The New Year Starts Now?
~ Scott Thiemann ~

There are reasons for this.

ONE. All volunteer hours recorded from November 1st count for 2019. That’s right, next year! (So, if you are one of only about 2 people who have not recorded yours upon receiving this NEWsletter, you may still have time to do so!) Overall, we have done quite well, logging in about 2500 volunteer hours and over 350 education hours. Thanks for all of the hard work and great projects you have helped with and taken on this year.

TWO. Ideas and projects for next year are already flowing. There are two that I am personally very excited about. The first involves working with kids in afterschool classes and activities, including gardening projects which may involve doing things like gardening in the Riley Creek school garden, working on the butterfly garden, plant propagation, and maybe even a go at landscaping. If any of these sound of interest, and you are background checked, please let me know and you can help guide the work and teach the concepts. This project will be coordinated by Karlie Wright, who is running this program out of the library. The program is called ASCEND: Afterschool Commitment to Education and Development.

Another, very similar to this, except we are approaching the above topics and projects more from a Voc-tech angle with young folks ages 16-24. This would involve working with them where they would be building skills for the ‘real world’ in which they might find employment—or even create such positions—where they could work right here in Curry County, and wouldn’t have to leave home to do so elsewhere. Such work experience would mostly concentrate on landscaping (especially in maintenance) skills. This would also be an opportunity to work more one-on-one with someone or a couple of young folks in direct support, whether in guiding their work or in teaching various concepts. We will be working with Rusty White, coordinating this with Gold Beach High School, in providing outreach in various areas of interest. Hopefully, we may be able in the future provide outreach to Brookings and to Port Orford.

THREE. New officers. I would like to welcome the folks who have stepped forward to take on the various leadership positions for the board going forward. Lori Phelan as president, Marna Williams as vice president, Barb Rylee will remain the treasurer, Jeffrie Hall as secretary and state representative. Cathe Barter will also continue as our newsletter editor and historian. I want to thank you all for your willingness to lead us forward into 2019! HUGE THANKS to Pam Leslie, Tim Lyons, Debbie Carroll, and Lana Larsen for serving in these positions for the last couple of years...it is definitely time to take a break. You have brought us into our productive present!

FOUR. This is where you come in! Big plans for an MG greenhouse and demo gardens will take a lot of support. Other MGs have headed other projects like the Brookings preschool gardening program, the Jr. MG program at the Chetco Public library, Crescent City’s Garden-to-Table, and other projects/programs, helping us coordinate volunteer activities thru the online ‘Team-Up’ calendar and providing our wonderful newsletter.

FIVE. And??? This is where 2019 and all of our new (and seasoned!) trainee-energy comes in. One project will be to train a couple folks to help out in Brookings. In next May’s Seed-to-Supper program. The world is your oyster, or garden, as you choose to make it!
ANNUAL PLANT SALE
Carol Hobbs, 541-251-2422, Mailhobbs@yahoo.com
Questions? Give me a call or text

The Brookings Christmas Bazaar is quickly approaching. Saturday November 10th is the big date. If you are interested in working at the Bazaar on November 10th let me know or contact Debbie Carroll.

We have been busy making planters and hanging wreaths. Driftwood and hypertufa planters plus new glass planters will be offered. We also plan to sell 3’ pots of succulents for those customers who want to make their own planter.

In addition to making Bazaar items we are also busy planting our new plants from cuttings. We are well underway for the 2019 Annual Plant Sale. Many staples but also several new plants that we will be able to offer.

Come check out what we are doing -Tuesday afternoons GBHS greenhouse.

Thank you

RILEY CREEK GARDEN ~
Ali Mramor mramorali@gmail.com, Coordinator, Tele. 310-409-3496

October has been a full and exciting month! Most exciting to note was the Fall Fest held at the Riley Creek School Garden in tandem with the Curry County Master Gardeners on October 17. It was a huge success! We estimate that we had around 80 people attend. Students, along with their families, took part in apple peeling, apple picking, seed art, a pumpkin weight guessing contest, eating made-to-order lettuce wraps, and probably the most alluring, fresh apple cider pressing. Thank you to Ali Van Otterloo for lending the apple crusher and cider press for the event. The cider was delicious! Kids also had a chance to harvest carrots, beets and peas from the garden. Everyone who attended walked away with something, whether it was a pumpkin they won, a cup of cider, or carrots they picked. A big THANK YOU to the Master Gardener volunteers who made the Fall Fest possible: Barbara Gaston, Bryan Grummon, Debi Harpole, Mary Jacobs, Pam Leslie, Lori Phelan, and Scott Thiemann. We also had a few non-MG volunteers who were of great help as well.

We’ve begun to plant fava beans as a cover crop in the now empty beds. We still have some bed clearing, amending, and planting to do, so if you have some extra time we’d love to have you volunteer a couple hours in the garden.

Garlic was planted by a first grade class from cloves harvested from last year’s crop. Hydroponic lettuce has been harvested and served in the cafeteria with more growing awaiting harvest soon.

Last week we had visitors from the Gordon Elwood Foundation Board who toured the garden and learned about all the ways the garden is utilized in and out of the classroom and throughout the calendar year. It was a pleasure to host them.

Wish List note: we are on the lookout for a donation of compost or rich soil mix to top off the beds. Any leads can be sent to amramor@ccsd.k12.or.us.
NOVEMBER GARDENING TIPS

Planning

- Force spring bulbs for indoor blooms in December.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Service lawn mower prior to winter.
- Check potatoes in storage and remove any going bad.
- Place a portable cold frame over rows of winter vegetables.
- Place mulch around berries for winter protection.
- Cover rhubarb and asparagus beds with composted manure and straw.
- Rake and compost leaves that are free of diseases and insects. Use mulches to prevent erosion and compaction from rain.
- To protect built-in sprinkler systems, drain the system and insulate the valve mechanisms.
- Clean and oil lawnmower, other garden equipment and tools before storing for winter. Drain and store hoses carefully to avoid damage from freezing.
- Renew mulch around perennial flower beds after removing weeds.
- Protect tender evergreens from drying wind.
- Tie limbs of upright evergreens to prevent breakage by snow or ice.
- Leave ornamental grasses up in winter to provide winter texture in the landscape. Cut them back a few inches above the ground in early spring.
- Western Oregon: Last chance to plant cover crops for soil building. You can also use a 3- to 4-inch layer of leaves, spread over the garden plot, to eliminate winter weeds, suppress early spring weeds and prevent soil compaction by rain.
- Western Oregon: Watch for wet soil and drainage problems in yard during heavy rains. Tiling, ditching, and French drains are possible solutions. Consider rain gardens and bioswales as a long-term solution.
- Western Oregon: Take cuttings of rhododendrons and camellias for propagation; propagate begonias from leaf cuttings.
- Western Oregon: Prune roses (tea and floribunda, but NOT climbers and ramblers) to around 3 feet in height to prevent winter damage.

Planting/Propagation

- Plant window garden of lettuce, chives, parsley.
- Good time to plant trees and shrubs. Consider planting shrubs and trees that supply food and shelter to birds (sumac, elderberry, flowering currant, and mock orange).
- Western Oregon: Still time to plant spring-flowering bulbs, such as tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, crocuses. Don’t delay.
- Western Oregon: Good time to plant garlic for harvest next summer; and to transplant landscape trees and shrubs.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Rake and destroy leaves from fruit trees that were diseased this year. Remove and discard mummified fruit.
- Check firewood for insect infestations. Burn affected wood first and don’t store inside.
- Treat peaches four weeks after leaf fall spray for peach leaf curl and shothole diseases.
- Western Oregon: Moss appearing in lawn may mean too much shade or poor drainage. Correct site conditions if moss is bothersome.
- Western Oregon: Bait garden, flower beds for slugs during rainy periods. Use traps or new phosphate baits, which are pet-safe.
- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don’t treat unless a problem is identified.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Reduce fertilizer applications to houseplants.

HOW TO FIND OUT WHAT’S GOING ON

Contact Pam Leslie, find us on Facebook: Curry County Master Gardeners-OSU Extension

THE BRAMBLES NEWSLETTER

Email to active members and on
http://extension.oregonstate.edu.curry
Editor, Cathe Barter at umpqua.bart@gmail.com

BOARD MEETINGS monthly 3rd Tuesday from 10 am to noon

OSU Extension (Gold Beach)
2930 Ellensburg Avenue, Gold Beach, meeting room
(No Meetings in August or December)

Visit these sites to volunteer:

GOLD BEACH HIGH SCHOOL GREENHOUSE
29316 Ellensburg (at the read of school)
Contact Carol Hobbs. 541-251-2422
*Annual Plant Sale Project* spoken here

RILEY CREEK GARDEN
94350 6th Street, Gold Beach
Contact Ali Mramor alimramor@yahoo.com

ABC PRESCHOOL
543 Hemlock St, Brookings
Contact Barb Carey barbcary15696@gmail.com

SHOP AND GIVE BACK TO CCMGA!

CCMGA has completed two "REWARD" program applications! This is your chance to give to our non-profit organization through your daily purchases.

The 1st rewards program is smile.amazon.com. If you have an Amazon account and purchase products from Amazon, connecting your account to Smile.amazon is easy. Go to smile.amazon.com and log in to your account. You will be asked which charity/non-profit you would like to support. You will find MANY Master Gardener Associations, so PLEASE select Master Gardener Association, Gold Beach, Oregon. It is on page three or four of their list of Master Gardener Assn. Then make your purchases...it is that simple. Amazon smile will donate .05% of your qualified purchase to CCMGA by direct deposit.

The 2nd rewards program is with Fred Meyer. Using this reward program is as easy as linking your Fred Meyer Rewards card with Curry County Master Gardener Assn., Gold Beach, OR. Set up a new account or sign into your existing account at fredmeyer.com, click on the ‘Fred Meyer Community Rewards’ link at the bottom of the page, type in ‘Curry County Master Gardener Assn.’ or the number ‘85441’, choose our organization, and click on ‘Enroll.’ Information about both the programs is available online at each business; check it out!
INSECTS AND SPIDERS OUT TO FIND SHELTER FOR WINTER

By Kym Pokorny; Source: Brooke Edmunds--CORVALLIS, Ore. – This time of year, insects and spiders are out and about – some in large numbers – looking for places to hunker down for winter.

“Just like us, they’re coming inside to get warm,” said Brooke Edmunds, a horticulturist for Oregon State University Extension Service. “They’re not feeding on homes or humans; they’re just looking for cracks or crevices. Most are minding their own business. They aren’t aggressive toward people, not even the spiders.”

That explanation often isn’t comforting when insects find your house the perfect spot for a long winter’s nap. Boxelder bugs can swarm the side of homes and outbuildings by the thousands, giving homeowners a fright. Spiders, which are looking for mates, can also cause anxiety.

However, of the 700 to 800 species of spiders in Oregon, only the black widow has the potential to cause serious harm to humans. This spider is found in the drier areas of southern Oregon and east of the Cascades more commonly than in the Willamette Valley, according to Gail Langellotto, OSU Extension entomologist. One brown widow was found recently, probably a hitchhiker from another area. Hobo spiders, research shows, are not venomous, but their bite may cause pain, redness and itching. Poisonous brown recluse spiders do not live in Oregon.

The distinctive red and black boxelder bug has long been the bane of homeowners, who find them piled on top of each other on the warm south- or west-facing walls of buildings. They don’t do much damage in the garden, unlike the shield-shaped brown marmorated stink bug, which feeds on a large number of plants, including blueberries, raspberries, apples, figs, hazelnuts and many ornamental plants.

In addition to brown marmorated stinkbugs and boxelder bugs, other insects most likely to be found invading your home right now are Mediterranean seed bugs and springtails, both very small.

“Springtails are tiny, like pieces of dirt but they move around,” Edmunds said. “They get their name because they can jump up to several inches by means of a tail-like mechanism.” Springtails live in soil, especially soil amended with compost, in leaf litter and organic mulches and under bark or decaying wood. They feed on decaying plant material, fungi, molds or algae. They love moist environments and if they do make it indoors, you can often find them in sinks, bathtubs, floor drains, damp basements and crawl spaces. Unless they find moisture, they’ll soon die.

Mediterranean seed bugs, which can be identified by distinctive black triangular and diamond-shaped markings on a tan body, are commonly found among tall grasses and weeds and feed on a wide variety of seeds.

To help keep all of these insects outside, caulk openings and cracks around doors and windows and repair screens, Edmunds recommends. Get rid of debris and leaf litter near the house, especially around foundations, to reduce the shelter they need to overwinter. Vacuum up any bugs that get inside, seal and dispose of the vacuum bag or empty it into a bucket of soapy water.

“Insects get through spaces so small you don’t even think about them,” she said. “You want to keep as many out as possible and then vacuum up the rest.”

There’s no need to suck up spiders, which are beneficial in the garden and can just be ushered back outside. Insecticide sprays are generally not recommended for these insects. They are often no more effective than vacuuming, and repeated applications may be required. At best, pesticides will provide only temporary relief. Pyrethroid insecticides are available for treating foundation walls around the perimeter of buildings. If required, these applications are best done by a professional.

CCMGA Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2018
Gold Beach High School Greenhouse


The meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m.

Minutes as published in the Brambles from meeting of September 18 were approved.

Treasurer’s Report distributed. All areas are under budget.

Business:
The annual Holiday Party will be December 8 at the Blue Water Cafe in Harbor. More info will be sent out in November.

2019 Budget requests are due by November 1, 2018. Please send to Pam Leslie.

2019 Officer candidates: President-Lori Phelan, Vice President-Mama Williams, Secretary/State Representative-Jeffrie Hall, Treasurer-Barb Rylee. If anyone else is interested in any of these positions please let Pam Leslie know, else the positions will be approved in the November 20, 2018 meeting.

We will be selling succulent and succulent planters at the Holiday Bazaar in Brookings on November 10. We have booth #15 in the cafeteria this year. Set up will be Nov 9 from 6 pm to 9 pm, the Saturday Bazaar sale hours are 9 am to 5 pm, with tear down starting at 5 pm. An email will be sent to schedule those able to assist with setup, sales and tear down.

Program Assistant’s report:
2019 proposed schedule of events list was distributed. Changes will be made as they happen. Eight potential new trainees so far; still looking for more. Scott is looking for someone to prepare and keep current a ‘newcomer packet’ for trainees. Anyone willing to take this responsibility please let him know. He expressed ‘thanks’ to Ali and Jeffrie for their assistance with the new OSU website.

PLEASE–PLEASE have all of your volunteer hours entered by Oct 31. 2018.

Committee Reports:
Riley Creek will be having their Fall Festival on October 17 after school is out for the day. Seed art, pumpkin activities and lettuce wraps are on the schedule. Volunteers are needed if anyone is available. Ali Mramor will be submitting a budget request to update the irrigation system at Riley Creek. It is currently a trip hazard in several places.

Living Waters Community Garden - Seed to Supper program that was held in Crescent City last year by the Lando’s is scheduled at this church in 2019. They had about 12-15 people at each session in Crescent City.

Annual Plant Sale - starting to move cuttings into 4* pots.
Land & Building fund - Starting discussion with principal and superintendent to possibly utilize more school area for improvements. Need children involved in educational portions to receive any grants.

Soil Testing - No soil tests done in October. Completed testing info will be given to Scott for a folder to be created and saved in the extension office.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Submitted by Lana Larsen, Secretary.
As I prepare and plan for growing tomatoes for the May sale, I would love to have some feedback from the tomato plants sold at last year’s plant sale.

Please text me, call (541-698-7703), or email me at jacomary@gmail.com with your impressions, successes, failures, etc. from your tomato crop. Also, any requests for next year.

Following is some of my current feedback:

**Oregon Spring** tomatoes produced well, early, on compact plants.

**Fruity cherry** were a poor substitute for other cherry tomatoes - I will probably only do the most popular cherry tomatoes next year (sweet 100s and Sungolds).

**Stupice** also produced reasonably well here on the coast.

I’ve had mixed messages about San Francisco Fog. They produced well, later than Oregon Spring, but I had complaints about the taste.

Please let me know what tomato plants you want next year and I will try to accommodate everyone’s needs when I start seedlings in March.

**FALL FESTIVAL ~ FOOD, FRIENDS AND FUN**

Coastal tomato growing—stupider

Oregon spring
By Kym Pokorny—CORVALLIS, Ore.—Holding onto poinsettias after the holidays is good for the pocketbook but hard on the ego when you can’t get them to color up the next year.

Now’s the time to start coaxing poinsettias back into color and bloom for December. Sensitive to day length, the poinsettia needs a certain minimum amount of darkness each 24-hour period to stimulate blooming in the winter. With the shorter fall and winter days in Oregon, the plant has a natural tendency to bloom in spring, when there are about equal amounts of dark and light.

If the plants are exposed to lights inside the home, they won’t receive enough darkness to start blooming and could stay green through winter. To make a poinsettia bloom in early winter, indoor gardeners simply need to adjust the amount of light and darkness to “fool” the plant. In mid- to late October place your poinsettias in a completely dark area from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily until red color starts to develop on the flowers or “bracts.” This can take quite a while. People often forget to cover the plant one or two nights. Interrupting the darkness by even a few minutes may cause failure of the coloring. Bring the plant to ordinary light after the bracts show color. You may have better luck if the bracts are almost fully expanded before bringing the plant out. Once the plant has large, colored bracts, the artificial light inside a house will not inhibit a poinsettia’s blooms.

Here’s a general time line for “coloring” the poinsettia:

Mid- to late October – Begin giving poinsettias long nights (darkness from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m.). Cover with a cardboard box or black plastic bag or place it in a dark closet.

Mid-November – Color should be showing in the bracts.

Early December – Bract color should be almost complete. Plant can be brought out into ordinary light.

December until February – During this “forced” bloom, keep the temperature between 60 and 70 degrees. Poinsettias are particularly susceptible to cold. Let the plant receive as much sunlight as possible during the day. Water regularly and thoroughly. Throughout winter, fertilize once a week with a water-soluble fertilizer at half strength or less. Over-fertilization will cause the leaves to drop. Keep plant away from hot or cold drafts. Leaves may wilt if the plant is too dry, too wet or exposed to a draft. Never allow a plant to stand in water. Yellowing of foliage may indicate insufficient light, over-watering or lack of nitrogen. Generally, a slight correction of the environment will correct any of these symptoms.

After blooming, the plant’s bracts and leaves will begin to fall naturally. Discontinue fertilizing and reduce watering. Cut the plant back to 6 inches. Water only enough to prevent the stem from shriveling. When summer rolls around, repot the poinsettia if necessary. When you see new growth, start watering regularly and feed every two weeks with a balanced (the three numbers on the label are the same) fertilizer. As they grow, pinch back stems to encourage branching. Grow it outdoors or as a houseplant. If grown outdoors, be sure to check for insect pests and treat if needed. Next autumn, start the cycle again.
Fall Festival Pictures
Fall Festival Pictures

Brookings Holiday Bazaar Sale ~ November 10
Succulent Containers
Brookings Holiday Bazaar Sale ~ November 10
Succulent Containers
HYDRANGEAS PLAY A PRETTY ROLE IN THE GARDEN

By Kym Pokorny, Source: Heather Stoven -- CORVALLIS, Ore. -- When botanist John Bartram first identified a hydrangea native to the U.S. in the 1730s, little did he know it would become a mainstay of the garden with its iconic flowers implying romance with their blustery beauty.

Hydrangeas populate millions of gardens and with good reason. They can be used as specimens in a place of honor, as partners in mixed beds, in containers and even as hedges, said Heather Stoven, a horticulturist with Oregon State University Extension Service. And with the continuing frenzy of breeding, new, cool cultivars come on the market on a regular basis. But with all the species available – mophead, oakleaf, panicle, smooth or H. serrata – there really is one for every garden. To clear things up, Stoven unlocks the mystery of hydrangeas and offers her tips on how to grow them.

Here it is. The famous mophead hydrangea (H. macrophylla) is the plant everyone imagines when thinking of hydrangeas. The big, bouncy blossoms of Hydrangea macrophylla give it the common name mophead hydrangea and make it the showiest of the genus. Flowers appear in shades of pink, purple, blue and white. Native to coastal Japan, mopheads, which are also known as bigleaf hydrangeas, are a little less cold hardy than other species. They’re fine in Zones 5 through 10 and some will tolerate Zone 4.

Though known for those big mophead flowers, some H. macrophylla show up with lovely lacecap flowers, which are flatter, less full and have sepals that look like petals in a circle around the flower. Though perhaps not as obvious as the mophead flowers, a plant full of lacecap flowers will not disappoint.

The plants range in size from 2 to 10 feet, but are most commonly 3 to 5 feet. Like all hydrangeas, H. macrophylla needs even moisture, so keep them watered. Plant them where they will get afternoon shade or they will burn in the hot summer sun.

About 20 years ago, the first hydrangea that bloom on old and new wood – called remontant – were introduced to the public. This was a huge breakthrough because it means flowers develop throughout the season instead of just once, giving a longer season of bloom and more flowers. ‘Endless Summer’ started the stampede, and the resulting publicity put hydrangeas fully on the map after years of languishing popularity. Some other remontant types to look for include ‘Bloomstruck’ from the Endless Summer series, ‘Starlight’ from the Let’s Dance series, ‘Revolution’ from the Plants Nouveau Everlasting series and ‘Fire Island’ from the Seaside Serenade series.

Similar to H. macrophylla is H. serrata, a smaller, more compact shrub. Most have lacecap flowers, but some sport the mophead type. H. serrata a little more finicky than mophead hydrangeas, and needs protection from hot, sunny, windy spots. So plant in a mostly shady spot. H. serrata is hardy to Zone 6.

If you admired a hydrangea in grandma’s garden, it was probably H. arborescens or oakleaf hydrangea. Though it is just fine in pink or white, but not blue. Native to the Eastern U.S., H. arborescens gets 5 to 7 feet, though dwarf varieties are hitting the market. Smooth hydrangea needs shade and is hardy in Zones 3 through 9. The best-known of the smooth hydrangeas is the old-favorite ‘Annabelle,’ a large shrub with huge white flowers. Breeding is bringing out varieties with even bigger blooms on stronger stems, such as Proven Winners ‘Incrediball,’ which is white, and ‘Invincicelle Spirit,’ which is pink.

Most commonly known as panicle or Peegee hydrangea, H. paniculata has elongated flowers in white, pink or greenish-white. The long flowers make quite a show and turn various shades of pink as they age. H. paniculata is the hardest of the hydrangeas, growing successfully down to Zone 3. Earlier cultivars grow up to a height of 10 feet, but newer ones stay in the 3- to 5-foot range. The best known of the newer varieties is ‘Limelight,’ which gets about 6 feet tall and wide and sports 8-inch, greenish-white flowers. Other new ones include ‘Pinky Winky’ and ‘Vanilla Strawberry.’ Panicle hydrangeas can take full sun if kept moist enough, and should have at least several hours. This attention-getting hydrangea can be grown as a single-trunk standard form. Smaller varieties do well in containers.

H. quercifolia or oakleaf hydrangea is a tough plant that withstands hot weather and sun better than other hydrangeas. As the name implies, the foliage looks like oak leaves and turns dark orange, red and burgundy in fall. Flowers, which come in pink and white, are smaller than mopheads and elongated like panicle hydrangeas. Size ranges from 3 to 7 ft.

Native to Southeast U.S., oakleaf hydrangea is hardy in Zones 6 through 10. A few smaller options are ‘Munchkin,’ ‘Ruby Slippers’ and ‘Queen of Hearts’ and ‘Jetstream.’

Planting: Choose the right site. Hydrangeas can be picky about what sun exposure they get so check the recommendation when buying. Avoid planting in hot weather. It’s best to plant from spring to fall. If you care about the color of the flowers, do a soil test to determine pH. See “Bluing” below. If you determine you want to change the color, planting is a good time to add sulfur or lime. Dig a hole two times the size of the plant’s rootball. Cut any circling roots. Fill the hole in with native soil mixed with organic material. Place mulch over the planted area and water well.

Fertilizing: Use a slow-release well-balanced (the three numbers on the label are the same or close to the same) fertilizer in spring. Fertilizing too much, especially with a fertilizer high in nitrogen (N) can bring on too much foliage and not many flowers. Avoid fertilizers high in phosphorus (P) if you want blue blooms.

Watering: Hydrangeas were named for a reason. Hydro means water in Greek and Angelon is vessel. So think of it this way. Hydrangeas are a vessel that holds water. In other words, don’t skimp on the water. Keep the plants evenly moist, but in well-drained soil.

Pruning: When to prune depends on if the plant blooms on new (current year) wood or old (last year’s) wood. If it’s new wood, prune in late winter or early spring. If it’s old wood, prune in late summer after blooming. Flowers can be deadheaded at any time, but be sure not to cut off the flower buds. Hydrangeas don’t need heavy pruning unless you want to reshape or resize it. In that case, cut out no more than a third of the plant by pruning old wood to the ground. At the appropriate time of year, prune for height by cutting back as far as you wish, but you may lose some flowers the following year. Blooms can be snipped at any time as long as you leave the buds. Keep in mind there’s no need to prune every year. If it looks good, just deadhead and remove dead wood.

H. macrophylla, H. serrata and H. quercifolia bloom on old wood, except the newer remontant forms of mopheads like ‘Endless Summer.’ H. arborescens and H. paniculata bloom on new wood. Do your homework and know which type of hydrangea you have before pruning.

Bluing: The million-dollar question is “How do I get my hydrangeas to turn blue?” Well, first of all, not all hydrangea flowers turn blue – such as white ones – so do some research before buying. Second, you need to know your pH, so either get a soil test done or buy a pH tester and do it yourself. For pink flowers the pH should be 6.5 or higher; purple flowers result from pH between 5.5 and 6.5; blue comes from a pH of 5.5 or lower. To adjust the pH, use sulfur to lower the pH and turn the flowers blue. (Use aluminum sulfate if growing a hydrangea in a pot in a soilless potting mix). If pink is your goal, go with lime to raise the pH. The best time to add amendments is fall. Changing the pH is a slow process that can take several years. For a deep dive into how to lower the soil pH see Acidifying Soil for Blueberries and Ornamental Plants in the Yard and Garden.
Have you seen the Curry County Master Gardeners website?
Extension.oregonstate.edu/curry/mg
The Brambles is usually posted there by the second of the month.

The last Monday of the month is the cut-off date for submitting articles for the Brambles. Email them to Cathe Barter umpqua.bart@gmail.com

This is your newsletter, if you have something to share please send it in. We will make every effort to include it.

Thanks to all of you who generously contributed to this edition of the Brambles. All submissions are gladly considered.

CCMGA Officers for 2018
President ............. Pam Leslie
Vice President......... Tim Lyons
Secretary.............. Lana Larsen
Treasurer.............. Barb Rylee
OMG State Rep……… Debbie Carroll
Newsletter Editor…… Cathe Barter
Historian.............. Cathe Barter
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