



DOUGLAS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS NEWSLETTER

Volume 30, Issue 4

April 2015

April 2015 Calendar

Wed., Apr. 1, 10:00-Noon
Photography Team, Annex Kitchen

Thurs., Apr. 2, 9:00-Noon
Butterfly Garden work crew

Thurs., Apr. 2, 10:00-2:00
Apple Tree Grafting Class@Annex

Mon., Apr. 6, 10:00-Noon
Insect Committee

Tues., Apr. 7, 9:00-Noon
Greenhouse Crew & Sale
Discovery Garden Work Day

Wed., Apr. 8, 10:00-Noon
Executive Board Meeting

Tues., Apr. 14, 9:00-Noon
Greenhouse Crew & Sale
Discovery Garden Work Day

Wed., Apr. 15, 10:00-Noon
Diagnostics Class

Mon., Apr. 20, 10:00-Noon
Insect Committee

Tues., Apr. 21, 9:00-Noon
Greenhouse Crew & Sale
Discovery Garden Work Day

Thurs., Apr. 23, 9:00-10:00
Continuing Education

Thurs., Apr. 23, 10:00-11:30
Chapter Meeting at Extension

Thurs., Apr. 23, 11:30 - ?
Plant Sale Meeting

Thurs., Apr. 23, 1:00-4:00
Plant Pre-Sale for MG's @ HLC

Sun., Apr. 26, 1:00-4:00
Plant Pre-Sale for MG's @ HLC

Tues., Apr. 28, 9:00-Noon
Greenhouse Crew & Sale
Discovery Garden Work Day

Fri., May 1, 8:00-5:00?
Set-Up for Plant Expo

Sat., May 2, 8:00-5:00?
Plant & Garden Expo



The President's Post

Chris Rusch

The DCMG's have been really busy this month!

Meet the new Class of 2015! Thirty-eight new students graduated from our Sustainable Gardening Winter Training Class March 18th. They are now learning about all the programs and projects DGMG's are involved in. The new volunteers were given a questionnaire to declare their interests. All Garden Heads and Committee Chairs will be receiving a list of new volunteers showing interest in their programs. Thanks so much to Maureen Benice, Vicki McAlister, and Valerie Call for helping make another successful Winter Training.

Our Trash to Treasure fundraiser was a great success. So many volunteers helped with the set-up, operations and take down. Also all the wonderful contributions from our membership made for a fantastic turn-out! Thanks so much to Cindy Rich and Toni Rudolph and all the hard-working volunteers that helped to make this the most successful Trash to Treasure ever!

Preparations are being made for the May 2nd Plant Sale. Barbara Robinson is heading up this event with the help of many volunteers. We will once again be at the Fairgrounds. Please mark your calendars and share with friends. The Plant Sale group is so ORGANIZED and it should be a great sale with a huge variety of plants. Bob Brindley has assured us many vendors will be returning, and more spaces will be available.

The Discovery Garden, Greenhouses and the Victory Garden are all popular places to work on Tuesday mornings from 9-12. These are terrific opportunities for our new volunteers to attain their pay-back hours commitment.

The Plant Clinic is also in need of volunteers - both veterans and trainees are needed. It helps us spread the word about all the things we are doing, and promotes community awareness.

Our social networking is paying off! If you are a Facebook person, please come to our DCMG page and "like us" at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Douglas-County-Master-Gardeners/251882398200487>
Happy Spring!



Vice-President's Report

Fred Alley

Our March 26th Continuing Education Program was an excellent example of the diverse and talented individuals in our Douglas County Master Gardener organization. Master Gardener, Bruce Gravens, gave an excellent presentation on "How to Build a Germination Box". Master Gardener, Lindley Hession Ballen, gave a presentation on the "Woolley Center" and how they incorporate gardening into their educational program. Both Bruce and Lindley clearly demonstrated their knowledge in their area of expertise. As they were making their presentations, I thought of our many other members, and all of the knowledge and expertise that is possessed in our organization. Normally I schedule one presenter for each program. However, Bruce and Lindley demonstrated the ability to keep the presentation on schedule and within the one hour time period. My point is, if you too would like to share with our group your special area of expertise, please give me a call or send me an e-mail. Many times we just don't get an opportunity to share with others our knowledge and special talents in a setting like the Continuing Education Program.

Our April 23rd Continuing Education Program will be by another Master Gardener, Bob Brindley. Many of you might think of tomatoes when thinking of Bob, since he organizes the Tomato Taste-off at our September meeting held at the Discovery Garden Pavilion. If you have visited Bob's house in Oakland, as I have, you will find that he has an obsession with saving water. He has developed a number of unique and fascinating ways to irrigate his garden using very little water. His presentation will be "Beyond Drip Irrigation: Using New and Ancient Methods in the Home Garden to Save Water". In his email to me regarding his upcoming presentation, he reminded me of the drought conditions in Douglas County, and that farming and ranching costs continue to rise. His presentation will include solutions, both ancient and new, that may further enhance our

efforts to use water, a limited natural resource, most efficiently . He has spent years perfecting his special watering techniques, and I think we will find Bob's presentation quite interesting.

As I was at the March 17th final exam day at the Discovery Garden, I took a few photographs of the new class members and the new blooming flowers. Photography is one of my long time hobbies. I love to take a variety of photographs and particularly enjoy close-up photography. I have included several photos for your enjoyment. If you have a feature in your garden that you would like to have photographed, please feel free to contact me. The Discovery Garden provides many, many photographic opportunities.



Photos: Fred Alley

Trash to Treasure Toni Rudolph & Cindy Rich

We want to thank everyone that helped make this our most successful Trash to Treasure Sale ever. After expenses, we made **\$3887.11**.

Many members helped us reach this amount by donating clean, quality items, working on Thursday, Friday, and/or Saturday, advertising, putting up fliers, hauling tables from the DG to the auditorium, setting up the room, pricing

and setting everything out for our customers, assisting with selling the items and of course cleanup. Together we made this a profitable event for Master Gardeners.

Here's the Dirt!



by Denise Fennell

This month I would like to share some books that are very near and dear to us, in that, they are about local trees and shrubs. When I first moved up here, I had no idea what was local. I was a southern California gal from a big city, and clueless as to what was growing in my own yard, and what those wonderful trees and shrubs were I saw on my walk.

The hardest part was trying to figure out what they were. Even after being up here, I still have questions about this and that, and, while I'm very Google-efficient, it's time-consuming. Seriously - I can spend 2 hours looking up one tree!

So do like I did and get these next two books. They are wonderful for keeping you on track while you identify trees. You may think these books are for beginners and not worth picking up. But trust me when I say that even the most avid gardener, nature lover, tree expert will find something new and educational in these books.

Trees to Know in Oregon by Edward C. Jensen - Right off the bat this book stands out! It is one of the few tree books that features great full color images. This is a huge help in looking up trees. But this book goes one step further in that it gives you the history of the tree, if there is a commercial use, and where it is found naturally in our beautiful state. (This book is available at our Extension Office for \$18).

Shrubs to Know in the Pacific Northwest by Edward C. Jensen - While this book boasts over 500 color images, in also includes notes, habitats, where to find them and distinguishing characteristics. (This book is available at our Extension Office for \$12).

Now for the really great thing. These books are thin paperbacks. Meaning they will easily fit inside a backpack or purse, making them very easy to take with you when you go exploring! Or even keep them in your car. I'm getting a set for my mom in California, who is a gardening nut and is always wanting to know about what grows up here.

They each receive a coveted 5 Wheel Barrows!





(Queen Bees: Barb & Sharon)

Worker Bees Needed - No Experience Necessary!! Plant & Garden Expo May 2nd, Setup May 1st

Barbara Robinson & Sharon Hopkins

Wow! Only a month away and we will be hauling inventory across town in preparation for our main fundraiser of the year. We need you whether it be for an hour, half day, full day, or any time you can spare!

Greenhouse crews are working multiple days each week readying the “merchandise” to produce the quality product our loyal customers have come to expect. Faithful Master Gardeners work year round in the greenhouses. Especially important at this point is making sure all the plants are weed-free, manicured, soil-freshened, and looking their best to present at our sale. Seedlings are being nurtured, repotted, and fussed over. Pricing and labeling of each plant/pack is the final touch. Please join us on Tuesdays or other workdays as scheduled by Westside and Eastside greenhouses, from 9 to noon. Watch your email for weekly updates on days crews will be working. We are an equal opportunity employer and on the job training is provided!

We will be offering two pre-Plant Sale opportunities for Master Gardeners ONLY at the greenhouses. These will be held on Thursday, April 23 and Sunday, April 26. Both sales will run from 1-4pm. To qualify for the pre-sale, dues need to be current and your MG name tag proudly displayed. Remember, MG purchases are not allowed the day of the sale until after 3 pm, so be sure and take advantage of the special pre-sales offered to you.

A relatively good sign-up for committees has been achieved except for a couple areas. BADLY needed are:

- Kitchen workers on Saturday (either half day or full day). Contact Valerie Call at vcall@gardener.com and make her day by signing up for this most important committee!
- Security & Traffic: Help motor vehicle traffic move smoothly outdoors and provide security for vendors and the public within the building. Help needed on Saturday. Please email Dave Hopkins at svhopkins1@gmail.com to sign up.
- Transportation: Transporting inventory from greenhouses to the Fairgrounds on Friday morning. Transporting unsold plants back to greenhouses on Saturday after the sale. No open rigs - have to be enclosed. BADLY needed are large enclosed trailers, i.e. horse, stock, etc. Contact Richard Johnstone at john18024@hotmail.com if you can help!

Plant Sale clipboards have been removed from the Plant Clinic and lists turned over to appropriate chairs of each committee. If you have not had a chance to sign up, please contact one of the committee heads above or just show up the day of the sale or set up and we will find just the right task for you!

Many, many thanks go out to all of you who have already signed up to work the sale. The chairperson for the area you chose will be contacting you in the near future to touch bases, give any direction necessary, and answer any questions you may have.



Have you thought about participating in our garden-themed **Hat Contest** this year? We will be awarding two prizes with the winners selected by those MG's attending the sale. The public loves our hats and we love seeing them as well!



Now onto some important details for the sale itself:

- Time: Workers need to be at the Fairgrounds Exhibit Building at 8:00 a.m. on both Friday and Saturday, unless otherwise directed by your committee chairperson. It is especially important to be on time Saturday as vendor pre-sales in our area start at 8:30 a.m. You will also be gathering with your group for direction from your committee chair.
- Potluck: Do not forget to bring your food as assigned by Valerie Call, our Food Management Chair. We will be having lunch only on Friday, but breakfast and lunch on Saturday. Any Master Gardener who brings a dish to share and is wearing their name tag is welcome to join us.
- Floor etiquette: Meals are to be eaten in the designated dining area, not out on the floor.
- Parking: Do not park in front of the building except to drop off food items, supplies, etc. Be brief. Vendors will be unloading there.
- Purses: Ladies, there is no secure location to leave your purse. We suggest you leave them in the trunk of your vehicle and perhaps wear a fanny pack. If you purchased one of our aprons, their handy dandy pockets are perfect for secure storage of your keys, cellphone, wallet, etc.
- Wear your name badges. If you forget, go home and get it. It's a must.
- Dues must be paid to work. If you are a 2015 graduate, yours have been paid.
- Wear your MG apron/t-shirt/cap if you have purchased one.
- Master Gardener Purchases: No purchases or "hoarding" until 3:00 p.m. unless announced otherwise.
- UCAN food collection: We are once again partnering with UCAN to collect food items. There will be a collection bin in front of the exhibit building. Non-perishable canned goods, dried foods (in sealed packages), peanut butter, pasta, etc. are all good choices. Spread the word to your friends and neighbors who are coming. There will not be a discounted admission for food donations.

This is a fun, rewarding event. Be prepared to have a great time while working with a great group of volunteers!

Plant Sale Potlucks - Valerie Call

We will be organizing our fabulous Plant Sale Potlucks a bit differently this year. In the past, we have had lopsided numbers of desserts and sweets. I'd like to take us in a healthier direction.

Instead of a clipboard for signups for your potluck contributions, I'm asking MG's to email or call me to let me know what they will bring. Go to this link to see what's needed: http://douglascountymg.org/docs/other/PS_Potluck.pdf Friday will be a salad bar lunch, Saturday breakfast and a lunch buffet - 3 meals total. Each meal lists the items and quantities needed. You choose what works best for you.

In fairness to all contributors, please consider bringing more than one item. For example, one box of crackers contributed and three meals enjoyed doesn't seem right. On the other hand, three large homemade potluck dishes is too much to ask of anyone (although you won't be turned away). So in your generous Master Gardener fashion, let your conscience be your guide.

A very limited number of cash only contributions will be accepted to cover the costs of breakfast sausage and sliced sandwich meats. Call me for details.

Any questions, comments or if you need a recipe, feel free to e-mail or call me directly. (Please don't "reply" to Shirley Purcell). Thank you so much. I'm sure this year's Plant Sale will be fabulous!

Valerie Call: vcall@gardener.com, 541-673-0505

Salad Bar Friday		Saturday Breakfast		Saturday Sandwich Buffet	
				Sliced turkey and ham will be provided	
Type of salad		Bananas 5 lbs	1	Swiss cheese 2lb	1
Green plus dressing	4	Strawberries 5 lbs	1	Cheddar cheese 2lb	1
Potato	2	Pineapple fresh	3	Provolone cheese 2lb	1
Pasta	1	Peaches canned large size	3	Jack cheese 2lb	1
Asian noodle	1	Other fruit 5lbs	1		
Grain or rice	1			Produce - please bring ready to eat,	
Kale	1	Shelled hard boiled eggs dz	3	washed, peeled, sliced etc.	
Slaw	2	Quiche	3	Carrot sticks 2lb	1
Carrot	2	Crustless quiche	2	Celery sticks 2lb	1
Bean	1	Frittata	2	Radishes bunch	4
Fruit	3	Hash brown casserole	2	Cucumbers sliced	4
		Homemade biscuits dz	4	Romaine lettuce head	4
Dinner rolls pkg of 8	4	English muffins pkg	4	Iceburg lettuce head	4
Saltines box	1	Bagels pkg	4	Red onion thinly sliced	6
Whole grain crackers box	2	Croissants pkg	4	Alfalfa/other sprouts	6
Bread sticks pkg	3	Yogurt plain or vanilla large size	2		
Butter 1 lb	2	Grainola pkg or box	1	Olives can/jar black	4
		Cream cheese 2lbs	1	Olives can/jar green	2
Cookies dz	8	Butter 3 lb	1	Pickles dill spears	2
		Jam homemade or store bought jars	4	Pickles sweet spears	2
		V-8 juice 6-pac cans	2	Sour dough bread loaf	3
		Orange juice large cartons	2	Whole wheat bread loaf	3
		Grapefruit juice	1	Rye bread loaf	2
				White bread loaf	2
				Kaiser/sandwich rolls pkg	4
				Potato chips lg bag	4
				Dorito's large bag	2
				Corn chips lg bag	1
				other chips lg bag	1
				Cookies dz	8
				Cake 9 x 13 size	6

**Last updated:
3/27/2015**

Have You Seen This Hummingbird?

Fred Alley

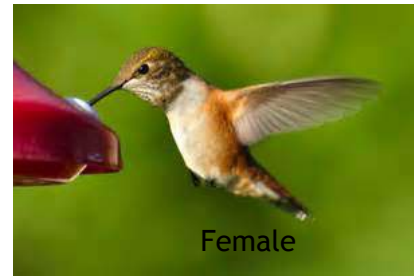
During Cindy Bright-Pierrie's Continuing Education presentation on January 29th, she included the identification of several hummingbirds that frequent Douglas County, including the Rufous hummingbird. This hummingbird usually arrives in April on their annual northern migration from Mexico. If you have watched any videos of the Rufous hummingbird, you may have discovered it to be the bully at your backyard sugar-water feeder. The Rufous is a fearless little bird that is extremely territorial. The rust-colored feathers of the Rufous distinguish it from most other hummingbirds. The male sports most of the signature color, while the female has a few orange-red feathers on the throat.



If you are avid hummingbird lovers like Valerie Call and me, you have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Rufous hummingbird. To our surprise, and maybe to yours too, we both have experienced the early arrival of this intriguing little bird. During Cindy's presentation, I mentioned I have three large potted red salvia placed across my backyard to maximize my opportunity to enjoy the Rufous hummingbird. Valerie asked me several days ago where I had purchased the red salvia as she had not been able to find any of the plants locally. The plant is a Hummingbird Salvia Coccinea Lady in Red. It grows in a small shrub form, and you should trim it back to 10-12 inches after bloom. It blooms all summer long, and mine stored over the winter in the existing 10 gallon pots. They can be easily propagated, divided and transplanted to larger pots as they grow. There are many red and purple salvia that attract hummingbirds, so just pick the one you can find locally.

There is a large amount of information available on the Internet regarding hummingbirds, far more than I can include in this short article. One of my favorite magazines is "Birds & Blooms". In its June-July 2011 issue, it included "10 award-winning hummingbird blooms". Later they published a special booklet, [Attract Hummingbirds](#). These two are my primary sources for listing top favorite hummingbird plants. A fantastic 56 minute nature video, "Hummingbirds -Documentary on the Secrets of Hummingbirds", by Obama Putin, is recommended.

While we don't have room for a photo of every plant that attracts hummingbirds, I have listed a number of the favorite plants. Even if you don't have a lot of space, a container filled with nectar-rich or brightly colored plants near your nectar



feeders provides a great opportunity to experience the unique world of the hummingbird. For a hanging plant, choose a Lonicera Major Wheeler honeysuckle with trumpet-shaped, reddish-orange flowers that bloom all summer long. In all plant selections, choose red, purple, pink or white colors.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Red Flowers: | Red Salvia, Bee Balm, Cardinal Flower |
| Tube-shaped blooms: | Butterfly Bush, Trumpet Vine |
| Annuals Mix: | Snapdragon, Salvia (red or purple) |
| Cascading Blooms: | Fuchsia, Columbine |
| Plants in clusters: | Phlox, Butterfly weed, verbena |
| Annuals: | Geranium, Hollyhock, Impatiens, Lantana, Nasturtium, Petunia, Zinnia, Hostas |
| Perennials: | Asiatic Lily, Bleeding heart, Canna, Coral bells, Dahlia, Daylily, Delphinium, |
| Shrubs, Trees/Vines: | Honeysuckle, Lilac, Morning Glory, Rhododendron, Scarlet Runner Bean, Weigela |



Chris Rusch

The Plant Clinic has been busy this month training volunteers from our 2015 Winter Training Class. It has been lots of fun. Everyone is so enthusiastic! The 2015 training team is Leo Grass, Larry Sutton, Anne Bacon, Bonnie Courter, and Chris Rusch.

Beginning in April we will need veterans to help in the Plant Clinic both in training our new volunteers and keeping up with the workload of assisting our visitors in the Plant Clinic. We particularly need veterans for Friday, April 3. Please try to volunteer your expertise at least once a month to help out in this important outreach program.

Questions for March were diverse, including problems with orchard maintenance, weed identification and lawn moss. In addition, we have been helping clients with garden soil preparation.

The statistics so far for 2015 are 158 visitors to the Plant Clinic.

We are hoping to increase our visitor participation for 2015. The Plant Clinic is a great way to promote our Master Gardener Program and encourage sustainable gardening in Douglas County.

OMGA Report Rosemary Brinkley

Anne Bacon and I traveled to St. Helen's for the quarterly Board of Directors meeting. The meeting was primarily about the up-coming Mini-College. Here are some facts. After all, it is not too early to think about planning to attend this year's **Mini-College**.

Date: August 6, 7, 8 at Linfield College in McMinnville.

Registration: \$35.00 a day, includes lunch

Itinerary:

Thursday:

- Session I Leadership training – the topic will be announced at a later date
- Evening pot-luck provided by Yamhill at the Fairgrounds with music and possibly a wine bar.

Friday:

- 8:30 to 10:00 General Session. Will include State Leader Report, and Search for Excellence Presentations
- Lunch with Round Table Discussions
- Sessions II and III with tours beginning with Session III
- 6:00? Awards Banquet: Recognition of all Chapter Master Gardeners of the Year, State Master Gardener of the Year, State Master Gardener Behind the Scenes, all Karl Carlson Grant recipients, and all Extension Educator Grant recipients.

Saturday:

- General Session: Keynote Speaker, James Cassidy
- Additional classes throughout the day.
- Silent Auction ends/ pick up of items you won.

Housing:

Dorms: \$45.00 for single per night; \$27.50 per night for double

They have two 3 and 4-person apartments for \$45.00 an individual per night. The apartments have kitchen facilities and sitting room. Sounds like a party to me!! There are motels off campus. Be sure to get yours early as the

Special Olympics is in town that week as well as Master Gardeners.

Classes:

Over 50 classes and workshops will be given. There will be at least 6 advanced classes this year. The themes for classes will be ornamentals, edibles, advanced classes, OSU training (“Seeds to Supper” as an example) and others. Most classes will count toward recertification hours (for those chapters that require recertification)

What the Mini-College Committee needs from us:

Publicity, Silent Auction items, and volunteers to help when you get there.

Additional Topics discussed:

- Retention: how to keep members active and willing to take on leadership in both local and state organizations
- Recertification: lots of discussion will continue over the next few years. There is nothing written in stone at this time. I will be looking for direction from the chapter on this topic.
- Benton County will be presenting at the International Master Gardener Convention on their Plant Problem Scenarios. They use this to train MG’s that work in the Plant Clinic.
- Gardener Pen Newsletter articles are due March 23. The theme this month is pollinators. Denise Fennell will have a book review in it this time. Send articles to gardenerspennewsletter@gmail.com

Treasurer’s Report

Vicki McAlister

INCOME 2/26/15 - 3/26/15

Interest	\$0.81
Dues - Membership	\$20.00
Soil Testing	\$165.00
Plant Sale - Pre-sale	\$194.00
Black Apparel	\$123.00
Snapper T-Shirts	\$748.00
Trash to Treasure	<u>\$3,918.10</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$5,168.91

EXPENSES 2/26/15 - 3/26/15

Hospitality	\$53.46
DG - Various	\$161.99
HLC - Various	\$332.13
Plant Sale - Various	<u>\$999.87</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,547.45

Breakdown of Our Accounts

Checking	\$6,453.86
Money Market - Reserves	\$8,659.10
Money Market	<u>\$25,102.92</u>
Ending Balance 3/26/15	\$40,215.88

Chemical Disposal Information:

Go to this Lane County website to get information on the recycling center in Eugene for household herbicides and pesticides. They also have information regarding other household cleaning chemicals and paint disposal.

www.co.lane.or.us/Departments/PW/WMD/Hazwaste/pages/hhwcc.aspx



Master Gardener International Conference

September 22-25, 2015

Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Early registration is \$330.00 by April 30

Standard Registration \$ 385 May1- June 30

Late Registration \$440 July 1, Aug. 30

<http://mastergardenerunl.edu/imgc2015> for additional information

Biochar 101 - The Basics

Kish Doyle



On Saturday, March 14, the BioChar Study Group of the Umpqua presented a free demonstration in Sutherlin. They set up a variety of “burn stations” that showed ways to convert waste wood to biochar, which could then be used in home gardens and farm soils. Several of our Master Gardeners attended the presentation and came away with a new appreciation for the creation and use of biochar. Considering the going price is \$40 to \$80 a cubic foot, it’s also an easy way to save some money.

There were about eight different types of burn stations, which used everything from a Weber barbecue to 20 and 55 gallon barrels. There were also some round and square welded metal containers that looked like portable fire pits. A couple of the large barrels had homemade chimneys created from the vent tubing used on indoor wood burning stoves. The chimneys helped to move air so the wood burned hotter and more evenly. They also used empty one- gallon paint containers for smaller types of fuel. The containers were filled then set on the main fire, or they said you could put it inside your wood burning stove.

The basic idea is to create a container then put holes toward or in the bottom so air can feed the fire. The container is then filled with anything from 1” to 2” dry wood, grapevines, nut shells or bundles of scotch broom. The important thing to remember is to have the

items about the same size so they burn evenly and finish about the same time. It took about 20 to 40 minutes for most of the demo burns to finish. Then they were sprayed with water and stirred with a shovel or small stirring implement for a few minutes. Once they cooled down, they were good to use.



Photos: Kish Doyle

As part of the demo, there was an area set up with photographs and actual examples of different types of finished biochar. Most of the char was about the size of a grape although there were some small “charcoal sticks.” The photographs showed why the char is so effective because the microscopic images looked like a bee’s honey comb. One of the presenters explained how to soak the char in water, liquid Miracle Gro or worm tea and allow the little spaces to fill with the liquid. The wet char is then mixed with your soil and added to the planting area. There were some photos showing how some Amazon Indian tribes dug a large area about three feet deep and burned the wood, then filled in the hole with soil. When the area cooled, they planted their crops. The photos showed how corn was twice as high in the char area compared to the non-char area.

The demonstration was a great way to see the process in action. I am now on the hunt for a “donor Weber” to get my biochar started. For more information, call Jim Long in the BioChar Study Group: 541-673-3713 or email at: jblong@dcwisp.net.



Here's the Scoop On Chemical & Organic Fertilizers

Kim Pokorny - OSU Extension



Organic fertilizers such as manures, compost or bone meal are derived directly from plant or animal sources, according to Ross Penhallegon, horticulturist with the Oregon State University Extension Service. Inorganic fertilizers such as ammonium sulfate or ammonium phosphate are often

called commercial or synthetic fertilizers because they go through a manufacturing process, although many of them come from naturally occurring mineral deposits.

Inorganic fertilizers usually contain only a few nutrients – generally nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur and sometimes micronutrients, either singly or in combination. These nutrients are in a form readily available to plants. However, since they are lost from the soil quickly, you may have to fertilize plants several times during the growing season unless you use a specially formulated, slow-release type.

Some nutrients, such as nitrate, are quickly available for uptake by plant roots, Penhallegon said. If you need only a certain element such as nitrogen and want it to be quickly available to your plants, an inorganic fertilizer such as ammonium nitrate might be in order.

Organic fertilizers usually contain plant nutrients in low concentrations. Many of these nutrients have to be converted into inorganic forms by soil bacteria and fungi before plants can use them, so they typically are more slowly

released, especially during cold weather when soil microbes are not as active.

But organic fertilizers have advantages. They don't make a crust on the soil as inorganic fertilizers sometimes do. They improve water movement into the soil and, in time, add structure to the soil. Organics feed beneficial microbes, making the soil easier to work. But they may cost more than chemical, or inorganic fertilizers, because they are less concentrated, supplying fewer nutrients pound for pound.

Since many chemical/inorganic fertilizers are concentrated and very soluble, it's easier to apply too much and damage your plants. Fresh, non-composted manure can damage your plants as well, because some manure contains harmful amounts of salts. They can also be a source of weed seeds.

Penhallegon has collected information about the nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) content of many of the organic substances commonly used as fertilizer in Oregon. His report, "[Values of Organic Fertilizers.](#)" also contains information about how quickly an organic fertilizer releases available nutrients and a reference list on organic gardening.

"One of the most difficult things to determine for an organic gardener is how much organic fertilizer to use, say on 1,000 square feet of garden," said Penhallegon. "For a fertilizer with an N-P-K ratio of 12-11-2, this means 12 percent is nitrogen, 11 percent is phosphorus and 2 percent is potassium. In simple terms, this means each 100-pound bag of the fertilizer would contain 12 pounds of nitrogen, 11 pounds phosphorus and two pounds nitrogen."

"For example, using 12-11-2 fertilizer, if we knew we wanted to apply one pound of nitrogen, we would use 1/12th of 100 pounds," he said. "This equals about 8 pounds of this fertilizer applied to get one pound of nitrogen out there in the soil."

Blood meal (12.5-1.5-0.6) releases nutrients over a period of two to six weeks.

Burned eggshells (0-.5-.3), fish emulsion (5-1-1) and urea (urine) (46-0-0) are the fastest-acting organic fertilizers, lasting only a couple of weeks.

To boost the nitrogen content of your soils, apply nitrogen-rich urea (42-46 percent N), feathers (15 percent N), blood meal (12.5 percent N), dried blood (12 percent N).

Organic amendments highest in phosphorus include rock phosphate (20-33 percent P), bone meal (15-27 percent P) and colloidal phosphate (17-25 percent P). High in potassium are kelp (4-13 percent K), wood ash (3-7 percent K), granite meal (3-6 percent K) and greensand (5 percent K).

To make soil less acidic, gardeners want materials rich in calcium, including clamshells, oyster shells, wood ashes, dolomite and gypsum (all are at least 30 percent calcium carbonate or straight calcium).

Many garden centers and feed stores carry organic fertilizers and amendments for gardens.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee (still to be named) for Executive Board members will be meeting next month. We are looking for additional GREAT volunteers to step forward to fill positions on the Executive Board. All positions are held for a minimum of one year, though many participants decide to serve longer.

If you are interested in serving as Vice-President, Treasurer or OMGA Rep, **or** if you would like to be part of the Nominating Committee, please contact Chris Rusch at crusch@hughes.net

According to our by-laws, we will be presenting the nominations at the May chapter meeting. The list of nominations will be published in the June Newsletter. Voting will occur at the July chapter meeting with installation at the August

meeting, elected officers officially beginning their terms.

Please give some consideration to participating on the Board. It can be very rewarding as well as challenging. We look forward to hearing from you.

Japanese Garden Clean-Up Photos: Fred Alley



Innovate!

by Bob Brindley

“Innovate!” is the title for this new column. I had lots of choices for names, but I chose “Innovate” because that is the best impressive-sounding, classy, overall comprehensive term for what I want to talk about. Other names I could have chosen were scrounge, recycle, yard sale trolling, experimentation, cheapskate, re-purposing, re-imaging, and scientific research. But let’s not quibble and go with the “innovate” thing.

This column will hopefully include information about gardening that you can use with little cost, time, or effort and/or will reduce your effort in the routine tasks you don’t like. Or maybe it will inspire you to come up with innovations of your own. If so, I’ll be happy. If it doesn’t, no sweat, I’ll just move on to other projects. The column will appear every other month till January 2016, at which time I will decide whether to continue based on how useful you find the information.

Some background on why innovation interests me. For some reason, it always has, and I had always wanted to be a scientist. So beginning in the fifth grade, I had an insect collection and my Gilbert Chemistry Set and I was happy, until I realized that I could buy more stuff and tools to enhance and expand my hobbies. But I only had an allowance of \$1/week that couldn’t buy me anything. So I turned to the dark side, foraging the neighborhood early in the morning on trash day, stealing stuff from our kitchen, selling ants on the black market to companies that coated them with chocolate for human consumption.

In junior high, I continued my wicked ways until I got a job in my junior year. I then turned straight, but spent most of my money on records, humor books/magazines, and women (after I qualified for THAT privilege by getting a car). I still have the records and books.

Meanwhile on the career side, I had settled on biology in the 8th grade, took every single science course offered in high school, and moved on to

college where I majored in biology, which led to my first real innovation—a maze for fruit flies! But that’s another story.

The maze got me into the PhD program in Psychology at the University of Texas. Why psychology? Once again, another story.

Then came my first job in a laboratory which lead me to, again, take up innovation, primarily scrounging or borrowing lab equipment from other labs, and inventing techniques and tools to replace slower and more expensive ones. This trend continued through two universities, the U.S. Army, and five companies. Gradually switching from a laboratory job to sales and marketing, I found ways to innovate here also and still drop into the lab to do experiments which scientists describe as “concept testing”, “seat of the pants science”, or “quick and dirty science”. These are experiments where you explore a wild idea to see it’s feasible, and if it has some merit, you give it to some other scientist to carry out the more boring rigorous testing and evaluation necessary. Sometimes it’s good to be management.

Meanwhile I bought a house, took up gardening, and got married in between 1979 and 1980, mid career, and applied my ways to gardening which leads me to now.

Yes, this is a long boring introduction but it is now over.

Here are a couple of garden/recycling stories on batteries of the future that might inspire you:

http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2015-03/acs-scb031115.php

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/23/packing-peanuts-batteries_n_6923662.html

You might enjoy this item for sale—hurry only a few left:

<http://teespring.com/happiness-and-plants>

More to come in the next column in June.



**OSU DOUGLAS COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS
Chapter Meeting
March 26, 2015**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:10 A.M. by President, Chris Rusch. There were 60 in attendance.

Agenda Approval: Bob Brindley asked to be added after Plant Sale.

Minutes: The minutes were approved as distributed.

Agent's Report: Steve Renquist - This was a really good group of new students. Steve encouraged veterans to reach out and make contact with the new students. This has been a great class and they will be a tremendous resource for inclusion into various activities, programs and committees.

This year has brought forth an incredibly interesting new climate. Of the fifteen warmest years in the last one hundred years, all years since 2001 are in those fifteen except two. Last year was a warm year. This winter has twice as many days over 55 & 60 degrees than the year before. Since December 1, 2014, heat units are four times the year before. We are, however, only 3½ to 4 inches below long term rain averages. Early planting "mania" may start to develop. When talking with people, encourage them to be patient and hold off planting other than peas and early season crops. May be able to bump up planting days by a couple of weeks.

Drought has been declared in 14 Oregon counties. Not critical here as yet. Use good water-wise practices and encourage others to do the same.

Small Farms and Food agent not yet announced.

OFFICER REPORTS

Membership: Denise Fennell - Not in attendance

OMGA: Rosemary Brinkley - Rosemary and Anne Bacon travelled to St. Helens for the OMGA quarterly meeting. Douglas County Master Gardeners account for 8% of the total hours tallied throughout Oregon. The monetary value of volunteer hours is almost four million dollars which is valued at 92 full time employees. Thanks given from OMGA and Gail Langelotto for all the work given by Master Gardeners.

Mini College will be held at Linfield College August 6-8. Online registration will be open on April 1 with a \$50 discount for early-bird registration. Volunteers are needed to help at Mini College in various capacities. Each chapter is asked to contribute to the silent auction with a donation of ten \$25 items or \$250 cash. More advanced classes will be offered this year for those interested in 201 and 301 level classes

Retention problems: reach out to others

A recertification committee is being formed by Gail Langelotto at OSU. Recertification is not a requirement yet, but may be instituted somewhere down the road.

There is money available through a Carl Carlson Grant. The Discovery Garden signage project received one of these grants. Suggestions for grant submissions should be given to Chris Rusch.

Treasurer: Vicki McAlister - Updates on budget are available on the web. Financial reports were distributed.

Vice President: Fred Alley - Not in attendance. President, Chris Rusch, thanked Bruce Gravens and Lynn Hession (Ballen) for their excellent continuing education presentations. Bob Brindley will discuss watering methods at April's meeting.

Past President: Larry Sutton – No report

Secretary: Barbara Robinson - No report

President: Chris Rusch – Chris gave kudos to Toni Rudolph and Cindy Rich for their leadership and hard work, resulting in the most successful Trash to Treasure Sale ever! She also thanked Maureen Benice, Valerie Call, and Vicki McAlister for their weekly attendance and behind the scenes work on winter training. Denise Fennell will coordinate winter training next year.

An interest questionnaire has been sent out to new class members. Committee and garden heads will be receiving names of students who showed an interest in their area.

APRIL CHAPTER MEETING WILL BE HELD ON APRIL 23rd and NOT the last Thursday of the month. This is being done to facilitate organization of the Plant Sale which falls earlier in the month than normal.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Plant Clinic: Chris Rusch – Veteran crew has been really busy training the new class. All new students have completed their two days of required training. Opportunities are available for veterans to sign up now. There were 80 contacts in March.

Community Outreach: Leo Grass – Not in attendance

Black Apparel: Barbara Robinson – Black aprons, caps, and t-shirts were available at the meeting for pickup. Any left will be in the Plant Clinic for pickup.

Plant Sale: Barbara Robinson – Barbara encouraged members to distribute Plant Sale flyers and magnets throughout the community. Read your newsletter for protocol and details for Plant Sale workers. Committee heads will be in touch with their committee signees with further details specific to their responsibilities.

A relatively good sign-up for committees has been achieved except for a couple areas. BADLY needed are:

- Kitchen workers on Saturday (either half day or full day). Contact Valerie Call at vcall@gardener.com and make her day by signing up for this most important committee!
- Security & Traffic: Help motor vehicle traffic move smoothly outdoors and provide security for vendors and public within the building. Help needed on Saturday. Please email Dave Hopkins at svhopkins1@gmail.com to sign up.
- Transportation: Transporting inventory from greenhouses to the Fairgrounds on Friday morning. Transporting unsold plants back to greenhouses on Saturday after the sale. No open rigs - have to be enclosed. BADLY needed are large enclosed trailers i.e. horse, stock, etc. Contact Richard Johnstone at john18024@hotmail.com if you can help!

Plant Sale clipboards have been removed from the Plant Clinic and lists turned over to appropriate chairs of each committee. We never turn down workers so if you haven't signed up, just show up and we will find just the right task for you!

Master Gardener pre-sales are scheduled for Thursday, April 23rd (after our chapter meeting) and on Sunday, April 26th, 1-4pm both days at the greenhouses. These are for Douglas County Master Gardeners ONLY who are WEARING their name badge.

We will once again have our Master Gardener garden-theme hat contest. There will be two prizes offered.

Vendors/Plant Sale: Bob Brindley – All booths sold out last year. To date we have 62½ booths sold. Bob has been able to add several additional spaces plus ½ booths along the stage. We will also be offering outside space on the lawn adjacent to the building. Kudos to Bob for being so efficient!

Winter Training: Maureen Benice - Julie Mann is the new class representative. Twenty-nine students completed the course. Several students were present and were asked to introduce themselves. Great to see new blood in the mix!

Eastside Greenhouse: Bruce Gravens – Eastside crews now working Tuesdays and Thursdays. General cleanup of plants for the sale and propagation for next year going on. Hardware has been purchased to allow the rollup of greenhouse sides to be much easier.

Discovery Garden: Julie Stanbery – Thanks to John Panches for footing the bill on a tractor repair which volunteers facilitated.

Chemical room: Julie made a trip to Eugene's Lane County Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Center, taking all the damaged and old pesticides and herbicides. She encouraged others to take advantage of this free service to keep toxic items out of the landfill. You need to call and make an appointment to take advantage of this service. For more information go to: <http://www.lanecounty.org/departments/pw/wmd/recycle/documents/householdhazardouswaste.pdf>

New class members are doing great work in the garden. A garden heads meeting was held to kick off the season. Please do not prune anything in the garden unless you talk to the garden head. Several of the gardens are leaning toward water-wise gardening in the spirit of using our resources wisely.

Janet Parkerson is head of the irrigation team. Only trained volunteers are allowed to start and stop the system. Talk to Julie or Janet for irrigation issues or requests. The system was flushed out and used to irrigate the greenhouse outside area successfully. With the recent rains muddying up the river, it will need to be flushed out again before use. Umpqua Basin Water is back on. Use it judiciously.

We have two new garden heads: Julie Mann/ Orchard and Jeanie Owen/Easy Access Garden. Betty Ison will mentor Jeanie.

Looking for straw bales.... Contact Julie.

Discovery Garden Signage: Karen Glatz - Signs have been installed in the Hummingbird Garden, Compost, and Victory Garden. Karen needs someone to volunteer to dig post holes in the entry garden next Tuesday, March 31.

Victory Garden: Ruth Stafford - Extending garden north 40 feet for more sun exposure. Laying cardboard with straw on top of this new addition. Looking for extra hands to help each Tuesday.

Publicity/Newsletter: Bonnie Courter - Plant Sale ads will appear in the Douglas County News four Wednesdays in April. A second colored ad will be in this Sunday's News-Review. Newsletter articles due this Saturday.

Trash to Treasure: Toni Rudolph and Cindy Rich – This year's sale cleared \$3,887.11! Success of the sale was attributed to good quality donations and great help. (Not to mention a great leadership team!) Thanks to everyone. Cindy Rich and Debbie Haynes will co-chair next year.

Spring T-Shirt Order: Diana Circle – Shirts will be available at our April 23rd meeting. Deadline for ordering is March 30th. Order forms may be found in the Plant Clinic.

Hallmark: Linda Thames - Linda sent get well cards to John Jasper, Jim Swegles, and Barbara Leeb. A thank you was sent to Umpqua Stone for their cutting board donation to Trash to Treasure. Linda also thanked Master Food Preservers for donating a pickup load of merchandise to the sale.

New Business: Approval of the Douglas County Master Gardener Policies and Procedures Manual: Toni Rudolph made a motion to accept the DCMG Policies and Procedures Manual as

revised. Betty Ison seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Show and Tell

Doug Gissell brought Candy Tuft plants to share.

Meeting adjourned at 11:16 A.M. by President, Chris Rusch.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Robinson
DCMG Secretary



Celebrating graduation with CAKE!



Botany, anyone?

Marjorie Neal - growing vegetables the smart way.



Maureen, Our Fearless Leader.



Douglas County Master Gardeners

Newsletter: The deadline for the May 2015 Newsletter is April 25th. E-mail submissions to Bonnie Courter: rbcourter@gmail.com

Website: www.douglascountymg.org

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

Oregon Master Gardeners Association (OMGA): www.oregonmastergardeners.org



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