

Scoop o' Dirt

Yakima County Master Gardener News

February 2021



Magic in the Garden

~Phyllis Pugnetti

Years ago my mother gave me these iron turtles, the kind where you can hide a key in them. I have no gift at displaying yard art and had no clue what to do with them. Then I realized that they were the right size to put a small toy inside. My grandkids were very small and believed that the magic fairies leave the gifts for them. They still believe! So while others may have art in the garden...I have magic!



Paisley and Noah digging in the snow to find the magic turtles.

Fun in the Greenhouse

This is the elf on the shelf that Diana Pieti hid in our greenhouse in December. Darrell Monroe frequently found and re-hid the Elf on the Shelf. As you can see he even fashioned a swing for our resident elf. The elf is now at the North Pole and hopefully will return next December.

~Angela Galbreath

Reminder! Foundation Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, February 3rd @ 10:30 am.

Correction: In the January newsletter, the Clinic Corner article was credited to the wrong person. Ken Tolonen was the writer of the Planting Techniques article.

Clearance Sale Coming Soon!!

The **Art Team** has paired up with the **Perennial Team** to “test run” the new Squarespace on-line sales platform that will be used for the Annual Plant Sale at the end of April 2021. Hopefully, if any issues arise, we will be able to work through them before facing them in April so we all can have a smooth sale.

The Perennial Team will be offering 2 different kinds of succulents. Names and pictures of plants will be forthcoming once all information is entered and formatted.

The Art Team will be clearing out some large bulky items at “clearance prices” to make room for smaller-sized repurposed items. Prices have been reduced up to 50% off. Items will include:

- an outdoor pink potting sink
- rustic potting bench
- wood bar cart
- Chandelier made of wine staves
- wood statue of a fawn and bear
- Custom-welded rustic large-sized flower
- 4 garden rugs made of garden hoses
- man and lady made of ironing boards
- purple weathered wood rocking chair
- 3 piece child-sized wood bistro set
- 3-piece wood planter boxes
- 36” antique iron wheel.

This sale will be an on-line sale **ONLY** for Master Gardeners from February 9th – February 12th.

Pickup dates will be February 11th and February 12th from 9:00 – 11:00 am. Pictures will be available to view online for you to make your selections and an announcement will be forthcoming. It will be a great opportunity to work out any problems that may arise, but on a much smaller scale with way less stress. We want to be prepared for our amazing sale in April.

Mark your calendars and set aside some money for this amazing “practice run” sale.

~ Jenny Mansfield

Love is Like That—a Garden Poem

Sometimes I think about things I would rather not.
But then I hear a flower talking to me, “I like you a lot.”
Do I answer? Do I dare?
The true love of a flower is extremely rare.
I tend to their needs
and collect their seeds.
They blossom and die
I do not know why.
Love is like that.

~ George Pessin

LA County Master Gardener

Program Coordinator's

Corner

Emeritus Greater than 10 years

In the January recap of the Awards presentation I did not honor our Emeritus or Emeritus-qualified with greater than 10 years of volunteer service. The following is a list of MGs in chronological order and those in Green have already chosen Emeritus status. I've also included their total number of volunteer hours since we began recording in the WSU data base in 2009. Written records were poorly kept before that date so it is difficult to estimate the devotion of these individuals before 2009. Again I want to thank you for all the hard work you have done for the Master Gardener Program in Yakima County.

I also want to thank the Board members who personally took the 5- 10- & 15-year longevity certificates and pins to the individuals who qualified this year, as we were not able to meet in person.

~Claudia

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Total volunteer hours if over 500</u>			
1980	Roy Van Denburgh	founder of MG program	2007	Carol Barany *	2,800
1982	Gary Schemp - 2 years, left & returned in 2007			John Barany	
1998	Diana Pieti *	2,600		Skip Brockman *	3,621
1998	Larray Prather *	1,220		Judi Hemenway	
2000	Rae Ellen Bower			Sam Hines	
2002	Alice Faringer			Becky Lang-Boyd *	576
	Felicia Faringer *	740		Karen Orange *	1,214
	Bill Gillespie *	758	2008	Phyllis Pugnetti *	3,515
	Lucille Meyers			Robin Kabrich	
2003	Debra Kroon *	1,546		Sue Uhlman	
	Margaret Morris *	3,112		Alice Wickstrom	
	Ken Tolonen *	3,036	2009	Peggy Chambers *	802
	Marylou Calhoun - 2011 *	503		Mary Clear *	594
2004	Pat Bombard *	1,061		Walt Clear *	599
	Susie Walters *	1,923		Stephanie Clevenger	
2005	Dick Larson *	1,336		Darrell DeHart *	3,214
	Kris Vestad			Trudy Riffe	
	Gary Schemp *	1,804		Claudia Steen *	1,710
2006	Jeanne Hagarty				+ 1,772 PC
	Ruth Hardison		2010	Ray Yates *	685
	Elaine Krump			Sharon Brown *	703
				Nancy Colleran	
				Lori Fisk	
				Vivian Hunt *	788
				Maia Mittelstaedt *	833
				Sara Rankin	
				Sean Rankin *	674
				Jean St George*	984

* Over 500 volunteer hours
 Green: Designated Emeritus
 Black: Still Active

Master Gardening Mission Statement:

"Engaging university-trained volunteers to empower and sustain communities with relevant, unbiased, researched-based horticulture and environmental stewardship education."

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of non-compliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension Office.

Art Team Highlights

*****All photos courtesy of Sarah Judd.***



Diana Pieti and Diane Berthon will work their magic with assorted items.



Karen Fortier applies her creativity to painting rocks. You can see her smiling through her face mask.



Jenny Mansfield hangs another bird feeder amongst a myriad of others.

Newsletter submissions are due on the 25th of each month. Please send them to Julie Hunziker at jbhunziker@gmail.com. Texting photos and brief descriptions is fine, as well. (530)209-4329



Ana Villasenor works carefully on a garden peace pole.

The Greenhouse Effect

By Jenny Mansfield

There has been a lot going on down at the Greenhouse the last few weeks.

The **PERENNIAL TEAM** has propagated over three dozen different sedums and succulents as well as hardy geraniums, liriopse, ice plants galore, clematis, honeysuckle, centranthus, and campanulas and have seeded Jupiter's beard, hollyhock, aster, Johnny jump ups, salvia, poppies, agastache, gaillardia, balloon flower, etc.



Annuals

The **ANNUAL TEAM** has beautiful cuttings of angel wing, plecanthus, mezzo, geraniums, and coleus, to name a few, and have started seeds for petunias, marigolds, snapdragons, gazania, zinnia, etc. Just imagining all the bright colors to come will brighten your day.

The **HERB TEAM** has taken cuttings or divisions of Cuban oregano, rosemary, thyme, winter savory, mint, and chives and have started parsley and sage from seeds. This small team is amazing and has spent no money, but rather used donated plants and old seed stock on hand and will reap rewards of being budget conscience.



Perennials

The **BASKET TEAM** has a nice variety of trailing, bushy, and colorful plants in preparation to plant up the dozens of gorgeous hanging baskets. The plants may be small now, but they will be growing by leaps and bounds in just a short time.

The **VEGGIE TEAM** is a large group of members who will soon be seeding dozens upon dozens of tasty vegetable we all so love. This year, members could chose a vegetable that they wanted to grow and would plant up a flat or two and be featured at a table for others to try as well. Many of the seeds this team is planting were donated by Phyllis Pugnetti so you know they will definitely be good. A box of old seed stock will be placed at the sign-in desk at the Greenhouse. Some of the seed packets are several years old so we cannot guarantee the viability, but if you wish to take a few packets, please help yourself.



Basket Table



Art Team

The **ART TEAM** has been very busy recycling, repurposing, and reusing donated items to create one-of a-kind garden art that will certainly enliven your gardens. Take a look at the wood wheel barrel garden carts, barb wire wall art, wine cork heart picture, bottle trees, mosaic stepping stones, birdhouses, gourds, garden signs, etc.

MEN AT WORK – A great big addition to the Greenhouse is the soil table across from the Art Team area that was custom built by Jack Vonfeld and Gary Schemp (AKA Popeye with Muscles!). This will be a nice addition when the veggie team begins their mass seeding in February.

There is also a new heating table on the perennial side of the Greenhouse compliments of the hard work by Skip Brockman, Darrell Monroe, Tom Schiels, John Strong, and Terry Travis.



Heating Table



Soil Table

Floribunda: Selecting Seeds

by Carol Barany

Liberty Hyde Bailey, one of America's first horticulturalists and a founder of the 4-H movement and agricultural extension programs, recognized that, "A garden is half-made when it is well planned. The best gardener is one who does the most gardening by the light of the winter fire."

Nearly 150 years later, Bailey's observation still holds true. Forget the latest *New York Times* list of bestselling books. Instead, the seed catalogs piling up on our bedside tables provide riveting night time reading that Yakima gardeners crave this time of year. We spend hours making our shopping list, and then another, and another.

Faced with far more choices than Bailey ever imagined, seed selection can be confusing. To help, here is a list of the terms you may encounter in choosing seeds.

OPEN POLLINATED seeds result from pollination by insects, wind, self-pollination or other natural methods. As long as pollen is not shared between different varieties within the same species, then the seeds produced will remain true-to-type year after year, with the same characteristics as their parent plants.

HYBRID seeds are the result of controlled methods of pollination, where the pollen of two different species or varieties is crossed by human intervention. Hybridization can occur naturally through random crosses, but commercially available hybridized seed, often labeled as F1, is deliberately created to breed a desired trait, such as larger flowers, or disease and pest resistance. However, any seed produced by F1 plants is genetically unstable and cannot be saved for use in following years, since future generations will not be true-to-type. Gardeners who grow hybrid flower and vegetable varieties must purchase new seed every year. Hybrid seeds can be stabilized, becoming open-pollinated varieties, by growing, selecting, and saving the seed over many years.

HEIRLOOM seeds are open-pollinated, often handed down for generations in a particular region and hand-selected by gardeners for a special trait. There is no industry standard definition of "heirloom seed". Some authorities classify an heirloom as any cultivar grown before 1950, a rough demarcation of the beginning of modern plant breeding. Others consider a cultivar that's been grown for more than 50 years an "heirloom".

GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) seeds are produced using a variety of modern genetic engineering methods. The DNA of GMO seed has been altered by human manipulation, often by inserting genes from related or unrelated species, to introduce new, desirable traits in a way that may not otherwise happen in nature, or may not happen as quickly. An example of a GMO crop is a corn variety that has been manipulated with a naturally occurring soil bacterium to protect it against corn borer. You're not likely to find these on neighborhood seed racks yet.

NON-GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) seed, as defined by the USDA, has not been produced by genetic modification, modern genetic engineering techniques, or by using parents that have been genetically modified. Non-GMO seed can be produced using conventional farming practices.

ORGANIC seeds can be labeled Certified Organic only if their growers are in compliance with the detailed regulations of the USDA's National Organic Program. These regulations specify that the land on which crops are grown cannot have had prohibited substances applied for three years prior to harvest, and the operation must be managed according to an Organic System Plan that is approved and regularly inspected by a USDA accredited certifier. Organic seeds are grown strictly without the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, sewage sludge, irradiation, or genetic engineering. They are by definition non-GMO.

PELLETED seeds are enclosed in a round pellet made from simple clay or other inert materials to bulk them up. This process makes very small seeds such as lettuce, carrots, and onions easier to handle and sow.

TREATED seeds, more likely used by commercial growers than home gardeners, are often coated with a fungicide to protect germinating seeds from pathogens when planted in the field. USDA-certified organic production currently prohibits the use of treated seed, but that might change as biological seed treatments become available.

We may not be dreaming or planning by the light of a winter fire, but by the light of a laptop, tablet, or smart phone instead. Though we have far more choices to make than Liberty Hyde Bailey could have imagined, some things never change. All gardens start with a seed. Some even smaller than a speck of dust, they hold nothing short of a miracle. Most of the far-from-usual flowers and vegetables that call to us from garden catalogs and magazines are seldom available as transplants. Even if it's just a single packet, why not sow some seeds of your own this year?



February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Perenials Team 8-11</i>	2 <i>Annuaals Team 8-11</i>	3 <i>Foundation Meeting via Zoom 10:30</i>	4 <i>Hanging Basket Team 9-11</i> <i>Herbs Team 8-11</i>	5 <i>Art Team 9-12</i>	6
7	8 <i>Perenials Team 8-11</i>	9 <i>Annuaals Team 8-11</i>	10	11 <i>Hanging Basket Team 9-11</i> <i>Herbs Team 8-11</i>	12 <i>Veggie Team 8-11</i> <i>Art Team 9-12</i>	13
14	15 <i>Perenials Team 8-11</i>	16 <i>Annuaals Team 8-11</i>	17	18 <i>Hanging Basket Team 9-11</i> <i>Herbs Team 8-11</i>	19 <i>Veggie Team 8-11</i> <i>Art Team 9-12</i>	20
21	22 <i>Perenials Team 8-11</i>	23 <i>Annuaals Team 8-11</i>	24 <i>Newsletter Articles Due to Editor</i>	25 <i>Hanging Basket Team 9-11</i> <i>Herbs Team 8-11</i>	26 <i>Veggie Team 8-11</i> <i>Art Team 9-12</i>	27
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