Between the Rows – Lee Bryant

How can it be September already? Didn’t we just start summer?

Wasco County Fair was great fun this year. Candy Armstrong and I put together the Wasco County Master Gardeners fair booth. I think that it turned out really great. I would also like to thank Marcia Strader for bringing in her potted plants and the brass bugs that we used, could not have done it without the use of her plants. (see pg. 5 for pictures)

Mini College was great as always. We had a very good time and learned lots of new things. On the garden tour we toured a demonstration garden that is at the Benton County fair grounds. I loved the way they had planted in rows and a group of MG’s took on the project of that row. (see pg. 4)

As we begin thinking about fall and all of the things that we do in our gardens, remember to:

*Stop deadheading roses – let hips form to help plants go dormant;*  
*Harvest winter pears when they are full size and break off easily. Never ripen pears on the trees. Keep in a cool, dark location for several weeks. Winter pears can be kept for weeks refrigerated. Remove from cold storage one week before eating and allow fruit to ripen at room temperature;*  
*The best time to plant cover crops is before the fall rains have made the soil too wet to work.*

As we think about fall we also need to be thinking about the Election of 2010 officers; the nominating committee is now hard at work to find new officers. This is a good time to become involved with the Master Gardener Program, so if you get a phone call or a visit from that committee please help out where needed.

The date for graduation this year is October 27th at 6:00 PM at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, the same place that we had our classes. Be sure and put that date on your calendar, we will be honoring this year’s graduating Master Gardeners and looking at this year’s activities. It will also be our last opportunity to come together until next year’s classes. And speaking of next year’s classes, they will be here before we know it. Are there any classes that you would like to see next year? The September Association meeting that is planned for Sept. 29th will be a good time to suggest any thing that you think would be a good subject.

As this fall season approaches take the time to enjoy the slower pace of gardening, stop and watch the birds. We have started putting out our bird feeders and as the old saying goes “build it and they will come” - that is very true for birds and bird feeders.

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Fall Bulb Sale

Mark your calendar for October 3. That is the date for our first bulb sale. There will be new and unique varieties available as well as some old standard ones. If you have extra bulbs after you have divided yours, consider donating them. The sale will be held at the Farmer’s Market in City Park (located across from the State Office building at Union & Sixth Streets). Hours of the Farmer’s Market are 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, so come early for the best selection.

Quarterly Meeting

The Wasco County Master Gardener Association’s quarterly meeting will be Tuesday, September 29th at the PUD’s newly renovated meeting room, starting at 6pm. The PUD is located on the Port District at 2345 River Road. Please bring some snacks to share. Lynn Long will talk about his recent travels to Lebanon and the cherry and apricot growers there. He promises to have an interesting talk & pictures.

Reminder

September 30th will be here soon. This is the date your final payback log is due for the year. Include all hours from July 1 through October 31st. You can hand deliver or mail them to the extension office. If you mail them, mark them Attention Cheri Austin.

Cheri Austin

Our native bitter cherry, *Prunus emarginata*, is not what Lynn will be talking about!
Photographing Gardens
Lynn Long

In the last few years I have been involved in evaluating new cherry varieties and introducing them to mid-Columbia cherry growers. Taking attractive, yet realistic pictures of these new cherries is often a challenge. These is especially true for a dark colored fruit such as cherries that often look black when taken either in the shade of the tree or in bright sunlight, which can cause a back lit situation.

Every garden has its beautiful moments. Flower and vegetable beds contain the raw material for thousands of photos, from the broad view of a landscape, to a favorite plant, and right on down to the honeybee that’s sipping nectar from a flower.

However, each of these subjects can present difficult challenges for any photographer. Below are several suggestions on how to take better photos of your garden from Bob Rost, an award-winning photographer with Oregon State University’s Extension and Experiment Station Communications.

Get close to your subject. The biggest photography mistake people commonly make is being too far from their subject. After you take your photo move in closer and take it again. Repeat several times, as necessary.

Keep backgrounds simple. A wall of evergreens, a fence, the side of a house, the sky or the ground—all work well. Or with an adjustable camera, use a large aperture setting (a lower f-stop number, such as f 1.4, f 2, f 2.8) to blur the background and isolate your target, making it stand out from the background.

Remove distracting weeds, dead flowers, or other items intruding on the scene. Add variety to the composition of your photos by mentally dividing the picture into thirds horizontally and vertically with an imaginary tic-tac-toe grid. Then, rather than centering the subject of your photo, place important elements where the lines intersect.

Include non-plant elements to add interest: trellises, benches, steps, walls, walks, sundials, birdhouses, bird baths, gazing balls or even a garden gnome, if you have one.

Add perspective and action by putting people in the picture doing something natural, such as picking flowers, planting, hoeing, mowing, digging or raking. Or how about a child in the garden blowing bubbles or sitting on a giant pumpkin?

Shoot the same scene from various vantage points (looking down from above, perhaps on a ladder and kneeling down looking up) and at different times of the day. Take both horizontal and vertical shots.

Observe the light. Pictures made when the sun is low in the sky, in the early morning or late afternoon, will be more interesting than those taken in the flat, overhead light of mid-day.

Try side and back lit shots with the sun behind the plants instead of behind the photographer. To avoid sun flares in your photos, hold an umbrella above the camera lens, or your hand, or stand in the shade of a tree.

Use a tripod if you have one. If not, hold the camera steady as you press the shutter. Hold your breath to help keep the camera steadier. Most fuzzy pictures are the result of camera movement rather than faulty focus.

Lighten dark shadows with a flash or some sort of reflector. Aluminum foil, crumpled and then smoothed out, reflects light softly in the shadows.

Digital cameras allow us to immediately see the results of our effort and learn from our mistakes. Keeping these tips in mind will allow you to quickly take professional quality photos of your garden in a very short period of time.
Update on The DIG (The Dalles Imagination Garden) by Charlotte Link

The photo below is of Mary Ann Schrader at the Mid-Columbia Food Bank accepting fruits and vegetables from The Dalles Imagination Garden project.

Since this photo was taken, more zucchini, eggplant, tomatoes and green beans were delivered to the Food Bank. Also, the Girl Scouts’ raised bed is producing squash and beans as well as The DIG Day Camp students’ raised bed is producing zucchini.

I would like to thank J & K Growers for the raised bed of coco fiber delivered to The DIG this month. I think it will be interesting to learn about using coco fiber material in a raised garden bed setting. Thank you to Karen Schwartz for delivering the fiber and to Dave Link for unloading the material for us.

The next phase of construction at The DIG will be Friday, September 18th at 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Heavy equipment will be onsite to move the soil and the excess sod from Meredith’s lot into the garden. As this phase will probably be the last large construction project at the garden, I hope you all will volunteer to help complete the 42 foot Crop Circle. I would like to thank Meredith for her support of The DIG project.
Between the Rows, cont.
Do you have too many cucumbers and just don’t want to make pickles? Try this recipe.

**Sesame Noodles with Cucumber**

¼ cup toasted sesame oil  
3 T soy sauce preferably tamari  
3 T smooth peanut butter  
1 T white vinegar  
2 t sugar  
½ t salt  
½ t minced garlic  
8 ounces dried noodles or vermicelli  
2 large cucumbers, trimmed, peeled halved and seeded  
2 T toasted sesame seeds

In a large serving bowl, whisk together the sesame oil, soy sauce, peanut butter, vinegar, sugar, salt, and garlic until smooth. Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling salted water until tender but firm. Drain and rinse under cool water just until they stop steaming. Drain thoroughly and add to the dressing. Toss to coat. Cool completely, tossing once or twice. While the noodles are cooling, cut the cucumber halves lengthwise into strips as thin as possible - the strips should match the thickness of the cooked noodles. To serve, put the cucumber strips over the center of the noodles. Sprinkle sesame seeds over the cucumber. Bring to the table, toss thoroughly and serve.

The following recipe is from *As Easy As Pie* by Susan G. Purdy. It is a wonderful summer pie and can be made with any combination of fruit. Basically, part of the fruit is mashed and cooked into a sauce with the remaining fruit stirred in and then the mixture poured into a prebaked pie shell.

**No-Bake Fresh Fruit Pie**

1 prebaked 9” pie shell

4 cups any combination of fresh cut-up fruit or berries (I like apricots & cherries, peaches & berries, but there are infinite possibilities)  
2/3 to 1 cup sugar, to taste  
3 TBSP cornstarch  
1 cup water  
1 TBSP lemon juice  
2 TBSP butter

In a food processor or with a fork, mash 1½ cups of cut up fruit. Measure the sugar, water, and cornstarch into a pan and whisk until smooth. Stir in the mashed fruit and cook over medium-low heat for 7 to 10 minutes, or until the mixture is thick and clear. Stir in the lemon juice. Taste the sauce and correct the balance of sugar and lemon if necessary. Stir in the butter and all remaining cut-up fresh fruit or berries. Firm fruits like apples or plums are best slightly mashed into the cooked sauce, with softer fresh fruits and berries simply stirred in. Chill until partially thickened. Pour into the cooked pastry shell and chill until set. Serve with ice cream or sweetened whipped cream.

Carolyn Wright
Our hats are off to you... you... and you... and you!!!!

Wasco County Master Gardener™
Graduation and Recognition Night
Potluck Dinner
October 29 – 6:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church
The Dalles, Oregon

Please bring a potluck dish & serving utensil

Graduating Master Gardeners are encouraged to be creative and make a Graduation Cap

There will be a “To die — Die for Prize!!!!

Mark your calendar, watch for your invitation and plan to attend.

This night is for you

Volunteers are unpaid not because they are worthless but because they are priceless!