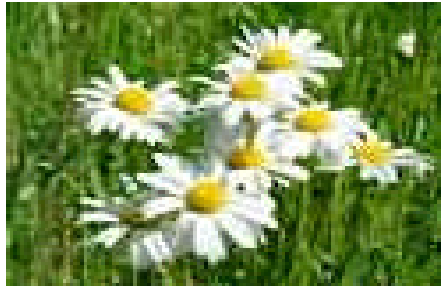


The Garden Gate



July 2003

COMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE:

August 20-24: Master Gardeners' booth at the Bonner County Fair
(reserve some time to help at our booth)



THE PRESIDENT'S BLOOMERS

It's amazing that with over seventeen hours of daylight I still don't seem to have enough time for gardening. I am sure that most of you have plenty to do outdoors without reading a long article from me so I will only outline some points that came up at our last Board Meeting.

At our monthly meetings we receive a report from our treasurer, Bill Lamson, detailing the expenses and revenues for the Master Gardeners (MG). According to the plus side of the ledger, our largest fund raiser is our Spring Plant Sale. The evening Horticulture series and Master Gardener Classes comprise the second best sources of revenues for us. We're hoping to fill the coffers a bit more next year by adding two more annual fund raising events: a Sandpoint Garden Tour and a Garden Design Raffle.

And how do the Master Gardeners benefit from the fund raisers and events that generate monies for the MG?. In the past year, we purchased a wireless microphone to be used at meetings and events; we bought additional books for the MG library; and these items: a new banner, skirting and linen for a display table; gifts for Graduation and Christmas party; landscaping plants; marketing, supplies and postage and the scholarship funding for the Mini College event in Oregon.

An upcoming expense will be for the purchase of signage for the plants and trees around the extension center. The signs for the flower gardens in the front and back of the extension center will help to showcase our native plants as well as all of the perennials that have been planted. While on that subject I must point

out these flower beds need a kind gardener or gardeners who will weed, deadhead and put all of the flowers to bed in the fall. I have been maintaining these beds for the past two years. Due to several additional gardening responsibilities, I have been unable to give them the attention they require. We are looking for someone who will oversee or organize a group of volunteers who will maintain the beds. Please try to help. If you can, please send me an email at mcdreich@earthlink.net.

At our last meeting we also discussed the idea of adding more evening classes for a Fall Horticulture series. I'll have more information on the proposal in the next newsletter. A question was raised whether current Master Gardeners must pay the \$5.00 fee for each horticulture class. The answer is "yes" since these classes are our second most important source of income. Only the emeritus members do not have to pay for the classes. The fees we charge defray the cost of supplies and expenses (e.g., for printing, etc.). Anyone who has attended these classes will surely agree that the fee is minimal compared to what one derives from them.

Another topic we discussed were the approved volunteer hours for community services. The approved programs are the Arboretum, Extension Office landscaping, Hospital Hospice Garden and the Priest River library and entrance gardens. And, don't forget to turn in your volunteer sheets to the Extension Office at the end of each month – that's a reminder to me as well.

Enjoy the extra long hours of sunlight (with sunscreen and shades, of course!), the "goodies" in your gardens and especially the eye candy of beautiful flowers, shrubs and trees.

Michelle

Michelle Reichelt

Plant Clinic

The Plant Clinic schedule is booked through July, but many dates are open on August and September. At the last board meeting it was decided not to staff the plant clinic during the county fair (Aug. 19 & 21). All other dates need volunteers in the AM & PM. Please call the extension office to sign up (263-8511).

Volunteer Hours

If you have not already done so, please send in a record of your completed volunteer hours and face-to-face contacts for this year through June 30.

Master Gardener Mini-College

Selections have been made for those who will receive scholarships to the MG Mini-College being held this summer in Corvallis, Oregon. Five scholarships were awarded in northern Idaho, twenty statewide. Don Childress will be attending from Bonner County and will be joined by Master Gardeners from Boundary, Kootenai and Latah Counties. Congratulations Don!!

BCMGA July Board Meeting Highlights:

OLD BUSINESS:

- Bob reported that 11 persons are currently signed up for the Insect and Disease Diagnostic course. There is a cap of 16 participants so it looks to be a great series.
- Michelle proposed that the Garden Tour fundraiser be planned for 2004 to allow adequate time for examining options and logistics. Unanimous approval.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The Bonner County Fair will be on August 18-19. Booth setup will be on August 18-19; Beth Evans will Chair. It was decided not to staff the Plant Clinic that week.
- Susan Daffron will now be in charge of our website. Thank you to Rita Janisse for the set up and excellent work you have done.
- Michelle proposed the raffle of a 10 x 10 flowerbed with the Association supplying plants and labor. Discussion will continue; an idea is for members to donate plants in addition to extra plants from the Spring Plant Sale.
- Michelle requested that a volunteer take over the flower beds at the Extension Office. Thank you Michelle for the generous donation you have given for the past 2 years.
- A phone tree will be established using the book of current membership.
- Volunteer hours were approved for: 1) flower beds at the West Bonner Library in Priest River, 2) the CREATE place 'Secret Garden' for small meetings in Newport, WA and 3) yard work for a disabled woman in Newport. Community hours are acceptable for non-profits but not for private business.

TIPS TRIED AND TRUE

I was greatly entertained last winter by a beautiful snowshoe hare – but a knew I was in for trouble when I spotted him with a 'lady friend' this spring. The inevitable consequence – adorable little bunnies munching on my adorable little plants. Sweet but not acceptable. A few shavings of Irish Spring bath soap around the base solved the problem – now they are happily eating a steady diet of dandelions and clover. Pat



Wild Greens

Greetings Master Gardeners

Summer is upon us; what joy, what frustration! First the frustration...limited water for all of the wonderful growing things in our gardens, gophers, slugs, gophers, cabbage loopers, gophers, so much to do and so little time, and did I mention gophers? Oh, for a magic eye, which could see right through the soil and mulch to where they hide and allude capture in the myriad traps we set. I've gotta tell you, 'Have-A-Heart' traps don't live at our house. Sure, I can just picture myself taking a darling little gopher outside of the garden fence and saying, "...now, you just run along and find yourself another home...like a good little gopher!" Why would any gopher in it's right, if not pea-sized, mind, chose the woods over our succulent, friable, cool (in the mornings and evenings) garden. If I could only redeem the hours spent on my knees probing freshly dug holes where once pea vines, cabbages, and carrots flourished. But, enough of the frustration of gardening in the country... on to the joy.

The abundant spring rains triggered a glorious display of wild roses, ceanothus, saskatoon, syringa, and lupine in our neck of the woods. Walking through the yard down to the vegetable garden has been an olfactory delight. And, now the sweet peas are just hitting their stride. Oxeye daisies adorn the fields, nodding their heads in the early evening breeze. Black-chinned and Rufous hummers regularly visit the feeder and the wrens (house wrens not winter wrens, as I mistakenly reported last month) which nested in a box on the garden fence are lingering nearby caring for their fledglings in an old slash pile in the meadow. I am taking particular delight in the perennials which I so lovingly raised from seed last year... awaiting their first blossoming season this summer. My, oh my...foxglove in rainbow hues, purple penstemmon and monarda, ruby yarrow, sunshine-golden rudbeckia...our garden palate is wild and crazy, subtle and sublime. Added to the glories too numerous to mention, are the returning wildflowers filling the barrel in which they grew last summer~ an enduring gift from dear Lois Wythe. I often pause and reflect on the abundant pleasure our summer garden brings in spite of the headaches, heartaches, and months of hard work. Certainly, you must have stories similar to mine. Anyone who gardens can join in the 'gardener's chorus'; the song is the same, the verses individual and unique.

The time is upon us to plan our fall garden and begin planting the cool weather crops. It is wise to count backward from the first expected frost to when the seeds should be started. Cloches and cold frames will be handy to help ward off early, unexpected cold snaps and prolong the growing season. Plants like spinach do better in cooler weather, their internal clocks preferring shortened days. They would appreciate extra shade and cool feet if started in the next several weeks. And, don't forget to draw a garden map of where plants were sited this summer...it will help you with next seasons placement.

As the day folds up its light and tucks it into the nighttime sky, I find myself ready to sit a spell and marvel at the wonders of this season. Crickets are singing in the grass, the cats are draped languidly over the back of the couch after a full day of naps and forays into the meadow; the swainson thrush flings its reedy, plaintive melody heavenward. It is time to meditate on the sweetness of life and prepare for another splendid day.

*Happy summer, fellow gardeners.
J'nene Wade Master Gardener*

