

The Garden Gate



edited by Kit Cooley (the_editrix@yahoo.com)

December 2009

Solstice celebrations and winter dreams

As the gardens sleep we move indoors to winter and rest until next year. There will be new plants and new projects, new board members and a new newsletter editor/editrix. Enjoy the Christmas party photos (thanks to Bob Blair).

Happy New Year to all!

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

President's Note



To the Dirty Fingernail Crowd,

This is my last letter to you as president. Zoe Bolton will be writing to you next month. I really enjoy the Master Gardener Association and was glad to be involved as president – most of the time. But I am very glad to be moving back into the general membership. Thank you

for your support this past year, and a special thank you to the Association for the beautiful orchid and the perfect earrings. The orchid is blooming today as I am writing this! I have always been fascinated by the leaves of the ginkgo tree, so the leaf earrings are very special.



The Christmas party was a great success: Wonderful food, great gifts, and good company! The decorations were very festive. Special thanks to Ann Warwick, Mike and Marybeth Williams, Bob Blair, and Zoe Bolton. They had the tables and chairs set up and the room decorated in record time.

“Wonder” Warwick deserves special recognition! She bought all the food supplies, decorating supplies, brought the boughs for the tables, Penny’s decorations, the Christmas tree, and much more. Thanks, Ann! I want to thank all of you who stayed afterwards and helped with the cleanup. Things were put away and the room was cleaned in no time. It is a treat to be involved in a function where so many people step in and help to make it a great success. I would especially like to thank all the family members who pitch in and help. Certainly you are all Honorary Members! We are very grateful for all you do.

All of you deserve recognition for being a part of this great organization. The Bonner County Master Gardeners Association has a gift of new garden gloves for every member. That’s a second pair for the new members who got a pair in October at graduation. If you didn’t make it to the party, stop by the office to pick them up.

We missed those of you who planned to attend the party on Saturday rather than Friday night. If you are near Mike Williams and he smells especially fragrant, ask him about

his Raspberry Cream gift! And if you want to escape this cold weather, Ann has a "Beach Party" she will share: sand, Sponge Bob, and all.

Thank you for your votes on the changes to the by-laws. They were overwhelmingly approved. Zoe sent the new by-laws along with all the documentation created by her and by Ann Warwick for our 501(c)(3) tax exemption status. We'll let you know when we receive the approval.

Wow! Single digit weather and below tonight! I hope I mulched those perennials enough.
Happy Holidays,

Janae Dale, President

To the beach, everyone!



Agent's Corner



Happy Holidays!

Although it is pretty quiet in the Master Gardener Program this time of year, we are working on setting up Master Gardener training for 2010. So far we have about 10 applications for new MGs and I am sure more will be coming. If you know of anyone applying, please remind them that the deadline is January 15. Since the program will start promptly on January 28, I will have to be very firm on that deadline date.

That reminds me: if any of you would like to help interview the new MG applicants by donating a half day of your time, please drop me a line.



This year's training program will operate in much the same way as last year. Two changes include an extra session on vegetable culture and one on cover crops and composting. We will make seats available to CMGs the same as last year; expect a letter in the mail as soon as I get speakers lined up.

Notable dates for the program:

January 28: Start of MG training

April 15: End of MG training

April-May: Look for some fun and educational tours

All summer: Continuation of the popular potluck visits to fellow MG's gardens.

I am looking forward to an outstanding 2010. Meantime, stay warm, enjoy the company of your loved ones, and we'll see you next year!

Mike



Important Dates

January 6, Wednesday, BCMGA meeting, 9 a.m., UI Extension Office

January 15, Friday, deadline for 2010 MG Program applications

January 28, Thursday, Start of 2010 MG Program training, UI Extension Office

February 3, Wednesday, BCMGA meeting, 9 a.m., UI Extension Office

March 3, Wednesday, BCMGA meeting, 9 a.m., UI Extension Office


April 7, Wednesday, BCMGA meeting, 9 a.m., UI Extension Office


April 15, Thursday, End of MG Program training


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




Announcements


 **Garden visits** for next year are being planned. Anyone interested in hosting a potluck and informal tour, please contact **Ann Warwick** or **Becky Reynolds**. Your garden does not have to be perfect in order for you to volunteer!

 **BCMGA website URLs:** Here are two ways to get to the BCMGA website: www.BonnerCountyMGA.org and www.Sandpoint.org/bcmastergardeners

 **BCMGA Bible updated:** Please make use of this valuable resource (in the Plant Clinic office). Thanks to **Ann Warwick** and **Bob Blair** for the new Committee Checklist, a form that will help committee chairs organize future activities. If you have chaired a committee in the past and have some information to share, please contact either Ann or Bob to have it included in the binder.

 **Seed and Garden Catalogs:** It will soon be that time of year when we can enjoy our gardening vicariously through reading our seed catalogs as we plan and replan next spring's garden. There you are, looking out the win-

dow at the cold, frozen ground, drinking a cup of hot tea, daydreaming of digging in the earth and planting those seeds and plants. Let me know if you have any favorite catalogs from companies you know to be reliable, and next month we can have a list of them in the newsletter. Please send me the name of the catalog, their web address, and why you like it. You may submit more than one, if you want to **Janae Dale**.

 **Changed by-laws:** Janae received more than enough votes to approve the changes to the BCMGA by-laws. Please see the copy of the changed by-laws in the MG Bible.



Martha will be encouraging correct Plant Clinic procedure with more vigor.

Annual Awards

Several deserving awards were given out at the Christmas party.

Leadership awards were presented to members deserving special recognition for all they did during the year: **Brenda Fletcher**, managing the booth at the Home and Garden Show, **Mikey Haven** and **Gail Swan**, redesigning and improving the Learning Garden, **Penny Barton**, organizing and conducting the Garden Tour, **Gail Locke**, planning and constructing the Fair Booth with its sweep of awards, and **Jennifer Costich-Thompson**, teaching classes and instructing in the plant clinic.

These activities required long hours and lots of energy,

but couldn't have been accomplished without the time and work of so many members, and awards were given to those members with the most hours. New CMGs with the most hours were **Marlisa Keyes, Mike Williams, and Briana Staglund**. **Richard Bower** contributed the most Plant Clinic hours of anyone in the new class.

Returning CMGs who contributed the most hours were **Martha Fortunati, Jan Griffiths, Liz Kuntz, Jay D. Baker, Linda Kirchmann, Bob Blair, and Howard Fennimore**.

Certainly the officers who served this year made significant contributions with their time and effort, and deserve special recognition as officers, as well as volunteers on many projects. Those who volunteered to be officers deserve a special thank you: **Ann Warwick**, Vice President; **Kit Cooley**, Secretary and Editor of the Garden Gate; and **Zoe Bolton**, Treasurer.

Thank you all for a great year!
Janae Dale, President

2010 Board Members/Officers

- Zoe Bolton, President
- Ann Warwick, Vice-President
- Bob Blair, Treasurer
- Howard Fennimore, Board Member
- Mikey Haven, Board Member
- Marlisa Keyes, Board Member
- Willie Millard, Board Member
- Lynn Pietz, Board Member
- Gail Swan, Board Member
- Mike Williams, Board Member

(Secretary position to be determined.)



Garden Hints

Oh, deer! At Don Childress' class on native planting, he mentioned some deer fence that he uses. Here is the information about the fencing and where to obtain it:

Benner's Garden deer fence is a high strength, weather resistant polypropylene mesh grid that is virtually invisible. Their standard 7.5 foot perimeter garden fencing is useful for most gardening situations. They have available a total fencing system, including posts. Contact www.bennersgardens.com or 1-800-244-3337.

Don says that he has had the fencing up for 8 years, and it holds up very well. Thanks, Don, for the tip!

Winter gardening ingenuity. A rotisserie chicken container makes a great window sill mini greenhouse for starting or propagating plants. It will hold two four packs easily, with space around them. To decrease humidity or heat, simply prop the lid open with a pencil or popsicle stick. Use this to propagate plants from cuttings or to start seeds indoors. The container has a second life and the trash can remains less full. (Ann)

Of Interest

Canadian Willow Trees in space, eh?

The Canadian Willow is the first tree that has ever been sent to the International Space Station. Typically the fast-growing Arapadopsis plants (mustard plants) are grown.

The reason given for growing trees in space? "Wood within tree stems, branches and roots is not uniform. Wood originates from cambium cells, which also produce reaction wood. Reaction wood is produced in stems and



branches when they grow at an inclination from vertical. There are two fundamentally different kinds of reaction wood: compression wood and tension wood.

The [space station] crew will actually loop the wood stems from young willow trees and let them grow for a couple of months in microgravity. The crew will then harvest the trees at different times so that the scientists can see the growth of the cells in the compression and tension wood. As with the human body, plants tend to grow differently when gravity is taken away. What the scientists hope will happen is that they can determine which type of reaction wood needs to be suppressed chemically to create stronger trees and, in turn, help us to understand how wood forms on Earth.

Environmentally, most of us know that trees exist as a carbon reservoir, they also serve as a water conduit from soil to their leaves enabling the water table level to be managed. Trees also clean the soil of toxic elements. ”

These trees (below) are growing now on the International Space Station.



For a video of this endeavor see:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMUxdwdBTSg>

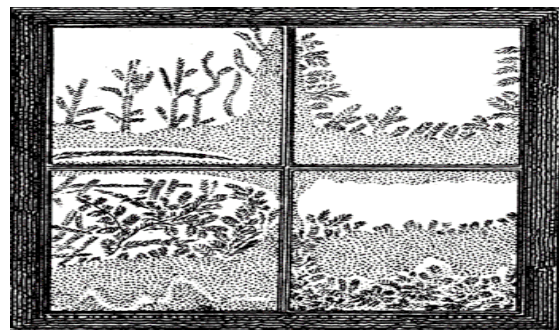
(Thank you to Jan Griffiths and Zoe Bolton for this submission.)



Who will get the dreaded chipper/shredder next?

Book Review: *The Informed Gardener*

A respected friend recently gave me a book that I would like to share with all of you. *The Informed Gardener* by Linda Chalker-Scott should be a must read for everyone who ever works in the Plant Clinic. Chalker-Scott writes a column for the Washington State Master Gardener magazine, debunking gardening myths, and stressing the need for scientific research. The book is a collection of many of her columns. They are well written and an entertaining, informative read. I find myself wanting to share my copy of the book with everyone, but I want it back when you're done! (Janae)



Antisthenes says that in a certain faraway land the cold is so intense that words freeze as soon as they are uttered, and after some time then thaw and become audible, so that words spoken in winter go unheard until next summer.

--Plutarch (Moralia)