SEPTEMBER WCMGA QUARTERLY MEETING

6:00 pm, Thursday, September 27
at the Wasco County PUD board room
2345 River Road (enter at the side door)

Come hear what the visioning committee is brainstorming for 2019 Master Gardener training, and give your input!
(Read more about this on pg. 4)

SUMMER POTLUCK PICNIC!

A fun time was had by all, and we missed those of you who weren’t able to attend. As usual, there was great food to go along with the brats. Pam Manning was recognized as Master Gardener of the Year for 2018. Many thanks to Bob & Barbara Bailey for hosting us again this year! Usually we enjoy the cooling breezes and shade of their garden on a hot summer evening, but this year it was a bit cooler than anticipated!
PRESIDENT’S CORNER: Tales from the Creek – Bill Marick

When the county fair comes around I get the feeling that summer is winding down, a new school year is just around the corner, and fall is not that far off. It still makes me a little sad to see summer’s end.

The Wasco County Fair is something I have experienced all my life. Long before I was old enough to be in 4-H Club my mother would exhibit her pretty flowers, fruits, and many types of vegetables in the Open Class category. Later, when my brothers and I showed our 4-H animals--mostly rabbits and chickens --we often entered produce that we had grown. It was fun to compete in special produce categories like the tallest sunflower or biggest squash. That was before pumpkin-growing contests.

Thankfully, our animals were usually awarded ribbons, and the championship ribbons gave us an opportunity to go to the Oregon State Fair. Traveling with my family to Salem with our show animals in tow was the highlight of summer.

Our county fair used to have a parade where 4-H’ers could show their animals. I remember the year I won first prize for the most unusual pet, my porcupine that I named “Porky”. I found him when he was very small and raised him in one of our spare rabbit cages. Porky became quite tame, eating out of my hand and seldom bristling. He loved to have his belly scratched when he climbed on the wire front of the cage. Usually, I did not pet him without a glove on, but sometimes I could lightly pet him as long as I brushed from his head down toward his tail with the quills lying down--very carefully! When scratching or petting him, Porky would make soft grunting noises that seemed to say he was enjoying it. One morning, not long after the fair, the wire front of his cage was ripped open and Porky was gone. I guess he had gotten the travel bug and went off to see the sights, or his recent fame had prompted him to seek more recognition.

This year’s county fair also gave me the opportunity to continue our grandson’s “rural” education. While walking through the parking area Aiden asked me why there were so many cow pies. I said it was because cows had been there recently! Aiden sometimes misses the obvious.

Another thing I noticed was how few flowers, fruits, vegetables, and preserved produce were on display. I would like to see more of us entering flowers and produce from our gardens to encourage more participation in the Open Class category. Who knows? This could incite some playful competition for bragging rights.

The local Master Gardeners used to have a booth at the fair, but haven’t recently because of the time and effort to set one up. I hope we can find someone interested in setting up a booth next year. It may produce more interest in the OSU Master Gardener program.

Have you completed all your volunteer hours, yet? If not, there are still open times at the plant clinics. If you need more hours, call Michelle to inquire about opportunities. It’s good to grow better together.
Members Present: Bill Marick; Ronnie Smith; Jens Frederickson; Annabelle Lavier; Steve Gillette; Peggy Peterson
Extension: Michelle Sager

Treasurer’s Report: Jens reported a balance of $18,416.85 as of 8/21. Ronnie moved to accept the treasure report with correction ($1.00) and subject to audit.

OSU REPORT: Michelle attended the Master Gardener Coordinator Conference— a national conference held in Madison, Wisconsin which centered on the theme of how to communicate our impact to world.

Visioning Committee/ Strategic Planning— Separate committee with the focus on training: how we are doing at this moment and how to improve in the future (strengths, weakness, trainings etc.). Michelle found a division between new members (under 5 years) and older members (over 5 years) in their views on training needs. Newer members were much more enthusiastic about the trainings last Spring compared to the older members. Committee will meet to discuss ideas on how to improve participation and trainings. The ideas will be presented at a quarterly meeting.

Parks and Recreation potential — The Director of Parks and Rec. met with Michelle to begin discussion of possible areas of cooperation. The Director, Scott Baker, suggested that perhaps the two organizations could collaborate on projects including a demonstration orchard. The Parks and Rec. department could use one of their properties as the site.

Celilo Cancer Center — Margaret Haupt, former Master Gardener, suggested that the Celilo Cancer Center and Master Gardeners might want to collaborate on projects. She suggested that a representative meet with Kim Hartley from the hospital. Ronnie volunteered to meet with her.

The DIG: Kathy reported that she had no real news. Participation is down, but the beds are looking good. Steve suggested that we build a board to honor the organizations and businesses that have donated to The DIG. He will work with Kathy on developing a plan and bring it to the board.

NORCOR/GREENHOUSE: (Peggy) Jens discussed possible dates/times to take down the shade cloth. There have been a couple of rips in the skin over the greenhouse. Some of them were mended but there may be more rips. Peggy reminded the Board that she will not be available for around six weeks at the beginning of next year. That means other members will need to take responsibility for securing the soils, planting the seeds, and general maintenance of the greenhouse (water, heat and fans). There’s a new teacher at NORCOR. Ronnie and/or Bill will meet with him and discuss future Seeds and Soil programs or activities.

OMGA— Louise will not be able to continue her duties for the remainder of this year. Bob Bailey is the alternate and will be asked about taking over her duties. Ronnie volunteered if Bob was not available.

Radio Shows — Ronnie will handle KODL (9/04) and Bill with the possibility of Ronnie will cover Hood River (9/28).

New Business
Graduation: Michelle will scout out possible dates of availability in late October or early November.

Fall Quarterly Meeting: Bill in conjunction with Michelle will secure a location and plan the meeting around Strategic Planning.

Elections 2019 — Nominating Committee will include Bill Marick, Steve Gillette and other members to be appointed by the president. Request for volunteers will be included in the newsletter.

Continued on page 4
August Board meeting, continued

**Picnic Report**— Members who attended enjoyed it even if it was rather cool.

Annual IRS information requested by the state Master Gardener Association (OMGA) will be completed by Bill and Jens.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

**Annabelle Lavier, Secretary**

**CALL TO ACTION: Help us with your vision for MG training!**

*Michelle Sager*

As you (hopefully) know, I am putting together a Visioning Committee of Master Gardeners to help brainstorm new ideas for how to make our Master Gardener trainings better for everyone. Considering our program consists of brand new MGs and MGs who’ve been in the program for a decade or more, and everyone in between, I am discovering the challenge to include the right information so that everyone benefits.

And guess who knows better than me how to do that? YOU! Right now, the committee consists of 4-5 folks who have stepped up. We met on Tuesday, and have started coming up with a game plan!

But even if you’re not interested in being on the committee itself, you might still have ideas, thoughts, or feedback about Master Gardener training, and I still want to know what it is! Please take a moment to think about what it is YOU want to get from Master Gardener training, next year and beyond. Write down some thoughts and send them to me in an email or whatever format works best for you.

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**Celebration of Life for Catherine (Cathy) Dowrey, lifetime Wasco County Master Gardener**

**Saturday, September 8, 2018 at 11:00am**

United Methodist Church, 305 E. 11th Street, The Dalles

Fellow Gardeners,

When The Dirt Sheet arrived in the mail, my mom was always anxious to see what was “going on” – long after she had sold her home in The Dalles and came to live with my family in Happy Valley. Mom instilled that gardening gene in me and I ran with it, the B.S. in Horticulture from OSU and a certified arborist has served me well. I used to joke with her that it was “all her fault.” Her seeds hit fertile ground.

Cathy passed away this last May, complication of stroke. Please join us for her celebration of life September 8, 2018 at the United Methodist Church in The Dalles, at 11am.

I would love to meet you and hear stories of my mom... on your side of the fence.

With much love,

Leslie Gover,
daughter of Catherine Dowrey
2018 ANNUAL TOMATO TASTING
EVENT AT THE DIG
Saturday August 25th

It was another fabulous morning at The DIG. The conditions were perfect for the Annual Tomato Tasting event on the Columbia River Gorge. The sun was shining, there was a cool light breeze, and plenty of good company. What more could you have asked for? Tasty tomatoes, silly!

The tomato varieties trickled in until early Saturday morning, just in time for them to be entered into the contest. We prepared 23 varieties for tasting and grouped them into three categories: Red Slicing Tomatoes, Roma Tomatoes and Cherry Tomatoes. Twentytwo ‘Tasters’ attended to enjoy the home grown tomatoes and cast their vote. Yum! That was the best part.

The results:

- Red Slicing: Goliath, provided by Peggy Peterson
- Roma: San Marzano Long, provided by Bill Marick
- Cherry: Sun Sugar provided by The DIG gardens: Hungry Caterpillar ~ Marilyn Richardson & Soup Kitchen ~ Kathy O’Hern

The Tomato Tasting Event was very successful and we were all pleased at the turnout of folks who were not only interested in tasting tomatoes but were also interested in the Master Gardener program. Lots of questions.

Our thanks go out to our long time Master Gardener, Pam Manning who is the 2018 project leader of ‘Coffee at The DIG’. Pam organized the long list of events that took place at ‘Coffee at The DIG’ with Tomato Tasting wrapping up the season. What a great way enjoy ‘The DIG’. Thanks to all!

TammyRae Sykora, Tomato Slicer
Fall garden club at Colonel Wright Elementary School is all about wildlife. Students are assigned with their own critter – native to our area – and are tasked with learning as much about them as possible, including what they need to eat, live in, and be surrounded by. By the end of the session, we will be planting a “wildlife garden” complete with lots of plants that can help their critters survive. Native plants to the rescue!

Garden Club is 15 or so third, fourth, and fifth graders from Colonel Wright. It typically runs for 6 weeks, one day per week, for 2 hours. The schedule is not yet set, as I am hoping to find a volunteer (or a few?) who are excited about the project so I can work out the schedule with you. We will likely begin the third (?) week of September, so please let me know ASAP if you’d like to participate!

Michelle Sager
PAINTED ROCK MOVEMENT
Kathy O’Hern

Have you noticed that painted rocks are being left here and there – including at The DIG? The painted rocks usually contain a happy or inspirational message, like these ones I’ve found – “Don’t worry, be happy” and “Happiness is not by chance, but by choice”. Some rocks have a picture painted on them – like a heart, a pretty design, cartoon character, etc.

After finding a few of these rocks at The DIG I did an Internet search to see what it’s all about. It turns out this is a movement with many names - The Kindness Rock Project, Painted Rocks, Painted Rock Life – I’m sure there are lots more names. It’s a nationwide phenomenon intended to simply make someone smile and brighten their day. This movement is intended to combat the negativity that seems to be all around us these days.

The idea is to paint a rock with a kind message or happy image, and leave it someplace where, hopefully, someone will pick it up. That person may take it with them or leave it another location for someone else to find. If the rock is taken home then another rock should be painted and left somewhere for another to find.

Regional Facebook groups provide a place to post photos of rocks found. Some people hide rocks then post clues on Facebook to help others locate them. There are lots of Facebook pages like “The Dalles Rocks”, “Gorge-us rocks” and more. Often the rock will have a Facebook page or hashtag painted on the back.

Maybe you will find a painted rock and become a part of the painted rock movement!

More pictures from the annual picnic

The Bailey’s lovely garden, setting for our picnic.
The Dirt Sheet
Newsletter of the Wasco County Master Gardener™ Association
Carolyn Wright, editor
carolyneewright@gmail.com
541-506-5001

Officers
President – Bill Marick
President Elect – Steve Gillette
Secretary – Annabelle Lavier
Treasurer – Jens Fredericksen
Historian – Bruce Lavier
OMGA Rep – Louise Sargent
Alternate OMGA Rep – Bob Bailey
OSU Extension Staff
Michelle Sager, Program Coordinator

For those of you not on Facebook, you can still view our page and read articles posted there. Here is the link:
https://www.facebook.com/WascoMG/

Find Us Online
http://extension.oregonstate.edu/wasco/mastergardeners

Calendar

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<td>Sept 4</td>
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<td>Tuesday work party at The DIG</td>
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<td>Sept 11</td>
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<td>Fall Workparty at The DIG</td>
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VOLUNTEER PAYBACK HOURS

Have you completed your volunteer payback hours yet? If not, do you need ideas on what you can do to complete them? Remember that everyone – first year or veteran – needs at least 12 hours of plant clinic time, and first year master gardeners need to complete a minimum of 42 hours of volunteer payback while veterans just need to complete at least 24 hours payback time. Hours need to be completed before the end of October.

There are still plenty of things to do to earn payback hours. There are a number of openings still for plant clinics, both weekdays and Saturdays, between now and mid-October when the clinics are finished. There are also call-back opportunities, which can be done from home or the office. Garden Club will start this month and is a fun time working with kids.

Contact Michelle for more information and additional ideas for how you can complete your hours. Be sure to record & report your hours, too!