WELCOME BACK READERS! Well, with this issue we will finish our 3rd year of bringing Garden Highlights to you.

Thanks in no small part to a wonderful lady named Jean, we got started in March of 2005. The first edition of Garden Highlights was pretty plain and only two brief pages. Look at Garden Highlights now!

I've certainly grown a lot and so has Garden Highlights. Between the printed version and the e-newsletter version, along with the sharing of Garden Highlights, I figure we have over 4,000 readers. That's pretty good I'd say.

Yet in many ways I'm feeling a bit melancholy. Many things are changing and I was just getting used to the way it was.

Now it's time for another change. The scent of the honeysuckle and rose is giving way to the musty scent of fall. The bees are leaving and the migrating birds are coming back. Well, there goes another season. I know this is part of the process of rebuilding, but it saddens me a bit. Then, low and behold, a seed catalogue shows up to jar me into tomorrow. Darn those catalogues - while I'm feeling down about the end of this year of growing, they kick me back to tomorrow.

Yes, this year was filled with a lot of good, not so good and some pretty bad planting experiences. I've learned from all of those things and vow to do it better next year.

I'm set for Winter and I've got that 'ol feeling again - okay, I'm gonna get it better in the Spring! And that's only three or four months away - better start planning now!

The roses and honeysuckle still linger, but the fact I'll do it even better next Spring means I'm still in the game.

In reflection, Garden Highlights has grown so well since I started it that I am humbled. Your readership and comments are the same as the fall plant catalogues for my Spring's new growth.

Interest in becoming a Master Gardener™? Registration for Spring classes in Wasco & Hood River counties will begin shortly. Watch local newspapers or contact your “Oregon State Extension Service” for more information. Classes are open to anyone in the region. Master Gardeners™ are a valuable community resource - get involved!

“Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can walk undisturbed.”
- Walt Whitman

“There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone at their work, you would find them smiling.”
- Mirabel Osler

Winter begins December 22nd! Do you know where your snow shovel is?

Many readers have some pretty cold-sensitive plants that stay outside in the summer and get to come inside for winter. This is a fine thing to do, however there are a few things to consider especially about “critters”.

It is not unusual for outdoor plants to pick up a few uninvited guests when basking in the summer's glorious warmth. Critters often catch a nice place to “rest & relax” in the foliage and soil of those summer vacationing flora. There are a few simple things you can do to minimize the introduction of uninvited critters. (cont. pg.4)
**Garden Chore Checklist**

- Over-winter tender herbs by bringing them indoors; then replant them outside in Spring instead of buying new seeds; keep the plants moist and out of direct sun until they have a chance to settle in.
- After mowing the lawn for the last time this season, it’s important to store your mower correctly to extend its life: tighten nuts & bolts; check all belts & filters; drain gas, store in a secure, dry area until Spring.
- Prepare your tool/garden shed for Winter - move any fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals to a high & dry location where they won’t freeze (away from children & pets).
- Go shopping! A shrub that cost $25 in May can often be snapped up for half that price in late Fall or early Winter.
- Put garden tools in a bucket of sand mixed with a quart of vegetable oil - the sand cleans and the oil prevents rust.
- Clean clay pots in a 10% bleach and water mixture for ½ hour then rinse, dry and store - this kills microorganisms that can over-winter in the pots.
- Save those fallen branches this Winter - use for decorative purposes or make woodchips for mulch.
- Drain hoses and put them away so they don’t freeze & burst; make sure outdoor faucets are protected too.
- Cut back and clean up perennials; mark them with stakes; dispose of debris.

**Winter Pruning**

The best time to prune your plants, trees and shrubs is when they are dormant (usually winter, during the coldest time of year) as this will shock the plant the least. Pruning will help repair damage and guard against future damage from severe weather; help to control growth; increase fruit & flower production; promote healthy plant growth; and to rejuvenate a neglected plant.

- Cut out dead, diseased, broken, injured, weak and twiggy growth first.
- Remove crossing limbs, twigs growing in the wrong direction, long and awkward limbs, dangling branches, stems that crowd or cross the plants center; snip off any suckers.

**Safety Tip:**

Don’t drag out the ladder for Winter pruning, use a long-handled pruning pole and keep your feet safely on the ground!

**The Many Joys of Gardening**

“Don’t wear perfume in the garden - unless you want to be pollinated by bees.”
- Anne Raver

“The garden is the poor man’s apothecary.” - German Proverb

“Unemployment is capitalism’s way of getting you to plant a garden.”
- Orson Scott Card

“In the evenings I scrape my fingernails clean, hunt through old catalogues for new seed, oil workboots and shears. This garden is no metaphor - more a task that swallows you into itself, earth using, as always, everything it can.”
- Jan Hirshfield, November, Remembering Voltaire

“November comes and November goes, with the last red berries and the first white snows.

With night coming early and dawn coming late, and ice in the bucket and frost by the gate.

The fires burn and the kettles sing, and earth sinks to rest until next spring.”
- Clyde Watson

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**Flower of the Month**

- **Chrysanthemum**: Perennial; flowers Summer to Fall.
- Can be started by seed, root divisions, stem cuttings or starter plants.
- Prefers full sun and well-drained soil.
- Mums will last about two weeks in a vase.

**Narcissus**: Perennial; flowers in Spring.
- Very fragrant, excellent for cutting.
- Prefers full sun and well-drained soil.

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**Gardeners:**

Now that our gardens are done for the season and we’re not able to “plant extra and donate surplus produce from our gardens to our local food banks”, they still need our help! Please donate non-perishable items!

**Tip:** Stay off frozen grass!
Reader Profile...Jean Hockman

This issue of Garden Highlights spotlights...Jean Hockman (The Dalles, Oregon).
Jean “caught the gardening bug” from her parents—here is her story:

“I read somewhere that most adults alive today are no more than three generations removed from the soil. I believe that to be true. I come from a long line of those who ‘toil in the soil’. At his profession, my father worked the ground, planting and growing for others. At home he would grow the most beautiful vegetables. Yes, I remember how nice they looked. When my father planted, we always knew it would grow and grow well. We children were always ready to help and were impatient to see what was coming up next.

My mom has all the same skill with the good earth, but she focuses totally on flowers. She has her favorites but most any blooming thing will do. She is 86 now and spends most of the day outside in her garden. We always call her at night (she lives in Parkdale) to check on her, and we ask her what she has done during the day. Her response is always, ‘I worked outside all day’, whether it is putting down 200 rose cuttings or planting three dozen iris that she got at the garden club that day. She has a permanent sign on her front door telling visitors to ‘come back to the garden’.

I like to come home from work and head into the garden, especially in my backyard. It is kind of like my retreat and I even have a totem pole! Whatever kind of day I have had, my garden makes it better. When I dig my hands in the soil I feel physically and mentally better. (And yes, it helps to talk to the plants!). I take after my mom in that I do enjoy growing flowers more than vegetables so most of my garden comes from my mom.

One of my biggest gardening challenges is space - I am presently running out of room! I have even expanded to my neighbor’s yard! My next chore is to do some major trimming of a couple trees and then I can plant more of everything.”

When Jean was asked what words of wisdom she would like to share with readers, this was her response:

“I have learned to trust my garden. If I don’t know what that is that’s growing over there, and I know I did not plant it, sometimes I leave it and see what comes up, literally. I have decided that it is there for a reason. The last time I did that I ended up with the most beautiful, unusual squash, and I have no idea how they got there. So just wait and see what may grow...patience is a virtue! (Disclaimer: does not apply to known weeds.)”

Well said Jean! Thank you! My garden is my retreat too (and I want a totem pole - who says gardening isn’t competitive?).

Winter Houseplant Tips

► Winter heating dries the air out in your home considerably. Help your houseplants survive by misting them or placing the pots on a pebble-filled tray of water to ensure adequate humidity.
► Pot up some Spring flowering bulbs for indoor color during the Winter; store the pots in a cool, dark place until new growth emerges from the soil; move them to a bright window.
► “The best fertilizer is the gardener’s shadow.” -Author Unknown

If You Don’t Have A Root Cellar

► Some hardy crops like parsnips and carrots can be left in the ground, mulched with straw.
► Root crops like potatoes, beets and turnips can do well in a corner of your basement, an unheated shed, garage or a cool attic.
► Bury a metal garbage can in the ground just below the frost line with insulation on top of the lid to store root crops.
► Always check your vegetables periodically for spoilage.
► Savor your crops well into Winter!

Backyard Bird Feeding...It’s For The Birds!

Unwanted pests can ruin your green-thumb dreams of a bountiful vegetable garden or a lush, green lawn. You can protect your gardening efforts by attracting pests’ natural enemies. Birds are good predators who eat insects and limit your need to resort to dangerous chemical pesticides. It doesn’t matter where you live - in an apartment, a house, in the city, or in the country - our feathered friends need our help during Winter! And it provides great bird watching from your own backyard!

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<tr>
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<td>Suet</td>
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Critter Control (continued)

into your home. Plus this might help keep your other indoor plants from getting a bad case of those uninvited guests.

- Prune back and remove unhealthy growth.
- Thoroughly rinse the foliage to dislodge critters.
- Carefully inspect and remove any insects or other creatures that have taken up residence.
- If possible, repot the plants to reduce the chance of insects residing in the old soil (part of the life cycle of many insects include time in soil).
- Once inside, regularly check all plants for critters and take quick action to eliminate them.

Remember, if you get an indoor foliar or soil critter problem with your plants, you need to act quickly or the critters may change their address to another plant location. As always I encourage you to try the least dramatic control before resorting to chemical control.

Reader’s Hidden Treasure

Jude from Mitchell, Oregon writes: “You asked your readers about any hidden treasures we have found in our past diggings in the garden...well, when I was a ten year old kid (back in 1954) living near Cottage Grove, my brother Jack and our neighbor were running a tiller in a garden next door and uncovered an old pistol that must have laid there many years. It was octagon and had a long barrel, maybe a .22? Everything on it was frozen in time and there were no bullets in it (if it had, I’m sure my brother would have tried to pop them out to see if they would still blow up...he did stuff like that). Jack passed away in 2001 and I do not know whatever became of that gun. I hope your readers have fun reading this, I had fun remembering it!”

“Gardening is civil and social, but it wants the vigor and freedom of the forest and the outlaw.” - Henry David Thoreau

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Tips, Tidbits & Humor

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