

## RING IN THE NEW YEAR

by **Kate Hassen, President** Master Gardener 2013



▲  
Jackson County Master  
Gardeners welcome the  
New Year!

Our ancestors rang bells for a multitude of reasons, most of which are no longer applicable. But the practice of ringing bells to leave the old year and to celebrate entering a new year is still found throughout the world and in many religions. So, I am ringing symbolic bells to announce the JCMGA new year!

This year I have been attending each of the new student orientations for the 2018 Master Gardener class. It is fun to meet and greet such a variety of people who all love gardening. I know it has been said time and time again, but I think this might be the best class ever! Welcome to the Class of 2018.

We begin the Master Gardener class on January 24th. Veteran Master Gardeners are encouraged to come on

that day to welcome the new students and perhaps share lunch with them. If you are planning to eat lunch, please notify Pam Hillers. Please remember that Master Gardeners can attend class on any Wednesday through April 25th and count them as recertification hours.

The new 2018 Board met for an orientation on December 8th. Not only did we spend some time getting to know one another, we reviewed JCMGA's mission, purposes and duties. Spending this time before January ensures that everyone is ready to give their best in the new year. The first Board meeting is January 5th. We start promptly at 9:30 a.m. and welcome all who wish to attend.

On January 19th the 2018 Board will meet for a retreat day. We will be reviewing our work from last year, discussing fundraising activities and ideas for social occasions. Determining the goals for the coming year will be our most important task. To be an effective organization we must redefine our direction on a yearly basis keeping the 5-year vision in sight as we go.

It is never too soon to begin planning for Spring Garden Fair (SGF). The four co-chairs have been meeting monthly since October. On January 25th the entire SGF team will be meeting for the first time. If you are interested in volunteering to prepare for the Spring Garden Fair, please come at 10:00 a.m. on January 25th. Our new greenhouse will be up and running soon. The

*continued on page 2*



## JULIE'S GARDEN JOURNAL

by Julie Engleson, Master Gardener 2012

**H**appy New Year everyone, we have an exciting year to map out. In review of last years "Garden Resolutions," I have to pat myself on the back. While challenging myself to eliminate old habits I was able to accomplish effective new goals. This year I am up for trying fresh new ideas in the garden.

Perhaps my biggest challenge was the smallest thing to do. As I composted all kitchen scraps, as well as added other garden waste to the compost, I remembered to take off those stickers that are on every piece of fruit purchased. I had been seeing them turn up in my garden boxes after I had added the compost. It was like garbage, recirculating. I was determined to not put a single peel with a sticker on it

into the compost this year, and I believe I have done it. The proof is in the pudding (or soil, however you'd like to look at it!) I'll have to wait until summer to see if I actually succeeded.

Right now, I am still pruning all woody perennials, and thinking about the seeds I'll buy soon. I like to grow something different each season. This past year it was tri-colored carrots. While they grew very nicely, the flavor of the yellow, white and purple carrots wasn't quite up to my palate. That's ok, because now I know! I am willing to try a different climbing bean this year. Any suggestions? In the

past, I have either grown Blue Lake or Kentucky Wonder (the latter is quite stringy), and I have tried the yard-long beans (not really a fan, flavor-wise) so I'm open to new ideas.

I was quite surprised at how well the bell peppers grew, despite the late, wet spring. The biggest factor might be the weather again this year. It has been cold and dry so far, but I believe we'll be getting more wet weather, and it may last into our spring again this year. Be prepared to hold your plants indoors longer this coming growing season.

**A welcomed addition to my garden this year is a 10x12' greenhouse kit that my husband and I are in the process of setting up.**

A welcomed addition to my garden this year is a 10x12' greenhouse kit that my husband and I are in the process of setting up. Now I will have a workspace that will be warm, contain all my starts, and provide a place to store unused garden

pots. The Master Gardener Program will have full access and use of its new greenhouse this year, too. It will make a big difference on workable space and the offering of more young plants to our public at Spring Garden Fair.

As you inventory your tools, sort through seed catalogs, turn your compost, or add mulch to your winter veggies, my wish for you this year is to appreciate the peace and joy gardening gives you. May many garden blessings come your way. Have a lovely, prosperous New Year...and Happy Gardening! ♦

## NEW YEAR...

by Kate Hassen, continued from front ...

heaters and watering systems are being added this month. The Class of 2018 will have the privilege of being the first class to fill it with plants for the Spring Garden Fair. It has been a long journey with many stumbling blocks; but the end of the trail is in sight and we have finished well. Because of the increase in space we are hoping to take a record number of plants to the fair.

The Demonstration gardens look wonderful. It is obvious that much time and energy has been spent in improving them over the past year. I know there are several projects in the works that will add beauty and educational value to our gardens in 2018.

So, beyond the bell ringing to start the year, we need to remember to ring them frequently to celebrate our work throughout the year. And don't be afraid to be a lone bell ringer. It only takes one person to make the day a celebration.

Happy New Year to all of you. Thank you for your support. ♦

*Be at war  
with your vices,  
at peace with your  
neighbors, and let  
every New Year find you  
a better person.*

—Benjamin Franklin



## HELLO FROM THE ROAD

by *Cindy Williams, Master Gardener 2014*



The Jungle Gardens (left) and the McIlhenny Tabasco Museum (right) on Avery Island, New Iberia, Louisiana

I have read about your plummeting temperatures and am grateful to be able to walk barefoot on the sand in Port Aransas, Texas.

By now, most of you know I love ice cream and will drive miles out of my way to have this mouthwatering delicacy. I had the culinary pleasure to try Raspberry Chipotle ice cream at the McIlhenny Tabasco Museum in New Iberia, Louisiana. I bring this up only to draw attention to the surrounding grounds of the Museum, Avery Island. The Jungle Gardens are a testament to how forethought can bring about stunning landscapes, bird sanctuaries and amazing plant life in what was considered swamp. The most amazing part is that this land and swamp area is over salt mines. Most would think that is two strikes against the land and not even try to preserve this eco system which now survives in such grandeur.

We as Master Gardeners have a mission, "We learn, practice and teach

the art and science of gardening in the Rogue Valley." If you read a little about the history of Master Gardeners on our website [www.jacksoncountymga.org](http://www.jacksoncountymga.org) (about us), you will learn that the program was started in 1972 and that Jackson County formed in 1982. We have done a great job trying to educate new and longtime residents of the Rogue Valley. Master Gardeners try to instill, especially in children, the value of growing your own food.

My question to you is, "who instilled in McIlhenny the need to preserve this swamp land in the 1800's?" If you have the answer, please let me know. [cindy@clwnet.com](mailto:cindy@clwnet.com)

Don't forget to spread the word about the 2018 Master Gardener Class starting this month on January 24th.

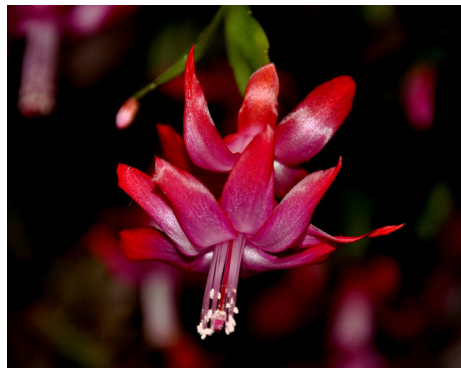
Stay warm. See you soon! ❖

## PEGGY'S PROPAGATION

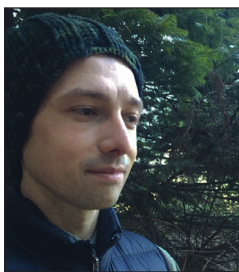
by *Peggy Corum, Master Gardener 1989*

The big news is, if all goes as planned, we will take our sales to Spring Fair next year! The incredible crew I have been working with in the propagation area has pushed hard for such an undertaking. The main ring leaders, Rebecca Jurta and Teri House have joined with other interested volunteers to offer help! So refreshing! Next we'll pray for winter weather that doesn't hold off a waking of greenery until June or July!

Meantime, we'll pack in as much warmth as possible into the small structure labeled "Neva's Greenhouse." We currently have a couple of pretty, blooming, Xmas cactus; some Orchid cactus which are not blooming; some small Ponderosa lemons; a Key lime; a Meyer lemon; and we're still hopeful our Kaffir lime cuttings will put forth a decent number of plants with roots underneath. Anytime you'd like to peek in that greenhouse, show up at Extension on Wednesday between 10:00 a.m. and noon. We would be happy to unlock the door for you! It's a pretty crowded environment, but take this as a lesson if you are planning a personal at-home structure—make it a bit larger than you at first thought, because you always need just-a-little-more room. ❖







## WITCH HAZEL THROUGH THE AGES

by Shane Hark, Master Gardener 2017



▲  
Witch hazel,  
*Hamamelis virginiana*

**L**ong after most shrubs and deciduous trees in our landscape have settled down for their long winter nap, and not after losing the entirety of its foliage, the ever diligent witch hazel has just begun to gain momentum in its transformation into a stunning winter homage to both beauty and unique survival strategy. Witch hazel or *Hamamelis virginiana* is a large shrub that can grow to 20 or 30 feet and unlike many, will bloom from around October to late February depending on the species and biome in which it grows. Its combination of ethereal winter beauty, incredible scent, and extensive medicinal value have cemented it into humanities past, present and future as a trusted friend and ally. Part of a fairly small genus, *H. virginiana* remains one of a total of six species currently known, there are four in North America and two outlying (*H. japonica*, *H. mollis*) in Japan and China respectively. Ecologically speaking the

witch hazel has a fairly diverse habitat range and can tolerate a myriad of conditions, successionaly this is a facultative seral species that exists in old growth stands as understory.

Throughout the nations of the first peoples in North America, witch hazel became a staple of health and wellbeing. The Potawatomi would utilize the witch hazel in sweat lodges, placing wet plant material adjacent to the hot rocks to generate medicinal steam; this would act as an analgesic and antifungal remedy. The peoples of the Osage nation would utilize witch hazel as a poultice for the treatment of skin lesions and other maladies. The peoples of the Iroquois nation brewed the witch hazel into a powerful medicinal tea capable of treating everything from the common cold to dysentery. A large degree of the medicinal knowledge we hold today concerning witch hazel was passed down to us from the first peoples of this nation.

Interestingly, the Mohegans were the first to show English settlers how to utilize the Witch Hazel branches for the purpose of dowsing; Y shaped

Witch hazel has garnered the unlikely reputation of being one of the few plants that are endorsed and underwritten by both the FDA and actual witches.

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cuttings of the plant were used as a reliable ancient method for locating underground water sources among other things.

The Witch Hazel gained notoriety over the years; likely because of its beauty, the incredible number of uses, and unconventional ecological habits. Witch hazel has garnered the unlikely reputation of being one of the few plants that are endorsed and underwritten by both the FDA and actual witches. The primary goodies in the medicinal toolbox of the *Hamamelis* genus are the astringent compounds, specifically tannins, namely Hamamelitannin, and Gallic Acid (Grieve, 2017); these aid in the constriction of blood vessels and the reduction of inflammation. The medicinal uses for *H. virginiana* are far too numerous to count and the biochemical mechanisms far too dry to discuss in this article but are very much worth the research.

Today there is a myriad of incredible witch hazel cultivars. The colors of our modern cultivars range from brilliant yellow to the deepest burgundy and purple, their leaves all exhibiting the same striking procession through the color spectrum as fall passes. Witch hazel is what can only be described as a polite ornamental medicinal plant, it is slow growing, it drops very little foliage, its shape is quite stunning by default, and instead of bothering to attract any birds or insects to spread its seed, it goes through the process of forming intricate little explosive capsules that hurl its seeds far enough to make a positive difference in the world. Witch hazel seeds will take two seasons to germinate. For the inclined gardener, witch hazels take grafting quite well. ❖

SAVE THE DATE

Jackson County  
Master Gardener  
Association

# spring garden fair 2018



Jackson County EXPO  
1 Peninger Road  
Central Point OR 97502

Saturday May 5th 9 - 5pm  
Sunday May 6th 10 - 4pm  
Over 100 Exhibitors

Free Parking  
General Admission: \$3  
Ages 15 and under: free

<http://www.jacksoncountymga.org>  
541-776-7371



digital artist: luigi bogni, master gardener



## GARDENING GOURMET — BERRY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

by Syd Brown, Master Gardener 2000



▲  
Photos courtesy of  
Per's Wildflowers

As most of us are likely holed up with mugs of steaming hot chocolate (and our favorite four-pawed partners) it's a time to no longer resist perusing all those latest gardening catalogs. It's even more challenging to keep from ordering all that's new or unusual such as the quirky beetberry plant.

For all not familiar, beetberry plants are quite delightful as well a bit strange given their edible leaves (liken to those of spinach) and raspberry shaped fruits later born upon leafy stems. The plant is indigenous to North America, (also native to Africa, Asia and Europe), growing here for many centuries. Although there's evidence of early cultivation in the ancient European monastery gardens, (discovered in the 1600's), it's only recently been domestically cultivated from its wild form.

Extremely cold hardy, easily propagated, thriving in full sun and moist soils, it grows well in our mild winters. In fact, it grows so well, if left totally unattended its mature fruits will seed new plants for years. A great thing if one desires self-sowing spinach but some consider it rather invasive. However, excess-unwanted plants are easily plucked out if not desired or put it in pots to contain its desire to wander.

Classified as *Chenopodium capitatum*, relative to quinoa and amaranth, it's also been known as strawberry spinach, strawberry blite (from bliton, Greek for a plant with edible leaves), goosefoot, Indian paint and Indian ink. Native Americans once used the fruits of beetberry plants for dyeing skin in ceremonial rituals, and the more fibrous plant parts for making clothes and material for weaving baskets.

This herbaceous annual flourishes readily. Laden with spade-shaped leaves and seedy raspberry-like pulpy fruit clusters (similar to mulberries), it grows to a height of about 12". The leaves are similar tasting to spinach and the

As the berries mature  
sprinkle them in salads  
to add a bit of sweet  
and seedy crunch to  
your favorite recipe.



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fruits are very decorative and showy in any garden bed. They also have parsnip-like tap roots marbled with rich red and white streaks that may also be consumed.

Like most greens, sowing early is best. Although way more resistant to bolting in hot conditions, tenderer-early leaves are those that are most tasty and contain little oxalins that only cooking can render safe for consuming. However, if one is prone to kidney stones they should grow this plant for decoration and not consumption.

Although direct sowing is best, beetberry plants may be started 4-6 weeks before the last frost in flats. Whether planting in or out, soil should be enhanced with good organic compost. Sow seeds about 1/2" deep covering with more fine compost and patting down firmly. Water thoroughly and expect sprouting in 2-15 days. Seeds may be sown every few weeks for staggered crops if desired.

Clip young leaves the same as lettuce to use raw in salads. After cooking mature leaves, they can be used as a great substitute wherever spinach is called for in recipes. As the berries mature sprinkle them in salads to add a bit of sweet and seedy crunch to your favorite recipe.

Even if one doesn't eat this most ingenious little plant, you'll find it a very lovely accent to a rather colorless border or pot. So have a berry happy new planting year of fun! ♦

## Braised Beetberry

### Ingredients

About 6 cups beetberry leaves, (may be both mature and young leaves) rinsed and drained on toweling

2 cloves of garlic, pressed

1/2 red onion, peeled, cut lengthwise in half then sliced in thin crescents

Virgin and extra virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons good balsamic vinegar

1 tablespoon pomegranate syrup or honey

1/4 teaspoon fresh minced lime thyme

Zest of one organic lime

1/4 cup sliced toasted almonds

2/3 cup beetberries, washed

Sea salt and fresh ground white pepper to taste

### Instructions

Heat 1 tablespoon virgin olive oil in large heavy sauté pan. Cook garlic and onion until limp, about 2 minutes. Add spinach gently tossing to mix until wilted, about 1-2 minutes. Mix together 1 tablespoon extra-Virgin olive oil, the balsamic vinegar, pomegranate syrup, thyme, and lime zest. Pour over beetberry leaves and toss again to mix. Add toasted almonds and beetberries gently folding in to incorporate. Sprinkle with sea salt and white pepper to taste. Serve hot. Serves about 4 as a side dish.

## Save the Date!

All Master Gardeners can attend Wednesday classes starting on January 24th to receive educational and volunteer hours for required 2018 volunteer time.



## *In Memory of John Yungen*

When asked a question about the history of the Experiment Station, farming in the Rogue Valley, or anything soils-related, John Yungen always had a ready answer.

Those involved with the Access Garden and the Small Farms project will tell you that John's support was instrumental to their success. They say their work would have been next to impossible without John. He prepared the ground for planting in the spring, set up the irrigation, and gave expert advice on crops.

John worked full time for the Southern Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station for thirty years, part time for six years after that, and continued on a volunteer basis for the last eighteen years. He clearly loved what he did and he will be greatly missed!

John Alfred Yungen passed away peacefully December 16, 2017 in his home surrounded by his loving family.

# Calendar

Date	Title	Time	Instructor
Sat, Jan 20	Home Orchards	10am–12noon	Phil Damewood, Master Gardener
	Whether you are planting your first fruit tree or have an established orchard, this class will go over the basics of tending a home orchard. The class will cover planting, pruning, training, pests and diseases.		
Thur, Feb 1	Pollinator Habitat	2–4pm	Andony Melathopoulos OSU Asst. Professor Pollinator Health
	A Small, Thoughtful, Committed Pollinator Habitat (in your garden) Can Change the World. Pollinator populations are under stress from all sides. The good news is that these damaging effects can be reversed through the retention or restoration of small bits of natural habitat. This class will dive deep into how to create pollinator habitat.		
Thur, Feb 1	What is the Oregon Bee Project?	6–8pm	Andony Melathopoulos OSU Asst. Professor Pollinator Health
	Oregon has 500 species of bees. Learn who these bees are and some of the weird and wonderful features of their lives along with an overview of a state-wide strategy to keep Oregon bee-friendly.		
Tues, Feb 27	The Scientific Garden	6:30–8:30pm	Maureen Battistella
	Scientific Garden has its founding in the medieval medical and culinary garden, but since then has come to represent a wide variety of gardens that may be illusional or real. This presentation reviews the origins of the scientific garden and traces its evolution to modern times. Of special note will be the hardscape and plantings of the garden that fronts the US Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory in Ashland, Oregon.		
Sat, Mar 17	Edible and Useful Native Plants	1:00–3:00pm	Erin Krenzer, Master Gardener
	Native plants are easier to grow and better for the local environment than many cultivated varieties. In this class, students will learn about all of the edible or useful native plants that they could incorporate onto their landscape.		

Pre-register online [www.jacksoncountymga.org](http://www.jacksoncountymga.org)  
or call 541-776-7371





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, DECEMBER 1, 2017

by **Cindy Tilley Case**, Master Gardener 2015



**T**raditionally the December JCMGA Board meeting is very festive. This year's meeting held true to tradition. Board Members brought delicious home-made quiche, holiday breads and cookies to share. President Hassen began the meeting by asking each member of the Board to introduce themselves and then share the most memorable Christmas gift they ever received. There was much laughter as some stories were very funny, while others were quite poignant.

### Announcements

President Hassen welcomed our newly elected Board Members; Kathy Apple, Ronda Bagwill, Keri Couvrette, Kristina Lafever, Juliette Van Weeghel and Mike Wiswell, along with our re-elected Board Members. She then thanked

out-going Board Members; Cindy Tilley Case, Susan Bowden, Gayle Stets, Jim Norfleet and Sandy Hammond for their many hours of service to JCMGA. President Hassen also thanked the Board Members who counted the election ballots and verified the results.

### President's Report

President Hassen spoke about JCMGA's four goals for 2017, and the progress we made in accomplishing them. Goal #1 focused on a meeting of the Gardens Working Group to help ensure everyone's voice is heard. Goal #2 was to develop a system for volunteer engagement. Goal #3 was to perform three fundraising projects prior to the end of the year.

Goal #4 was concerned with keeping 50% or better of the 2017 class active for three years or more. President Hassen was happy to say the Board achieved most of those goals and were either making great progress or we were continuing in the effort.

### Garden Modification Policy

Kari Gies spoke about a proposed policy with five points; Bringing on a New Garden, Taking out an Existing Garden, Moving an Existing Garden, Changing the theme of an Existing Garden and Changing the size of an Existing Garden. She said the paperwork will go to Rhianna, Rich Rosenberg and the Garden Working Groups. Any changes that are made must be approved by all three entities. If all three sign off, then it will go to the Board for approval. Kari added, Scott Goode said the Food Security Garden will be coming off. Joe Alvord will be doing some orchard modifications like taking out some trees and putting in others. The Board unanimously approved the new policy.

### Next Meeting

January 5, 2018

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy Tilley Case  
Recording Secretary



# Beet Box

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*from "New Year's Morning"*  
*by Helen Hunt Jackson*

...Only a night from old to new;  
Only a sleep from night to morn.  
The new is but the old come true;  
Each sunrise sees a new year born.



## **JACKSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION**

Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center  
569 Hanley Road, Central Point, OR 97502

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