seeds for the next season. I plant seeds for later crops to harvest. I compost to turn waste into future productive soil. I am amazed when the first garlic bulb pokes a green shoot up in Spring while the soil is still so cold, and when an experiment that seemed to have merit works when others said it wouldn't. I learn from plants that die, from insects that cause momentary diversions, and from the miracle of propagation. Gardening causes a spiritual awakening deep within me and reminds me with pleasure of the next season to come. My garden is ever changing and yet it is a constant in my life. Gardening brings me much joy.

So this I believe. Find the joy in your life everyday. Make the quest deliberate. Notice when you smile. Share the joy with others. Some days it's hard but always worth the journey.

Winter is nature asleep---and how beautifully she dreams!!!
The sun is far to the south now. A tree that stored its energy for half a century warms a living room as its logs smolder on the hearth. Outside, the other trees know the sun will return, and they are ready, with buds on their twigs and sap in their roots. We speak of the promise of spring, but the trees tell us we are wrong. It is winter that promises. Spring delivers.





Oregon White Oak (*Quercus garryana*)

By Judy Davis

I live in the pine-oak woodlands, that narrow strip of the landscape too dry for most trees but not yet sagebrush country. The signature trees are ponderosa pine and Oregon white oak.

This landscape is home to glacier lilies (*Erythronium grandiflorum*) that more often grow in subalpine meadows, oaks toothwort (*Cardamine pulcherrima* var. *pulcherrima*), the western gray squirrel, and, of course, poison oak.

The OSU Extension publication "Trees to Know in Oregon" says, "Landscapers like this oak because of its interesting form, tolerance of town conditions, longevity, and deep rooting, which permits garden plants to grow beneath scattered shade trees." This makes me think of the large, stately oaks in the Willamette Valley. My oaks are rather gawky either because of youth or crowding due to fire suppression. Most are probably under 100 years old, just adolescents for trees that can live for 500 years.

Still we prize our oaks, especially those that surround our

deck above the daylight basement. We live in treetops where we watch squirrels cavort and nuthatches hunt for insects. In the winter we have open views of basalt cliffs. In the summer we have a leafy enclosure with selected views.

My favorite Oregon white oaks would not be good landscape specimens. One grows at the bottom of our canyon where it catches the Columbia River winds. It is gnarly and short-limbed except for one lengthy limb reclining across a rock outcropping. Another favorite is at the forest edge on the top of one of the Catherine Creek meadows. This stout tree has long ago lost its top and most of its branches. Only two branches remain, both stretching south into the sunlight. The lower arm has a crook that makes a perfect perch for lunch. The upper arm has sprouted a new vertical "treetop" some distance from the main trunk.

I like spending time with these trees imagining the things that have happened in their lifetimes.

What are your favorite trees? Why do you like them?

Wasco County Master Gardener Classes

All Classes held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 1805 Minnesota Street, The Dalles

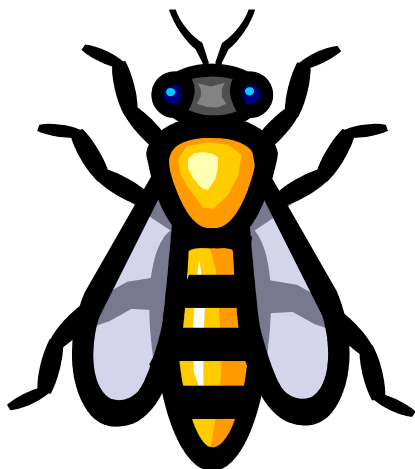
Feb. 14	9-12 1-4	Introduction to Botany Garden Weeds	Chip Bubl Chip Bubl
Feb. 21	9-12 1-4	Pruning Trees & Shrubs Berry Culture	Fred & Patricia Paige Joe DeFrancesco
Feb. 28	9-12 1-4	Garden Soils* Organic Gardening	Pat Patterson Pat Patterson
March 7	9-12 1-4	Pesticide Safety* Home Tree Fruit Production	Steve Renquist Steve Castagnoli
March 14	9-12 1-2:30 2:30-4	Plant Diseases* House Plant Culture Gorge Tolerant Plants	Jay Pscheidt Phyllis Olson Phyllis Olson
March 21	9-12 1-4	Selection & Care of Trees & Woody Ornamentals Garden Insects*	Lyle Feldmire Jean Natter
March 28	9-12 1-4	Plant Problem Diagnosis* Project Fair & Test Review*	Lynn Long All
April 4	9-11 (Plant Clinic Orientation New MGs only)	Cheri Austin & Lynn Long

*Denotes required class for advanced Master Gardeners

**Central Gorge and Wasco County
Master Gardener™ Associations**
Judy Davis, Newsletter Editor
6840 Oakbrook Lane
The Dalles, OR 97058

Calendar of Master Gardener Events and Activities

Feb. 6 (Tues)	3:00 pm	Wasco County MGA Executive Board Meeting , Wasco County Extension Office
Feb. 14 (Wed.)	9:00 am	Wasco County Master Gardener Classes begin.
Feb. 14 (Wed.)	5:00 pm	Central Gorge MGA Executive Committee Meeting , Valley Christian Church
Feb. 19 (Mon.)		<i>Deadline for the March newsletter.</i>



Some Buzz On Bees By John Ihle

Honey bees are more important for pollination than for honey. Low cost honey from China, New Zealand, etc. keeps the US price down to where our commercial beekeepers couldn't stay in business without the pollination fees from almond and various fruit growers.

The count on bees is 3 to 4 thousand to the pound depending upon whether they are full or empty. If you see the awesome sight of 10,000 to 40,000 milling around in the air as they swarm to start a new colony, they are actually at their most peaceful because they stuffed themselves with honey just before leaving the mother hive. They are like us after we've just had Thanksgiving dinner.