



# The Common Sense Gardener

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



“Helping Gardeners Grow”

APRIL 2008

## From the Foundation President

Nancy Mills



My gosh, it's almost April already as I write this message, and the snow was flurrying around my house today like a blizzard. Of course we all know that because a couple of warm days show up we cannot take for granted that Spring is here. But I certainly started pushing the limits planting some things that now I need to baby so they don't turn into compost before they even get a chance to grow! Sound familiar?

I don't know about you, but I've been really enjoying the opportunities we've had recently to get outside into some reasonably 'warm' weather, even with some significantly sunny days! My MG efforts have recently been focused on labeling plants for the Plant Sale on May 17. We've had some very hardy and reliable volunteers turn out to help with all of those efforts. All three of the gardens have fledgling steering committees, and the composting program has run several workshops already. Everyone seems to be shaking off the winter blues and, as Mary Moore said in her recent e-mail looking for people to help in the clinics, questions are starting to roll in.

All of this means our volunteer efforts are being called upon more and more for all the worthy programs we have going in this vibrant county. It takes a lot of dedicated volunteers to keep things going, and Cliff Moore recently was able to present the numbers to the county commissioners and let them know that our (all WSU Extension volunteers including 4-H, NPSP, etc.) efforts represent approximately 43 full time employees! It's enough to boggle my mind! (And as a gentle reminder, I can't resist the temptation to

(Continued on page 2)

## Plant Sale Update

Bob Findlay and Mary Moore, Co-chairs

By the time you read this, we will have little more than a month before the big day. So far we have things going well. People have been good about contributing plants. Much time and effort is going into the careful selection of plants to purchase in order to round out the diversity of material to offer to our customers.

The next thing that needs to occur is the care and feeding of the plants that are ready for sale. Folks have volunteered to take charge of certain types of

(Continued on page 2)



17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION OF THURSTON COUNTY **PLANT SALE**

**SATURDAY  
MAY 17<sup>TH</sup> 2008  
DIRT WORKS GARDEN  
AT YAUGER PARK  
9:00AM-4:00PM**

**GREAT  
PLANTS  
AT  
GREAT  
PRICES!**

- **PLANTS FOR RAIN GARDENS**
- **WATER-WISE PLANTS**
- **GREAT PLANT PICKS**
- **LANDSCAPE PLANTS**
- **TOMATOES**
- **COMPOST CLASSES AND COMPOSTER SALES**

wonder what that number would be if everyone turned in all their hours!?)

I want to encourage you all to put a couple of dates on your calendar so that your efforts can be recognized. The first is the Hats Off to Volunteers that's happening on Thursday April 17. I've attended this event before, and it's been lots of fun. Come meet the County Commissioners, indulge in a root beer float and enjoy some live music. Don't forget to wear a funny hat if you have one because you might win a nice prize like last years President, Marcia, did for having the best hat!

The second date, Sunday August 10, is that of our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Appreciation Day. The Foundation supplies all the food and work so that you can simply come and relax, meet with your friends, meet some new people, and let us say THANK YOU for all the hours you dedicate to the program, this community, the county and more. We'll be sending more details out closer to the date, but we hope you'll plan now to come and join us in a CELEBRATION!

## What's Up With Your Board

By Toni Ghazal, Secretary

Spring is slowly coming around. The daffodils are convinced of this. The Foundation Board has been busy staffing various committees and gathering volunteers. Our first membership meeting was well attended. Erica Gutteman was our speaker and as always was informative and entertaining. Our next membership meeting will be June 26<sup>th</sup>. The speaker will be Jan Pigman and take us on a "Virtual Farm Walk". If you have not been to one of these meetings, please join us. You have fun, you have the opportunity to meet new people sharing the same interests, and you go home armed with new insight and information.

Master Gardener and Master Composter clothing sales have been going well. This year we have a selection of clothing to chose and place orders. We have expanded the line and are offering more in women's styles and colors. We offer 100% organic tote bags and lanyards this year. The clothing will be sold at the Plant Sale and also at the next membership meeting. Just one more reason to join us for the next meeting!

See you in the gardens!

plants and they will all be informed of who has signed up to assist them not only with sales, but also with care. Also, we need to assure that everyone who wishes to work on the sale, but has not yet signed up has that chance. If you have not had a chance to sign up for working the sale, please contact Mary Moore at [mym-train@comcast.net](mailto:mym-train@comcast.net) and you can choose what areas you might be interested in helping with.

The poster and the bookmarks for the sale have been developed and are ready to be distributed throughout the area. You can find them posted on our website at [www.mgftc.org](http://www.mgftc.org) if you are interested in copying them off or you can contact Nancy Yarborough at 357-9775. She will be able to get you whatever supplies of posters and/or bookmarks that you need.

## Native Plant Salvage Project

WSU Thurston Co. Extension

[www.nativeplantsalvage.org](http://www.nativeplantsalvage.org) 360-754-3588 ext. 110 or 109.  
ericag@wsu.edu \*Advanced registration is required for all events.  
Call or email to sign up and receive directions and details.

### WORKSHOPS

**"Rain Gardens—Your Key to Managing Drainage & Protecting South Sound."** Learn how and why to build one or more rain gardens in your yard to create a low-maintenance, attractive feature that also helps protect local waterways and keep stormwater runoff away from your house. Learn other low-impact development tips, too! You will receive personalized attention to get started on a design for your site!

Choose one of the following dates/locations.

All workshops are from 6:30-9:30 p.m. *Free!*

Thursday, April 3, TUMWATER

Thursday, April 17, LACEY

Co-sponsored by Thurston Co./Tumwater Stream Team, Stewardship Partners, Nisqually River Education Project.

### "Naturescaping Field Class"

Saturday, May 17, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free!

Join NPSP's Erica Guttman and landscape designer Linda Andrews for a full day of learning about sustainable landscape design and creation, then travel by bus to local private water-wise landscapes! Sponsored by Thurston County Stream Team.

### "Meet the Trees of Washington Field Class"

Saturday, June 7, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free!

Learn about the wonders of our lowland native forests as well as other South Sound ecosystems. Travel by bus to a local nature trail to learn hands-on plant identification of native trees, shrubs, ferns and flowers. Sponsored by Thurston County Stream Team.

# Closed Loop Park

By Dorothy Taylor

While spring seems to be a long time coming this year (as this article is written, there is snow on the ground), work has begun for the season at Closed Loop Park and the garden is springing to life. The scent of winter daphne perfumes the air, the daffodils and a rare red trillium are in full bloom, the magnolia blossoms are ready to open, the Great Plant Picks (GPP) trial heuchera are showing their colorful foliage and there is new growth on the peonies.



On March 8<sup>h</sup>, we had a potluck and orientation for those who are new to the program and/or to Closed Loop Park. Bill Longnecker, a CLP veteran, introduced the new CLP steering committee and gave a brief overview of CLP and future plans. We had a great turnout including many of our new MG interns. Cathy Johnson, a 2003 graduate of the MG program, gave an excellent presentation on container gardening. On Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, we had a very successful pruning and cleanup at the garden with the help of MG interns, Wesley Sharpes, Nancy Poulteney and Linda Talen.

With a change in leadership, comes the opportunity for change and growth. The steering committee members, Bobbie Liberty, Diane Stanger, Judy Wilson, Mary Snyder, Dixie Corcoran, Iris Higgs, Connie Roth, and Dorothy Taylor, would welcome any ideas or suggestions you may have for the garden. One recent change is our work days are now Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10 to 1 (9 to 1 beginning in April). We have also scheduled a few Sundays (March 30, April 6, and April 13) from 1 to 4 p.m.

If you haven't been to CLP for awhile, or if you are new to the program and haven't had an opportunity to work at CLP, come join us. CLP is a large garden and while there is always much to do, most of our regulars will agree what keeps them coming back is the beauty and peacefulness of the garden. Come see for yourself!

# Olympia Farmers' Market Garden

By Catherine Eddington

Spring cleanup at the market garden was March 8. Things went very well. The weather was nice. No rain. We had about 13 interns show up along with 5 veterans. We got the pond area cleaned up, and the willows and grasses cut back. Most of the flower beds received some attention from the volunteers, weeding and cutting back perennials.

We are going to be moving the compost area at the request of the market. They would like us to make room for more seating. We have so many visitors to the garden. The compost will be moved to the far end of the kitchen building. It will become more of a demonstration, with three types of composting available. The existing plants in that area will be moved into the garden beds.

Orientation will begin for the new interns. Veterans will be taking small groups through to acquaint them with clinic policies, research materials, our "solar" system, where things can be found, the garden and the market. Welcome all!

A new arbor will be installed where an existing arbor is rotting out. It is our dream to have an arbor at each entrance of the garden.

We will also be working on new signage for plants and educational information. Over the compost area, our solar panel and how it works for us. A new sign for our donated antique tractor from Dorothy and Jim Meadors.

We would like to recognize and thank everyone who came down to help out with the cleanup. Unfortunately, we didn't have a sign up system so we won't be naming any names. You know who you are and we really appreciate you. We are excited for the new season to begin!



By Karen Walters

The weather has been pretty iffy since DirtWorks has opened the first of March, but we are getting the garden in pretty good shape despite the rain and cold. This is the first year in five years that we have not been under construction during the spring, so we have been able to concentrate on garden weeding and clean up. That's not to say there isn't more work to be done on our refurbishment, but the last couple of areas will be finished during the summer. The adaptive garden will have the soil in and some vegetables planted by plant sale time in May, and a few more growing areas for this garden will be installed later. The flow pattern for the Shady Landscape has been laid out and more soil and plantings will be added.

The last Saturday of March a workshop was held on cleaning and sharpening garden tools. Thank you to Scott Nelson for teaching that class.

We will be able to use the greenhouse this year for seed starting as we now have water connected inside. Children will be coming to the garden to help start the seeds on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. If anyone wants to help with this, or bring a child to plant seeds and take a planted seed home to grow, all are welcome.

Also on Saturday, April 5, Paul will be teaching a workshop on vegetable gardening. It is open to all Master Gardeners and the public. We will begin at 2:00 pm in the gazebo.

Our biggest project to take on and complete before the plant sale May 17<sup>th</sup> is some refurbishing in the Children's Garden. The Butterfly garden needs a face lift. Many plants have run amok and need to be controlled. Some new plants will be added. Also, the small rock garden is to be dismantled so the area can be used for a new project for the kids to work on this summer. It is also time to get compost into the vegetable beds and we will be putting some more gravel down on the pathways.

It is important for the garden to look beautiful by plant sale in May as plant sale day is also called "DirtWorks Open House". Help is always needed and appreciated!

We are pleased to announce some great field trips, tours, and continuing education opportunities this year.

One of the most exciting additions we have happening is the membership meeting/field trip combo. The topic presented at a Thursday night Foundation membership meeting will be followed by a Saturday field trip expanding upon that topic.

The "LET'S TRAVEL AND LEARN" series that was started last year will be greatly expanded. Following are some of the 2008 classes/field trips/tours planned so far:



**April 26 – Hulda Klager Lilac Garden Tour, Woodland, WA.**

**May 24 – Drip Irrigation Class** by Lois Willman, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., 2 CE

**May 31 – Dunn Garden Tour, Seattle**

**June 12 - Understanding Dormant Diseases & Insect Control, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. 2 hours CE.**

**June 26 – Membership Meeting, “Virtual Farm Walk” by Jan Pigman’s Organic Produce Patch 1 CE**

**June 28 – Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farm Field Trip, 9:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m., 3.5 CE**

**July 12 – Attracting Wild Life to Your Backyard, Bob Sundstrom and Sally Alhadeff, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., 2 CE.**

**Aug 23 – Barnyard Gardens and More Field Trip, a visit to Paul Feenan’s and surrounding nurseries. Sign-up information will be announced via e-mail.**

*You and your guests are cordially invited  
to join us for  
the 6th Annual*

## ***“Hats Off to Volunteers!”***

Wear your favorite hat and join us at this party  
honoring Thurston County's Volunteers

**Thursday, April 17, 2008**

**4:30 to 7:30 PM**

Thurston Expo Center  
Thurston County Fairgrounds

**You'll need your dancin' shoes for live music  
by**

**Joe Baque**

**and**

**The New York Trio**

Official Thank You to Volunteers and  
The Peoples' Choice Hat Awards  
at 6:00 PM

followed by more music, food and fun!

### **MENU**

Italian Submarine Sandwiches

Salads & Fruit

Root Beer Floats, Other Desserts & Beverages

***Reservations are respectfully requested  
so we can plan for enough food and beverages!***

**Reserve your places today:**

Call or write

**Alyssa Devoe**

**(360) 786-5445 ext. 7902**

**devoea@co.thurston.wa.us**

*Please bring name tags from your volunteer project or from another event*

## **Clinically Speaking...**

By Mary Moore

“ I always learn new things whenever I call you people!” The woman who made that remark called me last week at the Lacey Clinic to ask about the care of *thyme*. After I had thanked her and hung up, I thought – “Wow! That is exactly why we spend our time here at the clinic. It is the perfect example of following the mission of the Master Gardener program.” It is also a fairly normal type of response even if it is not said in those exact words. Rarely are people dissatisfied with our assistance – disappointed sometimes when we announce that their favorite plant is a goner – or even horrified when we tell them that yes, they did find a black widow spider in their garage – but mostly really happy with all the information that we give them.

“ I always learn something new whenever I work here!” And that is the second expression that I hear all the time from interns or folks that have just started to work in the Clinic. My mother used to ask me every time that I would come home from working the Clinic what I had learned that day. And I always had an answer. There are several invaluable programs that Paul has downloaded onto the computer in the Clinic and when things get a little slow, I often will explore an area of information new to me.

In the next month, the clinic at the Farmer's Market will open. Both clinics will experience a good deal of use as people will be asking about fertilizing bushes, planting early vegetables, reseeding their lawns, dealing with moles, and what to plant when. It is a busy season! Come into the clinics and spend some time. It is incredibly rewarding. You can expand your horizons while helping others to expand theirs!

# On the Go!



## Garden Related Classes, Shows, Tours and Sales

### April 2008

#### **Rhododendron Species Foundation Spring Plant Sale**

- Saturday April 5, 10 – 3, Sunday April 6, 10 – 2. More information: [www.rhodygarden.org](http://www.rhodygarden.org) or 253-838-4646  
Rhododendron Species Foundation Garden, 2525 S 336th St, Federal Way, WA

#### **Understanding Dormant Diseases & Insect Control**

- Saturday, April 12, 9:30-11:30 – Lowell Cordas is a life-long horticulturalist who has presented countless seminars along the West Coast and former Director of the Saratoga Horticulture Research Foundation in California. He will present this seminar on dormant diseases and insect control, particularly how it relates to fruit trees and roses. He will also talk about the five key words of pruning—“How to read a tree.” Fee: \$15 Foundation Members; \$20 all others, including the public. 2 hours CE. Location: Lacey Extension Office Contact: Lois Willman at [lois@mgftc.org](mailto:lois@mgftc.org) for reservations.

#### **Hardy Plant Society of Oregon Spring Plant Sale**

– Saturday April 12, 10 - 5, Sunday April 13, 10 – 3. More information: [www.hardyplantsociety.org](http://www.hardyplantsociety.org) or 503-224-5718  
Portland EXPO Center, Portland, OR

#### **Spring Garden Show and Plant Sale at the Puyallup Fairgrounds**

- Thursday, April, 17, 2008 from 3:00pm to 10:00pm, Friday, Saturday, April 18 -19 from 10am to 10pm, Sunday, April 20 from 10 am to 8 pm. More information: [www.thefair.com](http://www.thefair.com) or 253-845-1771 Puyallup Fairgrounds, 110 9th Ave SW, Puyallup, WA

#### **NPA Spring Plant Sale**

– Sunday April 20 from 10 – 3. More information: [www.northwestperennialalliance.org](http://www.northwestperennialalliance.org) or 425-647-6004 North Seattle Community College, 9600 College Way N. Seattle.

#### **Hulda Klager Lilac Garden**

- Saturday, April 26, Travel by van and car pool to Hulda Klager Lilac Garden in Woodland for their annual lilac festival. There is over 3 ½ acres of lilacs in the setting of a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorian-era garden containing many unusual shrubs and trees. On site is a gift shop and potting shed. We will then venture on to the Tsugawa Nursery and, if time permits, we will visit Bird's English Garden & Nursery just down the road

in Ridgefield. Lunch will be on our own but there are a couple of options: The Oak Tree, Burgerville which are very near Tsugawa Nursery or bring your brown bag lunch. We will leave Olympia at 9am and return at 4pm. Fee: \$15 for Foundation members/\$20 for non members which includes entry fee and travel.

Contact Joan Hoffmeyer at [joan@mgftc.org](mailto:joan@mgftc.org) for reservations.

#### **Arboretum Foundation FlorAbundance Spring Plant Sale**

- Saturday, April 26, 2008 from 10:00am to 5:00pm, Sunday April 27 from 10am to 3pm. More information: [www.arboretumfoundation.org](http://www.arboretumfoundation.org) or 206-325-4510  
Sale held at the Special Events Center, Building 27 Warren G. Magnuson Park, 7400 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA

### May 2008

#### **Pierce County Master Gardener Foundation Spring Plant Sale & Education Fair**

Saturday, Sunday May 10 - 11, 2008 from 9:30am to 4:00pm More information: 253-847-7601 or 253-845-9443 WSU Research Center, 7612 Pioneer Way E, Puyallup, WA

#### **Washington Native Plant Society Plant Sale**

- Saturday, Sunday May 10 - 11, 2008 from 10:00am to 4:00pm For information 206-527 3210 or [www.wnps.org](http://www.wnps.org)  
Bellevue Botanical Garden Visitor Center 12001 Main St Bellevue, WA

#### **Thurston County Master Gardener Foundation and WSU Extension Annual Plant Sale**

Saturday, May 17, 2008 from 10:00am to 4:00pm For information Lynda Bauer 360 455 9236 or [lynda.bauer@comcast.net](mailto:lynda.bauer@comcast.net) Dirt Works Demonstration Garden behind Yauger Park 3100 Capital Mall Dr. SW Olympia, WA

**Drip Irrigation** - Saturday, May 24, 9:30-11:30 – We received so many requests for this workshop that Lois Willman and her husband, David Ouellette, will be presenting it again this year. Lois and David will demystify all those parts and pieces, as well as demonstrate practical ways to make it all work. You will be able to tour their gardens and greenhouse to see the various applications and systems. Fee: \$15 Foundation Members; \$20 all others, in-

cluding the public. (All proceeds are donated to the MG Foundation of Thurston County.) 2 hours CE. Location: Tenino

Contact: Lois Willman at [lois@mgftc.org](mailto:lois@mgftc.org) for reservations.

**Dunn Garden Tour** - Saturday, May 31, Back by popular demand for the third year in a row. Travel by van/car pool to the exquisite Dunn Gardens, discount shopping at Swanson's Nursery, and a tour of Kruckeberg Gardens/ MsK Rare Plant nursery. We'll leave at 9am from the extension office, and return at approximately 5pm. Limited to 12 people. Fee: \$50 Foundation Members; \$60 non members. Contact: Joan Hoffmeyer at [joan@mgftc.org](mailto:joan@mgftc.org) for reservations.

**June 2008**

**Vegetable Gardening** - Saturday, June 28, 9-1 pm – Want to learn vegetable gardening from the pros? This field trip is a follow-up to Jan Pigman's "Virtual Farm Walk" presentation at the Membership Meeting June 26. The first stop will be at GRuB's (Grow Your own Bounty) 3-acre farm in West Olympia where local school students learn to grow produce, which is then sold through CSA or donated to the local food bank. The next stop will be Common Ground CSA farm for a tour of their gardens and a discussion of growing practices. We will then visit the home of David and Cindy Fairbrook near Steamboat Island. Cindy and David have incorporated a large vegetable growing area within their ornamental plantings. Bring a brown bag lunch and we will have a pleasant moment to eat and enjoy the view. We will meet at the Lacey Extension Office and travel by van/carpool. Fee: \$5 Foundation Members; \$10 all others, including the public. 3-1/2 hours CE. Contact: Lois Willman at [lois@mgftc.org](mailto:lois@mgftc.org) for reservations.

**July 2008**

**Attracting Wildlife** - Saturday, July 12, 9:30-11:30 – Join Bob Sundstrom and Sally Alhadeff for a tour of their garden, which has been specifically designed to attract birds and wildlife. They will demonstrate how to make your backyard come alive with birds and other critters. Bob is a professional nature tour leader with Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, a skilled birder with a special interest in bird song, and co-author of The National Audubon Society Field Guide to the Pacific Northwest. When not on tour, Bob keeps busy as the lead writer for the daily public radio program BirdNote. (BirdNote is archived at [www.birdnote.org](http://www.birdnote.org).) Sally is a Master Birder and life-long gardener. She and Bob have created a haven for birds and other small wildlife with wildlife-friendly practices. Over 140 species of birds have been observed at

their home, as well as 20 species of mammals. Fee: \$15 Foundation Members; \$20 all others, including the public. (All proceeds are donated to the MG Foundation of Thurston County.) 2 hours CE. Location: Tenino Contact: Lois Willman at [lois@mgftc.org](mailto:lois@mgftc.org) for reservations.

**September 2008**

**Northwest Horticultural Society Fall Plant Sale** - Friday, September 12 from 12:00pm to 6:30pm, Saturday September 13 from 9 am to 4 pm. Information 206 527 1794 or [www.northwesthort.org/](http://www.northwesthort.org/) Sand Point Magnuson Park

**Hardy Fern Foundation Fern Festival and Sale** - Saturday, September 20, 2008 from 10:00am to 5:00pm, Sunday September 21 from 10am to 3 pm. For information 425 747 2998 or [www.hardyferns.org](http://www.hardyferns.org) Center For Urban Horticulture 3501 NE 41st, Seattle, Wa September, 2008 from 12:00pm to 6:30pm Information 206 527 1794 or [www.northwesthort.org/](http://www.northwesthort.org/) Sand Point Magnuson Park 7400 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, Wa

**Hardy Plant Society of Oregon Fall Plant Sale & Garden Festival** - Saturday, Sunday, June 21-22, 2008 from 10:00am to 3:00pm Information 503 224 5718 or [www.hardyplantsociety.org](http://www.hardyplantsociety.org) Portland Expo Center, Portland, Or

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**2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour**  
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Mark the date: Saturday, July 26,  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
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The 2008 Garden Rhapsodies Tour will be  
in the Steamboat Island area.  
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## THE GARDENER'S BOOKSHELF

by Mary Moore

You will never look at the flowers for sale in Top Foods, Safeway, Albertson's, Costco, or any of the florists the same way again after reading this book. But conversely, you will admire what you or your neighbor grows a great deal more.

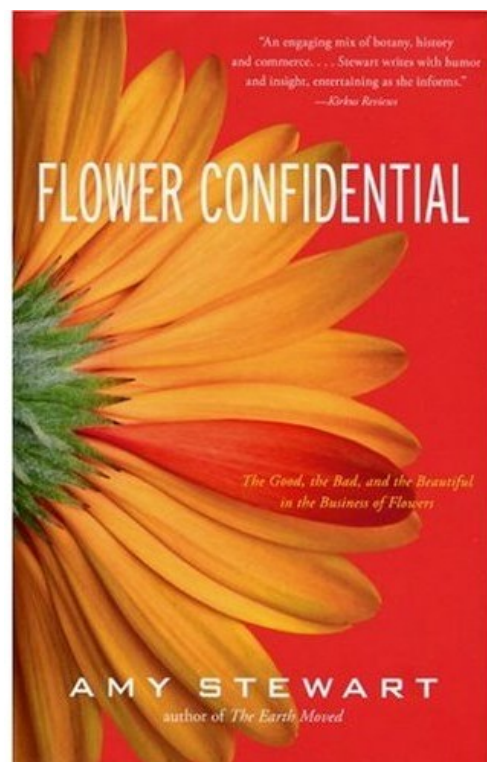
Amy Stewart, author of two other wonderful gardening books, has written a book about the flower trade – a 40 billion dollar international business. The title of the book is *Flower Confidential; the Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful*. Okay, so I bought it because of the title, but I have to say that it was a good buy and a perfectly fascinating read.

“Roses are not yet in full bloom here – in fact they are scarce – and from all the nurseries and all the garland weavers we could just barely get together the thousand that are sent you...even with picking the ones that ought not to have been picked tomorrow. We had all the narcissi you wanted, so instead of the two thousand you asked for we sent four thousand...” This very ordinary bit of business correspondence could have been written recently, but was, in fact, written in Roman Egypt and dates back before the birth of Christ. The flower trade has been that active for over twenty centuries!

One of the fascinating tales of plant breeding that Stewart tells us about is the tale of the development of “Star Gazer” a lily that most of us are familiar with. Bred in the 1940's by Leslie Woodriff, it is a story

about the last of the old-fashioned flower breeders who hand-pollinated with a camelhair brush– no businessman, but rather a idiosyncratic genius who had marvelous instincts about lilies. Today flowers are created in laboratories, bred in test tubes, grown in factories, harvested by machines, packed into boxes, sold at auctions and then flown across seas and continents.

I have given you just a tidbit about the book to whet your appetite. Amy Stewart is a very accomplished writer – engaging and extremely well-informed. Her book is quite fast-paced and intriguing in every chapter. I have not yet finished the book and can't wait to get to the part about roses. Stewart can “dish the dirt” with me anytime!



## 2008 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Women & Agriculture Conference

April 18-19, 2008

East Wenatchee, Washington

Transitioning farm ownership within the family, land and water rights, marketing savvy and biosecurity are just a few of the topics that will be covered at the annual Washington Women and Agriculture Conference held in East Wenatchee on April 18 – 19.

Information about how to register for the conference, costs, accommodations, driving directions and more is available at [www.ncw.wsu.edu/family](http://www.ncw.wsu.edu/family). Registration is due April 15. Hotel reservations at the lower conference rate are due April 4.

Presented by Washington State University Extension in cooperation with a number of local and statewide sponsors, the program's theme is "Cultivating Our Reality" and addresses subjects specifically requested by women working in agriculture, according to Margaret A. Viebrock, WSU Douglas County Extension director.

The conference begins with a social and networking event on Friday evening followed by a full-day of featured speakers and workshop sessions on Saturday.

Keynote speaker for the conference is Elaine Froese, a farmer and farmer's daughter who has been writing and speaking about life balance and farm issues since 1987. Her presentation, "Discuss the Undiscussabull," includes a practical tool kit to help families talk about the challenges involved in running an agricultural business together, such as trust, fairness, work style, retirement, space and ownership.

The conference also features a series of workshops on topics ranging from how to transition to organic production to writing a business plan to immigration reform. A new feature this year are lunchtime Table Topic discussions, opportunities to informally learn from other women's farming experiences.

"The majority of the workshops chosen are a result of input from past participants," Viebrock said. "Women involved in agriculture in Washington State are part of a growing statistic. The number of women counted as the primary operator of a farm is on the rise. This conference recognizes their role as owner, operator, partner or family member of an agriculture business."

For more information, contact WSU Extension at 509-745-8531 or Margaret Viebrock at [viebrock@wsu.edu](mailto:viebrock@wsu.edu)

## MG Foundation Trip

APRIL 26, Saturday-Hulda Klager Lilac Garden

Travel by van and car pool to Hulda Klager Lilac Garden in Woodland for their annual lilac festival. There is over 3 ½ acres of lilacs in the setting of a 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorian-era garden containing many unusual shrubs and trees. On site is a gift shop and potting shed. We will then venture on to the Tsugawa Nursery and, if time permits, we will visit Bird's English Garden & Nursery just down the road in Ridgefield. Lunch will be on our own but there are a couple of options: The Oak Tree and Burgerville,



which are very near Tsugawa Nursery or bring your brown bag lunch. We will leave WSU Clinic in Lacey at 9am (meet at 8:45) and return at 4pm.

**Fee: \$15 for Foundation members/\$20 for non members** which includes entry fee and travel.

Contact Joan Hoffmeyer at [jus.joan@comcast.net](mailto:jus.joan@comcast.net) or 789.5606 for reservations. Please RSVP no later than 4/19/08

Send your check payable to MGFTC

Joan Hoffmeyer

211 N Oak St

Centralia WA 98531

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Ed. Note: Many of us are planning our vegetable gar-  
\* dens. Here is some information to help you preserve  
\* the bounty you will raise. Enjoy... Frankie Rasmussen  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Storing the Harvest: Plan Before You Can! Web Resources for Preserving Food Safely



**Washington State University Extension Publications** <http://pubs.wsu.edu/>

When there is extra food, there are ways that you can safely preserve the food for later use. Canning, freezing, and drying are popular ways of preserving foods at home. Whichever method you choose, be sure to follow directions so that the food is safe and high-quality. Visit the WSU Extension Publications website for a list of research-based food preservation publications you can order from WSU. Many can be downloaded and printed for free!



**The National Center for Home Food Preservation**  
<http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/>

The National Center for Home Food Preservation was established with funding from the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (CSREES-USDA) to address food safety concerns for those who practice and teach home food preservation and processing methods. This comprehensive website includes publications, seasonal tips, search and information request, FAQ's, and links to other resources. Check out the Multimedia link for videos, slide shows, graphics and tutorials for canning, drying and freezing foods.

**The USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning**

[http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications\\_usda.html](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications_usda.html)

An invaluable resource book for those who are canning food for the first time. Experienced canners will find the updated information useful for helping them improve their canning practices.

The first part of this publication explains the scientific principles on which canning techniques are based, discusses canning equipment, and describes the proper use of jars and lids. It describes basic canning ingredients and procedures and how to use them to achieve safe, high-quality canned products. Finally, it helps you decide whether or not and how much to can.

The second part of this publication is a series of canning guides for specific foods.

### So Easy To Preserve Book and Video

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension



<http://www.uga.edu/setp/>

This beautiful book contains the latest U.S. Department of Agriculture recommendations for safe food preservation. So Easy To Preserve is now a 375-page book with over 185 tested recipes, along with step by step instructions and in-depth information for both the new and experienced food preserver. The So Easy to Preserve video includes eight shows with the most up-to-date recommendations for preserving fresh foods and great taste in your home.



### Preserving Food At Home: A Self-Study

<http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html>

A free, self-paced, online course for those wanting to learn more about home canning and preservation. Modules include:

- Introduction to Food Preservation
- General Canning
- Canning Acid Foods
- Canning Low-Acid Foods



## Unbeatable Plant Picks for Your Garden

**Question:** Is there a list of plants that are guaranteed to do well in our coastal gardens?

**Answer:** You can hardly go wrong by choosing from the more than 600 plants that currently make up the list of Great Plant Picks. For eight years, the Great Plant Picks educational awards program, which is based at the Elisabeth Carey Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle, has presented a group of outstanding garden plants for the Pacific Northwest region, west of the coastal mountains. Awards are based on the combined expertise of over forty horticulturists from Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. This year alone, 58 new plants were added to the list that are sure to make great additions to any landscape.

In order to be added to the Great Plant Pick list, plants need to meet the following criteria:

- Be hardy in USDA zones 7 and 8 which is 0 to 10 degrees F.,
- Be long lived, be vigorous and easy to grow by a gardener of average means and experience. (Plants don't require specialist knowledge.),
- Be reasonably disease and pest resistant, have a long season or preferably multiple seasons of interest,
- Be available from at least two retail sources in Canada and the U. S.,
- Be adaptable to a variety of soil and fertility conditions,
- Not require excessive moisture (with the exception of aquatic plants),

Not be invasive or overly vigorous in colonizing the garden or larger environment.



Additional criteria specify that:

- Perennials should not require staking, continuous deadheading, or frequent division,
- Trees and shrubs should require little pruning and nominal training to achieve the best form (excluding plants used for hedges).
- Bulbs should persist in the garden, without being lifted, for at least three years,

Variegated plants should be stable and not revert.

This program makes choosing the right plant for your landscape not only easy but an enjoyable experience as well! You can download colorful pictures of all of the great plant picks along with detailed cultural information on each plant simply by logging onto [www.greatplantpicks.org](http://www.greatplantpicks.org)

## Photinia Hedge Spots

**Question:** We have a photinia hedge that is absolutely beautiful every spring when the vibrant red new growth emerges. Unfortunately, shortly thereafter, the leaves all get spots on them and many fall off. Is there something we can spray on the photinia plants now to prevent this from happening?

**Answer:** Unfortunately, photinia falls into the category of a high maintenance plant. The foliage is susceptible to a fungus disease (Entomosporium), which causes small dark reddish spots to form which grow together and turn black and then gray.

In addition, photinia foliage is subject to physiological leaf spot which is even more common than the fungus leaf spot. Symptoms resemble those of early fungus leaf spot infections. Small red to purple spots appear on the leaves but do not develop the dark centers characteristic of fungal leaf spot infections. Although physiological leaf spot causes little damage to plants, it does result in leaf drop.

You can help to reduce the fungus leaf spot on photinia by applying fungicides, but you will need to wait until the new leaves are fully expanded. Daconil Weather Stik, Immunox and Rose Pride Funginex are all listed as providing effective control when used according to labeled directions. Repeat applications may be necessary. Removing and destroying falling leaves and spacing plants for good air circulation will also help to reduce both fungus infection and physiological leaf spot.

### Winter Weeds Get A Boost From Sunny Days

**Question:** Now that the days are getting longer and the temperatures warmer, the weeds in our garden are growing like gangbusters! Some of them are already beginning to flower and we are worried they will go to seed and produce another crop just in time to compete with our vegetable plants.

**Answer:** Although we typically think of seeds germinating in the spring, some weed seeds actually germinate in the fall. These weeds are called winter annuals. The young plants are very cold hardy and often stay green late in the season. The same plants then flower in early spring and form many seeds.

Common Chickweed is probably the best example of a winter annual that is actively growing and flowering in most of our coastal gardens this time of year. It is easily recognized by its light green, small and ovate shaped leaves with pointed tips. It often grows in the shade of trees and shrubs or the north sides of buildings.



Chickweed is a low spreading plant that can grow 4 to 12 inches tall. The stems are creeping and often root at the leaf nodes. The dense mat of chickweed and other winter annuals can slow soil drying and warming and interfere with planting and soil cultivation in the spring.

Another fairly common winter annual which is the bane of many home gardeners in our coastal area is Little Bittercress. The plant is easily identified by the

fact that when its mature seed pods are touched, they split apart explosively, giving rise to the common name “shotweed”. This weed produces a flat rosette of leaves, followed by a flower stem ranging from 2 inches to a foot tall. Little Bittercress blooms in early spring only, from mid-March to mid-April. Its flowers are tiny and white, borne at the top of the plant.



One of the winter annuals that is easily recognized for both its foliage and flower color this time of year is Red Deadnettle. The leaves of this low growing weed are green at the bottom and shade to purplish at the top. The flowers are bright red-purple. Flowers this time of year allow bees to



gather nectar for food when few other nectar sources are available. Though superficially similar to a nettle in appearance, it is not related and does not sting, hence the name “deadnettle”. Despite the aesthetic appeal of its flowers and foliage, red dead nettle can be an invasive weed in cultivated garden soils.

Control of winter annuals includes removing plants now by hoeing or hand pulling. Non-selective herbicides containing glyphosate (Roundup\*) can be effective when used according to labeled directions. Spraying weeds before they flower will prevent the plants producing another crop of seeds.

In established ornamental landscape plantings, the pre-emergent herbicide Casoron is effective at preventing the germination of both summer and winter annual weeds when used according to labeled directions. Casoron should not be used around herbaceous plant materials like peonies and other perennials. It is most effective when applied during the winter months when temperatures are cool and there is sufficient rainfall to dissolve herbicide granules.

Trifluralin is yet another pre-emergent herbicide reg-

istered for use in home gardens. Commonly sold under trade name of Preen Garden Weed Preventer\* this pre-emergent herbicide is registered for use around flowering herbaceous plants and in vegetable gardens once seeds have germinated. When used according to labeled directions, Preen can weed seed from germinating for up to three months.

Most garden soils unfortunately contain an abundant amount of weed seeds. Frequently referred to as a "Weed Seed Bank", these seeds may last for several years or longer until exposed to sufficient light, temperature and moisture for germination. One of the easiest ways to prevent the on-going challenge with weed germination and growth is through the use of mulches. A three inch layer of mulch will prevent the majority of both winter and summer annuals from germinating and competing with garden plants.

\* Sometimes it is necessary to use trade names for educational purposes. No endorsement of products by WSU Extension is intended nor is criticism of unnamed products implied.

### We're a Paradise for Slugs!

Western Washington is famous for slugs. With lush vegetation and six or more months of rain each year, what more could a slug wish for? Most of the time slugs do beneficial things. They cycle organic matter, contributing to our rich soils, and they are an important food source for other wildlife. Despite this, most gardeners are not very sympathetic to the damage they do when they get into our gardens and landscape plantings.



Slugs are closely related to snails, and both are related to common shellfish such as clams. They all belong to the animal phylum Mollusca and are termed mollusks. About 40 species of land slugs live in the 48 contiguous states. Roughly half of these are considered economically important. Of the pest species, all but one were introduced into this country. Introduction from the foreign lands was no doubt, by accident. However, at least one, the brown garden snail, was intentionally imported as a potential gourmet food item.

The gray garden slug is common in our coastal gardens and landscapes. Adults are 1 to 1.5 inches long. The slug has two principal breeding seasons: from the start of fall rains until the advent of freezing weather, and in the spring when temperatures warm. Slugs are hermaphroditic. This means that each slug has both male and female reproductive systems. Offspring are produced by cross fertilization or mating. Slugs can live from 12 months to two years. They reach sexual maturity before attaining full development, and they can begin to lay eggs when they are as young as three months, depending on moisture and food conditions. Eggs can be laid any time during the year; however laying decreases during drier or colder weather. The clear, slightly oval eggs are laid in batches under dead leaves, in soil cavities, and in other protected places. Gray garden slugs can lay up to 400 eggs per year which hatch in 3 to 6 weeks.



Slugs glide over a slime trail they produce. The mouth houses a hornlike rasping organ used to scrape at food. Slug damage generally is quite distinctive because of this unique feeding structure. A small slug can easily eat as much as it weighs in one night. When slug's teeth wear out, new rows move forward and replace them, conveyor belt style. Only 5 % of the slug population appears above ground at any one time. Slugs are largely nocturnal. They feed during the night and on overcast, cool, cloudy days. They can travel as far as 100 feet to find food. If the weather is hot and dry, slugs hide beneath stones, boxes, boards and under dense plant cover such as ivy. Slugs avoid dry, dusty areas

The gray garden slug is tolerant of low temperatures. Slug movement has been seen at or near freezing. A typical garden slug weighs about .01 ounces---it would take nine slugs to equal the weight of a penny. Our gray slugs are feather weight when compared to the foot long California slug which weighs about ¼ pound. Although man can run a 100 yard dash in less than ten seconds, it would take a slug almost 2 hours.

Many predators, including some birds, squirrels and mice stay clear of slugs because they taste terrible. Typical predators include frogs and garter snakes. Slugs are territorial and will attack caterpillars and other slug intruders.

In a heavily infested field, there are approximately 9 slugs per square foot. This means 392,040 slugs per acre. In one night alone, slugs will eat approximately 87 pounds of crop, in a two week period this is a ton per acre.



One of the most effective ways for home gardeners to reduce slug populations is to simply eliminate rocks, boards and other places which provide protection for slugs. Stale beer attracts slugs and many insects as well. Cans of beer sunk into the soil in and around the garden area have proved useful in slug control. The slugs crawl into the liquid and drown. Over the years, homeowners and popular garden articles have stated that cinders, wood chips, or sand used as borders along gardens provide effective barriers against slug invasion. This probably works because it eliminates favorable slug habitats.

One of the more recent slug control products registered for use in home gardens is iron phosphate. Sold under various trade names including *Sluggo*\* and *Escargot*\*, this material simply causes slugs to lose their appetite after feeding. They slither away and die. Unlike older slug baits, iron phosphate dose not pose a risk to pets, birds and other wildlife when used according to labeled directions.

\* Sometimes it is necessary to use trade names for educational purposes. No product endorsement is intended or implied.

## **Moss A Symptom of Lawn Problems, Not a Cause of Them**

Question: We seem to have more moss in our lawn now than grass. What's the best way to get rid of it? Is there anything we can do to prevent it from coming back?

Answer: Moss is a *symptom* of lawn problems, *not a*

*cause* of them. Mosses are distinctly different plants from turfgrasses. Although they are both green, the resemblance stops at that point. Mosses have root-like stem extensions underground. These are shallow and almost feather-like, not at all like the roots we see on our favored garden plants. They do not absorb water from the soil and transport it through veins to leaves and they do not manufacture food through photosynthesis.

Lawns develop moss problems when bare spots give the moss somewhere to grow. Think of moss in the lawn as an indication that the turf is stressed by one or more common problems. Shady conditions, poor drainage, low fertility, soil compaction or thin spots where the turf has died out all contribute to moss infestations. Any one of these, or quite often a combination of these conditions, will generally be present where moss is a problem.

The obvious place to begin in controlling moss is to make sure that turfgrasses have the best possible conditions for growth. Lawns need good light. They also need fertile, well-drained soil to support the roots that can penetrate 6 to 8 inches or even deeper. Any place where water stands after rain or irrigation, or places where the ground is too compacted to drain well will be potential sites for moss. In many places drainage is restricted by layers of hardpan, which is often nearly impermeable to water. In some instances, lawns are installed over ground that has been compacted by heavy equipment. A lawn planted over compacted soil or hardpan will never grow well, and cannot become thick enough to resist moss invasion. There are no easy fixes.

Moss can be killed this time of the year with any number of products which contain ferrous sulfate (iron). Ferrous Sulfate is often combined with nitrogen fertilizer and sold as Ferrous Ammonium Sulfate. The iron kills the moss, while the fertilizer stimulates grass growth. In addition, iron and sulfur are essential nutrients for grasses and tend to improve their color. Although these products kill existing moss, unless the underlying conditions mentioned above are changed, moss will reappear.





# Master Gardener Foundation of Thurston County

## "Helping Gardeners Grow"

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



### 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.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/ Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to have my/our name listed as: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ State and ZipCode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: "MGFTC"**

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

**Interests: Please tell us the areas which interest you:**

- \_\_\_ Plant Sale
- \_\_\_ Garden Rhapsodies
- \_\_\_ Membership
- \_\_\_ Newsletter
- \_\_\_ Publicity
- \_\_\_ Foundation Board
- \_\_\_ Fundraising
- \_\_\_ Composting

**Skills: Please let us know of any special skills or interests you have and may like to share:** \_\_\_\_\_

Computer \_\_\_ Accounting \_\_\_ Grant Writing \_\_\_ Legal \_\_\_ Crafts \_\_\_ Artist \_\_\_ Leadership \_\_\_ Teaching \_\_\_



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



# The Common Sense Gardener

## April 2008

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