

The Garden Gate

February 2004



COMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE:

- February 17: 2004 MG class begins*
- March 1: BCMGA Board of Directors meeting (all members welcome) 9:00 am Creekside Medical Center*
- March 13-14: Bonner County Home and Garden Show*
- June 17-19: Regional Conference North Idaho College*

Salutations



by Jan Rumore

AND calling all Master Gardeners! Your MG Board now has an official phone tree, five self-declared somewhat gabby women (the men declined the opportunity but not because they're not gabby). We'll be calling each and every one of you before February is spent, active members, associates, historic and long lost but not forgotten MGs. We plan to swell our ranks and issue the fattest membership directory the BCMGA has ever seen. There is much on our agenda, and we need all of us working together to get it done.

February always seems a rather lackluster month to me, perhaps because it is often gray and a bit short on days, albeit the only month to throw in an extra day every so often. But how curious that Groundhog Day dawned bright and sunny, an incontestable shadow maker! If that means six more weeks of winter, I figure most of us will be heartened by the news.

This year we will also enjoy the pairing of Valentine's Day with Presidents Day weekend, a sort of love, kisses, cards and flowers, remember, and honor weekend

which also happens to be one of the busiest ski weekends of the year. WOW! Now throw a little sun on that mix and stand back.

AND speaking of standing, have you noticed the remarkable number of herons standing resolutely by their fishing holes on Denton Slough? I see their human counterparts scattered about on the ice near the Longbridge, and I marvel at such patience and persistence. Is the fishing that good, or is this more of a dedicated winter ritual?

AND speaking of ritual and dedication and February, this is seed catalog season. As we count down to spring we'll be paging through the new garden offerings, listing varieties, comparing prices and writing orders, a fine ritual for the gardener's soul which builds the hope and expectation of spring to come. So, let all of us indulge, and as we do so, plant a few added delights for the MG Plant sale in May . . . Because we'll be calling.

Happy Valentines Day



Over 50 million roses (mostly red) are given on a typical Valentine's Day. Hope you get one.

We Won (almost)

By Don Childress

On January 16, 2004, many brave Master Gardner souls challenged the elements and participated in the Sandpoint Winter Carnival parade. The "float" was put together in Fields Cobb's warm shop the day before. A few new twists were added this year that undoubtedly led to our nationally recognized third place finish and a request by parade officials that we make a second lap of the parade route. Yes, we got a trophy for third place!

A public thank you to Fields for use of his trailer, auto, props and shop, again. Kudos to Pat VanV's husband who made us a beautiful poster with the parade theme connecting the past (organic waste) to the future (compost). A tip of the garden hat to our 'flower children' Fields and Valle and a special thanks to Pat Van Volkinburg who again stole the show as the flaming scarecrow. Thanks to all the volunteers who made the whole experience so much fun and to Penny Barton for the donation to purchase the hay bale seats.

Editors note: I believe what put us over the top was our own Don Childress bravely bumping atop Field's antique buggy seat coaxing and whipping the wagon(eer) on to the heights of glory.

Regional Conference

By Don Childress

The Master Gardner Regional conference to be held in Coeur d'Alene on June 17th-19th, 2004, is coming together. Brochures and applications will be available in March.

A few of the programs to be presented include, Landscaping with Native Plants with Toni Fitzgerald; Herbs with our own Lois Wythe; Ornamental Grasses; Propagating Plants; Greenhouse Design, construction and use; Lawn Culture; Mushrooms of the Inland Northwest; Organic Gardening with Diane Green; plus many others. The conference will be held at the North Idaho College campus and dorm rooms will be available for those that want to stay over. The cost of the rooms is a very affordable \$12.00 per night. Mark you calendars and plan to attend.

Procedures and Fact Sheet for Events/Committee

by Rita Janisse

Have you thought about becoming more active in any of our yearly events, but weren't sure what was involved with those that interested you; or where to begin once you'd volunteered? Are you the chairman the same committee every year but wish to pass the lessons of "how-to-do-it" along to someone else? Our new Procedures Sheet aims to address both of these issues. By keeping a written account of each event or committee through the years, it will be easier to see how it has been done in past years; what worked, what didn't, the steps taken, and where to go for assistance.

We're asking that members who officiates any event or committee take a few minute to fill-out our simple (and short) questionnaire. Keep in mind that any additional comments or suggestions would be greatly appreciated. Also accepted are suggestions to create a better Procedures Sheet. We want to hear from you!

Rita will try to stay on top of who's heading what and to make sure that everybody who needs the Procedures Sheet will get one. If for some reason you don't receive the sheet, please contact Rita or Bob and one will be sent to you. Then, please, return the completed sheet to the Extension office anyway that is convenient. If an email version works better for you, just email Rita and she'll send you one. You can return the completed form to her.

All returned sheets will be compiled into a binder according to event or committee and will be available to the membership for viewing. It's our hope that this will eliminate much of the guesswork often involved in chairing an event or committee and add to the number of Master Gardeners who participate in these fun and rewarding activities.

Rita says: Spring is just around the corner (I promise!) While designing your next garden, please think about planting a few extra plants for the Spring Plant Sale. The entire organization benefits from your donations. So read on



Tips Tried and True

Starting Seeds: The Problem:

Direction for planting flea-sized seeds state "sow 1-2 seeds in rows spaced 1 1/2 inches apart and cover with 1/8 inch soil." I couldn't pick up just 1-2 seeds and I couldn't tell when I had 1/8 inch of soil over the top of the seeds that I couldn't see anyway.

My Solution:

Pre-cut match sticks of wooden tooth picks into 1/4 inch lengths. Moisten one end slightly and touch the seed mass to pick up 1-2 seeds, then lay the match-seed assembly on your potting soil. Enjoy the visibility of the match sticks (seeds) in preparation for laying down the next one, all in a row. When the seeds are strategically placed, evidenced by the visible match sticks, sprinkle soil to just cover the tops of the match sticks, viola, 1/8 inch soil covers your seeds.

Good Luck.....Don Childress

Seed Starting Timetable

By Michelle Reichelt (source The Upbeet Gardener)

Growing Vegetables

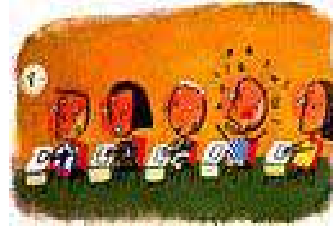
- 12-14 weeks: onions, leeks, chives, celery, globe artichoke
- 8-12 weeks: green onions, peppers, eggplant, lettuce
- 6-8 weeks: Swiss chard, mustard spinach, Oriental greens, cucumbers, tomatoes
- 4-6 weeks: cucumbers, cabbage family crops (cauliflower, cabbage, broccoli, kale)
- 2-4 weeks: melon, okra, pumpkins, squash

Growing Flowers:

- 20 weeks: fuchsia
- 12 to 14 weeks: pansies, lobelia, coleus, impatiens, poppies
- 8-12 weeks: snapdragons, alyssum, petunia
- 6-8 weeks: calendula, daisy, nemesia, ageratum and other hardy annuals
- 4-6 weeks: African daisy, marigolds, zinnias, cockscombs, godetia, nasturtium, bachelor button, dahlia, canary bird vine, sweet peas and other tender annuals

Growing Herbs:

- 12-14 weeks: chives, oregano, mint, yarrow, parsley
- 8-12 weeks: thyme, chamomile, feverfew, valerian, catnip
- 6-8 weeks: dill, chervil, coriander, lemon balm, sage, arugula, savory, basil



Facilitating a Master Gardener Class

Bob Wilson

Extension Educator/Horticulture

When a class is being presented in the Master Gardener Training, the facilitator plays a key role. Although their presence and work may be hardly noticed, without their efforts, the presentation can run into difficulty. A good facilitator will look after all the details of the presentation and the needs of the speaker to ensure that the presentation goes cleanly and smoothly.

Prior to the Class

Approximately 2 weeks before the class, you should contact the speaker. We have asked the speakers to send us information on their needs as well as some background information about themselves. Not all speakers comply with this, so you will need to contact the extension office first to find out if they have sent anything in.

- ◆ Introduce yourself and let them know you will be facilitating their class.
- ◆ Confirm the date and time with the speaker.
- ◆ The following is necessary if they have not already sent it in:
 - Audio-visual needs
 - Personal background information (current employment, education, experience in field, etc.). You will need this for the introduction.
 - Handouts - these need to be in to the extension office at least 2 days before the class so copies can be made. Remind the speaker of this if it has not already been taken care of.
 - How do they want the room set up? For PowerPoint presentations or overheads, the tables will need to face the screen. Do they need an additional table? Do they want a chair?
 - Are there any other materials they will need us to provide?

Setting up for the Class

- ◆ Arrive at the extension office at 8:15 so you can meet the speaker when they arrive.
- ◆ If it has not been started, plug in the coffee pot and hot water pot.
- ◆ Check the room to see if tables and chairs are set up properly.
- ◆ Introduce yourself to the speaker when they arrive.
- ◆ Help the speaker carry any materials in to the classroom and get everything set up.

Introducing the Speaker

Introducing the speaker often is something that is overlooked or under appreciated by the facilitator. Some feel the best thing they can do is announce the speaker and get out of the way. However, a good facilitator will take a few minutes to let the class know something about the speaker as well as the topic. In a few sentences you should try to address why **this subject** is important to Master Gardeners and why **this person** is qualified to address this subject. Although it is not necessary to review every accomplishment a speaker may have, take time to highlight those that are most relevant. Their current position, past experience and education all may provide material for an introduction. A good introduction should convey your respect for the speaker to the audience.



During the Class

Once the class is underway, the facilitator's role is to make sure the needs of the speaker and the needs of the class are met.

- ◆ Offer the speaker a beverage before the class.
- ◆ Handouts - distribute these as the speaker wishes.
- ◆ If the speaker is using overheads, offer to help change these so they can stand in front of the class.
- ◆ If the speaker is not watching the clock, let them know when the class needs a break or when time is running out.
- ◆ During the break, offer to get some food and a drink for the speaker. Sometimes they get swamped with student questions and aren't able to make it to the food table.

After the Class

- ◆ Lead the class in applauding the speaker.
- ◆ Remind students to fill out the class evaluations.
- ◆ Personally thank the speaker!
- ◆ Help the speaker pack up materials and carry them out to their car.
- ◆ Make sure the food area is cleaned up (the students bringing food are responsible for this). This includes unplugging the coffee and hot water, and cleaning the coffeepot.

If at any time you run into difficulties that you cannot resolve, the office staff is always ready to help. Above all, the role of the facilitator is to make the speaker as welcome and as comfortable as possible. If the speaker feels there is someone there supporting them, it makes their job a lot easier.

2004 Master Gardener Training

Tues. & Fri. 8:45 am to 12:30 pm

Date	Chapter	Topic	Instructor	Facilitator
Feb. 17	1	Orientation	Bob, Valle, Jan	none
Feb. 20	none	Intro to Horticulture	Bob Wilson	Helen C.
Feb. 24	2	Basic Botany	Jennifer C-T	Penny Barton
Feb. 27	4	Plant Propagation	Laurie Brown	Rita Janisse
March 2	none	Plant Identification	Bob Wilson	Pat M.
March 5	4	Soils and Fertilizers	Valdasue Steele	Don C.
March 9	7	Organic Gardening	Diane Green	Marge Carlson
March 12	19,20	Vegetables	Pat VanVolkinburg	Parise W.
March 16	21,22	Fruit Trees	Dan Barney	Pam H.
March 19	18	Herbaceous Ornamentals	Mary Reisenauer	Marsha W.
March 23	14	Lawns	Jack Zimmer	Barb M.
March 26	16	Tree Planting Guidelines, Landscape Plant Problem Diagnosis	Bob Tripepi	Jan R.
*March 30	17	Woody and Native Landscape Plants/	Bob Wilson, Valle N	
*April 2	17	Pruning	Rich Del Carlo	Michelle R.
April 6	8	Pesticide Management	Ed Bechinski	Jan R.
April 9	13	Weeds	Richard Metz	Alice B.
April 13	12	Plant Disease Management	Fields Cobb	Bill Lamson
April 16	10	Entomology	Carol Randall	Penny B.
April 20	none	Presentations	class	
April 23	none	Review Exercise	Bob Wilson	
April 27	none	Plant Clinic Orientation	Bob Wilson	
*April 30	23	Greenhouses & Tour	Valle Novak, Bob Wilson	

*Classes will be held outdoors. Be prepared for cold or wet weather.