

# The Common Sense Gardener

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

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## Cori's Corner by Cori Carlton

Summer is finally here! At this time of year you can't but have an extra spring in your step with all the blooming gardens and great weather that surrounds us. The year is flying by and I can hardly believe that June is here. The past few months have been quite busy and it looks like we won't be slowing down anytime soon.

Upcoming major events include moving the Extension office and planning for 2010 Master Gardener and Master Composter Programs. It's official that the Thurston County Extension Office will be moving from our current Lacey location to the old

McLane Firehouse off of Mud Bay Road and Highway 101. Look for the article in this newsletter for the latest move information.

Planning for 2010 Master Gardener programs will begin in August. A survey will be e-mailed/mailed out to all Master Gardeners to ask for your input. Your thoughts will help us to continue to build a strong program foundation so that we can streamline our procedures, increase our membership and help serve our community even more. This is an exciting time and I hope you will participate in creating the future of

the Master Gardener program of Thurston County.



On a final note I just want to say "Thank You" for welcoming me into your organization and helping me transition into this new position. I am truly blown away and reminded daily what generous and dedicated volunteers you are.

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## From the Foundation President by Nancy Mills

Although as I write this we're still in limbo regarding WSU funding, life goes on. That being said it means it's nomination time. We are looking for people who are willing to commit some of their volunteer time to working on the Foundation Board. You can find more details about the Nominations Committee in Deb Welt's article. Please remember, if a position

has a candidate, and you're interested in it, you're welcome to add your name to the slate!

It's sort of a running joke that these positions are hard to fill because the jobs are so hard to do, take too much time, and are no fun. I even find myself doing that, and yes there have been times when I wanted to pull out my hair. I have to admit that this was

(and is) mainly because I say "Yes" to doing lots of different things within the organization. If I had focused my efforts mainly on being President, I could have spent a lot less time. But for me, on the whole, I wouldn't be as happy.

(Continued on page 2)

## Cori's Corner, cont.

The Master Gardener and Master Composter Programs had a very big shining moment at our recent Plant Sale. Even in tough economic times just about 1,000 community members responded to all your hard work and efforts and supported you through their purchases. The weather was

wonderful and the energy at the Friday evening Gala and Saturday sale was electric. Being a previous event planner you always remember your "first" event. I will remember my first Plant Sale with very fond memories and that is because of all of you. Thank you is all I can

say even though it doesn't seem like enough. Keep spreading the gardening word and know your efforts are truly valued and appreciated! See you in the gardens.....  
Cori

## From the Foundation President, cont.

So you can see that I'm sort of caught in my own web of wanting to be productive and do things I love, yet getting overwhelmed at times because of synchronous deadlines.

Nonetheless, there has been no more rewarding thing I could have done than do my best to help steer this organization, with the others on the Board, to where we believe it's headed. We've continued the work on what was started in about 2005 to get the organization to a more professional level. The Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws were updated, Procedure manuals were started, the Treasurer's job became better organized, the Compost Bin Sales began, we had the First Annual Appreciation Day Picnic, and so on. Since I became President, we have developed a web presence at [www.mgfc.org](http://www.mgfc.org),

published the Policy and Procedure Manual (a copy is on the website), welcomed a full time Program Manager with fantastic volunteer organization skills and with whom we are working closely to develop better communication skills and procedures within the Board, continued to organize membership meetings for ever increasing audiences, and more. The board, with the help of Cori, is currently working on updating the job descriptions of the Foundation board and committees. These updates will streamline position responsibilities so that they will be efficient, effective, and fun without being overwhelming.

I also want to let you know that we actually have fun and enjoy each person on the board for who they are. Sure it's lots of work

sometimes, but the bottom line is that if we didn't enjoy and find value in what we're doing we wouldn't be doing this job, the Board, or the Foundation members any service.

In the effort to do some succession planning, and assuming I'll be re-elected, it would be highly preferable for someone to step up to the plate next year and be the Vice President during my last term with the intention of taking the President's position in 2011. I urge you to look deep within yourself and allow your leadership abilities to shine forth. You won't regret your choice to serve. I haven't.

# Great Plants at Great Prices—2009 Master Gardener Foundation Plant Sale

by Nancy Mills, co-chair

Photo by Charlie Keck



Our slogan proved to be true as our customers found attractive plants at relatively affordable prices and we enjoyed higher profits per pot and overall.

Busy bees. That's the image that keeps coming to my head when I think of all the helpers that were scurrying around, particularly over the last 3 weeks or so before the sale, and of course, on sale day! Hives are a flurry of activity with one goal in mind, supporting the colony, much like our plant sale. And we couldn't have had a better outcome — approximately \$15,700 in sales, with only about 300 plants remaining. Somehow our publicity impacted more people this year since we estimated around 1000 people coming through the gates (we had quite a few people coming in the 'exit only' and missing the counters at the front gate who gave us a number over 800). That compares to between 600-700 counted in the past few years.

We sold out of all the tomatoes again by noon, even though Pam had ordered more. We also bought veggie starts since it's such a hot topic this year. We had about 30 rhubarb plants, and every one disappeared. All the grapes, raspberries, strawberries — everything edible was gone except for some of the relatively puny cilantro and basil starts.

Bob outdid himself with the layout and display of our precious plants. We had received more wooden spools from Consolidated Electric (Judy Smith's husband Mike is our contact for that) and they make such great display tables. I heard over and over again how great the sale area looked, particularly the night of our "Pre-Sale Gala." Once our 65 participants had shopped, it looked like a bomb had hit to me, but actually they took home only about ten percent of our stock, and we quickly refilled the displays — as was the strategy throughout sale day. We feel this is one of the best ways we can say THANK YOU to our volunteers who have helped make this event such a success.

I personally want to thank Bob Findlay for his unwavering dedication to shopping the sale

racks, doing the digs, showing up at the sale site several times each week, designing and supervising the building of our great new office, and on and on. He's really the heart of this operation!

And I would be completely remiss if I didn't mention Pam Thayer and Wanda Cross who are two of the "usual suspects" who come out nearly every week, even through the winter, and are willing to do anything to help out. It is with a dedicated work crew like this that things get done. The commitment made by the leads in each plant area and sale day activity was exemplary of the collaborative effort needed to pull off the annual sale. Bob reported that the awesome view of the 65 plus volunteers seen from the training podium at the gala was a clear message that it takes a village to effectively sell a plant in support of our gardens and programs.

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Photo by Charlie Keck

## We Want You! by Deb Welt

Deb Welt here, your Master Gardener Foundation Member-at-Large. One of my responsibilities is to chair the committee to nominate next year's Board Members. We need you to seriously consider serving on your Foundation Board in the following positions: President, Vice President, Member-at-Large, Secretary and State Representative (Treasurer is a two

year term and not up for re-election this year). Job descriptions are currently listed on the [www.mgftc.org](http://www.mgftc.org) web site under official documents. We also encourage you to speak to any one of us currently on the board or Cori Carlton. This is a great way to serve both your fellow Master Gardeners and your community. It also counts as Master Gardener hours

and if you find yourself limited physically, this can be a great way to keep involved with out having to labor at a garden site.

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***"Busy bees. That's the image that keeps coming to my head when I think of all the helpers that were scurrying around..."***

# Volunteer in the Spotlight



*Master Gardener  
volunteer  
Judy Wilson*

**Name:** Judy Wilson

**Year:** 1997

**Where did you grow up?**

I spent my youth in north central Texas — in and around Dallas. I went to college at Texas Tech in Lubbock Texas. I married into the Air Force in the sixties, which took me to California, North Carolina, Arkansas, and short trips to Thailand and England, ending in Seattle in the seventies. The Air Force moved to California and I decided I really liked the NW so I stayed.

**How long have you lived in**

**Thurston County?**

Ken and I were both transferred to Olympia in 1980, he with the state and I was in retail management at the time. We built a home and have not moved since. Another career move for me later in the 80's before taking up Horticulture in 1993.

**Family or Pets?**

Husband, son and daughter-in-law and nine year old grandson living in Portland and a daughter living in Seattle.

**Hobbies?**

I have always liked fabric, so I have several quilts and other

projects planned and in the works but of course nothing completed. I also do thread count cross stitch which is getting harder to do as I get older — I need more magnification!

**My favorite part of being a Master Gardener?**

I have spent most of my 12 years at the Clinic. The calls we get for help via phone or walk-in and finding the answer to solve their problems, the gratitude of the public for the service we provide, that is the best.



## June and July Volunteer Birthdays

By filling out our Recommitment form we now have the pleasure of wishing our fellow Master Gardeners and Master Composters a Happy Birthday.

Wishing you a year full of health, happiness, and gardening bliss!

Barbara Smith-June 1<sup>st</sup>

Marion McIntosh-June 3<sup>rd</sup>

Linda Mason-June 3<sup>rd</sup>

Jimmy Aotaki-June 5<sup>th</sup>

Linda Harris-June 14<sup>th</sup>

Kathryn Ekar-June 15<sup>th</sup>

Valerie Burson-June 17<sup>th</sup>

Cathy Strum-June 19<sup>th</sup>

Debra Freeloove-June 21<sup>st</sup>

Zoe Champagne-June 21<sup>st</sup>

Ellen Williams-June 23<sup>rd</sup>

Carol Clarke-June 27<sup>th</sup>

Kate Larsen-June 29<sup>th</sup>

Sue Duffy-June 29<sup>th</sup>

Connie Barclay-June 30<sup>th</sup>

Midge Price-July 3<sup>rd</sup>

Mary Vanderhoof-July 4<sup>th</sup>

Gloria Mitchell-July 5<sup>th</sup>

Phil Butlin-July 15<sup>th</sup>

Donna Hawley-July 17<sup>th</sup>

Roy Emory-July 21<sup>st</sup>

Kathleen McKinney-July 24<sup>th</sup>

If your birthday is in June or July and you don't see your name of the list please contact Cori so we can update our files.

## WSU Extension Office is Moving! By Cori Carlton

It's official that the Thurston County Extension Office will be moving from our current Lacey location to the old McLane Firehouse off of Mud Bay Road and Highway 101. Our new address will be 4131 Mud Bay Road, Olympia, WA 98502. The phone system will be set up in early June and we will let you know what our new phone number is as soon as it is available. Currently the building is home to the Thurston County Parks and

Recreation Department. Unfortunately the department has had significant budget cuts and many of their department positions will be eliminated at the end of this month. We will be sharing the space with a few Parks and Rec staff that will still be working. Designated program (Master Gardeners, 4-H, Water Quality, Food Sense, Native Plant Salvage etc.) space within the building has not been decided upon. The Extension staff

will be meeting to discuss this in early June. Even though the actual department spaces have not been decided upon, I have been told that we will have space for a clinic. It looks like the actual moving process won't happen until the end of June or early July. That is all I know at this time about the move and will keep you updated to any news in the Friday Flashes. If you have further questions please let me know.

## Office News and Reminders

### Name Tags

Master Gardener name tags have finally arrived! Anyone who said they needed a name tag on their green recommitment forms was ordered a new one. With all sorts of printing delays they are finally here. Please stop by the office M-F from 9 am to 1 pm or call to make other arrangements with me for pick up.

Thank you for your patience with this matter and hope you are as excited as I am about wearing a new name tag!

### Reimbursements

Just a reminder to any volunteer who is authorized to make purchases for their program area to have only program purchases on the receipt. Please do not have personal and program purchases on the same receipt. Having the purchases be on separate receipts will help us meet our auditors request and make it easier to get reimbursed. We are aware and appreciate the time you take to make separate purchases for the sake of the program. Any questions, please contact Cori.

### 2nd Quarter Time Sheets Due

Don't forget second quarter time cards are due by July 15<sup>th</sup>. Blank timecards can be downloaded from the WSU Thurston County Master Gardener website at <http://thurston.wsu.edu/MasterGardener/>. Hard copies are also available in the Lacey clinic and at each demonstration garden. In the very near future we will be asked to report our hours to WSU via on-line. Watch for updates on this new procedure and know that I will be here to help make this transition as seamless as possible.

## Board News by Toni Ghazal

Sunny greetings from the Board! The hummingbirds and swallows are back dancing and entertaining us with their grace and antics. The gardens are awake and the summer procession of flowers has started. Teenage rabbits are keeping just out of reach from Daisy our Golden Retriever and she is determined to squeeze under our deck after them. Life is good.

A big thank you goes out to all who helped

with the garden plant sale. It was a huge success and it generated funds for 2010. Once again it could not have been orchestrated without the time and effort of so many talented volunteers. A million thanks!

Our next membership meeting is scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup> with Cass Turnbull as our speaker. Click on <http://mgfcmeeingdetails.mgfc.org/june25mtg.html> for details. Cass's expertise is

pruning and those who come to the meeting will not be disappointed. Just think, you can go home and look at that one plant that is taking over your bed and make it respectable again! As always Deb has done a first class job on booking speakers for our meetings. Thank you Deb.

Happy Gardening!



*“Although many people complain about having “hay fever” symptoms of watery eyes and sneezing when Scotch Broom is in bloom, more than likely the broom is not to blame.”*

## Ask the Expert by Don Tapio

**Question:** This year the Scotch Broom seems to be worse than ever! Why doesn't the county come out and spray it or pull it or in some way get rid of it?

**Answer:** According to Nancy Ness, Director of the Gray Harbor County Noxious Weed Control Board, each county weed board has the option each year of designating target weeds to be controlled. Unfortunately, when weeds like Scotch Broom get listed, they are usually placed in the “C” category, which means that the infestation is already so prolific, that enforced control is no longer feasible. “The very best we can do is to educate the public on options for control. We are particularly concerned that people become aware of Scotch Broom’s potential as a fire hazard,” added Ness.

Domestic goats are reported to browse Scotch Broom without apparent ill effects; given time; goats will probably control a patch of Scotch Broom if the plants are not too tall. Plants can also be controlled by grubbing out the crowns. After removing existing large plants, repeated cultivation will destroy seedlings of this weed. Cutting or mowing the plant down to ground level immediately after flowering has proven to be an effective means of control.

Selected herbicides currently recommended by WSU Weed Scientists for Scotch Broom control include triclopyr and glyphosate. Both of these materials can be found in most retail garden stores and nurseries. They provide effective control when used according to labeled directions.

Although many people complain about having “hay fever” symptoms of watery eyes and sneezing when Scotch Broom is in bloom, more than likely the broom is not to blame. Scotch Broom is insect pollinated. Being heavy and sticky, the pollen does not become airborne; thus the potential for an allergic reaction is minimal except perhaps when an individual actually handles a plant in bloom. Most allergic reactions that result in “hayfever” symptoms are result of wind borne pollen, such as grass pollen, which is distributed in large amounts at about the same time that Scotch Broom is in bloom.

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Photo by Jackie White

## Volunteer Snapshot

Master Gardeners and Master Composters have many talents to share with the public and with each other. One of those talents is photography! Whether it's a hobby or a profession, you all have fabulous garden photos to share. If you would like to have

one of your photo's highlighted in one of the upcoming newsletters please send a print to the office or by email at [carltoc@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:carltoc@co.thurston.wa.us). If you want, submit a short caption with your photo to describe the image. If you submit a print please make sure you have your name on back of the photo and state if you would like it returned or not. Thanks!

This image was submitted by Master Gardener Jackie White.

# Mitch Meets the Governor



proclaimed May 9-16, 2009 and our own Mitch Vorwerk was asked to be at the signing with Governor Gregoire. Mitch Vorwerk, is

has done a tremendous job with the Master Gardener class and setting up computer systems which will help our program for years to come. Thank you Mitch for all your help!

AmeriCorps Week was officially in the photo at the far right. Mitch

## Plant Sale, cont.

We're already shopping for next year's sale, and as usual, Bob is particularly on the lookout for "Great Plant Picks," winners of "Plant of the Year" acclaim, and such. But without the stock of hardy perennials you salvage from your gardens, we wouldn't be able to do as well as we do! We continue to ask donors for well identified, robust divisions both for the sake of selling plants by accurate information and for saving time and labor for our volunteers. Master Gardeners are becoming more conscious in their own gardens of planting the right plant in the right place, and knowing what they have. I know that I'm putting the ID stake

that comes with the plant right in the garden next to it much more than I ever did before. That doesn't mean I can always find it when I decide to move or split it, but it's more likely.

Please be sure to keep us in mind when you decide to split or take something out - we need a lot of plants to come in to get our stock back up to about 4000+ if we are to have another successful sale next year. If you are unsure of a species, try to get a picture when it blooms or turns color in the fall (digital works best and you can send it to me), so we at least have that to give to Dorrie Carr to

make a sign to display for sale day customers.



Remember, we're available to help dig out things that you are donating to the sale! Just let Bob or I know and we'll make the arrangements. Success next year means an ongoing commitment throughout the year! As has become obvious in this article, Bob and I have agreed to co-chair the plant sale for 2010! We sincerely hope that your commitment to the sale will continue as well.

*“Since grass plants grow at more or less the same rate regardless of blade length, a short-cut lawn develops an uneven appearance as quickly as a long-cut lawn.”*

## Ask the Expert, cont.

**Question:** We are having a difficult time keeping the lawn mowed. The grass is growing so fast that we have to mow twice a week. We are wondering if we can simply mow our lawn really short so we won't have to mow as often.

**Answer:** Lowering the mowing height has little impact on the overall aesthetics that drive mowing decisions. Grass blades grow from the “crown” that rests on the soil surface, so grass plants grow from the bottom up. Thus, the growth rate of grass blades has little to do with the length of the blades. The judgment that a lawn “needs mowing” is generally based on an appearance of uneven growth, not on a measurement of blade length. Since grass plants grow

at more or less the same rate regardless of blade length, a short-cut lawn develops an uneven appearance as quickly as a long-cut lawn.

This is the time of year when all of our cool season grasses including fescues, bentgrass and perennial ryegrass grow best. It is not unusual for a properly fertilized lawn to require twice-a-week mowing in order to follow the “1/3 rule”: no more than 1/3 of the blade should be removed during mowing.

The 1/3 rule is based on reducing turf grass stress associated with “carbohydrate partitioning.” If grass plants lack a continuous supply of carbohydrates sufficient to support normal plant functions,

the plants shift carbohydrates away from root growth to support re-growth of the blades, the carbohydrate source. Lowering the mowing height reduces leaf area for photosynthesis, which ultimately results in a reduction in root growth. To maximize root growth, the recommended mowing height for cool season grasses is 2 to 2.5 inches for the average home lawn. Mowing at regular intervals will promote a healthier turfgrass.

If the lawn is mowed too high, matted thatch will build up at the soil surface. Excess thatch prevents water, air, and plant nutrients from penetrating the soil, can harbor insect populations and may cause the lawn to turn brown.

## New Resource Boxes at the Gardens

The next time you are at one of the three demonstration gardens be sure to look for the new “Resource Box.” The resource box is filled with items you might need including: incident report forms, blank timecards, blank intern timecards, reimbursement forms, composting brochures and first aid supplies.

The kit also has what I call a “large business card” flier that has all of the Master Gardener services information. Please pass these fliers out to anyone who requests more information about the Master Gardener program.

The flier contains our most current contact information including: office numbers, web

site address, State Master Gardener web site, WSU publications website, the Foundation web site, as well as contact information for the Lacey and Olympia Farmers Market plant clinics. It also gives interest information on the 2010 Master Gardener class.

# Garden Rhapsodies Tour Update

by Jennifer Johnson, Education and Outreach Specialist,  
Thurston County Public Health and Social Services

Thurston County Master Gardeners do great work in our area. The creation of beautiful demonstration gardens, plant clinics, informational booths, and so many other activities help gardeners in our community make choices to reduce their reliance on pesticides and conserve water. I am grateful to work with more than 100 Master Gardeners every year.

As many of you know, several organizations come together to create the annual Garden Rhapsodies Tour. Thurston County Master Gardeners support this tour in many ways. Nearly 100 Master Gardeners volunteer in the gardens on the day of the event to answer questions, highlight educational opportunities and help with the various logistics of an event that hosts more than 600 participants within a six hour day. Master Gardeners also create educational displays for the gardens and act as hosts and greeters. A small committee of the various agencies that pull this event together, including Master Gardeners, work all year to make sure that the event happens by finding the gardens, planning the demonstrations,

and coordinating throughout the year. Volunteers can earn a ticket to the tour by volunteering for 3.5 hours during the event or in advance. If you are interested in helping with the Tour or joining the committee that makes it all happen, contact Erica Guttman at [ericaguttman@gmail.com](mailto:ericaguttman@gmail.com) or try her office phone at 754-3588 ext. 109. You can also contact her at her home number, 709-0704.

Join fellow Master Gardeners on Saturday, July 25th to tour seven beautiful gardens and see your colleagues in action! The event begins at 10:00 am and the gardens close promptly at 4:00 pm. Buses will leave from the shuttle site at Olympic National Forest Headquarters at 1835 Black Lake Blvd., SW and travel to each garden. For those of you concerned about last year's long bus waits, organizers have made every effort to make sure that buses are an efficient way to see all of the gardens. Tickets are \$15 and include the bus trip. You can purchase tickets in advance at one of Thurston County's fine local nurseries, True Value hardware stores, or from the Olympia Farmer's Market.

You can also purchase your tickets online at [www.mgftc.org/gardenrhapsodies.htm](http://www.mgftc.org/gardenrhapsodies.htm) or from the shuttle site on the day of the tour.

The gardens feature many educational opportunities with local groups joining us to discuss topics such as composting, pruning, drip irrigation, soil amendments, and Great Plant Picks. Displays in the gardens help to highlight sustainable practices unique to each garden. And of course, Master Gardeners offer their experience and knowledge to help create a day that strengthens participants' commitment to gardening with the environment in mind. Musicians from the Olympia Symphony Guild create the Rhapsody that makes this tour so unique while local artists capture lovely moments of light and color. For more information, feel free to contact Ernie Paul with Thurston County Public Health at (360) 754-3355 ext 7618 or e-mail [paule@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:paule@co.thurston.wa.us)

Hope to see you in the gardens!

## Fred Meyer Fuchsia Start and Garden Event-April 4<sup>th</sup>

What a busy beautiful day for planting and sharing garden information! One customer bought over 300 plants and it took a team of four Master Gardeners just over an hour to pot all of the plants.

Thank you to Lynda Bauer, Bea Schmidt, Judy Caron, Mary Boston, Bob Richards and interns Tami Edwards, Cathy McFarland, and Cathy Strum for helping plant and staff the Master Gardener informational booth.



**Master Gardener Cori Carlton and Intern Cathy McFarland are busy planting a customers new plant purchases. A fun but busy day!**

## Olympia Farmer's Market News by Catherine Eddington



We have had a great start to this season, several beautiful weekends with lots of visitors. Things are blooming as clean up continues. We typically do an annual cleanup day in March, however, this year the weather was so awful that all we could accomplish was the big pruning of the willows in the basin and that was done in the rain and snow. On our next scheduled work day we didn't fare much better, enduring freezing rain as we shoveled gravel for our walkways. Much thanks to the volunteers who braved the nasty

weather to get the job done. So, we are now moving from bed to bed, weeding and taking care of general maintenance.

We have a great group of people that are taking care of our compost area and worm bin. Intern orientations are ongoing and I must say that I have met some wonderful people in the process. I look forward to working with each of them.

We have a new display box on the front of the clinic to

showcase the garden history in pictures. Thank you David for the box and Norm for the pictures.

Next big project is pruning of the Flowering Plum and Flowing Cherry trees. They are done blooming and done covering the garden with "pink snow." Now the Wisteria is in bloom so we are enjoying "purple snow."

The Farmers Market Garden is a unique and wonderful place. Come down and see us!

*"The past two weeks have seen an explosion of growth, color and interest in all areas."*

## DirtWorks Garden News by Paula Nelson

I'm sure that any of you that have visited Dirt Works in the past and were at the Plant Sale will agree that the recently completed garden renovation is simply spectacular! The past two weeks have seen an explosion of growth, color and interest in all areas — from adaptive gardens, to the vegetable beds to the mixed border to the gorgeous Siberian Iris in the Rain Garden. It all gives one pause to admire the work that has gone into making this into such a lush and lovely space; kudos to Bob Findlay for his vision and the rest of the Dirt Works community for making it happen.

Now, that is not to say that it won't take a bit of work to maintain and dare I say improve on the garden, as we all know a garden is truly never 'finished.' Summer is just around the corner, which at Dirt Works means even more Children's Garden events, classes in the gazebo and composting fun.

Speaking of composting, now that we are open Thursday evenings, those of you who are busy on Tuesdays or Saturdays can come join the "Dirty Girls" then. Shanna and I believe in gardening as a full contact sport and for the two hours or so that we spend at those times, it's a challenge to see who can get the

most into and out of a mess. This past Thursday saw us cleaning out two former City of Olympia lunch room Worm Bins. Since the bins were previously kept indoors, there are no drainage holes at the bottom and boy howdy was that bottom few inches stinky! Charlie Keck took pictures for posterity (and hopefully, avoided our posteriors!) as we were on our hands and knees sorting finished compost from worms. A good time was had by all — as is usually the case at Dirt Works. We cordially invite you to come join us whenever you have time, Tuesday and Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm or Thursday from 5:30 pm until dusk.



Photo by Charlie Keck

# Closed Loop Garden News

by Bobbie Liberty



The **Peonies** are in bloom and they are beautiful! There are about 100 different species to see and most are blooming. Come out to Closed Loop Park and see for yourself.

The peony is named after **Paeon** or **Paeon**, a student of **Asclepius**, the **Greek god** of medicine and healing. **Asclepius** became jealous of his pupil; **Zeus** saved Paeon from the wrath of **Asclepius** by turning him into the peony flower.

**Great Plant Picks'** perennial committee has sent us 33 different species of Dianthus Pinks (95 plants) to trial. They will be planted on the slope in the rockery.

There are over 300 species of Dianthus (Carnations, Pinks, and Sweet Williams), and hundreds more of hybrid varieties. The group includes annuals, biennials and perennials. Most Dianthus produce richly fragrant flowers in the spring or summer, sometimes extending right up until



the first frost. Although Dianthus species vary from 2 inches to 3 feet tall in height, most garden varieties are 10 to 20 inches tall.

*Dianthus means divine flower*

**The Lake Lawrence Garden Club** visited a couple of weeks ago. Ten people showed up with boots and umbrellas to see CLP. It was raining very hard and water was running over the paths, but everyone wanted to continue the tour. They were interested in the garden and asked lots of questions. They all said they would return in a couple of weeks to see the peonies in bloom!

## We Want You! cont.

I will be sending out a notice soon to form the Nominations Committee to help seek out candidates. "What will I have to do?" you may ask. The committee will simply assist me in talking to members about the different board positions. We'll most likely only need to meet once or twice and then work together by phone or by email. We will begin our search soon and be finished in time to give foundation members a 30 day written notice about the election which is held at our Annual Meeting. This year the board wants to talk to potential candidates for the purpose of

discussing responsibilities as well as time investment. That way, you can have a better idea of what the job entails so there is no confusion, and you can make a more informed decision about serving. It's easier than you might think, and we do have fun!

## Upcoming NHS Events by Joyce Hawkins

### Northwest Horticultural Society Presents NHS Annual Fall Plant Sale:

The best specialty nurseries from our area will offer many choice plants. Since Fall is one of the best times for planting in the Northwest, this is a fantastic opportunity to find a wide assortment of plant materials -- all in one location.

**DATES AND SCHEDULE:** Friday, September 18, 12 noon to 6:30 pm  
Saturday, September 19, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Warren G. Magnuson Park (former Sand Point Naval Air Station)  
7400 Sand Point Way  
Seattle, WA 98115 (free parking)

**INFORMATION:** 206-527-1794  
[www.northwesthort.org](http://www.northwesthort.org)

### Northwest Horticultural Society Presents *What is a Garden?:*

Brooks Garcia of Fine Gardens in Scottsdale, Georgia, will take you through the ideas that we call a garden. A garden is more than simply the sum of the plants. But, what is it exactly? Brooks believes "it is

the experience of moving through time and space, but how we shape that space affects how we feel and the time we spend in it."

**DATE AND SCHEDULE:**  
Wednesday, October 14, 2009  
6:45 pm Reception  
7:15 pm Lecture

**LOCATION:** NHS Hall/UW Botanic Gardens  
Center for Urban Horticulture  
3501 NE 41st, Seattle (free parking)  
\$5 members/\$10 non-members

**INFORMATION:** 206-527-1794  
[www.northwesthort.org](http://www.northwesthort.org)

## Cori's Vegas Adventure by Cori Carlton

Viva Las Vegas! It's been two months since I attended the conference and I still can't get Elvis, the dingy of slot machines and the flashing lights out of my head. I actually saw my first slot machine in a bathroom of the hotel. Can you believe it...in the bathroom? No wonder the women's line was so long.

I was very excited to attend my first Master Gardener Conference and it did not disappoint. I came back with a wealth of new

knowledge and even had enough room in my luggage to bring back a plethora of resource materials without exceeding the 50 pound baggage limit. I also made a lot of great contacts which included four from Washington state and our own state Master Gardener coordinator, Tonie Fitzgerald.

902 people attended the conference. 779 were from the United States and 123 were from other countries including: Mexico, Canada, Costa Rica and

Armenia.

The sessions were wonderful and I will use this information to write articles for future newsletters.

(Continued on next page)



## Cori's Vegas Adventure, cont.

Some of the topics included: growing community gardens, gardening in small spaces, how to research gardening material on the internet from reliable sources, how to grow food without land, research on why pruning is so important, pollinators and urbanization, promotion of your programs, plus volunteer management tools. Too much great information to share in one newsletter!

At the opening address they presented the following information about the Master Gardener program nationwide.

A 2009 Extension MG Survey done by USDA/ CSREES found that there are 94,865 current MG volunteers in the US who volunteered 5,197,573 hours, valued at \$64.5 million. More interesting information revealed:

- 79% of MG hours were in metropolitan counties
- 21% of MG hours were in rural counties
- 4,850,285 personal contacts

included telephones, e-mails, live audience presentations and site visits

- 14.4% of contacts were to underserved audiences
- 685,554 pounds of produce were donated to local food banks
- 293,017 hours were devoted to youth gardening

This data was collected from what was reported and I'm sure even more contacts were made that weren't reported. Very impressive none the less!

The trade show was excellent and I picked up some great brochures of various products, events, and services to tell you about including these:

- American Community Gardening Association Annual Conference, August 6-9, Columbus Ohio  
[www.communitygarden.org](http://www.communitygarden.org)
- Backyard Food Solutions, August 5-8, OSU, Corvallis, OR  
<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mgmini-college>

- Botanical Tours  
[www.HiddenTreasuresBotanicalTours.com](http://www.HiddenTreasuresBotanicalTours.com)
- Community and Home Food gardens have flourished at 3 different times in US history: World War I, World War II and now [www.victorygrower.com](http://www.victorygrower.com)
- National Children and Youth Gardening Symposium, July 23-25, Cleveland Botanical Garden, sponsored by the American Horticulture Society  
[www.ahs.org](http://www.ahs.org)
- Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond (books) [www.HarvestingRainwater.com](http://www.HarvestingRainwater.com)
- Water Smart Calendar with great pictures and gardening tips from Southern Nevada Water Authority <http://www.snwa.com/html/>

The 2011 International MG Conference will be held in Charleston, WV. Washington State was asked to consider hosting the 2013 conference. We'll see if that comes to fruition or not.

MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION OF WASHINGTON STATE  
& WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION present

# master gardener advanced-education conference



**September 24–26, 2009**  
WSU Pullman Campus

### Topics

- Science, society, and sustainable food systems
- Eco-lawns
- Root diseases
- And more!

### Tours/Workshops

- Plant ID: spotting invasive species before they establish
- WSU insect collection and insect ID services
- Sustainable horticulture demo gardens
- WSU Organic Farm

### Volunteer Skills

- Committees that work!
- Master Gardener Online Training
- Working with low income audiences
- Roundtable topics

Also, Friday evening awards banquet, social hours, and receptions for networking with MGs from all planting zones in Washington and Idaho.

Watch for registration and schedule updates at <http://mastergardener.wsu.edu/mgfws/>

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Teacher and naturalist Jack Nisbet is the author of *Purple Flat Top*; *Singing Grass*, *Burning Sage*; *Visible Bones*; and two books about fur trader David Thompson: *Sources of the River* and *The Mapmaker's Eye*. His teaching, presentations, writing, and museum work all involve going outside and watching things grow.



*Jack Nisbet, teacher, author, and naturalist.*

Nisbet's current project, *The Collector: David Douglas and the Natural History of the Northwest*, explores the interactions of Scottish naturalist David Douglas with the landscape and culture of our region. It will appear from Sasquatch Books in fall 2009. For more information, visit [jacknisbet.com](http://jacknisbet.com).

**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**EXTENSION**  
*Master Gardener Program*

**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**EXTENSION**  
*Master Gardener Foundation*

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension office.

## Oregon Coast Gardening and Landscaping Expo

The Oregon Coast Gardening & Landscaping Expo returns to Newport, Oregon on Friday, June 26 and Saturday, June 27 at the beautiful Newport Middle School facility. This year's exciting two day Expo features fifty quality plant sellers with a wide variety of plants plus selected garden tools, garden art, water garden and landscaping supplies. And returning as part of the low admission price will be ten fabulous gardening and landscaping seminars featuring top names in northwest horticulture including:

- Kristin VanHoose, owner of Hydrangeas Plus
- Mike Bones, American Rhododendron Society
- Yolanda Wilson, Vanveen Bulbs
- Jed White, Pacific Water Gardens
- Lowell Cordas of Lowell's Tools on shopping and maintenance of garden tools
- Rose Marie Nichols McGee, Nichols Garden Nursery
- Steve Taylor, Blooming Nursery
- Darren Morgan, Shonnard's Nursery and the "Dean" of Northwest Gardening
- Mike Darcy, radio and TV host of "In The Garden."

Plus Mike will be broadcasting his "In The Garden" radio show live from the Expo!

For more information, please visit:

<http://oregoncoastgardeningexpo.com>

Or write to:

[gardenexpo@oregoncoastgardeningexpo.com](mailto:gardenexpo@oregoncoastgardeningexpo.com)

## WSU Budget Update by Cori Carlton

Some of you have been inquiring about any WSU budget updates or announcements. I have not been passing along any information about the WSU budget because nothing has been finalized and won't be for some time. All Extension staff have viewed various question/answer sessions from WSU regarding the budget via video cam but in the end nothing is finalized.

Recently you may have seen some emails passed around saying that the Extension

Department would not have any budget cuts. This was misinformation and has yet to be determined. As soon as I hear a finalized budget reduction plan I will pass it along to you but until then know that nothing is set in stone. Please visit the WSU Budget Committee web site for the most up to date budget information:

<http://budget-committee.wsu.edu/>

## June 25 Foundation Meeting Featuring Cass Turnbull

by Deb Welt

Please plan to attend our Thursday, June 25th Foundation meeting from 6 to 9 pm. It really is a must see lecture if you have ever killed, butchered, mangled or made a plant more of a nuisance while trying to prune than it ever was before. Our featured speaker will be Cass Turnbull the author of *Cass Turnbull's Guide to Pruning – What, When, Where & How to Prune for a Beautiful Garden*, published by Sasquatch Books in 2004 (which will be available for purchase). We will be on the west side of Olympia, at the McLane Fire Station located at [125 Delphi Rd. NW Olympia, WA 98502](http://www.olympiafire.com/125-Delphi-Bd-NW-Olympia-WA-98502).

We will get started with our wonderful potluck so please plan to bring food of your choice to share, a serving spoon along with a plate and utensils (as always, we'll have some extras just in case). No worries if you can't bring (or don't want to bring food) drinks are welcome as well! Or better still; just bring yourself and maybe a fellow gardener who has trouble getting

out!

### Just in case you don't know

**Cass Turnbull** she left the Seattle Parks Department in 1986 after 11 years to start her own landscape maintenance and consulting business. Three years later, she founded

### **PlantAmnesty**

([www.plantamnesty.org](http://www.plantamnesty.org)), a private non-profit organization that now numbers over 900 members in 46 states and four countries. **PlantAmnesty's** goal to "end the senseless torture and mutilation of trees and shrubs" has gained considerable local and national press as the organization strives to educate the commercial and public sectors on responsible, appropriate pruning and landscape management practices, establishing a standard of quality care for the urban ecology.

Born in Seattle in 1951, Turnbull studied for a liberal arts degree at Fairhaven College of Western Washington State University in Bellingham, Washington. She is a Washington State Certified

Landscape, a Certified Arborist and teaches horticulture at Washington State Vocational Schools. A veteran of the King County Master Gardener program, she also studied horticulture at the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture and at Edmonds Community College.

Turnbull often lectures to parks departments, school districts, community clubs, commercial landscape groups, flower and home shows and industry seminars. She is frequently published and interviewed on the subject of pruning reform, and has won three awards for her work—which includes not only teaching and lecturing, but also several slide shows, instructive pamphlets, a newsletter, information booths, a how-to book and several videos. Turnbull resides in Seattle with her husband, two cats and garden.

## Let's Travel and Learn—June 14

A Let's Travel and Learn trip is planned for Sunday, June 14, 8:30-4:30, featuring Rehabilitative Pruning. We will travel by van/carpool to Seattle's Warren G. Magnuson Park to hear Cass Turnbull, founder of PlantAmnesty, tell us how to restore beauty to overgrown or mal-pruned plants. Cass has been a professional gardener for more than twenty years and founded PlantAmnesty, an organization committed to putting a stop to mal-pruning by

providing accurate and easily understood information about pruning and garden maintenance.

Bring a sack lunch to picnic in the park then spend the rest of the afternoon visiting two well-known nurseries in North Seattle prior to returning to Olympia in late afternoon.

If there are more people than the van can accommodate, carpooling will be arranged. Fee

includes workshop fee. Gas money may be required if we take private cars.

**Fee: \$15 for Foundation members, \$20 for non-members.**

**2 hours CE credit.**

**Contact Penny Locke at [penny@mgfrc.org](mailto:penny@mgfrc.org)**

## Let's Travel and Learn—April's Trip to Bloedel Reserve





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

# The Common Sense Gardener

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## Class of 2009 News by Cori Carlton

### **2009 Master Gardener Class Is Almost Complete**

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, 45 Master Gardener interns will have completed over eighty hours of classroom training. It's been a long road but I can truly say I've seen their heads grow with new plant knowledge from week to week. I hope when July 10<sup>th</sup> hits they will be able to fit through the classroom door. Their next step is to continue to fulfill their 60 volunteer hour commitment in the various Master Gardener program offerings. This includes volunteering in the gardens, clinics, foundation events like Garden Rhapsodies, and other community education events. This group is very enthusiastic and I hope you get to know

and welcome them as you volunteer together. As they know I celebrate everyday but today I celebrate them and all their hard work. If they made Master Gardener Crocs I'd be wearing them for you today. Congratulations and welcome to the Master Gardener Program of Thurston County!

### **2009 Master Composter Class Graduates 13 New Composters**

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 13 new Master Composters will have completed their classroom training to become certified Master Composters. How exciting to have 13 new Master Composters to help spread the composting word across the county and beyond. From yard waste to

wiggling worms they have had their hands dirty while their brains have been filled with all sorts of new composting knowledge. They too will continue to fulfill their additional volunteer hour commitment in the various Master Composter program offerings. Congratulations and welcome to the Master Composter Program of Thurston County!