President’s Corner:
Lynn Long - On Becoming a Legend

It has been my pleasure to work with Lynn Long during this Master Gardener Year. Grounded in his spiritual beliefs and dedicated to the good of community, he is a conscientious and valuable advisor to agriculture and Master Gardeners.

Recently I interviewed someone who knows him very well. They met in a WSU grad school lab in 1976: the project focused on corn smut. A year later and many pizzas later, Lynn and Marlene were married. After they both graduated with a degree in plant pathology, Lynn took a job working for a plant seed company - he researched seed-born virus in peas and lentils. He also established a native plant nursery which provided stock for government agencies such as BLM called 'Plants of the Wild.’ On a personal level he and Marlene were by then parents of three small children.

In 1987, Lynn went back to WSU to expand his horticultural knowledge and to study tree fruits. Fittingly, he started as the Wasco County Horticultural Agent in 1988. Lana Tepfer and her sister Carol Miller wasted no time in suggesting to Lynn that a Master Gardener Program be started in Wasco County. According to a reliable source, "one of the favorite parts of his job is working with Master Gardeners because they want to learn and to share their knowledge." Barbara Bailey
2010 MINI-COLLEGE MUSINGS  
Lana Tepfer

2011 Mini-College moves from O.S.U. campus to Newport, Oregon!  Planning is already underway and special motel rates have been secured for our visit. The date is not yet firm but I will report on that as soon as I know when it will be. Plan now to attend and save your change or cash in your pop cans if you need to. We shouldn't have to worry about it being too hot at the beach. If you have any questions about mini-college contact Lana, Cheri, or Lee.

Classes that Lana took were as follows: The Critical Link Between OMGA and Your Chapter; Giving Presentations with Panache; Sustainable Lawn Care; Advanced Plant Clinic Techniques; Gardens for Healthy Aging; Reining in Rogues (about invasives); and Horticultural Case Studies which was a tongue in cheek look at the psychology of plant buyers. Had to skip my last class as I was just too pooped to go!

A very special thank you to Candy Barnard-Davidson who constructed a gorgeous display about the work we do at NORCOR with juvenile offenders and to Lee Bryant who transported the display and set it up at the alumni center.

Our group handles the door prizes each year so this year we distributed 67 gifts over 4 drawings. Thanks to all my helpers: Jens, Sharon Paz, Lee, Lolly, Cheri, and Toni Stephan of Central Oregon chapter.

I have no idea of the income for the silent auction yet but I'm sure it did very well. There were many wonderful gifts to bid on. The Send-A-Friend raffle raised $540 and we will add over $50 to that from used cookbook sales.

SUMMER PICNIC

Many thanks to all who came to the summer potluck picnic and brought such wonderful food to share. Thanks, also, to Ned & Sandy Kice for hosting the picnic, to Therese for organizing it and to all others who had a hand in its success. Ned led us on a walk by the creek and then another over to the neighbor’s garden. We enjoyed the shade of the lovely sycamore tree, the gardens, and even saw some resident fauna (doe & raccoon). See photo on pg 3.

Master Gardener of the Year was also announced at the picnic. Congratulations to Katherine Olmstead!!!
FALL FLING - Lana Tepfer

Each fall the Polk County Master Gardeners have an all-day seminar for only $25 which includes your lunch, snacks and door prizes. This year's seminar will be held at 9:00 am on Sat., Sept. 11, 2010 at Dallas High School. Registration is due August 27.

Presenters include James Cassidy - who did our soils presentation this spring - this will be called Soils 2. In Chickens and Gardening, a Perfect Combination Barbara Palermo will dispel the myths of chicken-keeping and explore the basic benefits of backyard chickens. Fall, the Forgotten Season is the topic for Roger Gossler of Gossler Farms Nursery who will teach us how to get year round color. He will focus on plants to spruce up the late summer-fall season referencing his new book: The Gossler Guide to the Best Hardy Shrubs.

Optional afternoon workshops, which cost an additional $10, are: The Ergonomics of Garden Work; Porch Dressing; and Movement for Healthy Gardening and Overall Wellness.

If mini-college is just too long for you to be away please consider this other opportunity for continuing education. There will be over 15 vendors and OSU will bring a gardeners' book store like they do for us at mini-college. Call Lana or Cheri if you have any questions or go to the Polk Co. MG’s website at: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/polk/mg.

SUMMER POTLUCK:

enjoying the sycamore tree shade & good company
WATERING GARDENS  - Lynn Long

Early August is often the hottest and driest part of the summer which means that there needs to be extra diligence given to keeping adequate moisture in the soil around our plants.

Keeping your garden in peak condition during the hot days of August is no easy task. If the intense sunlight isn’t enough to stress plants, the combination of heat and wind certainly is. In addition, the soil in some parts of the area is sandy, which means that it will not hold much water.

All of this means that you must be very diligent in watering, especially during those very hot periods that we have from time to time. Newly planted ornamentals are at particular risk. These should be watered by hand more frequently than established plants since their root system is still very small and has not penetrated into the surrounding moist soil.

Immediately after planting I will water these plants every other day for two weeks and then every third or fourth day for a month. Even after this time, if we have extremely hot weather, it is a good idea to give these young plants an extra dose of water.

In the landscape, heat stress can weaken plants or, in some cases, cause effects that won’t be noticed until later. For example, in blueberry plants, lack of water in late summer will cause a lack of bud development in the spring, which can mean no blueberry production from the plant for that season. In addition, plants that are stressed in the summer may be weakened and not survive the coming winter.

If you just aren’t sure if your plants are getting enough water, dig a small hole and check the moisture content of the soil that your plants are living in. The roots of most ornamental plants are in the top 12 inches of the soil, some, however, are shallower.

Take a handful of soil and press it together. You should be able to form a ball that holds together when you bounce it in your hand. If the ball is loose and easily breaks apart when bounced, it is time to apply the next irrigation.

Keeping container plants thriving during this time of year can also be a challenge. Often it means watering the container on a daily basis. It is important, however, not to just water the container automatically, or you could actually over water the plants causing rotting. Check the soil moisture in the pot before adding more with the simple touch and feel method. If it feels wet, then wait to water.

Often during this time of year, petunias and other flowers may become lanky. This is a good time to cut the plants back and give the containers a shot of fertilizer. Frequent watering makes more fertilization of container plants necessary because large amounts of moisture leach nutrients out of the soil quickly. Soluble, all-purpose fertilizers that you can mix in water are easiest to use with container plants. Apply this type of fertilizer every week during periods of frequent plant watering.

Even, consistent watering is important for our vegetables as well. A dry period that causes plants to wilt for even a short period of time can be extremely damaging to vegetable plants. With tomatoes, the result of lack of water is blossom end rot. Blossom end rot is a malady that rots the bottom end of tomato fruit. Other critical watering times in the vegetable garden are when sweet corn begins to show tassels, and when cucumbers and summer squash are setting fruit.

Executive Board Meeting July 13th

Present: Barbara Bailey, Candy Armstrong, Therese Leon, Lana Tepfer, Cheri Austin, and Lynn Long

Jeff Justen and Phil Brady from NORCOR were also present to discuss possible WCMGA scholarships for NORCOR/Discovery High Graduates. Scholarships would be based on participation in the NORCOR greenhouse partnership. Further details of this scholarship are to be worked out.

Follow-up on the Garden Tour - all were pleased with the turnout and tickets sold (120). Thank you again to all those who participated and the hosts and hosting gardens. It was a pleasure to have the tour in the south Wasco County area. Graduation date still to be decided for October. Next Executive Board Meeting TBA in September.

Thank you
Therese Leon, Secretary
The Dirt Sheet

Happenings at The DIG

The new archway entrance done by Paul Black

“Alice in Wonderland”, another “petal”

Mr. McGregor’s Garden, in the Flower Petal Garden

The future Marian Rohde Herb Garden; herbs below

Native American Garden - The Three Sisters (corn, beans, squash, with some onions, too!)
The first time I ever found one, I didn’t need anyone to tell me what I had - I knew it was a tomato hornworm, and it was having a feast on my tomato plant. Since that first encounter I have had more than I’d care to think about, including on my eggplants, and I’m sure many of you have had to deal with them, too.

Tomato hornworm is also known as Five-spotted Hawk Moth, or Manduca quinquemaculata. It has a close relative, the tobacco hornworm (Carolina Sphinx, Manduca sexta), which can be distinguished by fewer white diagonal stripes and a red (yellow, orange) curved horn, in contrast to the V shape stripes and blue-black straight horn of the tomato hornworm. The moth has 5 pairs of spots along its abdomen compared to the sphinx with 6 pairs. The wingspan is 9-13.5 cm and they fly at dusk. Larvae of both feast on tomato plants and other solanaceous plants. The tomato hornworm pupates in the soil and over-winters in that stage.

You can easily control the caterpillars by picking them off; Bt should also work. Since they pupate & over winter in the soil it may help to cultivate the soil which could expose and damage the pupae.