

The Garden Gate

September 2003



COMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE:

- Sept. 17: Season Extenders - Jennifer Costich-Thompson
Sept. 25: Beautiful Garden in 4 Easy Steps
October 1: Pressed Dried Flowers - Ann Warwick
October 1: Volunteer hours due
October 8: Dried Flower Decorations / Wreaths - Beth Evans
* all Home Horticulture Series held at the Brown house -
Wednesday eves 6-8 pm
October 6: BCMGA Board of Directors Meeting
October 22: Graduation for the Class of 2003

***** IMPORTANT NOTICE:** All volunteer hours must be turned in to the Extension office by October 1. Certification of new members and re-certification of continuing members is critical to our Organization and the University of Idaho sponsor. Certification hours are as follows:

- New Members (35 total) 24 Plant Clinic, 11 community service/ education
- Re-certification: ((18 total) 9 Plant Clinic, 3 education, 4 community service, 2 any of the above.

THE PRESIDENT'S BLOOMERS



Have you ever noted how you feel while gardening and afterwards? Aside from perhaps having sore muscles or a burst blister or two, what about your mood or frame of mind? Whether consciously or through someone else's perception, you probably were aware of pleasant feelings and had a generally good disposition. While not earth shattering, a recent article confirms our suspicion about the benefits of gardening.

In the August 26th edition of the *Wall Street Journal* (of all places), you'll find a worthwhile report on the physical and mental health benefits of gardening. Titled, "Flower Power: How Gardens Improve Your Mental Health," it details some items that I believe are worth sharing. Let me quote and paraphrase some of the findings.

According to the reporter, Michael Waldholz, "a new practice of horticulture therapy is sprouting." Gardens are being built for patients, visitors and even physicians for the express purpose of offering "healing" and "therapy" - both in terms of physical as well as mental help. Studies have shown "...that psychological and environmental factors can affect physiological systems and health status." In one recent study it was discovered that people recovered from stress "within just a few minutes" when they were exposed to "nature."

Especially intriguing is the belief, backed by evidence, that "humans are hard-wired not just to enjoy a pleasant view of nature, but to actually exploit it, much like a drug, to relax and refresh after a stressful experience." In controlled experiments, 112 young adults were subjected to a number of stressful tasks and events. As one would expect, they showed physiological and mental changes that were not exactly pleasant (e.g., high blood pressure, etc.). However, after just a short walk through a nature preserve the one control group's "maladies" were essentially gone while the other group, that went through an urban development, showed little improvement.

There's a lot more to the article than I've related so far. The following references from the article are definitely worth looking into, especially the websites of the American Horticultural Therapy Institute (www.htinstitute.org) and the Portland, Oregon based Legacy Good Samaritan Institute (www.legacyhealth.org). What the preceding institutes and the studies I've briefly touched on have in common is their convincing evidence of the healing effects of nature, in particular, the wonderful nurturing of the spirit through gardens and gardening.

I highly recommend the reading of the article in its entirety. I believe it is available online at the *WSJ* website; if you want, I can share copies of the printed article with you.

So, if you're feeling blue, just remember your green thumb!

Michelle

Michelle Reichelt



GRADUATION NIGHT: Please mark your calendar for Wednesday October 22. This is our annual welcome to new members and the occasion to pat ourselves on the back for a year well done. Come meet the new people and renew friendships with the old. It promises to be a grand event as always with great food and camaraderie. Appreciation will be given to all members and recognition for special categories. Michelle has reserved the Brown House (behind the hospital). Time: 6:00 - 8:00 pm. Please bring a pot luck item to share; drinks will be provided. See you there.

Beautiful Gardens in 4 Easy Steps – Sept. 25

Marianne Binette, garden author, will talk about her strategy for growing lush, attractive gardens. This presentation is sponsored by the WSU Spokane County Master Gardeners as a celebration of their 30th anniversary. It will be held at Spokane Community College Lair Auditorium, 1810 N. Greene St. at 7:00 - 9:00 PM on Thursday, Sept. 25. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 the day of the event. Contact the Spokane County Extension Office at 509-477-2048 for more information.

BCMGA Board Meetings:

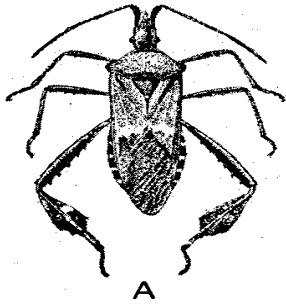
Board meetings are open to all members and we invite and encourage you to attend. Your input and ideas are welcome and of great value to the Organization. Board meetings are held on the first Monday of each month (with the exception of holidays - thence on the 2nd Monday) at 9:00 am at the Creekside Medical Center. This is your association - let's all work together to make it great.

***** **A** special Thank You to Nikki Donaldson for volunteering to maintain the rock garden at the Native Plant Society's Arboretum.

HORTICULTURE NOTES

Bob Wilson

Extension Educator/Horticulture



Bugs, Bugs, Bugs

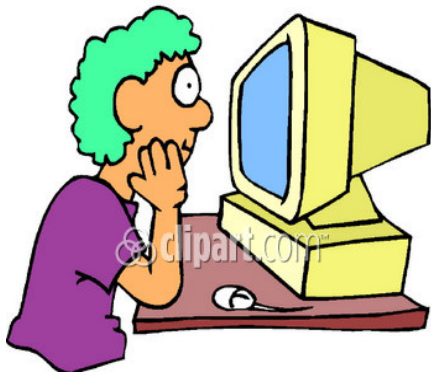
It's that time of year when the bugs start flying and the phones start ringing here in the extension office. The western conifer seed bug adults are out and flying about. They seem to come out of nowhere and find their way into every crevice in every room in the house.

The important thing to keep in mind is that they do not cause any damage to your house and are not a threat to people. They fall under the category "Nuisance Pests" because they love to congregate in and around your house. They will emit an odor when disturbed but are not the same as stink bugs, which are broader bodied insects and much more common in the spring. These are in the leaf-footed bug family and can be recognized by their hind legs which are broader and slightly flattened compared to its other legs.

They are common around here because they feed on the cones of pines and douglas-fir all summer long. In the fall they mature into winged adults and disperse. The damage they cause to these trees is to limit their seed production.

You can use your vacuum to get rid of a lot of them in a hurry, but you will want to discard the vacuum cleaner bag immediately. If stronger measures are called for, pyrethrin containing products can be effective. Application must be made to come in contact with the insect. Carbaryl can also work but extreme caution should be used when applying this product around your home. Always apply pesticides according to instructions on the label and make sure it is registered for home use.

Check It Out - <http://www.sandpoint.org/bcmastergardeners/>



Thanks to Rita Janisse who created our website and Susan Daffron who took it over - our website is wonderful and informative. Articles contributed to the site will count as volunteer hours.



Tips Tried and True

Bill Lamson writes: Like most people, I did not think that Yellow Jackets had any beneficial purpose, unless it would be to clean the leftover hamburger stuck to the barbecue. I was doing my morning garden inspection when I noticed them buzzing around my broccoli plants. Closer inspection revealed that they were eating those little green caterpillars that infest plants of the cabbage family before becoming white butterflies. How can I take advantage of this discovery? Maybe I could put hamburger around my broccoli plants. My dog would like that. I think the idea holds promise, but needs more work.

Jack Frost may be paying us a visit soon. It is time to give the strawberries a security blanket for the long winter ahead. Clean straw works nicely; build the mulch around the plants to 3 or 4 inches between rows, and cover the plants before the first frost comes.

September Board Meeting Highlights:

- Thank you to all who contributed to the Fair Booth - decorations were outstanding as were volunteers who represented MGs to the public
- Graduation night has been set for the Class of 2003
- Home Hort Series \$: These classes are a major source of income for MG Assoc. and need to be fiscally sound. We often are required to pay the instructor, in addition, must purchase materials to be used. It was agreed as reasonable to charge appropriate fees to cover these costs. All members are expected to pay the \$5 registration; additional costs (kept to a bare minimum) will be specific to the materials required and instructor fees.
- Jan proposed we look into a downtown garden display to showcase MGs and to connect our organization with the community at large. Jan will inquire as to the availability and feasibility of the new bank area.
- It was agreed to provide a workshop for Girl Scouts in the spring of 2004. The Coordinator of the Girl Scouts found us through the Fair Booth - a good example of community outreach.
- A decision was made to scholarship teachers for the MG course. This year will be given to a Lake Pend O'reille teacher - this school does a lot of work with our organization.

