



## **Jackson County Master Gardeners Announcements**

### **December 2023**

#### **Member Services Working Group Survey**

- Thank you to all who took the time to complete our survey.
- We will be using the data to plan for next year.

#### **Winter Dreams Summer Gardens 2023 Satisfaction Survey**

- Thank you to all who attended this year's WDSG event and for completing our Satisfaction Survey.
- We will be using the data to plan for the Winter Dreams Summer Gardens 2024!

#### **JCMGA Membership Renewal for 2024 is now open.**

- Remember to be included in the JCMGA Chapter Directory, you need to renew your membership by January 31, 2024.

#### **JCMGA Chapter Directory Photo Contest**

- We will again have a Photo Contest in January 2024. The photo chosen will be used for the front cover of the 2024 JCMGA Chapter Directory.
- For more details, see the enclosed article.



## The Presidents Corner

### The Close of a Great Year

By Marcie Katz

As the year comes to a close, I look back at my presidency with pride and satisfaction at all the accomplishments we as an association have achieved! I am further awed and humbled by all of the volunteers, board members and chairs who made these endeavors possible.

From a rich history of successful enterprises, we knew how capable we could be. We survived the Covid years, relying largely on pop up plant sales. But our member base was reduced and we didn't have the resources we once had. This year was our opportunity to make a comeback, and we needed to take a different approach.

After many discussions, meetings, and a lot of finger crossing, we pulled off the Spring Garden Fair (SGF), a one-day event. It took many Master Gardener volunteers, as well as the wonderful Class of 2023, to make it a great success by growing and selling plants, carting wagons and parking cars.

The Greenhouses were cleaned up by the Practicum Mentors after three years of disuse. They became the Practicum classroom, propagation workspaces, Mosaic Glass Art workshop and home of SGF Plant sales and the Fall Festival! With the help of volunteers, the Native Plant Nursery also expanded to increase production. Under the supervision of Lynn Kunstman, it now provides a steady stream of income for the Association and Practicum, while spreading the word of the importance of native plantings in the home garden.

On the gardens side, two new beautiful, large interpretive signs were commissioned for the Water Catchment System and the newly renamed Native Plant Garden (replacing the Rain Garden). Both of these areas serve as teaching platforms to demonstrate our mission; namely sustainability in a changing environment. We also had new enthusiasm in the Demonstration Gardens, with many of the student apprentices taking on major roles under or in place of absent GEMS. Areas that had been decommissioned, like the compost area and Dahlia Garden, have been cleaned up for future new projects. The Garden Enhancement Committee created a beautiful cut-flower garden in the Gathering Area that serves as a meeting place for garden tours from the local garden clubs and a place of rest and snacks for the hard-working gardeners on Wednesdays. Even the Fig Grove got a good cleanup and a thick layer of chips!

The Member Services Working Group had a booth at several public events, getting us in the public eye once again. It is hoped that next year we will be able to maintain a weekly booth at the Growers Market with Plant Clinic and MG information. Anyone can volunteer at this booth. Any questions will be recorded and the Plant Clinic will get back to the person with a response.

Our Community Outreach Working Group has reestablished connections with School and Community Gardens and worked to replenish the Speakers Bureau. The Marketing and

Technology Working Group (formerly Communications) is busy updating the website, creating links and making it more user-friendly, and keeping us current on Facebook.

All in all, it's been a wonderful year. I am looking forward to seeing how much more we will do in the year ahead. Plans include a two-day Spring Garden Fair on extension grounds, enticing more visitors to the gardens with Garden Tours, and perhaps a "Friends of Master Gardeners" group for those who want to come out to help but are not ready to take the full class. It will be a year of change, with Alec Levin's new plans for the grounds. We will have a big part in the planning, which is exciting!

I want to thank everyone who made my job easier and gave me the support that I needed. I have been honored to work with such an amazing group of caring, smart, and wonderful people. This is truly my community, and I wish all of you Happy Holidays and a healthy and prosperous New Year. See you in '24!



## Coordinator's Column

Grace Florjancic

Hello Gardeners,

We are in those cold winter months where family and friends gather to celebrate. There is much for the Jackson County Master Gardeners to celebrate this year also.

- We have completed a total of 8,981.8 volunteer hours this year!
- Plus, an additional 1,133.4 hours of Continuing Education Credits!
- 65,914 people in the County were reached through our efforts!
- 1,108.5 pounds of produce were donated, largely from the Plant a Row Campaign and our Veggie Demonstration Garden!

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year a success. All of your hard work really demonstrates our impact as an organization. As we continue to expand what we do as an organization, these numbers will continue to grow. I am looking forward to working with you all again next year!

Speaking of next year, what's new for the Jackson County Master Gardeners in 2024? In addition to our current volunteer opportunities, we will be expanding into a few new areas.

We are happy to announce the initiation of our Friends of the Demonstration Gardens volunteers. These volunteers are folks who are not Master Gardeners but are still interested in getting some hands-on education and practice volunteering in our Demonstration Gardens. This will expand our reach within our community and help our GEMs keep their gardens in tip top shape. If you are interested in helping coordinate this group of volunteers, reach out to me (Grace Florjancic) at [grace.flroajncic@oregonstate.edu](mailto:grace.flroajncic@oregonstate.edu)!

Seed to Supper is making a comeback! This 6-week gardening class is designed for those in our county of lower incomes to teach how to veggie garden on a budget. This program is important in helping create a more resilient and food secure Oregon. If you are interested in becoming a Seed to Supper instructor, reach out to me at [grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu](mailto:grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu)!

We have a new initiative under construction and if the grant is funded, we will be charging ahead in the summer of 2024. The working title is "Plants for Gramps", and it will take place in various Jackson County libraries. It will be a short workshop series based on horticultural therapy activities to help combat mental health challenges and loneliness in rural older adults. Our goal is to help folks be able to access the benefits of interacting with nature indoors and from home as

well as connecting with new people to foster a sense of community. If you are interested in becoming a Plants for Gramps instructor, reach out to me at [grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu](mailto:grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu)!

Thank you to everyone for your hard work over this past year. I know there are endless opportunities for the future, and it can be a challenge to make sure we accomplish all the exciting goals we have when taking on new initiatives and expanding old ones. I am available to discuss ideas about future endeavors. Drop me a line! By now you should all know my email: [grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu](mailto:grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu)

## **CONGRATULATIONS!!!**

### **JCMGA 2024 Elected Board Members**

- **President-Elect:**
  - Vacant
- **Recording Secretary:**
  - Kathy Apple
- **Membership Secretary:**
  - Ann Ackles
- **Treasurer:**
  - Keltie Nelson
- **OMGA Representative:**
  - Colet Allen
- **Archivist:**
  - Pam Hillers
- **Members-At-Large:**
  - Rebecca Cohn
  - Randa Linthwaite
  - Rob MacWhorter
  - Lucy Pylkki
  - Cassandra Toews
- **Assistant Treasurer:**
  - Regula Pepi

## See the New Interpretive Sign in the Native Plant Garden!

By Janine Salvatti

Next time you wander around the Demonstration Garden grounds, the Gardens Enhancement Committee (GEC) hopes you notice the beautiful new interpretive sign recently installed to replace the old Rain Garden sign. The Rain Garden met its demise as our climate changed over time, leaving the existing plants struggling to survive. We used native plants as their replacements to reimagine the garden and support our educational mission. Come check it out!





## **“Unsheltered” by Barbara Kingsolver**

A Book Recommendation by Colet Allen

Now that I have learned how to access library audiobooks and download them to my phone, I am listening to a couple more books a month while driving in my car. Learning this process and getting it into my aging brain was on my 2023 goals list. With the help of our Jackson County Library System, I have mastered this new skill that our young people take for granted, as we older folks did with a landline at their age.

In the past, I bought audio books (very expensive) and played them on my device in my car and at home. In 2021, I purchased a new Outback and, only after getting home realized it did not have a CD player. I was devastated, as I had close to 200 audiobooks in my home library. At about the same time my home CD player died. Was the Universe trying to tell me something? So, I donated all of my audio books to the library, took the tax write off and moved on.

Now that I'm downloading library audiobooks to my phone, I am once again getting more books under my belt. Interestingly, one of the first books that I listened to was “Unsheltered” by Barbara Kingsolver.

Every book of Kingsolver's that I have read (which is most of them) always brings surprise and delight. Her insights into family dynamics, social justice, science verses religion and so much more always give me a new perspective that I had not expected when I chose the book to read. “Unsheltered” is no different. One fascinating character in the story was Mary Treat, who is a real person and known for her work in botany and entomology. In the 1830's. Mary corresponded with Charles Darwin, which adds some interesting discussions about Darwin's work and ideas. As a lover of plants and the science around plants, this was one of the aspects of this book that I found most delicious.

This is a fascinating and complex read on many levels. I have spent many enjoyable reflective moments on various elements of the book since finishing it. The website below gives a fuller synopsis of the novel. Maybe one of these days as we are working in the gardens at SOREC we can have a lively discussion about “Unsheltered” by Barbara Kingsolver.

<https://www.tomakemuchoftime.com/blog/book-review-of-unsheltered-by-barbara-kingsolver>



## My Favorite Tomato

Ronnie Budge

My favorite tomato is “Esterina.” It is a golden colored cherry tomato, very much like “Sun Gold” but better in my opinion. It is less prone to cracking than “Sun Gold” and I think the flavor is more delicious. In fact, in head-to-head taste tests at JCMGA picnics, “Esterina” twice won over “Sun Gold” as more flavorful. Unfortunately, it is hard to find either seed or transplants, but I encourage you to be persistent as it is well worth growing and may become your favorite too.



## JCMGA Fall Festival 2023

Sandy Hammond

The Fall Festival of 2023 was an experiment that we learned a lot from. We did not have the field for parking as we did for the Spring Garden Fair, so we held back on advertising, resulting in lower attendance than we would have liked. A good time was had by all who attended though, with an added treat being the spectacular eclipse visible in the parking lot in the morning.

The Native Plant Nursery did their usual great job of selling their plants, earning the majority of the income for the day. Greenhouse #2 was full of Christmas items, beautiful glass garden art (made by Master Gardeners) and Christmas cacti. Wonderful cookies and beverages were free to the delight of all who attended.

There were several vendors who participated, including Sanctuary One with two adorable goats. The leftover Christmas items were donated to Sanctuary One for their future fundraising events.



IT'S MEMBERSHIP  
RENEWAL TIME!



It is time to renew your Jackson County  
Master Gardener Membership for 2024!

Remember that to be included in the  
2024 JCMGA Chapter Directory, you need to  
renew your membership by  
**January 31, 2024.**

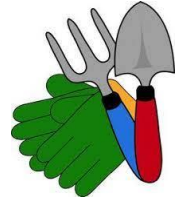
It's a great deal at just \$25!

You may renew on the Member Portal of the website  
<https://jacksoncountymga.org/membership-renewal/>.

Contact Barbara Low, temporary Membership Secretary, if you  
have any questions at [barbaralow@msn.com](mailto:barbaralow@msn.com).

## December in the Garden

By Barbara Low



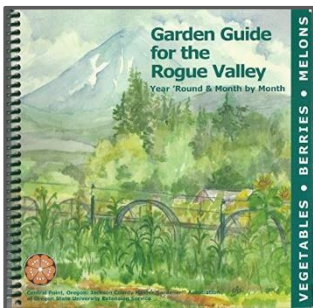
This is the last article in the series concerning yearlong gardening based on the *Gardening Guide for the Rogue Valley – Year Round & Month by Month* by the Jackson County Master Gardeners Association. I hope that you have enjoyed the articles.

In December, there is not much to do in the garden depending on what you want to grow next Spring and Summer.

By caring for our gardens, we are also caring for ourselves – physically, mentally, and emotionally.

### **December is the time to:**

- Inventory any leftover seeds.
- Request garden catalogues.
- Continue to check your stored harvest of vegetables and fruits.
- Dig and divide rhubarb. This should be done every four years.
- Start to plan your garden(s) for next year. Evaluate what grew well in your garden this year and what changes you would like to make for this coming year. Maybe consider growing a new variety of vegetable.



*Garden Guide for the Rogue Valley – Year-Round & Month by Month*. This book contains a wealth of gardening information. You can purchase it at our local Grange Co-op or at the OSU Extension office for \$21.00. It can also be purchased on-line at <https://jacksoncountymga.org/shop/>. Note that a shipping fee will be applied.

**Happy Gardening**

**Garden For Life**



## **Announcing the Annual Jackson County Master Gardener™ Association Photo Contest Sandy Hansen**

The Jackson County Master Gardener™ Association Member Services Working Group (MSWG) announces its annual photo contest.

♦ The 2024 JCMGA Photo Contest is open to all current Jackson County Master Gardener™ Association members.

♦ **Photos may be submitted from January 1<sup>st</sup> until February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.** We can accept two (2) photos from each member, although there will be only one winning photo per person.

♦ Photographs are limited to those taken in gardens of the Rogue Valley and the focus must be on a plant or flower - no people (for privacy issues), or garden animals or insects.

♦ Please submit your photograph in portrait format, rather than landscape format to [jcmgaphoto1@gmail.com](mailto:jcmgaphoto1@gmail.com).

♦ All photographs must be at least 1500 x 1575 pixels (5"x5-1/2" at 300 dpi) and all submitted photos become the property of JCMGA.

In addition, since the photograph on the cover of the directory is longer from top-to-bottom than from side-to-side, photos submitted must be in portrait format rather than landscape.

Please submit your picture to [jcmgaphoto1@gmail.com](mailto:jcmgaphoto1@gmail.com) and include your name, phone number, email address and a short description of the flora pictured. If you have any questions, please contact Sandy Hansen, [sandyhansen08@gmail.com](mailto:sandyhansen08@gmail.com). All identifying information will be removed and the contest will be judged by members of the Member Services Working Group and the editor of the Garden Beet.

The winning photograph will appear on the cover of the 2024 JCMGA Chapter Directory, and four runners-up will have their photographs featured in the *Garden Beet*. Winners will be announced in the April *Garden Beet*. Four runners-up will have their photographs featured in the *Garden Beet*. Winners will be announced in the April *Garden Beet*.

Whether your garden consists of several acres or a single plant in a hanging basket, we would love the opportunity to honor the beauty you have created and nurtured.

- All submitted photos become the property of JCMGA.



## **December JCMGA Working Groups Summaries**

### **Community Outreach Working Group**

Chair, Ronnie Budge

No meeting in November.

### **FUNDRAISING WORKING GROUP**

Chair, Sandy Hammond

No meeting in November.

### **Garden Enhancement Working Group**

Chair, Janine Salvatti

We are continuing to work in the gardens and are now getting them ready for the cooler temperatures.

### **Marketing and Technology Working Group**

Chair – (looking for a chair or co-chair)

This group has been busy with creating videos of our Demonstration Gardens; working on the Garden Beet; meeting the technology of our organization; updating Facebook posts.

### **Member Services Working Group**

Chair, Barbara Low



We received the data from the member survey that was done in November. We will be delving into the data at our December and January meetings.

We did a recap of the 2023 Student Master Gardener Graduation/Celebration.

We will be having a Joint Committee meeting with the Community Outreach Working Group at our December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting to continue to work out the details of the Friends of the Gardens Program.

### **Program Support Working Group**

Chair is Grace Florjancic

In 2024 we are bringing back our Seed to Supper classes! Seed to Supper is a 6 weeklong basic vegetable gardening class for folks in our county with lower incomes to help increase food security in our communities. This program was put on hold during the past few years but is coming back. We have a few locations in the county pick out to hold these classes, but we need instructors! The more instructors we have, the more classes we can hold next year. If you are a certified Master Gardener looking to help with this program, contact Grace Florjancic at [grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu](mailto:grace.florjancic@oregonstate.edu)

### **Winter Dreams Summer Gardens Working Group**

chairs are Colet Allen, Susan Koenig, and Barbara Low

There will be a satisfaction survey sent out the week of November 5<sup>th</sup> and the data collected will be used to plan for next year's Winter Dreams Summer Gardens.

## Berried Treasures

By Sydney Jordan Brown



"Here we go round the mul-'bry bush so early in the morning." While this old English song calls it a bush, *Morus alba*, *Morus rubra* and *Morus nigra* are actually trees. In the *Moraceae* family along with figs, breadfruit and jackfruit, mulberries (like quince and several other plants) have lost their positions in home gardens. However, new varieties and awareness campaigns are causing a comeback for this most valuable heirloom tree.

Mulberries have a rich history indeed. Native red fruiting trees (Eastern US coast) have been used for centuries by Native Americans. In the De Soto expedition of the mid 1500's, explorers observed the Muskogee consuming dried mulberries and Iroquois mixing mashed dried mulberry fruit in sauces and cornbread. The Timucua in Florida consumed mulberry fruits and used their leaves and twigs for dye. The Seminoles used branches for bows.

Chinese white mulberries (wild in China, then naturalized in Europe with leaves providing food for silkworms) were brought to the US in the mid 1800's for making silk. Though this ultimately proved too costly a venture, the trees survived.

Native Asian black mulberries, cultivated in Europe since Roman times, are still used for their delicious berries and shade. Their leaves were fed to livestock and used for medicinal treatments. They became prized in the Tudor era when 10,000 black mulberry trees were mistakenly bought instead of white for silk production. Silk making was a bust, but the black fruits became all the rage in England.

Although many see mulberries as merely an annoyance, their delicious, nutritious and versatile native red, white naturalized, and black Asian fruits have become more sought after. While mulberries can grow 50 to 80 feet tall, new smaller varieties offer options for backyard gardens. Dwarfed trees still have distinctive delicious blackberry-flavored fruits with phenomenal amounts of beneficial nutrients. It's like plucking super blackberries from a tree! Mulberries are

bursting with vitamins (C, K1 and E), potassium, iron and fiber. They also have phenolic acid, antioxidants and anthocyanins found in black fruits and vegetables.

No matter the variety, mulberries are deciduous -- having toothed or lobed alternately arranged leaves along long, graceful stems. Minute flowers bloom in late spring followed by fruits in white, pink, red, purple, or nearly black, harvestable by late summer. Self-fertile trees have both male and female (monoecious) flowers on the same tree. Others are single sex (dioecious) requiring a pollinator. Although red and white mulberries tend to be the biggies, dwarf, weeping or contorted varieties and black fruited tend to be the most practical size, ranging from 8-10 feet at maturity.

Mulberries grow well in most well-drained soils (preferably away from walkways, patios, and driveways to avoid fruit stains) and away from water or septic lines they'll want to tap into. They need half-day or full sun and are somewhat drought tolerant once established. Summer pruning maintains a manageable height. Fruiting usually begins 3 to 5 years after planting. It's well worth the wait. Given its great disease and pest resistance and lovely tropical-like foliage, why not give this tree a try? Then harvest some American heritage -- rounding your own mulberry "bush" of bounteous, beneficial, and delicious fruits.

### **Recipe:**

#### **Mulberry Buckle**

Preheat oven to 375°. Oil bottom and sides of a nine-inch cake pan.

Topping:

1/3 cup coconut sugar

½ cup organic white, whole wheat, or oat flour

½ cup regular rolled oats

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

½ teaspoon ground nutmeg

¼ cup olive oil

Mix together all ingredients until crumbly and set aside.

Cake:

2 cups organic white, whole wheat, or oat flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

½ teaspoon ground nutmeg

¼ teaspoon sea salt

2/3 cup coconut sugar

zest of one organic lemon

¼ cup olive oil

1 egg (substitute 1 tablespoon gold flax meal soaked in 3 tablespoons hot water)

1 teaspoon vanilla

½ cup milk (soy or almond or oat milk)

2 cups mulberries, stemmed

In a large bowl, mix together flour, baking powder, spices, sea salt, sugar, and lemon zest. In a medium bowl, stir together oil, milk and egg until blended. Stir milk mixture into dry ingredients. Fold in mulberries.

Pour batter into prepared pan. Sprinkle crumb mixture over top. Bake in preheated oven for 40-45 minutes or until cake center doesn't stick to toothpick. Remove from oven and serve warm or cold with whipped cream or ice cream. Serves 8-10.

### **Resources:**

#### **One Green World**

<https://onegreenworld.com/mysteries-of-the-mulberry-tree/>

#### **Raintree Nursery**

<https://raintree nursery.com/pages/growing-fruit-trees-mulberries>

## **UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions**

<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/trees/mulberry.html>

## **Baltimore Orchard Project**

<https://www.baltimoreorchardproject.org/our-blog/forgottenfruit>

## **Tree Sources:**

One Green world

<https://onegreenworld.com/?s=mulberry>

Raintree Nursery

[https://raintreenursery.com/search?type=product&q=mulberry\\*](https://raintreenursery.com/search?type=product&q=mulberry*)

Both nurseries have many varieties including dwarf, weeping and contorted (this variety is more ornamental having less fruit).