



Douglas County Master Gardeners

March 2014 Newsletter

Volume 29, Number 3

Gale Robinson Master Gardener of the Month by Michelle Harding-Olson



Gale Robinson was born in Wisconsin and grew up on a dairy farm, and has been driving farm equipment for as long as he can remember. He began his illustrious driving career on a cucumber picking machine, and graduated to a myriad of lumber mill fork-lifts before finally settling on a Discovery Garden tractor. Although milking cows roamed most of the 150 acres there were 50 acres set aside to farm cucumbers and strawberries. He lived with his parents and three siblings 8 miles outside town, and it wasn't until he joined the Navy that he began to see the world.

He was 21 when he decided to enlist rather than wait to be drafted. Now Gale is a pretty smart guy and very practical, and he knew he wasn't a very

March 2014 Events

3	10-12	Insect Committee
4	9-12	Berry Crops
	1-4	Composting/Cover Crops
7	1-4	Japanese Garden Pruning (Discovery Garden)
11	9-12	Vertebrate Pests/ Waterwise Gardening
	1-4	Integrated Pest Management
12	9-10	Executive Board meeting
	10	Plant Sale Committee Heads meeting
14	9-12	Ornamental Shrub Garden Pruning (Discovery Garden)
17	10-12	Insect Committee
18	2:30	WT14 Class Graduation
19	10-12	Diagnostics Group
20	2-4	Trash to Treasures Setup
21	9-4	Trash to Treasures Drop-off
22	9-4	Trash to Treasures Sale
25	9-12	Discovery Garden Work Day
27	9	Continuing Ed: Bonsai Training
27	10	Chapter meeting

Trash to Treasures Sale We Need Your Donations!

Please contribute your "trash" to our upcoming sale. This is an important fundraiser for our group, contributing to our own "treasures".

Drop off items on Friday, March 21st. Sorry, we cannot accept clothes, shoes, computer monitors or old-style TVs.

Please sign up to help with the sale as well.

good swimmer, and although he did join the Navy, he didn't think being on a boat was in his best interests (besides the fact his older brother told him you had to jump 20 feet from the deck into the water below for drills!) so Gale entered the Navy as a builder (Seabee) not a seaman. It was 54 below 0 in Great Lakes, Michigan, and 50 above 0 in San Diego, California—and did I mention Gale is a pretty smart guy—so he chose to be stationed in San Diego. He did tell me, however, that he about froze to death in San Diego because it was a damp 50 degrees and he was used to a dry cold...um, kinda like dry ice?? Gale then left San Diego and was stationed in Coos Bay, receiving his first introduction to Oregon. He wasn't much of a drinker, so instead of heading to the bars Gale and a buddy went to the local roller skating rink (a man after my own heart because I spent many Friday and Saturday nights of my youth at the roller skating rink in Paramount, California—what a blast!). It was at the roller rink that Gale met the woman who would later become his wife. This was 1964 or 1965 and the Vietnam War was demanding our full attention, as a result Gale completed two tours in Da Nang before being discharged and returning to Coos Bay, Oregon. He spent three weeks as a man of leisure before securing work at Georgia Pacific Plywood Mill.



Gale spent 9 ½ years working graveyard shift before moving to the plywood mill where he spent the next 25 years operating a variety of machinery and moving lots of paper bales. He had three children before divorcing, and spent 3 years as a bachelor before meeting and marrying Barbara who owned the local Grange Insurance Agency in Coos Bay. When the mill closed, Gale retired, and thought he had put his fork-lift days behind him. He and Barb

decided to move to Roseburg to be closer to the kids. Gale loves to sing and sang while in High School. After the move he returned to singing, and joined a Barbershop Quartet, singing with them for 5 years before the group disbanded and his special relationship with pallets reclaimed him. He works at UCAN and is back on the fork-lift! He and Barbara heard about the Master Gardener Program and joined together in 2009. Gale is a kind and funny guy and does most of our Discovery Garden heavy lifting. I always thought he was driving the mower and talking to him, now I know he was singing up a storm! Please give special thanks to Gale whenever you see him for all that he contributes to our organization. Gardeners, meet Gale Robinson.

Bonsai Training

by Mike Winters

Wintergreen Nursery (Winston, Oregon)

Continuing Education Program

Thursday, March 27, 2014, 9:00 AM

Your Chapter Needs YOU!

Barbara Robinson, Sharon Hopkins

There are less than two months left until our Plant and Garden Expo on May 3rd! Mother's Day follows in short order and what better venue to gear up for the occasion than our annual extravaganza? Between the offerings of our Master Gardener inventory and those of other participating vendors, there will be no shortage of appropriate gifts for your mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, aunt, and don't forget yourself (my favorite recipient)!

Many of you have already signed up to help and we thank you! If you have not signed up, please take the time to do so soon so that our committee heads are able to contact and organize their groups. There are available slots on most all the committees and many more hands are needed.

Of course, we can always use more covered/enclosed trucks, vans, SUV's, and trailers for transporting plants to and from the fairgrounds. (Sign up for Transportation.) The more rigs we have, the fewer trips each will need to make. It is a requirement for rigs to be covered and/or enclosed

to prevent damage to our tender merchandise while in transport.

We also desperately need people to show up at the greenhouses immediately following the sale on Saturday to unload leftover inventory. **Please** consider signing up for this activity. (Loading/Unloading at Greenhouse – PM slot). By the end of the sale we are all tired so the more people who stay to help or come back to help, the earlier we can all go home and kick back.

Don't forget to sign up for Saturday potluck. Please indicate your intent to bring an item for breakfast or lunch. Any Master Gardener bringing a dish to share AND wearing their name tag is welcome to join us in the dining room. **We are not providing potluck on Friday**, so be sure you eat breakfast before leaving home. Drinks (coffee, tea, hot chocolate, water) will be provided. Friday is an intense day of setting up so we need you out on the floor helping, versus sitting in the dining area for long periods of time. The more people helping, the earlier we can all go home and rest up for the big day.

Clipboards with committee signups will continue to be available this month during MG classes and in the Plant Clinic. They will also be available @ our March 28th chapter meeting. If neither works for you, please email barbararob@gmail.com, or call Barbara at 541-677-8226 or Sharon Hopkins at 541-459-1782 with your information. Thank YOU!

Discovery Garden Pruning

led by Steve Renquist

Japanese Garden

Friday, March 7, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

(per Julie Stanbery, this entails different pruning techniques than used in the rest of the Discovery Garden)

Ornamental Shrub Garden

Friday, March 14, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

(per Julie, this area needs a lot of help with pruning and clean-up)

Drought and Your Lawn

Steve Renquist

OSU Extension Horticultural Agent

2013-2014 have been the driest seasons in the past one hundred plus years. Here are a few options to help you with decision of what to do with the lawn in your landscape when we are having water shortages. Each of these options will impact your lawn differently.

Option 1: Let the stand go dormant

- The stand density will decrease.
- Most of the plants will not die but spots will open up and weeds will invade.
- Perennial rye and Chewings fescue will look bunchy as stands thin.
- Tall fescue is the most drought hardy local species, most plants will survive.

Next fall you should renovate your lawn to bring it back quickly:

- Dethatch
- Over-seed bare spots
- Fertilize
- Spray weeds if heavy

Option 2: Prioritize areas to be watered.

- Water areas you use the most.
- Let other areas go dormant.
- Keep trees and shrubs mulched to cut their water use.
- Renovate dormant areas next fall like option 1.

Option 3: Survival watering.

- Give grass minimum water to stay alive.
- Grass usually wants 1-2 inches of water/week, cut it to .5-1 inch/week.
- Grass will brown a little but maintain some growth.
- This option keeps roots in good shape.

Next fall renovation is minimal:

- Replanting usually not needed.

- Fertilize and dethatch.
- Weeds usually not bad.

Option 4: Redesign your landscape.

- Eliminate much of your turf.
- Remove grass from curb areas and under trees.
- Remember adding flower and vegetable gardens to old lawn areas-won't reduce water use. Use mulches to prevent erosion on bare ground.

Improve the efficiency of watering.

- If you use an in-ground sprinkler system, make sure it is not over applying water. Adjust timers to water less frequently and deeper.
- Most people are not aware of how much water they are applying each week.
- Know your rate of irrigation by testing with catch cups.
- Use lower pressure systems to lower evaporation rates.
- Water once a week deeper, not every other day and shallow.
- Water in the cool mornings and when not windy.

A healthy lawn is more drought hardy.

- Fertilize at least once a year, best time is in April.
- Cut your grass at a two inch height. Short cuts burn more easily and reduce root growth.
- Do not bag and remove lawn clippings.
- Mulching mowers return 50% of the nutrients to the soil with the grass.
- Dethatch your lawn every 3-4 years especially if you water and fertilize a lot.
- Keep pH of soil above 5.5 for most western Oregon grasses with lime.
- Water once a week in the dry season putting on about 1 inch.
- Aerate or plug lawns if your soil gets compacted.

Other Alternatives:

- Xeriscaping- Landscaping with plants that can take dry periods.
- Low maintenance turf. Called Eco-turf, contains many species
- Species:

Tall Fescue	90%
Yarrow	5%
Clover	4%
English Daisy	1%
- Water, once a month 1-2 inches
- Cut at 2 inches tall
- Mix 1-4 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft.

Spring Into Gardening 2014



Bob Denman of Red Pig Garden Tools was a big hit at Spring into Gardening, teaching us about the ergonomics of tool use, as well as the care and feeding of tools.

Trainees and Mentors at Work

Photos by Maureen Benice



February 2014 Chapter Meeting Minutes

The OSU Douglas County Master Gardeners chapter meeting was called to order at 10:12 AM on February 27, 2014 by President **Michelle Harding-Olson**. The minutes of the January 2014 chapter meeting were approved as written. The agenda was edited to include **Bob Brindley** and **Sharon Hopkins** discussing the Plant Sale and adopted as edited.

HORTICULTURE AGENT – Steve Renquist had nothing to report.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR – Ruth Stafford reported 53 members have not yet paid their 2014 membership dues. Telephone and email reminders have been sent. OMGA membership cards are available once dues have been paid. Territorial Seed Company gives a 10% discount to Master Gardeners who show the membership card or their badge. Garlands Nursery (in Corvallis) also offers a discount.

OMGA REPRESENTATIVE – Rosemary Brinkley reported she and **Larry Sutton** will be attending the OMGA board meeting this weekend in Portland.

TREASURER – Vicki McAlister reviewed the Treasurer's Report (*see attached*).

VICE PRESIDENT – Fred Alley reported that **Denise Fennell** is the 2014 class representative to the Executive Board. **Kish Doyle** has volunteered to facilitate the 2014 class picture. Please sign and return the Photo Release form to **Steve Renquist**. The Continuing Education program on March 27th will be Bonsai Training, by Mike Winters of Wintergreen Nursery in Winston.

SECRETARY – Janet Parkerson is out of town, taking care of her mother. **Jen Bailey** is covering for Janet. **Michelle** thanked Jen for supporting us during Jan's absence.

PAST PRESIDENT – Larry Sutton announced the 4H program is sponsoring a rummage sale in the Annex Auditorium tomorrow, February 28th, from 10 AM to 6 PM.

PRESIDENT – Michelle Harding-Olson welcomed **Tim and Georgia Richards**, who joined our group last year. We received a thank you letter from UCAN

for our 2013 food donations, and one from OSU for our final payment to the Douglas County OSU Extension endowment fund. **Michelle** thanked **Fred Alley, Larry Sutton, and anyone else** involved behind the scenes for setting up the Auditorium before our meetings.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH – Leo Grass reported **Bob Brindley** gave a presentation to the Sutherlin Garden Club on insects. **Jean Wall** led a fruit tree pruning class at Redeemers' church. **Leo** is still seeking a volunteer to speak at the UCC Extraordinary Living Conference on September 11th; the topics are gardening under drought conditions and natural pest control. He's also seeking help with four, one hour presentations and Q&A (VA, low income housing, 2 retirement homes), all of which use raised beds. **Michelle Harding-Olson** suggested folks interested in giving presentations should talk to **Steve Renquist** about using the videotapes of standard gardening presentations for preparation.

PLANT CLINIC – Chris Rusch reported training the 2014 class is going well. She distributed the calendar for signups. In January, the Plant Clinic had 28 contacts, and thus far in February, 40 contacts (twice as many as last February). Please check the Lost & Found in the Plant Clinic.

DISCOVERY GARDEN – Julie Stanbery reported **Steve Renquist** will lead a pruning class in the Japanese Garden from 1:00 to 4:00 PM on Friday, March 7th. The next Discovery Garden work day is Friday, March 14th, to prune and clean up the ornamental pruning garden. **Steve** will schedule work days to remove the grapevines and trellising along the entrance to the HLC. Many thanks to **John Punches**, who paid for a new riding lawnmower and repairs to our tractor. **Kish Doyle** volunteered use of her pressure washer to clean the equipment. Please do NOT park along the sides of the roads. Tuesday, March 25th is the first regular Discovery Garden work day for the season.

PUBLICITY – Bonnie Courter has been submitting PSAs for the Plant Clinic, and has included visitor statistics in the announcements. An article on the Plant Sale will be published in the American Profile newspaper insert on April 12th. Paid advertisements for the Plant Sale will start appearing in March. Work is ongoing to create more effective banners and signs. Bookmarks are forthcoming.

HALLMARK – Linda Thames reported **Marjorie Milroy** passed away on January 5th. She will be remembered for her indomitable spirit and wonderful smile. **Barb Leeb's** son is recovering from surgery. **Pat Dinsmore** sent a thank you for our note to her, and was at today's meeting.

TRASH TO TREASURES SALE – **Cindy Rich** and **Debbie Haynes** have flyers for distribution. The sign-up sheets are available. Setup is from 2:00 to 4:00 PM on Thursday, March 20th. Items can be dropped off between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM on Friday the 21st. The sale itself is on Saturday the 22nd from 9 AM to 4 PM. Volunteers should be there by 8:30, and are needed to help clean up after the sale. Early drop-off of items is not available. We will not accept televisions or computers, clothes or shoes.

PLANT SALE – **Bob Brindley** explained we've had external vendors at our Plant Sale since the sale was moved to the Douglas County Fairgrounds eight years ago. He has a list of 300 potential vendors, but asked that Master Gardeners also seek out new vendors. The 2013 Plant Sale had 1500 attendees, all potential buyers. The cost is \$60 for a 10x10 space, with a 20% discount if paid by March 14th. Master Gardeners also get a 10% discount. **Sharon Hopkins** reported sign-up sheets are available, and thanked **Valerie Call** for taking them to the Tuesday classes. Help is needed transporting plants to and from the greenhouse and fairgrounds. There will not be a potluck on Friday, just water, coffee and tea. Flyers and bookmarks will be available for distribution soon. There is a meeting of Plant Sale Committee Heads after the Executive Board meeting on Wednesday, March 12th. **Robyn Thompson** needs a Co-Chair for the Holding Area. Help in the greenhouses is always needed before the sale.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

SHOW-AND-TELL – **Bob Brindley** discovered the first decent oranges since he left California 50 years ago. Sherm's Thunderbird has 10 lbs bags of organic oranges for \$10. He shared a story about how to control box elder bugs inside your house. Vacuuming is a popular approach, and a nylon sock can be inserted in the wand. However, do not spray Raid down the wand – one woman's vacuum caught on fire!

Treasurer's Report

Vicki McAlister

INCOME 1/29/14 – 2/27/14

Donations	\$0.50
Dues-membership	\$360.00
Dues-hardcopy newsletter	\$14.50
Soil Testing/Interest	\$106.09
	\$481.09

EXPENSES 1/29/14 – 2/27/14

Mgmt&Gen Bank Charge	\$21.60
PSP Expense – Postage/Xeriscape/Soil	\$528.10
Plant Sale – Next Year Seed/Supplies	-\$93.50
	\$456.20

Breakdown of our accounts

Checking	\$3,021.84
Money Market – Reserves	\$7,659.10
Money Market	\$18,089.67

Ending Balance 1/29/14 **\$28,770.61**

Plant Clinic

Chris Rusch

The Plant Clinic has been busy this month with the training of our new students from the 2014 class. The requirement for students is to complete 36 volunteer hours in the plant clinic. The calendar will be available at the Tuesday classes for students to sign up with their mentor for their first two sessions and their 36 hour requirement. The 2014 training team this year is Leo Grass, Kay Rogers, Karolyn Riecks, Judy Mercer and Chris Rusch.

Veterans can begin signing up to volunteer at the clinic now!

The statistics so far for January and February showed a total of 70 visitors to the plant clinic. Questions were diverse, ranging from orchard maintenance to bed bugs. We are hoping to increase our visitor participation for 2014. The plant clinic is a great way to promote our Master Gardener Program and encourage sustainable gardening in Douglas County.

If you are in town stop by the clinic and say hi to our new students.

Betty Ison's Garden, August 2013 Open House

Photos by Tasha King and Maureen Benice



Western Oregon Gardening Hints for March 2014 from OSU Extension

Planning

- Plan your vegetable garden carefully for spring, summer, and fall vegetables that can be eaten fresh or preserved. If you lack in-ground gardening space, plan an outdoor container garden.
- Use a soil thermometer to help you know when to plant vegetables. Some cool season crops (onions, kale, lettuce, spinach) can be planted when the soil is consistently at or above 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Lawn mowing: Set blade at 0.75 to 1 inch for bentgrass lawns; 1.5 to 2.5 inches for bluegrasses, fine fescues and ryegrasses.
- Compost grass clippings and yard waste, except for clippings from lawns where weed-and-feed products or herbicides (weedkillers) have been used.
- Spread compost over garden and landscape areas.
- Prune gooseberries and currants; fertilize with manure or a complete fertilizer.
- Fertilize evergreen shrubs and trees, only if needed. If established and healthy, their nutrient needs should be minimal.
- If needed, fertilize rhododendrons, camellias, azaleas with acid-type fertilizer. If established and healthy, their nutrient needs should be minimal.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after blossoms fade.
- Fertilize caneberries using band fertilizer, broadcast fertilizer or a complete fertilizer or manure.

Planting/Propagation

- Divide hosta, daylilies and mums.
- Use stored scion wood to graft fruit and ornamental trees.
- Plant insectary plants (e.g. Alyssum, Phacelia, coriander, candytuft, sunflower, yarrow, and dill) to attract beneficial insects to the garden. For more information, see Encouraging Beneficial Insects in Your Garden (PNW 550): <http://bit.ly/PNW-550>
- If soil is dry enough, prepare vegetable garden and plant early cool-season crops (carrots, beets, broccoli, leeks, parsley, chives, rhubarb, peas and radishes). Plant onions outdoors as soon as the soil is dry enough to work.
- Berry crops (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, currants, gooseberries and other berry-producing crop plants). See OSU Extension publications for berry varieties: <http://bit.ly/OSUberries>

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Spray trees and shrubs for webworms and leafrollers, if present.
- Protect new plant growth from slugs. Least toxic management options include barriers and traps. Baits are also available for slug control; use with caution around pets. Read and follow all label directions prior to using baits or any other chemical control.
- Learn to identify the predatory insects that can help to keep aphids and other pests under control.
- Spray to control leaf and twig fungus diseases in dogwood, sycamore, hawthorn and willow trees.
- Prune ornamentals for air circulation and to help prevent fungus diseases.
- Monitor for European crane fly and treat lawns if damage has been verified.
- Start rose blackspot control tactics at budbreak. Control rose diseases such as black spot. Remove infected leaves. Spray as necessary with registered fungicide.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Trim or shear heather when bloom period is finished.
- Start tuberous begonias indoors.
- Take geraniums, begonias and fuchsias from storage. Water and fertilize. Cut back if necessary. Move outdoors next month.

Douglas County Master Gardeners

Newsletter: Deadline for April 2014 newsletter is March 28th. Mail submissions to jen@skylondaranch.com.

Web Site: www.extension.oregonstate.edu/douglas/douglas-county-oregon-master-gardeners

Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/pages/Douglas-County-Master-Gardeners/251882398200487

Horticulture Agent: www.extension.oregonstate.edu/douglas/horticulture,
steve.renquist@oregonstate.edu

OSU Douglas County Extension Service: www.extension.oregonstate.edu/douglas

OSU Gardening Information – www.extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening

OSU Master Gardeners Program – www.extension.oregonstate.edu/mg,
www.facebook.com/OSUMG

Oregon Master Gardeners Association – www.oregonmastergardeners.org



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Douglas County Master Gardeners
PO BOX 1165
Roseburg OR 97470
Ph: 541-672-4461