

The Garden Gate



Bonner County Gardeners Association Education ~ Community Service ~ Camaraderie

December 2015

Please contribute to The Garden Gate. Informational articles, garden tips, announcements, and digital photos are welcome. For questions or comments please email lauriebrown54@gmail.com When emailing, please put "MG" in the subject line.

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President's Message

Wishing you a Happy 2016 as the New Year is upon us. Hopefully it will be another good year for gardening activities. If the past couple of weeks are any indication, the snow pack will continue to build and there will be plenty of water, fewer fires and good fishing.

A reminder: If you haven't paid your dues for next year please do so as soon as possible. I would like to finish the "list of members" for next year so that I can hand it off to next year's officers. Please include the renewal form and indicate which Association activities in which you would like to participate.

Finally, it has been a pleasure being your President this past year. As with any organization there have been challenges and will continue to be so. However, I believe the camaraderie that exists within the Association continues to enable us to fulfill our mission of education and service and enjoy it as we do. That said, we are always looking for new ideas for programs and activities and also increased participation by our membership. So, don't hold back; go for it!!

Happy New Year!

January Gardening To Do List



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Zone 3

- Order seeds
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Water cymbidiums weekly until they bloom

Zone 4

- Order seeds
- Sow seeds indoors for hardy spring-blooming plants
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)

Zone 5

- Order seeds
- Sow seeds for hardy spring-blooming plants
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Sow frost-tolerant perennials indoors

December Meeting Minutes

Following are the minutes for the BCGA meeting on December 2, 2015:

Members Present: Patti Pietron, Deb Steffen, Gray Henderson, Janae Dale, Gail Swan, Marjory Clements, Ann Warwick, Barb Pressler, Cindy Hayes, Howie Fennimore, Penny Barton, Gordon Fish, Tim Gift, Deborah Gift, Sandy Anderson, Bruce Green

At 9:15 am December 2, 2015 President Gray Henderson brought the meeting to order.

November Meeting Minutes: Marjory Clements moved to approve November minutes, seconded by Gray Henderson. Minutes approved.

Treasures Report: Penny Barton reports a November ending balance of \$1,259.26. Howie Fennimore moved to approve the report, seconded by Marjory Clements. Treasures report approved.

Membership Dues: Gray Henderson reported that out of 80 members, he has received 38 renewals. Gray to pursue obtaining the rest of the dues.

Home and Garden Show: Ann Warwick reported that she's received entry forms for this event. The forms need to be filled out and submitted by February 2016. We are still unsure if BCGA will participate. If we continue, we may possibly change the format. We will address this event in the New Year.

Membership Course: Gray Henderson recommends we continue offering this to the public. Penny Barton's employment has changed and she will only have Mondays and Fridays available for classes if she remains in the chair position. Ann Warwick observed that Mondays and Fridays would be a good change because BCGA classes and need for certain instructors would not conflict with the Master Gardener course offered by the University of Idaho. Penny will need help if she is to remain as chair. Penny says a meeting will need to be held to address finding instructors. Gray Henderson is putting out an email to members who indicated interest in helping with this program. . A motion was made and approved to hold

upcoming membership classes on Mondays and Fridays. Ann Warwick will write a piece for the Co-Op paper to advertise the upcoming Membership Course

Potlucks: Deb Steffen reports a very successful, fun, and lovely potluck hosted by Janae and John Dale. Janae reports that we need some new BCGA signs and Gray Henderson said he'd take on this project. Janae also said we all need to know where the light switch is in our storage area (it's location eludes us). Gray to donate a flashlight.

Christmas Party: Gray Henderson sent out a memo to interested helpers. So far he's had 50 RSVPs. He is planning for 60. We will do a white elephant gift exchange and this year the gift table will be in the center of the room so everyone can see what who gets what gift. Howie Fennimore suggested door prizes so people will visit more. Howie will donate one of his gourd birdhouses. Gray suggested 4 or 5 nice, new, not too expensive gifts as the prizes. Gray asked for donations for the door prizes and will purchase a couple if he receives no donations. Gail Swan will give out the tickets participating in the white elephant gift exchange, and Gail and Penny Barton will take admission money at the door. Gray will send out an email letting members know that decorating will commence at 10:00am on Saturday December 12 and that if folks have decorations they'd like to use, they're welcome to bring them. BCGA members will do the cleanup.

Home Horticulture: Janae reported that a meeting is scheduled for December 3. Gray will send emails to interested members. Janae wants to get the class list solidified in order to give it to Ann Warwick who will put it in the Co-Op paper before the first week in February. We will hold the classes in the BCGA office but can move it to the larger event space if necessary.

Christmas Party: Gray Henderson has set the date! Mark calendars for December 12.

Spring Plant and Yard Sale: Janae reports that if we sell plants more than one time next year we need to purchase a license for \$100.00. The cost for a one-time license is \$25.00.

Jan Wilfert: Gray Henderson contacted Becky Reynolds, who suggested a possible scholarship in Jan's

name. Becky says we should do this for a BCGA related event/class if we pursue this. This topic will be on the January 2016 agenda.

New Business:

Elections: All positions were approved as follows: Cindy Hayes president, Gordon Fish vice president, Penny Barton treasurer, Patti Pietron secretary. Board members as follows: Penny Goodman, Howie Fenimore, Pamela Rose Crawford, Gray Henderson, and Barb Pressler. It was noted we were still in need of 2 more board members. Tim Gift and Gail Swan stepped in and filled the positions.

Facebook: Gray Henderson says Laurie Brown will take over the administration of our Facebook page. Marrion Newsam Banks will be her backup. Penny Barton said she saw an inappropriate post on our page but didn't know how to remove it.

List Serve: Gray Henderson has been working with Shannon Callister on an interactive way for members to connect. Members will be invited to join List Serve. If they elect to sign up they will receive all emails that come in. This will allow communication between members without having to funnel it through a single hub. The hope is that conversations around gardening issues, or other helpful information will be shared and also promote communication.

Sip n Shop: Cindy Hayes has set up Tuesday, April 12 from 4:30-9:00pm as the time for this event at the Pend d'Oreille Winery. She says she received feedback that members liked this event. We will not do a basket this year. Cindy was looking for a chairperson for this event. Deborah Gift volunteered to be the chair. Cindy suggested we advertise earlier this year.

Directory: Cindy Hayes suggested we might add a little more information about members in our directory. Birthdays (month and day only), spouse's name, and personal interests. We will continue this discussion in the New Year. The possible addition of photos was also discussed.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:45

Hot Spot

This month we introduce a new feature: the Hot Spot! Each month we will feature one or two biographies of members, old and new, so we can all get to know each other better.

Hot Spot: Ann Warwick

Ann Warwick
P.O. Box 1197
Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

Hi, I'm Ann Warwick. My Partner, Jim Furlong and I moved to Sandpoint in 1974, from Fresno, California. We did not intend to buy a place, as we were hauling an elderly Airstream trailer and had planned to travel for a while. But, gas prices spiked, and some friends urged us to look at a piece of property. Forty one years later, we are still here, though in a different part of the county. I grew up in the Palouse area south of here, and we came ostensibly to be close enough to my parents to help them as they aged. They've both been gone for decades, and we are still here. The place has a magnetic effect on us.

Gardening is in my blood, my very genes. I grew up on a farm, and at that time, we also grew most of our food. Each child had duties, such as picking the raspberries, weeding, feeding the stock, feeding chickens and gathering the eggs, etc.

I took a longish respite from gardening in educational and career endeavors before we moved here, but when we arrived, I tried to start a garden on our northern exposure shaded cold spot with underlying decomposing granite. I was used to the loamy Palouse soil, so it was a bit of a shock to end up with virtually no crops at the end of a season. We had to haul water to the garden there, and the deer, moose and other critters ran rampant over the entire project. Jim and I ended up starting our own business working in the woods, clearing, cutting firewood, salvage logging, and other forest related tasks, so the garden took last place in the summer, when we were really busy.

We moved to Samuels in 1989, and gardening became a focus, once again. Since then, it has become something of an obsession, though a healthy one, maybe. I took the Master Gardener course in 1996, and things got better. Knowledge is a helpful thing!

My current garden area is really a couple of areas. I have a fenced 50'x50' (thanks to Jim) vegetable garden, with a seasonal hoop house and raised beds. The flower garden is behind the house and is also fenced (also thanks to Jim). I like a lot of things about this location. It is flat. No rocks. Good sun exposure, easily increased by falling a few trees. When we moved to this address, it was unimproved. The place where the garden is now was forest. The soil is almost pure sand, with just a tiny layer of plant material on top. This is a cold spot, frequently with frost midsummer. Those are things I can deal with, by adding materials to the soil, and using season extenders to foil the frosts.

After 20 years of soil building, we have great vegetable crops, and my big focus is the compost pile. We have no source of animal manures, so composting plant waste is the main way I add to the garden fertility. We grow enough food in the vegetable garden to provide fresh eating all summer, and we can, freeze, and dry enough to provide echoes of summer all winter in our meals. It's a feel good thing.

My main area of experience and some knowledge is compost. I make a lot of compost, a couple of cubic yards each year. I have ways of recycling even the toughest weeds to make them into compost without spreading them everywhere. I love to work it, turn it, smell it, play with the worms and watch the other visible creatures that roam throughout. I put seed heads from flowers in the compost, which means that many of my "weeds" are larkspur, cosmos, poppies and rudbeckia, among others. I don't mind a few flowers among the veggie plants to encourage pollinators to meander through. And I'm trying to achieve that free spirited flower garden, without it looking too chaotic.

I don't have special techniques.....I simply ask my BCGA friends what they are doing and copy them. I do like to play with winter cover crops, and see a good outcome from using them. I plant Austrian peas (when I can get them), cereal rye, and hairy vetch. It is nice to see the garden all green going into winter, and as soon as it thaws, I turn this wonderful material under and let it decompose for several weeks before starting to plant. It has increased my yields. The peas and vetch add nitrogen, and all of it adds organic matter to the soil.

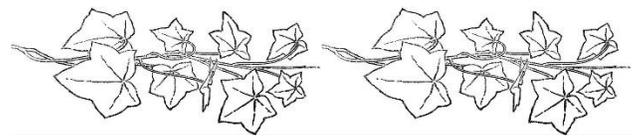
I have a pretty extensive flower garden, as I press flowers and use the dry material in making cards and pictures. We enjoy the ornamental area in the summer. We have two apple trees and a plum tree that

bear, and a couple of small plum trees that may someday give us a taste.

I always like to try new things in the garden. Over the years, the list is extensive, with some successes and some not so much. Cover crops are fairly new to me. Seed saving, too. Putting up the produce is something I didn't do until recently. That's one the great things about gardening, there is always more to learn and something to improve or change or try.

I love learning more about gardening. I attend nearly all of the Home Horticulture classes, and have learned much from each of them, and any other classes that are available. I use the library in the office to learn more about various topics. There is much more to learn.

Other interests: kayaking, being outdoors doing anything, pressing flowers and making crafty things, writing, reading, and just enjoying life.



Hot Spot: Shannon Callister

16 Hawkins Road, Sagle Idaho (corner of Lakeshore Drive and Hawkins Rd)

I am originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, though I haven't been back in years (my beverage preferences aren't easy to satisfy in Utah, among other reasons... I graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in Organizational Development. That was also where I met my husband-to-be, Tom, who was a graduate student.

After working for awhile in the Los Angeles area, I followed Tom to Hanover, NH and where we both worked at Dartmouth College – Tom as a professor, and I as a Career Services professional at the Tuck School of Business Administration. Our two sons were born in Hanover, and that's where I originally got the "gardening bug." We had a large back yard with plenty of sun, and we grew lots of vegetables as well as a large flower cutting garden. We did pretty well for novices. I still remember the guy I hired to rototill the garden the first year – he brought a big Troybilt tiller, which shook his pants further and further down with every step. As I sat there watching him from the back, it wasn't pretty. I kept wondering with almost scientific interest how much further those pants could drop before they would literally be around his ankles. Fortunately, they never made it all the way down.

We were anxious to get back to the West (we didn't make very good Easterners), so in 1994 moved to Walla Walla, WA, home of Whitman College, where we both worked for 17 years (I became a Director in the college's central information technology department; Tom was a professor of education and Associate Dean of the Faculty). We raised our two boys, and rebuilt our 'fixer-upper' house room by room. My gardening had to turn more toward perennials and landscaping plants because our yard was small, shaded, and had a steep hill in the back that dropped down to a small spring-fed stream complete with crawdads and the occasional turtle. Over the years I reclaimed the slope from the overgrown buttercups and planted lots of shade loving perennials, shrubs, grasses, and huge ferns and water plants down by the stream, and laid flagstone paths and small patio areas. That was also my first experience installing drip irrigation, as well as having a tree fall on our house during a windstorm!

We moved to the Sandpoint area in August of 2011 after falling in love with the area during visits the previous couple years when we were exploring places to retire. Our older son (also Tom) was already in college at that time, but our younger son, Talbot, went to Sandpoint High for his senior year. Our home is about a half mile down Lakeshore Drive in Sagle, and it has been quite a gardening challenge and learning experience. The 2/3 acre yard is much larger than I was used to maintaining, and it was originally completely overgrown with tansies, thistles, and pretty much every noxious weed you can imagine. Much of the front is steeply sloped, which was at least one element to which I was accustomed. It took the better part of a year to clear the overgrowth, using our packing paper as a weed suppressing mulch with bark on top, after which I began landscaping with grasses, native shrubs, perennials, stone paths, and dry creek beds, all supported with a sprawling drip irrigation system. So far, the project has been very successful, which is the exception of the back surgery I had this last spring – I guess I overdid it a little.

I joined BCGA just this last spring after seeing an ad for the membership course and thinking this organization was exactly what I wanted to be a part of. I can't say enough about the quality of the course Penny conducts, and all the great members who facilitated and helped. I was very sorry to see it end, though amazed at how much I'd learned.

This last summer Tom and I took on the project of some root excavations on 5 large conifers in our yard – all had been buried several feet above their bases when the house was originally built and we wanted to save them from dying. It was a project that required the temporary removal of many established plants, a significant change in the terrain of the front yard, and a lot of general mayhem and landscape destruction. Definitely not what the doctor ordered as an ideal recovery situation for my back. I was, however, armed with so much new knowledge that proved invaluable during the process.

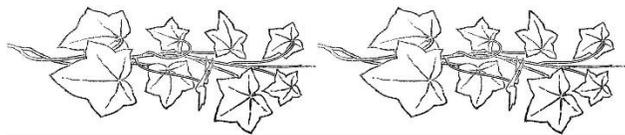
Between my surgical adventure and our big landscaping project, I didn't have much opportunity to volunteer for BCGA activities this summer, but I look forward to much more of that in the coming year(s). I did, however, enjoy the opportunity to meet many members at the great potlucks over the summer and discovered those are not to be missed!

My home landscape is far from finished, so that remains my main interest and "hobby" along with wanting to learn more about native shrubs and perennials,

propagation, plant problem diagnosis and treatment, and developing a better eye for landscape design. We may try some vegetables next year too, who knows.

Outside of the garden, I seem to find myself managing the Lodge at Sandpoint on and off (currently “on” part time, only while the owners are away for the winter). I also dabble in some private technology consulting, helping people and small businesses solve technology problems and learn to better use technology to accomplish their goals. During warmer weather I also love to be on the lake in my kayak.

Thank you all for the privilege of being a part of such a great organization. I look forward to many years of getting to know old and new members and supporting the many things that you do!



“In the morning the whitened yard, flower beds, roofs and fences; delicate patterns on the window panes; the trees in winter silver, gay magpies outside, and the hills softly overspread with winter’s brilliant carpeting. All is bright, all is white around.”

Aleksandr Pushkin,
1799-1837 Russian poet



Sadly, I don’t know where this picture was taken, but I’d love to have this in my garden!

“Once upon a sunny morning a man who sat in a breakfast nook looked up from his scrambled eggs to see a white unicorn with a golden horn quietly cropping the roses in the garden. The man went up to the bedroom where his wife was still asleep and woke her. “There’s a unicorn in the garden,” he said. “eating roses.” She opened an unfriendly eye and looked at him. “The unicorn is a mythical beast,” she said and turned her back on him. The man walked slowly downstairs and into the garden.”

James Thurber, *“The Unicorn in the Garden”*
1894-1961, writer