

May 2018



Spring has Sprung

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



Mark Twain once said, "In spring I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours." and just to add to his hyperbole I think that this year the number is now 137 different kinds. After a screwball winter with spring weather in January we are having a true Oregon spring and I love it.

In my next life I am going to be an artist. Each spring I marvel at the beauty of trees donning their new foliage, at the amazing quality of each tiny perfectly formed leaf and at the new-born freshness of color that bursts forth. To be able to capture my words with paint is a dream I will probably never attain in this lifetime. Next time maybe the gift will be given to me. In the meantime, I will continue to marvel at the gorgeous display of greenery given freely to us again this year.

The Spring Garden Fair is just as annual as the breaking forth of new leaves! In just a few days the 39th annual fair will be held at the Seven Feathers Arena at the Jackson County Fairgrounds. All the planning and work will culminate in wonderful weekend of excitement and team work.

Over the past few months I have had the privilege of working with three brilliant women. Our team started in October planning for JCMGA's major fundraising event. Linda Holder, Sandy Hammond and Jane Moyer have worked tirelessly to iron out all the wrinkles so that this year's Spring Garden Fair will run seamlessly. Please make sure to thank them for their dedicated work.

This year we have officially entered the twenty-first century with online vendor

applications and payments. Our vendor coordinators Kathy Detweiler, Marcie Kaminker and Sandy Hansen have worked tirelessly to ensure that we have a full house of vendors for the fair.

The site managers team of Rob Bumgardner and Heide Martins have met frequently to work out the nuts and bolts of running the fair. The area managers, Juliette Van Weeghel, Alan Bass, Pam Bos, Sophia Oldenkamp, Kelly Ruse, Bill Gabriel and Jim Buck are ready to spring into action on May 4 helping to set up the arena and help the vendors during the weekend.

The volunteer coordinators, Keltie Nelson and Sherri Morgan have called nearly everyone in the Directory to sign up Master Gardeners to work during the fair. It takes everyone to staff such a large event.

Cindy Williams and the marketing/publicity working group has managed our advertising from newspaper ads to movie theatre spots to Facebook pages. The art work for the Spring Garden Fair was designed by Luigi Bogni and is so bright and beautiful with its bright red tomato on a brilliant green background.

The Practicum mentors and 2018 students have labored to nurture the seedlings and plants throughout the spring. Everyone will be expecting to find an heirloom tomato or some zinnias to buy and support the Master Gardener program by doing so.

Now, what we need is for you to come see us at the Spring Garden Fair on May 5-6 at the Seven Feathers Arena. We are ready for you! ♦



A Few Last Words

by Jane Moyer, Master Gardener 2005

Anticipating that this may be my last column as the interim MG Coordinator, there are a few last words I'd like to get in.

First, the Spring Garden Fair is just four days away! The help of every able Master Gardener is needed. If you have waited to sign up, please call one of the Volunteer Coordinators TODAY! Sherri Morgan can be reached at 541-941-1603 or you can call Keltie Nelson at 541-941-8584. It would be a shame to miss all the fun, great gardening items, and happy smiling people!

Mostly, I'd like to explain something that took me ten years to figure out—the relationship between the Jackson County Master Gardener Program and the Jackson County Master Gardener Association. On my own, it was a decade before I realized these were actually two separate entities rather than one. The development of a Venn diagram showing what each was responsible for, as well as the areas shared, suddenly made it crystal clear. (See *Venn Diagram in Garden Beet March, 2018 issue, page 3.*) I've been on a mission ever since to make sure every single Master Gardener understands how they fit together.

Just as when the Master Gardener Program was founded, the main purpose of Master Gardeners is still the training of volunteers to answer garden related questions from the general public in the Plant Clinic. Providing gardening education has become a close secondary effort. The program also provides the advisor for the association, volunteer management, and a liaison between the association and SOREC and OSU.

The main purpose of the Master Gardener Association is to support the Master Gardener Program. Other activities that have been adopted by the association are the JCMGA board, The Garden Beet, the financial aspects of the Spring Garden Fair and Winter Dreams Summer Gardens, the JCMGA Archives, the Social Committee, care of the Demonstration Gardens, and our involvement in the Oregon Master Gardener Association.

It's been harder work
than I ever imagined
and I have enjoyed
every minute

The program and the association intersect where the program oversees the education and the association provides the volunteers to accomplish the education. Community Education Classes, Community Outreach (Speakers Bureau, and School Grants), Seed to Supper, the Practicum and the Children's Garden are prime examples. The educational aspects of the Spring Garden Fair, Winter Dreams Summer Gardens, the Demonstration Gardens, and "In The Garden" (KDRV gardening segments) also fall into this category. Because both the association and the program need to advertise, this is also a shared activity.

At times, it's difficult to know if we are dealing with the program, the association, or a shared area. A case in point is when we want to ask Sheila Lee or

Jackie Freeman to help us with a project. We have to realize they have been hired to provide assistance to the OSU programs. Much as we could use their help, they aren't paid to work on association matters. Especially when the task falls into the "shared" area, we have to ask ourselves if the request is for an educational subject (program) or if it falls into a support, financial, or volunteer classification (association).

Finally, as my last last word, I would like to express my great appreciation to the many Master Gardeners and OSU staff who have helped me during these eight months in areas where I was unprepared, dropping the ball, or just plain struggling. Without their help, I would have ended up a whimpering mess in a fetal position under the desk! THANK YOU! It's been harder work than I ever imagined and I have enjoyed every minute because of the wonderful people who surrounded me! ❖





Scholarship Grad returns to Rogue Valley

by Aisha Young, Master Gardener 2017

Since starting the Master Gardener program this year I've learned so much and have been able to contribute to the organization that helped me financially while pursuing my bachelor's degree in horticulture at Oregon State University. For those who don't know, the Jackson County Master Gardeners Association gives at least one scholarship every year to a student attending OSU who is from Jackson County and is in pursuit of a horticulture or related degree. It is easy to apply for, so easy I didn't even know I had applied! OSU's College of Agriculture (the college which houses the horticulture department) advertises a scholarship application every year for students. Students are entered into over 100 scholarships by filling out a single application; after the first year, you don't even have to apply as your financial aid bundle automatically pulls from these possibilities and enters you into the ones you're eligible for.

I received my JCMGA scholarship during the 2013-14 school year and was able

to finish my program winter 2016. The scholarship helped close the financial gap I experienced as the first person in my family to complete a degree. Since graduation I've returned to the Rogue Valley where I was born and raised. It feels great to come home and participate in a thriving rural agricultural community that I've loved since childhood.

The opportunities created by fundraising for the scholarship program are so important for the support of future young farmers and horticulturalists who may need help to get the education they want and need. I cannot say how grateful I am that the scholarship program exists and continues to build momentum!

I look forward to continued service to the OSU Extension and JCMGA for years to come. If anyone is interested in learning more about the scholarship program or would like to get involved in the scholarship committee, please contact Barbara Davidson at barbdav@charter.net. ♦



Show your support when you shop at the Grange Co-op!

JCMGA can earn money every time you shop at Grange! How cool is that? Whenever you shop at any of the Grange Co-Op locations, tell the clerk you are a Jackson County Master Gardener and they will credit our account with the amount of your purchase. At the end of the year, JCMGA will receive a percentage of all our accumulated credits back in the form of cash! This is like free money since we all buy plants, tools, and garden supplies!

If you have a personal account with Grange, you cannot receive the credit for both your account and the Master Gardener account; you will need to make a choice. With that one caveat aside, this is one of the simplest and easiest fundraisers ever!

Calendar

Tuesday, May 15
COMPOSTING METHODS

3-5pm

Kathleen Hering and Bill Gabriel, Master Gardeners

This hands on workshop will describe various methods of composting including using worms, burying vegetative matter, and using Bokashi buckets. Every participant will make a Bokashi bucket to take home. If you have a drill with a 1/2" drill bit, bring it. Limit of 20 participants. Materials cost \$30 prepaid.

Pre-register online
<http://bit.ly/JacksonMGWorkshops>
or call 541-776-7371





The Children's Garden

by Rebecca Heinz, Master Gardener 2012

The Children's Garden was granted \$2,200 from The Chaney Family Foundation. Now that we have received this grant, we are ready to go to the next steps which are to figure out the most efficient use of these funds based on the needs as expressed in the grant application and then to put steps into action.

Originally, we requested funds from two organizations. We were not in the final count for the grant request to the Whole Kids Foundation, but we have

been put on a list to be reconsidered if any of the original 600 people who did receive their grant do not, for some reason, follow through with the grant requirements. We were also encouraged to resubmit the request to Whole Kids Foundation in September.

Because our budget included items that would be covered if we were to receive both grants, we have had to look at what is most important and where we can make the best use of our funds. This means that we need to examine

our initial budget and see how we can stretch our dollars to do the most good.

We feel that the greenhouse must be repaired before it falls in to a state of disrepair beyond recovery. The small raised beds, on the south end of the Children's Garden, need to be replaced and the new Handicap Accessible raised bed on the far south end is a timely addition. The path to the greenhouse needs decomposed granite and edges

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of 4x4's to bring it back up to a safe walkway for the children.

This said, we will be doing what we, in the Children's Garden, do so well. We will be looking for ways of doing what needs to be done in the most economically sound ways without sacrificing quality. That means that you may be hearing from us for donations of unused goods that you may have laying around waiting for a purpose.

We will be looking for short pieces of rebar, unused lumber you may have that could be used to build a work bench in the greenhouse that is just child height, bags of cement that you opened and used part of and wonder what to do with the rest, pieces of 4x4's that we can cut into 10" lengths or can be used to edge the path to the greenhouse, pieces of hardware cloth left over from a project for the bottoms or our raised beds, tail ends of shade cloth that we can stitch together for shelter on the greenhouse roof and time to help us put this all together when we begin the tasks in September and October.

We all thank you for your generous contributions to the Children's Garden. The egg cartons, cans, extra tools, your time, everything you donate is used and appreciated by the entire crew. Because of your donations, we have been able to go the extra mile when providing education for our "Gardeners in Training." Thank you very much. ♦



The Biggest Garden Show and Plant Sale in Southern Oregon!

SAVE THE DATE

Jackson County
Master Gardener™
Association

spring
garden
fair
2018



Jackson County EXPO
1 Peninger Road
Central Point OR 97502



Get Ready for Spring Gardening!

The 39th Annual Jackson County Master Gardener Association's Spring Garden Fair signals the beginning of the summer gardening season in the Rogue Valley, and is produced in collaboration with and support of Oregon State University Extension Master Gardener Program.

- Over 100 Plant and Yard Exhibitors
- Free Gardening Demonstrations
- Free Well Water Nitrate Testing
- Special Mother's Day Gifts

Saturday, May 5, 9am – 5pm
Sunday, May 6, 10am – 4pm

Jackson County Expo,
Free Parking, Admission \$3
Children 12 and under Free



Oregon State University
Extension Service
Master Gardener



Citrusy Sword Blades

by Syd Brown, Master Gardener 2000



Photo by whologwhy from Philippines

Around the world Lemon grass is used to spice up cuisine.

Even though we're neither a tropical or subtropical region, we can still savor the strong citrus sensation of lemon grass. Prized by Asians for cooking, teas, sauces and soups, this tropical herb is also cultivated for ornamentation as well making scented oil. *Cymbopogon citratus*, (also known as citronella grass), is a flowering perennial belonging to the Poaceae family of grasses.

Lemon grass won't survive wintering outside in our area but makes a delightful indoor plant for just about anyone; even those with very limited or no garden plot can propagate this lemony stalk in a large pot.

Although one can purchase lemon grass as seeds, it's quicker as well as easier and more successful to start with stalk clumps available from catalog ordering.

Upon arrival, examine clumps for damaged or brown blades removing them promptly then trim tips of blade tops evenly. To satisfy its growing preferences, select a pot (or pots since one can never have too many plants) at least 12" across and about 5 gallons capacity. Since lemongrass prefers a very well-drained-fertile soil, cover bottom of pot(s) with about 1" of pea gravel then fill with premium quality potting soil.

Plant lemon grass at the same level it was previously grown gently pressing potting soil about its stalks and watering thoroughly with root stimulant and 50% strength of fish emulsion. This very thirsty plant should never be allowed to dry out. Locating lemon grass near a constant water source as well full sun is best.

As the season continues to warm, your grass stalks will shoot high towards the sky soaring to 5 feet tall with regular fish emulsion feedings about every three weeks. Rivaling many ornamental grasses, its slender green blades and creamy green flowers are a lovely addition to the landscape as well alluring to wild bees.

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Photo by Mokkie

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Lemon grass is ready to harvest in about 6 months after planting (when stalk diameter is about 0.5"). You can either pull off entire stalks or just trim the leaf tops. The interior of the bulb base, leaf buds as well younger plant tops are the tenderest for consuming as well a great source of B, A and C vitamins, potassium, zinc, calcium and iron. Tougher mature plant parts are best for infusing flavor in foods then contributed to the compost pile.

You can continue propagating lemon grass by dividing the rhizomes at their base then planting them in other pots.

Lemon grass will give you tropical pot appeal for your patio, a perfumery for the bees, repellent for mosquitoes, and sweet citrus for your supper table. Trimmed to 4" for wintering and kept moist in a cool-dark spot indoors, this short-term perennial is sure to become one of your garden favorites. ♦



Rivaling many ornamental grasses, its slender green blades and creamy green flowers are a lovely addition to the landscape as well alluring to wild bees.



Lemon Grass Custard

This can be made in to individual cup servings or used to fill tartlets topped with fruit

- 1 1/2 cups each milk and cream (can substitute whole fat unsweetened dairy alternatives such as soy, nut, or coconut milks)
- 4-5 stalks lemongrass, coarsely chopped
- 4 extra large eggs, at room temperature
- 1/2 cup organic cane sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt

Heat milk and cream or alternative milk with lemon grass in saucepan until very hot but not boiling. Set aside for about an hour then strain through fine mesh strainer discarding lemongrass.

Preheat oven to 350° and bring to a boil a teakettle full of water.

For custards: In a medium bowl, gently whisk eggs, sugar, vanilla, almond and salt until mixed. Slowly pour over the milk infusion while whisking until blended but not foamy. Pour custard mixture in to six 6 oz custard cups sprayed with pan release. Place in large baking pan large enough so cups don't touch filling with boiling water to reach 1/2 inch from cup tops. Bake in oven about 25-30 minutes until knife tip inserted at custard center comes out clean. Remove cups to cool on wire rack 5-10 minutes serving them warm or refrigerating until cold.

For Tartlets: Pour custard in to 6-8 tartlet pans with prebaked crusts. Place on baking sheet and bake for around 25-30 minutes until knife inserted at center comes clean. Cool completely about 20 minutes then refrigerate. Top each tartlet with desired fresh fruits such as a strawberry, blueberries, half an apricot, raspberries and so forth. Glaze with apricot jam heated until thin enough to brush atop fruit. Serve with a dollop of whipped cream.



Notes on Ashwagandha

by **Shane Hark**, Master Gardener 2017

This month I would like to take the time to write about Indian Ginseng, or Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*). Despite its common name, it is in no way related to ginseng, and the name Ashwagandha loosely translates to “smells like horses” in sanskrit (The fresh root and vegetative matter does in fact smell a bit like horses; not in a bad way, just unmistakably of horses. Ashwagandha, a member of the nightshade family, has been used as a potent medicine and tonic for over 5,000 years in many cultures. Aside from this plants medicinal properties, it makes a lovely addition to a garden and makes a good conversation piece; broad alternate ovate teal leaves adorn stems producing a bright red medicinal berries.

These revered plants are probably most famous in the Indian Ayurvedic system of medicine where they have become a staple Rasayana (tonic). Many studies have been carried out on the Ashwagandha plant to figure out the secrets behind its incredible adaptogenic/anti stress and nerve healing properties. Ashwagandha contains the alkaloids withanine and somniferine among other things, which are used to treat nervous disorders such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimers. Studies show it promotes formation of dendrites within damaged and aging nervous tissue. It can also be used to treat intestinal infections, inflammatory conditions and a myriad of other conditions. This is one of those multifaceted species where all plant parts are used including the roots, bark, leaves, fruit and seeds.

This plant is considered an annual and grows to an average height of around two feet and can grow larger in proper conditions. I have a specimen as a

houseplant thats been going strong for well over a year now, with incremental light adjustment in the winter and a nice outdoor spot in the summer, it produces a yearly batch of seeds and could theoretically be harvested at any time. The Ashwagandha roots, which are the primary harvestable part used in medicine, are a long fleshy tuber that can be harvested at the end of a years growth cycle; this plant grows rapidly and survives hot heat and sudden cold slumps well. Supposedly this plant is USDA hardy to zone 10. I have found that this plant can easily survive zone 6-7 conditions with a bit of precautionary care.

This plant will respond well to full sun, but can tolerate partial shade quite well. It has large rather delicate leaves and is susceptible to spider mites so take precautions when choosing a spot and perhaps plant some trap crops near it. Ashwagandha will do well in soil with a higher PH of 6.5-7.5.

A sandy loam is preferable for potting and planting; I have used a mix of cocoa coir, horticultural sand, perlite, and a solid organic potting soil with mycorrhizae as a base mix for this plant. Ashwagandha can be propagated via most conventional methods, it takes well to cloning procedures and germinates readily from seed in around 15-20 days at approx. 70°F. This is a very rewarding plant to grow and know, if not for its fascinating history and incredible medicinal properties, then for its stately beauty and relatively uncommon occurrence in American gardens.

Attention current Master Gardeners: If you would like to grow a specimen of this fantastic plant, please email me (shaneahark@gmail.com) and I will happily send you a few seeds in the mail — I happen to have a large amount of seed stock hanging around from last year. ❖



Withania somnifera



In the Garden

by **Maxine Cass**, Master Gardener 2015

As gardeners attempt to shake off a damp and late Spring, “In the Garden” took a practical approach last month: get the seeds started and transplanted into containers, then get set up to garden with less water (Ronnie Budge); hands on with potting mix ingredients (Sandy Hammond); fire-resistant plants (Maxine Cass); and milkweed for monarch butterflies (Robin McKenzie).

At month’s end and in the next few days, Kristina Lefever, Maxine Cass, Jane Moyer and Ronnie Budge preview Spring Garden Fair education, trees, hanging baskets—and the ever-in-demand planting tomatoes demonstration by Ronnie. Look for a native plant display and living mulches later this month. Rhianna Simes returns three times in May to tell KDRV-TV viewers how to deal with pesky garden insects and Rhonda Nowak launches the first in a multi-part season series revealing much about Shakespeare’s flowers in the home garden.

“In the Garden” is live on Wednesday and Friday on KDRV’s NewsWatch Midday hour (between 11am and noon; “In the Garden” usually airs close to 11:20 am.). Both segments are rebroadcast on KDRV-TV (Channel 12) on the following weekend.

“In the Garden” welcomes suggestions for topics to cover—we want to talk about what you want to know! Call or e-mail Linda Holder or Maxine Cass! Support “In the Garden” by watching your fellow Master Gardeners on the air! ♦

Above: Ronnie Budge sowing seeds with KDRV host Gio Insignares.

Below: Jane Moyer tells viewers about Coleus plants.





Board of Directors Meeting, April 6, 2018

by Keri Couvrette, Master Gardener 2017

Announcements

- I. Susan Koenig noted that there are still 3 vacancies for Garden Education Mentors. The vacancies are for the Entrance Garden, the Rain Garden and the Wanda Hauser Garden. Susan encouraged members to recruit for these vacancies before April 18, 2018.

Unfinished Business

1. Fundraising Proposal:
 - A. **MOTION:** Linda Holder moved that the earnings from all JCMGA entities will be deposited in the JCMGA general fund to be distributed per the JCMGA budgetary process. The motion was seconded by Roberta Heinz. Motion approved. One opposed.
2. Kristina Lefever changed the language of a JCMGA Facebook post, with suggestions from the Board to: Money from the sale of these books goes to the Jackson County Master Gardener Association to support community educational activities.

New Business

1. OSU changes: Jane Moyer reported that the state was divided into 10 districts. There has been a reconfiguration, so now there will be six districts. John Punches has been our district administrator. He applied to be district administrator again, but was not chosen. John resigned effective in June. We appreciate his friendship and help.
 - A. **MOTION:** Michael Riding moved that JCMGA thank John Punches for all his help and assistance during his term as OSU district director. The motion was seconded by Jo Terrell. Motion approved.
 - B. Jane Moyer also gave an update on the new Master Gardener Coordinator, she reported out of 15 applicants there were four finalists who had video interviews, which then narrowed it down to three finalists. On April 23, 2018 at 6:00pm in the SOREC auditorium there will be a general presentation by the three finalists, open to anyone in the community. Tentatively, on April 24, 2018 the finalists will individually tour the facility.

2. Change of Board Meeting dates: Jane Moyer requested a change from the first Friday of the month to the second Friday of the month, to allow the treasurer to give an up-to-date report based on the latest statement and for the plant clinic to compile their data into a month report. We have been moving some of the monthly meeting dates for other events this year, so it only makes sense to make the change.

- A. The word "first" would need to be changed to "second" in the Bylaws page 51, under POLICIES & MOTIONS, #1.

- B. **MOTION:** Sherri Morgan moved to change "first Friday of the month" to "second Friday of the month". The motion was seconded by Barbara Davidson. Motion approved.

3. Absences from Board Meetings: President Hassen asked, if Board members miss more than two meetings how should we deal with this? Do we need to get these people a co-chair or someone to represent them?

- A. The Board discussed the questions and decided that in accordance with the JCMGA bylaws the president has the discretion to deal with the issue.

4. 4-H Day at the Expo: Jane Moyer reported that there is a 4-H farm day at the Expo right after the JCMGA Spring Garden Fair. In the past years it has been all about animals. Lena Hosking, the 4-H Youth Development Educator, is taking it over this year and would like Master Gardeners to make some presentations. She would like two presentations repeated every ten minutes. If anyone would like to do this contact Jane Moyer.



Save Your Gently Used Items



YARD SALE

Saturday, May 12, 8am – 3pm

Please donate gently used items to Jackson County Master Gardeners

We need Children's toys, Decorative items, Kitchen items, Small working appliances, Garden art, Garden equipment/tools, Power tools, Craft Items or tables and lamps

Bring items to the extension parking lot on May 11th from 9am to 3pm, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point

Please no clothing, shoes or computers

Gardening, travel, or cook books need to be donated early for the Spring Garden Fair Book Booth and left outside the Master Gardener office

Donation receipts will be available

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Additional Agenda Items:

1. Mail Chimp: The Board needs a clearing house for Mail Chimp. Rhianna Simes used to do it. Jane Moyer said she would be happy to serve as the clearing house. Mail Chimp needs to go through Jane. No person in any committee is to request an email without the knowledge of a committee or a working group.
2. Peggy's Propagation: Rebecca Jurta was directed to go through the Gardens Working Group for issues concerning Peggy's Garden.
3. Oregon Master Gardener Association: Barbara Davidson has handouts for the OMGA Annual Training Conference (formerly Mini-College) in McMinnville, OR. There are a few \$100 dollar scholarships available for this Mini-College.

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned: 11:00am PST. Next Meeting: May 11, 2018 at 9:30am in the OSU SOREC Auditorium.

Submitted by Keri Couvrette, Recording Secretary, Master Gardener 2017





Hello from the Road

by **Cindy Williams**, Master Gardener 2014

Have you been on a Diesel or Steam train in a while? We hadn't in years so bought tickets and boarded in Bryson City, North Carolina. Riding through the Smoky Mountains on the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad we saw terrain not much different from the mountains between Gold Hill and Grants Pass. At a half way point in the trip we stopped to sit on the banks of the Tuckasegee River watching kids fish in a calm pool and kayakers navigate the rapids.

We walked a mile on the Appalachian trail. Of course, I will keep it a secret that it was only a mile as I don't want to seem like a quitter to those that have walked the 2200 miles. I wanted a photo.

Years ago, Kudzu was planted to help with erosion control and has taken over many areas. You will even see a tractor buried under a mound of beautiful green vines. Kudzu is also known as "The vine that ate the South." I have often wondered about the consequences of introducing a foreign plant to an area and its effect 20 years later. This is a good example however, did the good off-set the over growth of today?

North Carolina is a beautiful area. Mile after mile you will see manicured lawns. It's like everyone gets up on the same day to mow, weed and trim. Just to compare the rainfall in this area with Medford, NC gets 19 more inches of rain. And much more humidity.

I hope you all remember to attend Spring Garden Fair May 5-6 as the vendors are truly amazing and have worked hard to present their best. ♦



This area of the Tuckasegee River is where many put in to kayak a couple of the milder rapids.



Julie's Garden Journal

by Julie Engleson, Master Gardener 2012

Recently, as the rain has come down, I've looked back over my garden notes for this year. These are some notable things: "First honeybee sighted Feb 14th in garden; poor thing! False Spring, nothing to eat yet." "Sighted the first cucumber beetle today! Its only Feb 20th!" "My quail friends are back! I hear Papa quail hollering at the brood..." That was on April 2nd. On April 10th "Our resident Meadow Lark returned, just singing his lovely Spring song as loud as he could." Then, on April 14th, "I found an asparagus spear perfect for picking, so I did! The flavor was amazing, and this was a plant a bird must've left me!" These are the sure signs Spring is here, even if my older lilac bush hasn't bloomed out, and the pink dogwood tree doesn't even look close to being ready.

This year, Spring is coming on slowly, and I'm okay with that. It has given me more time to get the beds ready for planting; it is doing all the watering for me. Soon enough we will all be in our gardens: planting, watering, mulching, setting timers, changing out emitters, fertilizing. I'm happy with the slow season, as I feel like I am enjoying this pace more than the hot Spring starts we have had over the past few years. The rain has been intermittent enough for me to pop out-

side for a few minutes when it stops to pull a few weeds. So far, I am ahead, but the minute the sun's out for a week, I will be behind again!

This month I am concentrating on little things. I potted new petunias in the patio planters. I also gave my acid-loving plants a small boost of an iron cocktail. The next step is to prepare the circle my green bean tee-pee goes on. The peas are already 6 inches tall, so I need to think about staking them up soon. I think the ground might be too cold yet for melons and cucumbers, so I'm holding off putting them in the ground. My one question is what odd vegetable to grow this year? I might try sour melons, I hear they are fun to grow and cultivate. The great thing about being a gardener is there's never a dull moment!

While you are busily planting all those rows of corn, beans, strawberries, herbs, potatoes, melons and more, remember to relax in your space. Listen to nature; observe who's hard at work beside you from the insect kingdom. Remember someone with flowers from your garden on May Day, and don't forget to visit the awesome Spring Garden Fair on the first weekend of May.

Enjoy this lovely slow Spring, and Happy Gardening! ♦

Four Kinds of Lilacs

"Why don't you turn at the next corner," she said, "and take another road home. Let's go past that farm with all the different colored lilacs."

"That's seven miles out of the way," he said. "I wanted to plant the rest of the corn before evening. We can look at lilacs some other time."

"It'll take only a few minutes" she said. "You know that lilacs aren't in bloom for long—if we don't go now, it will be too late."

"We drove past there last year," he said. "They're like any other lilacs except for the different colors. The rest of the year, they're all just bushes."

"They're lilac, purple, white, and pink," she said. "And today, with no breeze, the scent will hang in the air—no flowers smell as good as lilacs in the spring."

"I thought of planting lilacs once," he said, "for a windbreak in the grove. The good smell lasts only a few days. I suppose we can go, if we hurry."

— by Leo Dangel



Listen to nature; observe who's hard at work beside you from the insect kingdom.

Beet Box

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Graphic Design Pete Livers and Karen Finnegan

Photography Pete Livers, Karen Finnegan, Cindy Williams,
Sandy Hammond

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Publishing Information: All articles and photos are due by the 15th of the preceding month. Articles should not exceed 600 words. One-time articles should be emailed to the editor for review. If a photo needs to be taken, please contact Kenda Swartz. Photos submitted cannot be less than 600x800 pixels.

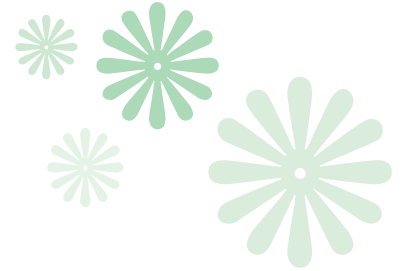
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Check Your Spring Garden Fair Calendar!

Spring Garden Fair Meetings
All at 10am in the auditorium

- May 1



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JACKSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Southern Oregon Research and Extension Center
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