



Here's "THE DIRT" on The Common Sense Gardener

Newsletter of the WSU Thurston County Master Gardeners and The Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County

"Helping Gardeners Grow"

OCTOBER 2007

Volume 7, Issue 5



Newsletters Unite!

by Frankie Rasmussen

The 2007 State Master Gardener Foundation Conference at Port Townsend was not only fun and educational, it brought the Editors of "The Common Sense Gardener" and "The Dirt" to the realization that there is no legal or other requirement to have separate newsletters!



The misperception that the newsletters, as well as other activities, were required by law to be separate was dispelled by Dr. Linda Kirk Fox, Director and Dean of WSU Extension.

So, this Newsletter combines the best of both and brings you all the news in one convenient place. It saves a ton of labor for writers who wrote articles for both newsletters and it allows one of the Editors to concentrate her efforts in other areas. This is a Win-Win for us all.

If you would like to contribute an article to the newsletter or have an idea for one, contact the Editor at CommonSenseGardener@gmail.com

Many, many thanks to Nancy Mills, who spent countless hours putting together The Common Sense Gardener the past few years. She did a great job and continues working hard for Master Gardeners and Composters in Thurston County!

Annual Foundation Member Meeting!

At South Puget Sound Community College

Saturday Oct 27, 2007 at 1200 (noon)

Brown Bag Lunch - See page 7 for more details

From the Program Manager

by Paul Feenan



As autumn approaches like a runaway train (or is that winter disguised as fall?) and the garden slows down to a slugs pace, it is somewhat odd to be reflecting on the garden tours of summer. While some of our members will surely be thinking of us as they enjoy the gardens of various European destinations those left behind are surely more apt to be thinking of firewood and galoshes than touring anything uncovered by a roof.

However a budget proposal drafted by the foundation board of directors at my request asks us to consider an enhanced effort for the 2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour. We are petitioning interested Master Gardeners of Thurston County to assist us and our event partners in delivering an improved educational component to the garden tour.

As I toured the gardens this year I asked myself "am I learning something here"? My answer is a resounding yes. I am an inquisitive and active garden tour participant and I am constantly asking questions to myself and anyone who will listen. I also interact with the garden itself to gain knowledge to bring back to my own garden at home. I realize too that I have a foundation of understanding regarding the methods and practices of sustainable gardening (the guiding principle of the tour as well as the Master Gardener Program).

(Continued on page 2)

From the Foundation President

By Nancy Mills, Current Vice President
(and 2008 nominated President)

As I reflect on the tour I wonder if others enjoyed learning on the tour. Did people receive the message we are delivering? Have they gone away with better comprehension of water-wise landscaping and plant selection? Are they now considering their use of pesticides and fertilizers because they realize that the overuse of these products can lead to environmental, and water quality issues affecting the larger community? Are they excited to begin composting in their backyards or improve the composting systems already in place?

I have no doubt we are reaching people. I also believe the tour event represents a unique opportunity to educate a lot of people already interested in gardening (the bought the ticket after all). It is my opinion that we can do better. I am also confident that our partners in the event are excited for us all to enhance the tour's educational aspect.

That is why Foundation Board has proposed to invest in the tour as an educational endeavor. Our pledge is to bring more educational opportunities to the 2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour. I commend the board for this action. The next step is for Master Gardeners to participate in development of the educational program for the tour.

I am asking folks to begin to brainstorm for ideas to implement for next year. Get involved in the educational planning now. Talk to your friends about the tour and discuss opportunities to teach people about sustainable gardening in their yards. The tour offers such a large and diverse stage for us to take advantage. I am confident we can design a diverse educational program to fill that stage.

You have all done wonderful work on the tour to help bring it to where it is today. The event enjoys strong support from the community and represents an even stronger partnership with its sponsors. Let's build on this strong foundation for next year help to deliver a strong message to the Thurston County gardening community.



Wow, we are going to have an exciting year in 2008! We have a wonderful slate of people who are volunteering their time to be on the Board, including two from the new Master Gardener class.

It is wonderful that there will be a mix of the new with the "old blood" (not to say that any of us returning are old mind you!). It's always encouraging to see people who are new in an organization willing to spend time to help with the leadership roles.

Thanks to the many great fundraisers, we're having a wonderfully successful year to date and are able to start budgeting some monies in 2008 towards expansions of programs.

One of those things, Garden Rhapsodies, is talked about more in depth by Paul Feenan earlier in this newsletter. This action can directly be attributed to the vocalization of some of your concerns about, and your desire to maintain supporting this worthwhile program.

If you have other concerns that can be addressed by the Foundation Board, please let any of the officers know. I want you to feel like you are part of an organization that meets the needs of the members.

In that, we need your help not just with suggestions, but with willingness to work on committees and follow through with ideas. We have lots of things that are sort of sitting on the side, just waiting for the right person to come along. Let us know who you are and what your interests are. I bet we have something just for you. I encourage you to come join us and make this the best year yet!

Closed Loop Park

by Wanda Cross



It was 1982. I had purchased my first house two years previously and was finally going to put some flowers in front of the fence to give it that homey look. My gardening background at that point consisted of watching the boys from the local FFA climb all over my apple tree with sharp implements as they practiced their pruning techniques. Who knew so many boys could fit in that little tree!

Anyway, I went to the nursery down the road and purchased some burgundy petunias. Still my favorite color. I dug a little trench about 6 inches wide in the weeds in front of the fence, planted my prizes 12 inches apart, and stood back to admire my work. This gardening wasn't so hard!

A few days later I invited a friend over to see the new garden area. How proud I was! The flowers seemed nice and happy and much fuller than the straggly specimens in neighboring yards. That's when I learned that the petunias were sold in four-packs! Instead of 16 petunias stretched across the front of the fence I had 16 groups of four! Not 16 petunias, but 64! Somehow my friend managed to restrain her laughter...

I relate this story to illustrate the fact that I am Distressingly Horticulturally Deficient. It's with this background that I signed up for the Master Gardener course and found myself volunteering at Closed Loop Park.

February 10 it rained. Not a downpour but a drizzle. Enough to obliterate my name from my intern tag and to convince me I had to invest in a raincoat. It was my first day volunteering at Closed

Loop and a small group of interns and veterans worked in the Native Garden, pulling weeds and pruning. I went home wet and tired. And didn't return for three months.

When I did venture back at the beginning of May, the garden was just starting to awaken from its winter's nap. The weeds were definitely the early risers. The CLP crew spent long hours in the Sedum Garden pulling weeds to the cacophony of the recycling center just down the hill.

Spring turned into summer and the garden flourished. Attacking weeds in the Picnic Garden wasn't half bad when you could stand to stretch your back and at the same time enjoy a view of Mt. Rainier above the multi-colored peony bed. And the noise from the recyclers? Now a barely-noticed background to the sounds of the garden: the hum of the bees and songs of the birds and of course the chatter of the human garden workers.

Of course that deficiency I started with hasn't completely disappeared. There was the time that Tam sent me off to pull foxglove and I had a nice pile of verbascum in the wheelbarrow before she happened by to correct me. And it took some convincing that those poppies would truly take over the world if we didn't stop them in their tracks right down there by the lower fence.

Now fall is here. It seems such a long time since that soggy day in February, but it has been time well-spent. Watching the garden change through the past months has been a treat; working with the Friday crew of Master Gardeners and interns has been enjoyable; and wandering through the various Closed Loop gardens has given me ideas for my own yard.

So here I am, more than 25 years past the "petunia incident." A little less Horticulturally Deficient since volunteering at Closed Loop. It's been fun, good exercise, and more than a little educational. Come and join us in the garden and you'll see what I mean.

Dirt Works Garden

Dirt Works Children's Garden

by Karen Walters

by Karen Walters



We are winding down for the season at Dirt Works. The garden is open on Tuesday and Saturday from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. through October. Please note we will not be working this month on Thursday evenings.

There will be some new happenings in the garden next year. As we are cleaning up the vegetable beds and perennial beds, we are also preparing to be ready for new areas in the garden next year. The raised beds for the adaptive garden are being built as well as some new vegetable beds near the Children's Garden. By the end of October, we will have the rest of the containers purchased for this site. Next spring we will put them in place, add soil and begin planting. The adaptive garden committee will meet early next year to make plans for bringing in community members to utilize the garden.

Bob has been busy planning the last phase of the garden renovation. After plant sale in May, we will be calling for help with the new shade garden. He has already been cleaning up the debris, outlining a path through the trees, and doing some planting as the plants become available. Bob will be the lead on this project.

Dirt Works new feature for the fall is the rock garden. The committee worked quickly to get it started. It is mostly planted and the pea gravel and mulch have been installed since the pictures were taken. It really looks beautiful and is a nice addition to the garden.



We still have plenty of work left until the end of October. It is always nice to leave the garden well tended and hopefully lessen the work load in March. Thanks to all of the Master Gardeners who are spending time helping out!

The Children's Garden program ended the last Tuesday of August. The last day was a busy one with 34 children present. There were some really good lessons this year. It was wonderful to have Mr. Morrison speak to the children about Birds in the garden and David, a Pierce Co. Master Gardener and Beekeeper Society member, speak about honey bees. There were also some teachers in our new Master Gardener class who were really great reading the stories to the kids; they really new how to keep their attention and make it interesting.

We had a Saturday open house at the Children's Garden in September. It was not well attended, but those that came seemed to have a good time. They got to pick the apples and the rest of the vegetables, feed the worms and make an activity book to take home. We did have two new families visit and they plan on attending next year.



Plans are already underway for next year. There will be some changes in the garden. There will be new vegetable beds, some new tree fruits and small fruits and more planting space for the children. In early March, we will have a day for kids to come and plant seeds to be kept in the greenhouse until we have our planting day in May.

In February, 2008 we will get a group together to plan the lessons for summer. One lesson that is already in the works is 'Native Plants'. Erica Guttman will come and have a nature walk through the park with the children. If anyone has ideas of things children should know about nature and gardening, or someone who would be willing to speak on a Tuesday, you can email me at kswalters@comcast.net.

Master Gardener Class of 2007—GRADUATION!!

by Tom Neitzel

We've completed our last class today, Friday, Sep 21st, roughly eight months after we started. We are the first class to use the "class every third Friday" schedule. I like it. Our formal graduation is Monday, October 1. The entire class is really looking forward to that evening.

So, what have we been doing for these last five classes? Meeting and listening to the great WSU staff (current and past) and other experts share their knowledge and experience in the same manner we have throughout the training, of course!

Carol Miles shared a great deal about vegetable growing – understand what your plants need, give it to them in the easiest manner possible, and you will be rewarded.

Don Tapio visited us twice. The first session was about woody landscape plants. I don't recall the exact title of the talk, but it went something like "How we kill plants!" A humorous title for a great lecture. My simplified take away from the session was "concentrate on the roots and the plant will take care of itself." It was a good illustration of how continued research can change conventional wisdom. There are a couple things I had to "unlearn".

His second session covered weeds. I really enjoyed the handout he gave us to record the location of each weed he covered in our own yard. I was amazed at how many times I said to myself, "So that's what that is." It turns out that I have quite an extensive selection of very fine weed specimens. Just let me know if you need one or two specimens for your yard.

Dave Pehling brought many examples and lots of enthusiasm to his talk about vertebrate pests. I'm pleased that I can now tell a deer mouse from a house mouse. I know I should be happy to learn that the moles are eating earthworms and such in my yard. The soil must be good to support the earthworms. I'm still trying to peacefully co-exist by patiently removing the hills and telling the moles that they should relocate, but they aren't listening.

Art Antonelli gave us a wealth of insect information. Important items to me included how devastating to bees

most insecticides really are and the large number of beneficial insects that are killed along with "pests".

Gardening in our watershed was the topic covered by Bob Simmons, Chris Monn, and Jane from Thurston County Public Works. We learned how easy it is for excess pesticides and fertilizers to move and contaminate our water resources. The real highlight of this session was piling into a school bus and taking a field trip to see the Olympia McAllister Creek watershed, several storm water retention and treatment ponds, Lacey's natural, reclaimed water tertiary treatment facility, and the Nisqually Reach Nature Center, illustrating the complete McAllister Creek drainage from beginning to emptying into the Sound.

Jim Freed was back again to talk about home orchards at our last class (he had covered small fruits in May). We talked about our unique climate and the challenges associated with it. We learned a simple word for most pest and disease control – Sanitation.

Some things that come to my mind as I think back over the classes include:

- Understand what the problem is before you come up with the answer.
- Many times people know what the answer is but don't have a clue as to what the problem is they are solving. Finding an insect chewing on a leaf does not mean there is an insect problem.
- Simple is always the right answer.
- All things are related in the web of life.
- Mother Nature will always win no matter how much you think you are controlling her.

I'm still busy, along with a few other members of the class of 2007, getting my volunteer hours commitment completed. Over the summer I've been able to spend time at the Lacey Clinic, Olympia Farmer's Market, and Garden Rhapsodies. I find it really fun to interact with the public and chat with veteran Master Gardeners.

I have really enjoyed by association with the Master Gardener program to date. I expect it to be even more fun as I work with and meet more of you.

Plant Sale Update

Thanks to Everyone who helped Marion McIntosh care for our plants this summer. With minimal volunteer time there are rows of healthy plants lined up and ready for winter's rest!

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 30, 2007

Perennial donations accepted for Spring 2008 on Tuesdays 9 am to 1 pm

Please bring in healthy and special or exotic plants for next spring's sale.

NOTE: We have **plenty** of Lamb's Ear, Persicaria, Sword Fern, Siberian Iris, Lysmachia, Shasta Daisy, Vinca, Pieris, Cape Fuchsia, Hardy Geranium, Phlox and Figwort.
Please hold divisions of these plants for another year.

If you can not bring plants in on a Tuesday, or if you require help to harvest from your yard contact:

Pam Thayer: Thayer_snyder@hotmail.com or 357-3823

Evelyn Stewart: petroduck@ccomcast.net or 438-7382

Bob Findlay: rfindlay@iastate.edu or 753-2983

Sept. 18th was our big potting day and a crew of six filled all three holding beds with donations from DW Children's Garden, and the private gardens of Judy Smith, Kathryn Baker, Bev Postman, and Stephanie Tibbets. Wanda Cross and Diane Claussen did yeoman service all day, transporting, potting and adding to the general hilarity! What would we do without the interest, energy and high spirits of the new class members?

Thank You!!

Nancy Mills is doing a fantastic job getting the labels printed immediately for all these plants so they are labeled now in preparation for sale day 2008! That means we need all the information available for every plant donated to be recorded in the log book, folks, or sent directly to Nancy, please! You all know the drill: common name, botanical name, height, growth habit, color

and time of bloom, noteworthy foliage, special care, and sun and water requirements. It certainly makes Nancy's job easier the more information you supply. Our customers always comment about the value of our informative labels. But most importantly, identified plants sell for higher prices!

Need Some Hours??

Particularly for the new class members who require hours, we will be on site Tuesdays from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. through October.

This month our plants require their last grooming and weeding, and the site must be closed down just like in your own yards, so there is work still to be done! If anyone is interested in becoming a lead for a particular group of plants and working with them next year, please contact Lynda Bauer or join us at the final planning committee meeting of 2007.

Final 2007 Plant Sale Meeting

9:30 a.m. Thursday, November 8th at the Lacey Office.

For the last time, our sincere thanks to everyone for the fun and successes of the past four years!

Lynda Bauer and Evelyn Stewart



Hurrah for the new Plant Sale Chairs!
Mary Moore and Bob Findlay have agreed to co-chair the 2008 Spring Plant Sale. We are all thankful for their experience, talent and willing spirits. 2008 will be another great year!

Master Gardener Foundation Annual Meeting - Brown Bag!

Noon on Saturday, October 27, 2007

South Puget Sound Community College

We are in for a great treat this year. The meeting will be held at the South Puget Sound Community College and hosted by Brent Chapman, Dean of Natural Sciences. Brent has set up a fabulous program with Frank Byles, who has earned an international reputation for the grafting and production of **Japanese maples**.

For many years, Frank operated a production nursery in Olympia, shipping plants all over the United States. After recently selling his nursery, Frank took on a new "retirement" goal of collecting every single Japanese maple that exists in the world. He reports he only has 50 more to go of the 550 or so that are available. Soon after retirement, Frank and his wife also decided to share part of his extensive collection with South Puget Sound Community College. There are now close to 220 different Japanese maples growing on campus, with an additional garden that contains over 30 different species of maples.

The meeting will start off with a **Brown Bag Lunch** at noon. Following lunch, we will have our business meeting, which includes our **annual election of Board officers**, a vote on the 2008 **budget**, and an **awards ceremony**.

At the conclusion of the business meeting, Frank will be giving a lecture on how to care for Japanese maples in the landscape, including pruning and disease issues. Then, he will conduct a tour of the maple collection in all its autumn glory. Depending upon the number of people planning to attend, an earlier tour may be added prior to the meeting at 10:30.

It is important we get a count of those planning to attend so we can finalize arrangements for the appropriate size meeting room and whether a second tour will be necessary. Please RSVP Deborah Welt at david_welt@msn.com or 455-1687.

"What's Up with Your Board"

By Lois Willman, Secretary



COMPOST PAILS: The Compost Bin project is doing so well the Board recently approved an addition to the line of products—compost pails. The pails will be sold on a trial basis at \$12 each. The pails will only be sold separately at a workshop or in conjunction with a bin, and delivered only with the purchase of a bin.

For more information on the pails and compost bins, go to www.compostbintc.com.

COMPOST BINS: We are always looking for additional volunteers to assist with the various workshops and composting events, so if you would like to get involved and help out on occasion, contact Paul Feenan.

GARDEN RHAPSODY EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT: The Foundation has been very supportive of the Garden Rhapsody program, both as a fund raiser and as an educational opportunity for gardening practices.

The Board would like to add a little more focus on the educational side, however, so it has approved \$2000 in the 2008 budget to be used for Educational Enhancement.

We will be working closely with the Garden Rhapsody Committee to come up with a specific educational focus. Bring up *your* education ideas with a member of the Board.

*Master Gardener Foundation
of Thurston County Mission Statement:
"Helping Gardeners Grow" by supporting
programs that cultivate knowledgeable
gardening and promote quality of life for
Thurston County.*

2008 Master Gardener Foundation Board Slate

**Come Meet These Dedicated People
at the Annual Foundation Member Meeting
Sat, Oct 27 at noon at SPSCC**

Nancy Mills – President. I moved to Washington State in 2001 from New Jersey, where I had lived all my life. I had just retired from my career of 20+ years being what I like to describe as a “Betty Crocker of drugs” in the pharmaceutical industry.

I knew some people in Olympia and decided it was time to have an adventure. It wasn't until 2005, when those folks moved away and I decided to stay in Olympia, that I signed up for the Master Gardener class. I had always loved plants and did as much gardening as I could, but had never joined a community of gardeners before. I expected to learn lots and make some new friends. What I have found is some great friends, something to learn all the time, but probably most importantly, is a passion for a program that I believe does so much to promote the education of the general public on sustainable gardening practices.

I live out in the Delphi area of Thurston County with my cat family (now enclosed by 450+ lineal feet of fence since this has been a very difficult year for me regarding the loss of several family members). I also sing with The Olympia Choral Society. I love to travel and especially enjoy visiting the National Parks. They are such a great place to practice photography.

Joan Hoffmeyer – Vice President. I moved to Thurston County in 1980 where I lived until my move to Lewis County in 2006. I work for the State of Washington and have two sons, a granddaughter and a grandson.

My first memory of gardening was the sweet peas in my mother's garden. To this day, it is almost impossible for me to pass up the opportunity of purchasing a bunch of sweet peas at the Farmers market.

I lived in several states over the years and have gardened in vastly different climates. I failed miserably in my attempt to grow anything but rocks in Las Vegas. Gardening in California, Utah, and Illinois was more successful, but the most rewarding was in Omaha, Nebraska. I've been gardening for nearly 38 years and my passion continues to increase each year!

I enrolled in the 1999 Master Gardener class but life happened and I had to withdraw after the second class. My next chance for taking the class didn't come until 2007. My dream just took a bit longer than anticipated to realize.

I've been involved with Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Thurston County, I'm on the Pride Wall Committee, the Adopt-a-Family Committee at work, I belong to the Art Deco Society and the Page Turners discussion group at Timberland Library. I also love to travel, play (at) the piano and have two cats.

Toni Ghazal – Secretary. My family and I moved to Silverdale, WA from Houston 17 years ago. An opportunity arose in Olympia where we bought a business and ran it successfully for 15 years. My husband, Ralph is now in the Mortgage and Real Estate business and we have two grown sons. I hold a BA degree in Geography from the University of Oklahoma.

Since we sold the business last October, I joined the Master Gardeners Program and Ralph has joined the West Olympia Rotary Club. I also belong to a local women's book club. My hobbies include reading, gardening, cooking, traveling, and training our Golden Retriever.

We live on the west side on five acres. Our three goats are more difficult to train but we enjoy them nonetheless. Our fourteen year old Beagle is beyond training and she knows it. She runs the place.

I look forward to continued involvement in the community.

VISION: “Helping Gardeners Grow” by supporting programs that cultivate knowledgeable gardening and promote quality of life for Thurston County.



MISSION: Enhance and Promote the County's Master Gardener and Master Composter Programs in an Atmosphere of Camaraderie and Teamwork.

Sharon Brown - Treasurer. I am continuing my 2 year term as Treasurer this year and have completed a previous 2 year term as Treasurer. I've been working these past 3 years to strengthen sound accounting practices within the Foundation and to assist the board in maximizing revenue opportunities.

I was born on a farm and grew up in Moses Lake so I have been 'gardening' all my life. I moved to Olympia in 1969 and worked for the State, retiring after 30 years of service. I spent 15 years in Information Systems as a programmer, analyst and in management, primarily in the WA State Department of Revenue. The last 15 years of WA State service was in tax administration management with responsibility for financial systems affecting all businesses in the State.

I've volunteer at Puget Sound Blood Center, and currently with AARP completing tax returns for our Seniors. My love of travel has taken me to some very interesting places, most recently to Novia Scotia and this year to Italy on a garden tour led by Marianne Binetti.

Bill Longnecker –Representative to MGF Washington State. I was born in Olympia and have lived in Thurston County most of my life. I grew up in rural area two miles out of Rainier. I now live just a mile from my family's place on five acres.

My wife of 24 years, and daughter, a sophomore at Saint Martins University, have been supportive of my time spent in this and other community activities.

I took the MG class in one of the largest and still active groups, 2003. I became a Master Composter in 2004.

I have served the past two years as Thurston County Representative to MGF of Washington State. This means not only sitting on our Thurston County Foundation Board but also having the vote on the State Foundation (MGFWS) Board and helping with State activities such as the MG Conference.

My long term goal for the Foundation is to provide the funds and leadership to expand our current program to the more rural areas of Thurston County.

Deb Welt – Member at Large. As an Army brat I've lived all over, attending 10 different schools where I learned to adapt quickly. I am married to a wonderful Intel guy with 2 grown children, and 2 beautiful granddaughters 3 and 18 months. I love being a stay-at-home volunteer after a career as a legal assistant in the Thurston County Public Defenders office. Before that most of my experience is in the customer service venue: answering an 800 line for a keyboard manufacturing company, an office manager at a temporary help agency and an administrative assist in the Administration Office of a large hospital.

What drives me is to continue to learn about what interests me most and currently that's gardening, composting and quilting. I enjoy working with the board to facilitate the volunteers jobs in their efforts to help the community to learn, grow and flourish.

2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour

By Jennifer Johnson

Happy Autumn, Master Gardeners!

The Garden Tour Committee is already busy finding gardens for the 2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour.

If you have a great garden or know of a great garden to suggest, please let me know as soon as possible. We look for gardens that are beautiful AND maintained with integrated pest management. The tour isn't limited to organic gardens but we do look for gardens that minimize their use of weed and bug killers with prevention strategies such as the right plants in the right place, well adapted and drought tolerant plant selection, compost to build organic matter, and watering techniques such as soaker hoses and drip irrigation. We look for gardens all year and even if they aren't selected for this year's tour, we hope to be touring low impact gardens for years to come!



We also welcome your suggestions and ideas for demonstrations and workshops at the tour. If you know of a great presenter (including yourself!), let us know. We try to get demonstrations scheduled in early spring, so give us your suggestions as soon as possible. Don't forget that community organizations are invited to participate in the tour at the bus shuttle site, so give us your suggestions for great groups that should be invited.

Thank you to the Master Gardeners for all that you do to support this fun and educational community event.

We couldn't do it without you!

Master Gardener Foundation Scholarship

By Sharon Brown



It is time again for the Master Gardener Scholarship to South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC).

The board will fund one scholarship of \$750 in 2008. We would like to add either another scholarship or to increase the scholarship to \$1,000. Two Master Gardeners have already pledged another \$500; do you want help too?

From feedback received, there is a desire from numerous other MG/MCers to participate in this worthy endeavor. There is no limit to how many scholarships we can sponsor, but \$750 is the minimum funding level for each scholarship. If you would like to be a part of this rewarding program and give the gift of knowledge, any donation amount is acceptable and will be held in a special fund until a minimum total of \$750 is received. At that time it will be transferred to SPSCC for a scholarship fund. All monies must be sent to the Foundation by November 30, 2007 to be administered in 2008.

The scholarship criteria are: Minimum grade point of 3.0, full time student, based on a commitment to a career in horticulture, recommendations from horticulture faculty, and consideration of financial need.



If you would like to donate to this worthwhile program, send your check to MGFTC, 720 Sleater Kinney Rd, Ste Y, Lacey, WA 98503. Please note "scholarship" on your check. Remember your donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Any questions about the scholarship program, please email Sharon Brown smsbrown@comcast.net

You can direct qualified students to SPSCC Scholarships at Student Financial Services, Building 25, First Floor (360) 596-5232 and on the web at: <http://www.spscc.ctc.edu/admission/funding/financial-aid.html>



THE GARDENER'S BOOKSHELF

By Mary Moore

By the time that you are reading this article, I will have returned from spending two weeks in England touring English gardens.

To prepare for this tour, it was recommended to me that I read a book entitled ***Royal Gardeners: the history of Britain's Royal Gardens*** by Alan Titchmarsh. I must admit that I was dubious as to its relevance. Why would I want to know about royal gardeners? Why would I want to know just about the royal gardens? Well, my eyes were soon opened. We would not have the gardens that we have today were it not for both the royal gardens and their gardeners. And we certainly would not have the plants that we have today were it not for the enterprising Brits who went all over the world to find them. Move over Dan Hinkley. You are just one in the history of several great plant finders!

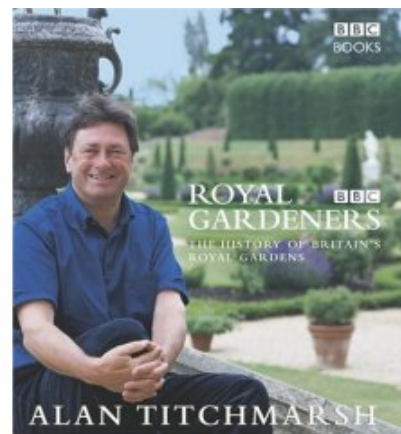
Gardening in England would not have occurred were it not for the royal families. They had the land, the time, and the funds to be able to garden on a grand scale. They always initiated the vast variety of garden styles and "fads" as the years went by. It started in earnest with Eleanor of Aquitaine, married to Henry II, who had visited the Holy Lands with her first husband, Louis VII. Bringing the Islamic and Moorish influence in gardens with her, they soon became very influential in the design of English gardens. The Tudors, with both Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, were avid about gardens and established many of the more famous ones. Opulent and imaginary, the Elizabethan gardens included arbors, knot gardens (brought forward from the medieval gardens) and topiaries. William and Mary brought the dutch influence to England some of which remains to this day.

The royal gardeners have names that many of us recognize from the plants they discovered and the legacies that they left. John Tradescant and his son were not only gardeners and botanists, but traveled

the whole world collecting plants not previously known in England such as the tulip tree, swamp cypress, phlox, lupins, goldenrod, and Michaelmas daisies. One of the most famous garden designers was Andre Le Notre, responsible for the gardens at Versailles. He was also contracted to design several of the royal gardens in England and throughout Europe. Other names that we should give credit to are Daniel Marot, Henry Wise, Charles Bridgeman (of ha ha fame), William Kent, Lancelot "Capability" Brown and Humphrey Repton. Capability Brown was given his nickname because whenever he would visit a prospective client, he would remark that their grounds had "great capabilities for improvement".

As Titchmarsh progresses, he includes lists of plants that were used during the period and also the tools that were formed. He also utilizes lots of wonderful pictures to bring the past to life.

Alan Titchmarsh is a wonderful combination of savvy, well-trained gardener and author. He has written over thirty books on gardening and has done a good deal of broadcasting as well. His style of writing is highly entertaining and he uses just enough down-home terms to be fun. His side comments and all the fascinating little tidbits here and there make for a delightful read.



On the Go!

Garden Related Classes, Shows, Tours and Sales



Classes, Tours and Other Activities

Linnaeus Celebration Lecture

Friday, October 5, 7:30 pm, Kane Hall, University of Washington, Seattle. Magnus Liden, the Curator of the Linnaeus gardens at Sweden's Uppsala Botanical Gardens, will speak about Linnaeus, the father of taxonomy. This lecture is part of several events worldwide celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of Carl von Linné, known as Linnaeus, who devised the Latin binomial classification system for plants. \$10/students free

Inspired Gardens: Color, Texture and Light. -

Saturday, October 27, all day at Bastyr University, Kenmore. Explore how to use color, texture and light to weave magic into any garden. Speakers include writer Pam Harper of Virginia; Graham Gough, owner of Marchants Hardy Plants in England; his partner Lucy Goffin, celebrated textile artist; and Bernard Trainor, noted garden designer from California. Sponsored by Northwest Perennial Alliance. NPA members \$80/nonmembers \$100. Registration begins June 1. To register, contact info@northwestperennialalliance.org.

Designing Mixed Borders for Sun and Shade –

Wednesday October 10, 7:15 p.m., Center for Urban Horticulture, Seattle. Bob Hyland is co-owner and manager of Loomis Creek Nursery, a retail nursery in New York's Hudson River Valley that specializes in perennials, grasses, shrubs and tender plants for the mixed border. He will discuss the art and practice of creating dynamic, colorful, four-season borders planted with a mixture of shrubs, perennials, ornamental grasses, annuals, and bulbs. Sponsored by Northwest Horticultural Society. Fee Member \$5./Nonmembers \$10.

Bloedel Reserve—Pacific Northwest Treasure –

Wednesday, November 14, 7 p.m., NHS Hall, Center for Urban Horticulture, Seattle. Prentice Bloedel's belief that "Nature can do without man, but man cannot do without nature," inspired him to give his wonderful estate to the Northwest. Richard Brown, the executive director of the Bloedel Reserve, and a talented garden photographer, will tell us how this once-private residential estate evolved into a nationally significant public-access garden. Sponsored by Northwest Perennial Alliance Fee: Members \$5. /Nonmembers \$10.

Grays Harbor County Harvest Celebration

Sat, October 6 9am-4pm. Spend a fun day learning about local agriculture at Grays Harbor County Harvest Celebration, Saturday, October 6. This event, which showcases the diversity, productivity and economic impact of the Grays Harbor County Ag industry includes visits to the Tolt Garden organic vegetable farm, Living Art Japanese Maple Nursery, Dan's Dahlias, Oak Meadows Buffalo Ranch and a farm which includes a stream restoration project on Vance Creek. Local grange women will have refreshments available at the Sharon Grange near Porter.

You may drive your own vehicle to tour farms between 9 A.M and 4 P.M. or board a guided tour bus. Bus tours will leave the Abelhouse Bed and Breakfast in Montesano at 8 A.M., 10 A.M. and 1 P.M. Cost is \$2.00 per person or \$4 for a family of four. Cost on the day of the tour is \$3.00 per person or \$5.00 for a family of 4. To reserve a space on the bus call 360-249-6002. For those choosing to drive their own vehicles, maps to the farms with driving directions will be available at the Abelhouse at 117 South Fleet Street in Montesano.

There will also be a pancake breakfast available at the Abelhouse, quilt displays and a number of activities throughout the day in downtown Montesano including a performance by the Grays Harbor Banjo Band in Fleet park from 3 to 4 pm. Bring the entire family and spend a fun day celebrating our agricultural industry.

Waterwise Plant Sale October 14, 11am to 4pm

2918 Ferguson St SW Suite A Tumwater WA

WSU Thurston County Extension Native Plant Salvage Project's fall plant sale will feature hard-to-find native and waterwise plants.

The event will be held **under cover** and take place rain or shine at our office in Tumwater. This is both an educational event and a fund raiser including mini-courses and personal plant shoppers to help you select great plants for your garden. We're also seeking volunteers for pre-sale organizing and/or help on the day of the event.

Contact Erica at ericaguttman@gmail.com or ericag@wsu.edu, or call (360) 754-3588 ext. 110. See our website (www.oly-wa.us/NPS/) for directions and more information.

FALL GARDEN CLEAN-UP PAYS BIG DIVIDENDS IN REDUCING PLANT PROBLEMS NEXT YEAR

Cooler temperatures, shorter days and rain showers all serve to validate fall's arrival. For gardeners, it's time to tidy up those unsightly plants that are still lingering in the garden. A general clean-up now will not only improve the garden's appearance, but also help in the prevention of insect and disease problems next year. Most disease causing organisms such as fungi, bacteria and viruses as well as insect pests spend the winter on plant debris and weeds. Getting rid of spent plant material can make a significant difference in the occurrence and severity of pest problems next year.

Once vegetables are harvested, remove the entire plant. This will help with foliar diseases such as late blight on tomato and with nematodes and nematode eggs if roots are infested. If there is still plant material in the garden, follow up with tilling or turning the soil over. Most microorganisms that cause foliar diseases are destroyed quickly once plant foliage is in contact with the soil and starts to rot. After the first killing frost, remove annual flowers from the garden and till the soil to a depth of eight inches to bury any remaining infested plant material. Remove weeds from the garden too, because in addition to producing seed, they can harbor diseases and insects.

Herbaceous perennials such as hosta and iris are beginning to succumb to the short days and cool nights. After the tops have died back, cut them back close to the ground to help reduce slug populations. Fall and winter are good times to inspect trees and shrubs as well. Many of the organisms that cause leaf spots and twig and branch dieback overwinter on fallen leaves and stem tissue. Rake and remove fallen leaves. If the plant showed symptoms of a folia disease, it may be advisable to also remove some of the mulch and replace it with new. Prune out branches that have died and check other branches for areas of dead tissue known as cankers. These should be pruned six to 12 inches below the visibly affected area, and pruners should be dipped in a 10 percent bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water) between cuts.

Tent Caterpillars

Question: Our tree is filled with what we believe to be tent caterpillars. Should we spray them with something?

Answer: Most likely, the tents you are referring to are made by an insect called the Fall Webworm. It is a common pest of many types of deciduous shade and forest trees. Fall webworms are found in groups and feed together on the foliage of their host trees. They skeletonize and consume the leaves under the protection of a tentlike web which they enlarge from time to time as they develop and as more food is needed. Large portions of a tree may be covered by these webs.

The caterpillars feed entirely within the tent, which protects

them from predators and parasites. However, it also helps mechanical control. When the "tenting" branches are within reach, they can often simply be snipped off and destroyed. This is a helpful proactive if the tents have not become too large and the tree's shape is not threatened by this method. Chemical control can be used if the infestation is heavy. *Bacillus thuringiensis*, sold under the trade names Dipel and Thuricide, is effective when used according to labeled directions. Applications should be made as soon as the webs appear.

Cover Crops Not Grown to Feed The Gardener, But To Feed The Garden

Question: Is there anything we can do to improve the soil in our garden during the winter months?

Answer: One of the best investments home gardeners can make this time of year is to plant winter cover crops. Often referred to as "green manures", cover crops will produce an abundance of lush growth during the winter months that will translate into lots of organic matter for your garden next spring. They also boost soil fertility, cycle nutrients, improve soil structure, prevent weeds and protect the soil from erosion and compaction.

While cover crops produce green foliage aboveground, their roots are also at work improving soil structure. Legumes like vetches and clover have relatively simple root systems that support nitrogen fixing *Rhizobium* bacteria and penetrate deep into the soil to loosen hard packed beds. When the cover crop root systems decompose, they release nutrients back to the soil. As a rule of thumb, legume cover crops provide more nitrogen to the soil, while grasses boost soil organic matter more effectively.

You can plant cover crops by section in your garden, planting the earliest cover crops as soon as harvest is complete. The sooner you plant cover crops, the better. Planting now will help recover more nutrients, cover the soil more quickly and produce more organic matter. By capturing more nutrients and covering the soil, early planting also improves water quality protection by reducing nutrient leaching, erosion, soil compaction and runoff. For example, WSU researchers in Mt Vernon, Washington found cereal rye planted September 1 will accumulate almost 4 times as much nitrogen as rye planted September 30th.

Cover crops need a good seed bed just like garden crops. After harvesting your garden crops, turn the soil and rake it smooth. Small seeded crops need the smoothest seedbed. Most of the common cover crops (cereals, vetches, Austrian winter pea, fava bean and buckwheat) have medium to large



seeds. Cereal rye is the most commonly grown cover crop in the Northwest. It is vigorous, very cold hardy, and can germinate and become established in cool weather. One commonly grown mixture is cereal rye and hairy vetch, typically planted in the garden at a seeding rate of 1.75 pounds/1000 square feet of rye plus .75 lb/1000 square feet of hairy vetch. The vetch will germinate in the fall, but grows very slowly until spring. Then it will use the more upright rye as a structure on which to grow. Other common cover crop mixtures include oats or barley plus crimson or Austrian field peas.

Simply broadcast cover crop seeds across the area to be planted. Cover the seeds by raking at least ¼ " deep, or rototill no more than 2 " deep. This provides good soil seed contact and protection from drying, which increases germination. You won't be able to work all the seeds below the surface, so do not be concerned that some seeds remain on the surface. You do not need to fertilize cover crops in established garden. Enough nutrients will remain available in the garden to meet their needs. Natural rainfall provides enough moisture for seed germination and plant establishment.

Ideally next spring, turn the cover crop under about three weeks before planting. This give time for some decomposition to occur, and for the soil to warm. You can turn the cover crop under in sections based on when you plant different parts of the garden. Avoid turning the cover crop when the soil is to wet to prevent harming the soil's structure. If the top growth is too heavy to turn under easily, cut and remove most of it first and put the clippings in the compost pile.

When to Harvest Winter Squash

Question: We are never quite sure when we should harvest our winter squash. They look as though they have stopped growing.

Answer: Perhaps the easiest way to tell when Butternut, Acorn, Hubbard, and other types of winter squash are mature is when the rind becomes hard enough that you can no longer puncture it with your thumbnail. In addition, mature fruit has a dull and dry skin compared to shiny, smooth skin of immature fruits. If you're still not sure, check the ground color or that area of the squash that has contact with the soil. When mature, the ground color changes from white to a cream or gold color.



Remember to cut, rather than breaking off the stems of Hubbards and other fleshy stemmed squash, leaving about two inches of stem. Cure squashes and pumpkins after harvesting them by placing them in a warm, dry area for about a week. Store them in an area where temperatures do not drop below 50 degrees F. with humidity ranging between 70 and 80 percent. Good air circulation will help to extend storage life. Avoid storing them on paper or in plastic bags. An attic or high garage shelf, if kept above 50 degrees F., would be ideal. Winter squash should be used immediately when taken out of storage to avoid development of fruit rot diseases.

No Apples or Pears this year

Question: We don't have any fruit on our apple and pear tree. Last year both were loaded with fruit. What happened?

Answer: More than likely, the reason your trees are lacking fruit is due to a phenomena known as alternate bearing. Anytime there is excessive fruit set it reduces the flower bud formation for the next season which results in alternate bearing---that is, a heavy crop of fruit one year and little or no crop the next. This habit continues year after year, producing a crop every other year. In addition, when there is a bumper crop of fruit, it is often small due to competition for carbohydrates. This carbohydrate drain or "sink" can also weaken the tree and make it more susceptible to pests and sunburn damage.

The best way to prevent alternate bearing is by hand thinning the fruit 3 to 4 weeks after bloom. Two important factors related to apples and pears include: 1) fruit are produced on spurs and; 2) flowers are in clusters of 5 with the bloom in the center known as the "king blossom" surrounded by lateral blossoms. Both apples and pears have a strong tendency to alternate bear. Another important factor is that a spur will not produce fruit in consecutive years. Therefore, the object in thinning is to eliminate all flowers and small fruit on every other spur. This has to be done within 30 days after bloom or the thinning will not be effective in reducing alternate bearing. When thinning to increase fruit size, leave only one fruit in a cluster. The largest fruit will come from the king blossom. Leave this one for maximum fruit size. Space fruit 6-8 inches apart regardless of spur placement on a limb.

Powdery Mildew

Question: We are having a serious problem with powdery mildew. So many of our garden plants are covered with the characteristic grayish-white powdery coating. Is there a good general purpose fungicide that will help us control the problem?

Answer: You are certainly not alone with your mildew problems. Our warm days, cool nights and humid conditions are ideal for the development of this disease. A large number of plants are attacked by the powdery mildew fungus-----ornamental flowers and shrubs, grasses, fruit trees, and vegetables. The disease is common on roses, apples, grapes, potatoes, peas, zinnias and a host of native plants. The disease thrives in crowded plantings where air circulation is poor as well as in damp, shaded areas. Powdery mildew usually disappears in warm, dry weather.

Since environment plays a large role in the development of powdery mildew, control can sometimes be obtained by making conditions less favorable for the disease. Spacing plantings so as to permit good air circulation and avoiding poorly drained soils along with damp areas will help to reduce the disease .

Chemical control of powdery mildew is effective. Since most of the mildew fungus is external to the plant, this disease is one of the few that can be controlled after infection has occurred. Several fungicides are available for mildew control; sulfur either as a dust or spray is perhaps the most widely used. Sulfur may

injure some plants, especially if temperatures are above 90 degrees F.

Getting Rid of Blackberry Vines

Question: We have several huge blackberry patches in our backyard that are totally out of control. Even though we enjoy the fruit, we would like to get rid of them. What do you suggest?

Answer: Getting rid of these aggressive berry vines is never an easy task. Blackberry canes are known for their stout thorns and robust growth which can result in plants reaching 10 feet in height and spreading as much as 20 feet in a season. In addition the trailing canes can root where they contact the soil producing dense, impermeable thickets. Blackberry seeds are transported by birds and mammals that eat the fruit. The seeds can remain viable in the soil for several years. Cutting back the canes and digging out the roots is perhaps the best option for smaller patches. Treat any new foliage which may appear with glyphosate (sold as Round-up) in September. This time of the year herbicide applications are very effective when plants are beginning to move carbohydrates from the leaves back to the roots for winter. The herbicide should be applied when the new growth is about a foot tall so there's enough live tissue to respond to the chemical. For larger thickets, you may have to use heavy equipment to help reduce the plants to the point where you can prune and apply herbicides.

Plant Spring Bulbs Now for "Flower Power" Next Spring

Question: We are going to plant some daffodils and tulips next weekend and are wondering if we should put some fertilizer in the planting hole?



Answer: Once upon a time, bone meal was considered an excellent bulb fertilizer, Most bone meal today however, has been so thoroughly processed that much of the essential nutrients have been literally boiled out of them. Spring-flowering bulbs actually need no fertilizer for their first season of blooming. A healthy Dutch bulb will already contain all of the food it needs to support one season of spectacular growth. One other note about bone meal ---- dogs and other critters can sniff it out and be tempted to dig!

Potted Bulbs for Christmas

Question: We have decided we would like to give potted bulbs in full bloom for Christmas gifts this year. How do we do this?

Answer: In order to bloom, spring-flowering bulbs must be exposed to temperatures of 40 to 45 degrees F for 12 to 16 weeks. Possible storage sites include the refrigerator, root cellar, or an outdoor trench. During cold storage, water the bulbs regularly and keep them in complete darkness.

Once the cold requirement has been met, begin to remove the potted bulbs from cold storage. For a succession of bloom,

remove pots from storage at 10 to 14 day intervals. Place the bulbs in a cool (50 to 60 degree location that receives low to medium light. When the bulbs begin to grow, move the plants to a slightly warmer area that receives bright light. Keep the potting soil evenly moist during the forcing period. Flowering should occur in 3 to 4 weeks.

Tulips and most other spring-flowering bulbs are normally discarded after forcing. Attempts to save forced bulbs are usually unsuccessful, as many don't bloom again when planted outdoors. Forced daffodils, however, can often be successful planted outdoors.

Get Your Turf In Shape For Next Year

Question: Due to all of the rain we received in August our lawn is still green and actively growing. Unfortunately, the weeds are growing right along with the grass. Is there anyway to get rid of them once and for all?

Answer: Late summer and early fall is an ideal time to deal with many lawn weeds. Weed management involves more than the application of herbicides. The best defense against weeds is healthy turf.

Turf vigor increases with regular fertilization. WSU turfgrass specialists recommend applying one pound of Nitrogen fertilizer per 1000 feet of turf four times a year and have made the dates easy to remember by choosing holidays for application times. The first application should be made around Memorial Day, the second around July 4th, the third around Labor Day and the fourth and final application during Thanksgiving week. Applying 5 pounds of Ammonium Sulfate (21-0-0) per thousand feet will provide the required one pound of actual Nitrogen. Be sure to water the fertilizer in after application to prevent burning the grass.

Fertilizing the lawn now however will not get rid of established weeds. One big advantage to our unseasonably wet August is the fact that lawn weeds are actively growing. In addition, perennial weeds like dandelion and clover prepare for winter by pulling nutrients and starches from their leaves into their roots. By doing this, they also draw herbicides into their root systems, thus more effectively killing the weed. The more healthy and vigorous the weed, the more receptive it is to herbicide applications and therefore control. Weeds under stress will not absorb or translocate chemicals unless conditions favor weed growth. Weed scientists sometimes go as far as recommending that gardeners fertilize and water their weeds prior to an herbicide application in order to achieve better control!

The majority of broadleaf weeds in lawns can be effectively controlled with phenoxy type herbicide applications like 2,4-D used according to labeled directions. When practical, it's best to apply herbicides directly to affected areas rather than broadcasting the herbicide onto the entire lawn. Those pressed for time can use one of the common Weed and Feed products which contain both fertilizer and weed killer. Once a lawn is free of weeds, new infestations can be kept at a minimum by maintaining a healthy, vigorous turf with no bare spots.



Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County

"Helping Gardeners Grow"

720 Sleater-Kinney Road SE Suite Y
Lacey, Washington 98503



2008 Membership and Sponsor Application

I wish to be an **Individual** (MG/MC) or **Associate Member** of the Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County. Dues of \$10 per calendar year, Jan – Dec, are enclosed. *Individual and Associate Members may vote and hold elective office. They may attend Member Meetings, classes and events at no charge.* Year MG ____ Year MG ____

I/we wish to be a **Business Member** of the Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County. Dues are \$25 per calendar year, Jan – Dec, and are enclosed. *Business Members may vote and hold elective office, They will receive a framed Certificate of Membership, and may attend Member Meetings and events at no charge.*

I/we wish to become a **Sponsor** of the Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County at the below level, which is enclosed. *Sponsors' names will be prominently displayed at Master Gardener Plant Sales, at Membership Meetings, and at other locations and venues as appropriate. Sponsors will receive a letter acknowledging their tax-deductible contribution.*

- ____ Friend: \$50 - \$99
- ____ Donor: \$100 - \$249
- ____ Patron: \$250 - \$499
- ____ Benefactor: \$500 - \$1,000+

The Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation organized and existing under the provisions of the Washington Nonprofit Corporation Act (Chapter 24.03 of the Revised Code of Washington) with a Tax ID # 91-1898726. Your contributions are fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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Make checks payable to: “*MGFTC”

Mail to: MGFTC Attn: Membership
720 Sleater-Kinney Road SE Suite Y
Lacey, Washington 98503

Contact: MGFoundation@comcast.net or Frankie Rasmussen, Membership & Giving Chairwoman at 360-753-3850



The Common Sense Gardener

720 Sleater-Kinney Rd SE, Ste Y
Lacey, WA 98503



Congratulations, MG Class of 2007!



WSU Master Gardener Program Purpose Statement: "To provide public education in gardening and home horticulture based on researched-based information from WSU Extension."