

The Garden Gate



edited by Kit Cooley (the_editrix@yahoo.com)

April 2009

Happy Spring!

City Baskets are planted and our next big event is the Home and Garden Show, April 18 & 19. Please contact Brenda Fletcher, the chair of this event, for information or to volunteer. Please note the changes in the Home Horticulture classes below. Plant Clinic time is fast approaching! See the update on the Plant Clinic on page 3. Learning Garden renovations start in April. Sign up to help dig in on April 17.

Please contribute to *The Garden Gate*. Informational articles, garden tips, announcements, items to swap, and digital photos are welcome.

President's Note



Dear Master Gardeners,

As I write this letter, it is a beautiful, sunny, warm day. If you are lucky enough to have some snow-free area, it really feels good to get out in the yard again. It's a strange thing about gardeners and the earth. When the city baskets were being planted, **Jan Rumore** commented on the high energy level in the greenhouse. It was true! There was excitement in the air and everyone was smiling. I believe it was the result of gardeners having their hands in soil and planting live plants.

It is always enjoyable when we get together for a work party or social occasion. We are planning to have Garden Visits this summer at the homes of Master Gardeners who are willing to open their gardens to everyone. **Penny Barton** has volunteered to start it off with an invitation to her garden sometime in June, date to be announced.

The Master Gardener classes will be finished the end of this month! Congratulations to all those students who are completing the program of instruction. Now it's time to take on the Plant Clinic. And that's a reminder for all

MGs to get signed up for your nine hours of time. The Plant Clinic opens May 5!

Friday, April 17, will be a busy day. It's a workday at the Learning Garden in the morning, followed by the afternoon set-up for the Home and Garden show. Stop by and visit our booth at the fairgrounds all day Saturday and Sunday, April 18 and 19.

Keep looking down,

Janae

Agent's Corner

Spring has Sprung – Finally!



It is hard to believe that on April 30 our new class of 16 MG trainees will have completed their classroom training and will embark on the volunteer portion of their first-year experience. Soon we will have the first of two practice plant clinic sessions that will help trainees get hands-on experience with the problem-solving process. On May 5, our plant clinic begins here at the Extension office, and

sign-ups are going well. Thanks to all CMGs who have stepped up recently to fill the early slots.

Advanced Master Gardener classes are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month and are open to all MGs who have agreed to recertify this year. The next class is scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, from 9 a.m. to noon, with Laurie Brown presenting "Plant Propagation." On May 20, I will present "Xeriscape and Waterwise Gardening." Call Patti to sign up.

Master Gardeners have stepped up to help with this year's Totally Awesome Thursdays Youth Day Camp on July 9th. MGs will help with a container growing class and a plant ID/garland making class. Each activity will allow the children to make something to take home.

The Bonner County Home and Garden Show is coming up on April 18 and 19. UI Bonner County MGs will have a booth and will be doing presentations for the public. If you are interested in participating in this project, contact Brenda Fletcher.

With the warmer weather, the Learning Garden is beginning its makeover with a workday on Friday, April 17, at 10 am. Come out and help transform the garden! Please call Patti at the Extension office for more information.

Thanks to all of you for your continued involvement!

Mike



Important Dates

April 17, Friday, 10 a.m., Learning Garden work day, Extension office outside

April 18-19, Home and Garden Show, Fair Building (Chair: Brenda Fletcher).

May 5, Tuesday, 9 a.m., BCMG Membership meeting, Extension Office.

May 16, Saturday, 9 a.m.-noon, Native Plant Society Annual Plant Sale, Panhandle Special Needs Building (on Boyer). (All proceeds benefit the Kinnikinnick Chapter of the Native Plant Society and PSN).

Please contact any Board Member or Officer if you wish to participate in or organize any activity.

Master Gardener Home Horticulture Series

Classes cost \$10 and space is limited. Please register and pay for classes by calling or visiting the Extension office. Class space is available on a first registered and paid basis.

****Please note that the schedule has changed.***

April 15, Wednesday, "Ask the Experts"

Presented by Valle Novak, Mike Bauer, Laurie Brown, Loie DeLa Vergne, Jennifer Costich-Thompson, Pat Van Volkinburg, and Diane Green

Stump the Panel! Bring your toughest gardening questions to be solved by these local "Gardening Gurus."

April 16, Thursday, "Start Your Garden Indoors With Seed," Presented by Jennifer Costich-Thompson, Master Gardener

Class to include soil preparation, seed starts, hardening off starts, transplanting, and any necessary season extenders.

April 22, Wednesday, "Growing Idaho Potatoes in Idaho,"

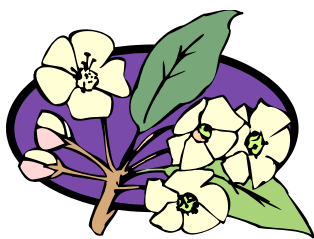
Presented by Pat Van Volkinburg, The Potato Lady
Learn about the varieties of potatoes to grow, soil preparation, planting, tending through the summer and harvesting.

April 29, Wednesday, "Pruning –Beneficial and Decorative,"

Presented by Rich Del Carlo, Certified Arborist
Learn about pruning fruit trees, landscape trees and shrubs, espalier, and proper care and sharpening of your pruning tools.

May 6, Wednesday, "Potagers," Presented by Valle Novak, Master Gardener Emeritus

"Pot-ah-zhay", traditionally a French "soup" Garden; a small plot with a few special herbs and veggies for use in quick, fresh dishes, from soup to omelets to salad and beyond. Valle will show you how to create your own in a tiny plot, a pot or a group of pots; she'll even plant one during the class.





Announcements


Friday Plant Clinic Plan

The Plant Clinic will be open one extra day per week for 3 hours for research purposes only for recertifying Master Gardeners who cannot participate in the Plant Clinic on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The extra day will be every Friday, 9 a.m. – 12 noon, May through September, in the Plant Clinic with the Plant Clinic Coordinator in attendance. As was decided during the 2008 evaluation meeting, all plant clinic activities will take place at the Extension office. This plan is to be reviewed at the end of the season, in October, at the program evaluation meeting.

 In keeping with our policy of **Master Gardeners Helping Master Gardeners**, **Trish Murphy** has requested a few hours of help getting her perennial beds ready for spring. Some temporary health issues prevent her from being able to do it by herself. Join with a couple of other MGs to give her a hand for an afternoon. Please call her at 265-2072 to schedule a date.

 **Lost and Found** A grey and white plastic tarp inside a matching sack with handle was found in the Plant Clinic after the August 2008 Fair. Please claim this if it is yours.

 **Submissions** to *The Garden Gate* are welcome. Photos (digital preferred), garden hints, and suggestions for articles that you would like to read are especially needed. Please send them to Kit Cooley by the 1st of the month for that month's issue.

City Baskets Thank You

I wanted to thank the following people for coming to play in the soil and get the city baskets planted: **Gail Swan, Jan Rumore, Martha Troughton, Ken Lunde, Bonnie Cavanaugh, Zoe Bolton, Linda Kirchmann, Jay D. Baker, Robin Beams, Marlisa Keyes, Gaea Swinford, Valerie Ripley, Mike Williams, Annette Smith, Kristy**

Pierce, Julie Woods, Howard Fennimore, Shirley Barksdale, Janae Dale, Gail Locke, Jan Griffiths and Marci Crockett.

We had a wonderful time and the task was done in record time.

Thank you so very much,
Penny Barton

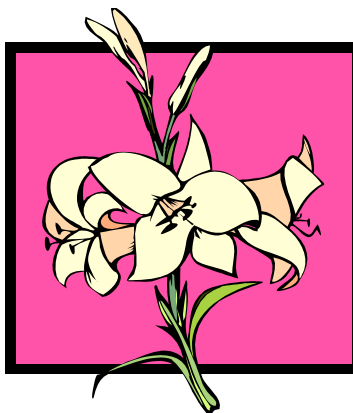
Plant Clinic Update

Attached to this newsletter is a copy of the Plant Clinic Procedures for 2009. For your convenience there is also a copy affixed to each work area in the Plant Clinic. In addition to the information in the Procedures regarding filling out forms, please remember to include the diagnosis as well as the recommendations when completing research forms for clients.

Please sign up now for the Plant Clinic for Tuesdays and Thursdays so the trainees are assured of adequate mentoring. For recertifying Master Gardeners who cannot participate in the Plant Clinic on Tuesdays and Thursdays, please sign up for Friday morning research sessions. The Plant Clinic season for 2009 is May 5 through October 1. Please call the office at 263-8511 to sign up, if you haven't done so already.

With continuing thanks to **Mike Bauer, Patti Speelmon, Marsha Williams, Penny Barton, Janae Dale, Gail Swan, Jennifer Costitch-Thompson, and Howard Fennimore** for their contributions to the organization of the Plant Clinic.

Martha Fortunati, Plant Clinic Coordinator



Garden Hints

It's a struggle to resist, but avoid digging your soil until it dries out a little. Check your soil by squeezing a handful. If it holds together, it's still too wet. The soil should crumble apart slightly.

Until the earth warms up, use a knee pad for warmth while working in the garden. Your knees will thank you!

Before you start planting indoors or out, be wary of fungal and bacterial contamination. Wash your tools and containers with soapy water, rinse, and then rinse again in a 10% bleach solution. Dry the tools thoroughly.

Here are some great sites to explore, for tomato tips and more:

http://westernfarmpress.com/mag/farming_processing_to_mato_trials/ (growing tomatoes)

<http://seedrack.com/10.html> (unusual tomatoes)

<http://extension.uidaho.edu/idahogardens/> (landscape & garden)

"Swap Meet"

Time to go through the seed packets and tidy up the houseplants! If you have anything to give away or swap (of a garden nature only, please), this is the place to list it. Swaps need to be in to Kit by the first of the month to be listed in that month's *The Garden Gate*.

▶ Jay D. Baker has 5 packages of pink foxglove and each package contains 1/4 tsp of seed. Call him at 263-3026.

▶ Kit Cooley has one packet of Jetsonic Hybrid Tomato seeds (20 seeds) and 3 *Sansevieria* (snakeplant) houseplants in 4 -inch pots. Looking for medicinal perennials. Call her at 265-5706.



Shouting at a bud does not make a flower blossom more. ~Myoki Lehrhaupt