

# The Garden Gate



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May 2009

## Plant Clinic is open!

If you have not signed up for your hours yet, please do so. There are openings in August and September to be filled. For your convenience, included in this edition of *The Garden Gate* is May's Plant Clinic schedule. The Learning Garden has had a fabulous makeover! Stop by the Extension to see the changes, and please contact Mikey Haven with donations of seeds, plants, and time. Volunteer opportunities abound: the Healing Garden (Valle Novak), McKinnick Trail (Jan Griffiths), and the Fair Booth (Gail Locke) all need attention. Time to get busy!

**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,

Is anyone out there reading this? Why aren't you outside in your garden? Perhaps there is a bit of a lull now until the warm season vegetables and the annuals can be planted. The rainy days are perfect for transplanting, though. I planted potatoes a couple weeks ago. There were blooming dandelions in my lawn, and Pat VonVolkinberg said that means it is time.

The plant clinic is open! Put on your detective hats and start investigating. Certified Master Gardeners, please make the new Master Gardener trainees feel welcome when you work with them in the clinic.

Penny has invited everyone to see her garden sometime in June. We are still hoping for more members to open their gardens for a visit. I promise no one will be judging it! Please don't wait until your garden is perfect. No one would want to see it if it were. Think of the joy you can bring other members when they see the flaws in your gardening performance. Hmm. After all that, am I obligated

to do it, too? Believe me, you wouldn't be intimidated. My garden is one of those that would bring joy and a sense of superiority to all who visit. Let me know if you are willing to open your garden to everyone.

Keep looking down,

Janae

## Agent's Corner



### Mike's Research Notes

#### ***Death of Organic Farming and Regulation of Backyard Gardens: True?***

Some internet sites are claiming that backyard gardens will be involved and that organic farming will disappear if the 2009 Food Safety Modernization Act (HR 875) is passed.

According to FactCheck.org, a nonpartisan, nonprofit "consumer advocate" for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics, the bill proposes to split the US Food and Drug Administration, creating a separate Food Safety Administration in charge of food safety and labeling to prevent food-borne illnesses. It is aimed at food sold in supermarkets and does not address organic gardening, pesticides, farmers' markets or backyard gardens. Organic farming is regulated by the USDA under its National Organic Program, not the FDA. There is no wording in the bill that addresses animal GPS tracking or seed regulation. The bill is currently in the House.

The Factcheck article can be found at:

[http://www.factcheck.org/askfactcheck/would\\_a\\_new\\_bill\\_in\\_congress\\_make.html](http://www.factcheck.org/askfactcheck/would_a_new_bill_in_congress_make.html)

A summary and full text of HR 875 can be found at:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-875&tab=summary>

### ***Potential Hazards of Tires as Raised Beds***

I understand a comment was made by an audience member at the recent "Potagers" class stating that ketones were a health hazard from tires used in a garden. Since many of us make recommendations for using tires as raised beds for crops such as potatoes, I thought I would address this issue. Research on the hazards of tire crumbs in nursery potting mixes has been fairly well documented. One study conducted by the University of Connecticut found zinc in concentrations 74 times that of normal soil. However, no research has been found that came to the conclusion that whole tires used in a garden are a health hazard.

### ***SWAT Raid on Food Co-op: True?***

I did some checking on the "raid" that was discussed after the BCMGA meeting on May 5.

A confrontation developed when Ohio health officials put the Manna Storehouse in Lorain County, Ohio, under investigation to determine whether it is a retail food business without a license. Many internet postings have indicated the Lorain County Sheriff's office used SWAT team tactics to hold the family hostage for nine hours. This turns out to be not true: the search warrant was executed over three hours. There was no SWAT team and the Sheriff's office does not own semiautomatic weapons. One shotgun was used in the search but no family member was held at gunpoint.

(Source: Cleveland Plain Dealer, 12/10/2008, <http://www.cleveland.com/lorain/plaindealer/index.ssf?/base/lorain/1228901590175700.xml&coll=2>, referenced 5/7/2009).

### ***On a lighter note: Does the brand of beer make a difference as a slug bait?***

There is no doubt this question has kept you up nights. Good thing Colorado State University Entomologist Whitney Cranshaw conducted research on that very topic in 1998. He tested the efficacy of several beers and concoctions and came up with these results, from most effective to least effective:

1. Kingsbury Malt Beverage (a near-beer from Heileman Brewing Company in Wisconsin)
2. Michelob
3. Budweiser
4. Bud Light
5. Old Milwaukee
6. Coors Light
7. Schaefer
8. Miller
9. Strohs
10. Miller Lite and sugar water/yeast mixture (tie)
11. Coors
12. Pabst Blue Ribbon
13. Rainier
14. Gallo Pink Chablis (sorry all you wine drinkers)
15. Tap water

Budweiser was significantly less effective if it was allowed to go flat.

### ***Congratulations to the 2009 MG Class!***

### ***Happy Gardening!***

Mike



*Mikey, Bob, Howard, and Mike take a break in the Learning Garden.*

## Important Dates

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)

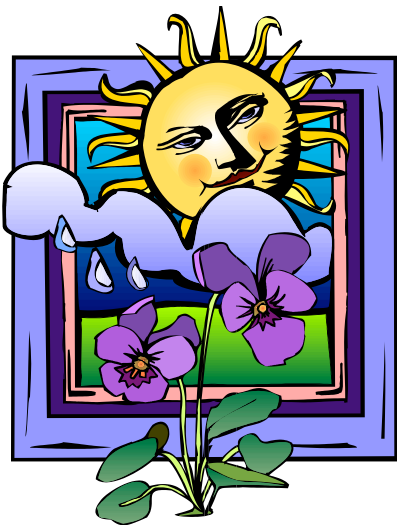
May 25, Monday, Field Trip: Marsha Semar's farm, Mandy Lammer's orchard, and Moose Valley Nursery. Meet at Extension Office, 9 a.m. Bring bag lunch.

May 30, Saturday, 9 a.m., "Spring for the Garden" plant sale and Grand Opening of the Children's Garden, Bonner General Hospital Healing Garden, Brown House

June 2, Tuesday, 9 a.m., BCMG Meeting, Extension Office

September 24-26, WSU Master Gardener Advanced Education Conference, Pullman, <http://mastergardener.wsu.edu/mgfws/>.

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




## Announcements


### Visiting MG Gardens


**Penny Barton** is inviting all Master Gardeners to her garden in June (date TBD). We need volunteers to host informal gatherings at your own gardens in the months of July, August, and September. Let any Board member know if you would like to volunteer.


### Home Horticulture Classes for Fall

Suggestions are needed for topics to present in the Fall. Please contact Gail Swan or Don Childress with your ideas.

 **Master Gardeners Helping Master Gardeners, Annette Smith** is organizing the ongoing effort to help **Tricia Murphy** in getting her perennial beds ready for spring. Please contact **Annette** at 263-3451, if you can help out.

 **Reminder:** The MG email list is for official Master Gardener business use only. Please respect this, and send your emails to Patti Speelmon at the Extension office to be distributed to the membership.

 **Yard Sale:** Our annual sale is coming up in August, the Friday of Fair week. Please gather your plants and gently used items to donate to the sale. If you wish to volunteer, or for information, please call Janae at 265-2205.

 **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 first of the month for that month's issue.

### 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.

## Plant Clinic

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. There are still spaces for CMGs on Friday mornings for research sessions.

Please remember that you must let Patti know when you make a change in the schedule, so that she can note it on the master schedule at the front desk. It is your responsibility to make sure that the schedule posted in the Plant Clinic reflects this change. If you have any questions regarding Plant Clinic procedure, please contact **Martha Fortunati**, Plant Clinic Coordinator at 265-2898.

### Plant Clinic Schedule, May 2009

#### May 12, Tuesday

AM  
CMG: Jennifer Costich-Thompson  
Trainee: April Jackson  
Trainee: Natalie Larson  
PM  
CMG: Jennifer Costich-Thompson  
Trainee: April Jackson  
Trainee: Briana Staglund

#### May 19, Tuesday

AM  
CMG: Annette Smith  
Trainee: April Jackson  
Trainee: Natalie Larson  
PM  
CMG: Kit Cooley  
Trainee: April Jackson  
Trainee: Elissa Wadds

#### May 26, Tuesday

AM  
CMG: Chris McIntosh/Bonnie Cavanaugh  
Trainee: April Jackson  
Trainee: Elissa Wadds  
PM  
CMG: Ken Lunde  
Trainee: April Jackson  
Trainee: Becky Reynolds

#### May 14, Thursday

AM  
CMG: Jan Griffiths  
Trainee: Mike Williams  
Trainee: Natalie Larson  
PM  
CMG: Penny Barton  
Trainee: Mike Williams  
Trainee: Briana Staglund

#### May 21, Thursday

AM  
CMG: Chris McIntosh/Bonnie Cavanaugh  
Trainee: Pamelarose Crawford  
Trainee: Mike Williams  
PM  
CMG: Dorothy Modafferi  
Trainee: Mike Williams  
Trainee: Leona Fox

#### May 28, Thursday

AM  
CMG: Linda Kirchmann  
Trainee: Mike Williams  
Trainee: Marlisa Keys  
PM  
CMG: Linda Kirchmann  
Trainee: Mike Williams  
Trainee: Leona Fox



## Garden Hints

Keep that frost cloth or other cover handy, especially at higher elevations and in cold pockets. We still have the chance of frost for many nights to come, and you will want to protect your tender plantings and seedlings.

## "Swap Meet"

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.



Jay D. Baker & Margerete Holton dig in at the Learning Garden

*When the sun rises, I go to work.  
When the sun goes down, I take my rest.  
I dig the well, from which I drink,  
I farm the soil, which yields my food,  
I share creation; Kings can do no more.*

*~Chinese Proverb*