



# Master Gardener Newsletter



## Master Gardener Program

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

MARCH 2022  
304 COWLITZ WAY,  
KELSO, WA 98626

### REFLECTIONS FROM THE GARDEN

Gary Fredricks

#### A shining light lost!

“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.” ~ Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss)

Have you ever lost something important to you? The family was on a trip to Disneyland. My son wanted to go on a ride that no one else wanted to. Before he left, he set down his wallet on the bench and told his sister to watch it. While we were waiting, we decided to walk over to a store to shop, and his sister forgot about the wallet. When he got back, it was gone. The \$120 dollars in cash (seemed like a million to him) he earned from mowing lawns was lost. We all felt a deep sense of helplessness and frustration at the situation.

It is a deep sense of loss that I am experiencing again. As many of you know, our Administrative Assistant Carlee and her family are moving to Alaska and will be leaving WSU Extension effective May 27. Carlee started in January of 2017. During her interview, I remember she asked the question, so what do we do at the Extension office? The explanation didn't come close to what she has done over the past 6 years.

What can I say about Carlee? She has given countless hours to support volunteer activities. She is always prepared to help out when needed and eagerly shares her knowledge and talents with others. You can always see her helping others to the best of her ability. Carlee is proactive in taking a problem on and making sure it is taken care of until it is completed. She continually strives to better those around her. It's the reason that everyone around her respects and cares for her. There is not enough space in this newsletter to tell about all the wonderful things she has accomplished with her time in the office. During her time here, she has been a shining example of support for the Master Gardener organization. She certainly will be missed, and we all appreciate everything she did for us.

The rest of the story: With no options left, my son went to the lost and found. A very honest person who we will never know turned in the wallet with all the money, and my son recovered it. My thanks for all the work that MG volunteers continue to serve the people of Cowlitz County. You make a big difference, and your effort is appreciated.

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**WSU Gardening Websites**  
[mastergardener.wsu.edu/](http://mastergardener.wsu.edu/)  
[gardening.wsu.edu](http://gardening.wsu.edu)  
[cowlitz.wsu.edu](http://cowlitz.wsu.edu)

**HortSense Fact Sheets**  
[hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/](http://hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/)

**PestSense Fact Sheets**  
[pestsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/](http://pestsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/)

**Pest Leaflet Series**  
[puyallup.wsu.edu/plantclinic/pls/](http://puyallup.wsu.edu/plantclinic/pls/)

**WSU Educational Materials**  
<http://pubs.wsu.edu>

**WSU Master Gardener**  
[www.cowlitzcomg.com/](http://www.cowlitzcomg.com/)

*Reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities and special needs who contact the office at least two weeks prior to the event. Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.*

# Announcements

**Plant and Insect Clinic** is fielding In-clinic visits, calls, and emails. In office April-Oct: MWF, Nov-March: Wed. only, 10-noon. 360-577-3014 Ext. 1

All of our workshops-with slides, handouts, and videos: [cowlitzcomg.com/workshops-videos](http://cowlitzcomg.com/workshops-videos)

**Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State**  
[Seeds for Thought Newsletter Feb. 2022](#)

## In this issue

If you enjoy the MG articles below,  
PLEASE LET THE AUTHOR KNOW!

- ◆ [Reflections from the Garden](#) Gary Fredricks
- ◆ [2022 Advanced Education Conference](#)
- ◆ [Hands](#)—Louise Bozorth
- ◆ [Worm Composting in Garbage Cans](#)—Sara Clark
- ◆ [Demo Garden Spring Cleaning Day](#)
- ◆ [Plant Propagation Workshop](#)
- ◆ [Dividing and SHARING Perennials](#)--Roxanne Nakamura
- ◆ [What's growing in YOUR yard?](#)—PIC
- ◆ [Volunteer opportunities](#)

Log your Volunteer Hours



[wsu.givepulse.com/group/453100-WSU-Cowlitz-County-Master-Gardeners](http://wsu.givepulse.com/group/453100-WSU-Cowlitz-County-Master-Gardeners)

[wsu.givepulse.com/group/453100-WSU-Cowlitz-County-Master-Gardeners](http://wsu.givepulse.com/group/453100-WSU-Cowlitz-County-Master-Gardeners)

## - Article Opportunity -

If you specialize in a specific type of gardening, then why not share your knowledge by writing a short article for the newsletter? It's a great way to contribute, and help inspire fellow gardeners. Not to mention that the time spent writing can be turned in as volunteer hours!

If you have an article you'd like to share, please email them to: Alice Slusher, [alslush@gmail.com](mailto:alslush@gmail.com)  
**Articles for April issue due April 20, 2022**

# Meetings & Event

## Foundation Meeting

10 am, Tuesday, April 12, 2022

Hybrid--Zoom or  
in-person at office



**MASTER  
GARDENER  
CALENDAR**

## Upcoming Workshops (Zoom unless otherwise noted)

|                                  |   |                                      |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Tu Apr 5-<br>Noon                | <b>Soils and Fertilizers</b>  | Art Fuller &<br>Dale Wheeler         |
| Tu Apr 12<br>Noon                | <b>Container gardening</b>  | Steve Powers                         |
| Tu Apr 19<br>Noon                | <b>Raised Beds</b>  | Art Fuller                           |
| Tu Apr 26<br>Noon                | <b>Slugs</b>  | Jen Swanson                          |
| Sa April<br>30<br>9:30am-<br>2pm | <b>Growing Vegetables, where to start! Affordable Landscaping, Landscaping for Wildlife, Tips to control moles, Weed Control for Home Landscape</b> | Home and<br>Garden Show<br>In person |
| Su May 1<br>10am-<br>1pm         | <b>Proper Sharpening Tools and Knives, Do-it-Yourself "Irrigation", How to Grow a Red Tomato, Waterwise gardening</b>                               | Home and<br>Garden Show<br>In-person |

**Master Gardener  
Directory**

## IN THE KNOW

**Roxanne Nakamura**



The longer I'm with Cowlitz Co. MG, the more I find to be excited about. I have just joined the State Foundation Board of Washington and I find it to be worth our attention. The board members are professional, real people who are working to improve our program by putting on the Advanced Education Conference. It is important for our continuing education and growth as representatives of the program to attend this event. It offers opportunities to learn from experts from WSU and other organizations to increase our abilities to

address the Master Gardener Program Priorities in our educational offerings to our communities. Just as importantly, attending the conference gives us the chance to meet and get to know folks around our state. We can work together to make the program stronger. It gives us the bigger, state-wide picture of how we help our communities in important ways.

We are all Life-Long Learners, growing with every new science-based fact.

The 2022 AEC (Advanced Education Conference) will be at the Olympia Hotel at Capitol Lake, Olympia, WA September 28 to Oct. 1. Find information [www.mglearns.org](http://www.mglearns.org)





# HANDS

**Louise Bozorth**



Hands—most have them—large, medium and small, soft, calloused, scarred, arthritic and all.

Whatever the type, they have many uses, leaving us with few excuses.

They are used for peeling, cooking and making good meals, washing dishes and clothes, how good cleans feels.

Scrubbing floors, wiping cupboards, making the bed, setting things out for the times ahead.

Used on the farm, both large and small. Milking cows, and goats, cleaning out the horse stalls,



Feeding the chickens, turkeys, and Guinea hens, calves, foals, lambs and pigs in their pens, Plowing, fertilizing, planting in spring, fall haying, reaping and harvesting everything,

Weeding, pruning, cleaning flower beds, lawn



mowing, watering, keeping ahead. Laying block, building houses, barns and sheds, fixing fences and gates, planting vegetable beds,

Digging post holes, stretching fence wire, sawing and splitting wood for the fire,

Giving love to the dogs and cats and other pets, taking them for their shots at the local vet's,

Playing catch or throwing balls, writing, drawing, photographing beautiful falls.

Knitting, crocheting, and making lap covers, sewing quilts, mending for yourself or others,

Caring for babies, soft and small, changing diapers, bathing and cuddling them all,

Making an angry fist or folding in prayer, they are doing good or bad everywhere.

They guide, hold, and comfort in many ways, dress the old or young for many days.

You can do without them, but think what you'd miss...Squeezing, feeling, digging or cleaning a fish!



## WORM COMPOSTING IN GARBAGE CANS

Sara Clark

Like many gardeners, I have an addiction to plants. I always think I need one more fruit tree or raised bed for veggies. Perhaps I should try to start a chapter of Over-planters Anonymous; honestly, though, I don't truly want to quit.

Except in August.

In August, ALL the fruits and vegetables come knocking on my back door, demanding to COME IN AND BE PROCESSED IMMEDIATELY.

One hot August day, a few years ago, I was once again attempting to transform the Immense Fruit Harvest into Useable Units of Stored Food. At the end of the day, I collapsed into a chair at the table. In front of me was a huge bowl full of about three gallons of peach and pear peelings and about a billion fruit flies. Swatting away a few of the flies from my face, I thought, "There must be a better way to dispose of this than just throwing it in the garbage or hauling it out to the garden area."

Naturally, I do have compost bins (SIX! -- which I do not turn regularly -- but I feel guilty about it, so that makes it ok). Those compost bins are located in what we call the "Back 40," about 150 feet away from the house. To take care of my mountain of canning waste, though, I needed something closer, and something that would:

1. Be able to handle a **large** amount of plant wastes,
2. Compost those wastes much **faster** than my big compost bins *without any turning or guilt on my part*,
3. Create lovely **fertilizer** that had a higher nutrient value than what the compost bins made,
4. **NOT stink**,
5. Be **scientifically interesting**.



This was a tall order. Then, I heard about Worm Composting (vermiculture). Worm composting needs a container with holes for air and drainage, a source of bedding, red wiggler worms, and plant wastes. However, most worm bins hold only about 5 to 7 gallons. Just one large bowl from a day of canning would overwhelm a bin like that.



*The three bin system, last year's bin, leaves in the middle, this year's active bin.*

Then I read about using a 35 gallon plastic garbage can for a worm bin! I grabbed a plastic garbage can I had on hand, drilled 1/4 inch holes down the sides, and tossed in some leaves, worms and fruit scraps.

Eureka! Happiness and joy for all involved! I was happy to transform my mountain of fruit and vegetable waste into fertilizer, the worms were happy (at least, as happy as creatures who have no facial features can seem), and even the fruit flies were happy, since they now had a place to hang out in the summer with plenty to eat. (*Note: covering the food scraps with more leaves can help control the fruit fly issue. Some.*)

Eventually, my worm bin system evolved into three bins.



## WORM COMPOSTING IN GARBAGE CANS

Sara Clark



*This year's active bin, with worms and leaves*



*The bin of dry leaves, crammed full each fall*

On the **right**, in the **black can**, are the active worms, busy devouring vegetable scraps and leaves. I add scraps, and then add a layer of leaves. Sometimes I mix the leaves and scraps together with my hands,

On the left (with the **cream-colored lid**) is last year's bin. It will sit there until it is time to start a new bin. It is about 2/3 full of worm castings, slowly decomposing the last bits. When an active bin gets full (which can take up to a year), first I



looking for the worms. Very fun and interesting!

The bin in the **middle** (with the **blue lid**) has dry maple leaves. Many worm bins use shredded paper products, but I have an excess of leaves to use up, and worms love Maple leaves. (Note: not all leaves are created equal. Oak leaves, for example, take longer to break down.)



*Last year's castings, rotting down.*

empty last year's bin, by sifting the finished castings through a screen into my wheelbarrow. Then I take the top third of the active bin, and dump it into the now empty bin from last year. I try to get as many of the worms into the "new" active bin as I can, but if I miss some, they seem happy to live in the old bin, helping it to rot down into compost. I switch the placement of the two bins, so the new "active" one is near my back steps, and the "old" active one gets to sit on the left, finishing off.



# WORM COMPOSTING IN GARBAGE CANS

Sara Clark

My bins are in the shade, under a large maple tree and under the eaves of the house. The worms will let you know if they are too hot or too wet by crawling as far up as they can go. Only occasionally have I opened the lid to find all the worms trying to Evacuate Immediately. (During the heat dome of 2021, they were all on the back hinge, recreating the Lifeboat Scene from *Titanic*, trying to get out any way possible.)

My system works very well. It is basically a bottomless pit for composting. The worms multiply to match the amount of vegetable and fruit scraps, coffee grounds, tea bags, and moldy bread I put in, and they do all the work. It does not stink. Some of my excess leaves are put to good use. The worms turn everything into very fertile compost to use all around the farm. Plus, the worms are scientifically interesting! What a great system!

*Below are some links to more detailed instructions for making a worm bin of your own, and what you should (and should NOT) put into the worm bins.*

*Even though I really like my system, I must add that the official recommendation for worm bins is to keep them fairly shallow. The worm castings tend to pack down in a deep system like this. Sifting them before storing the worm compost in empty chicken feed sacks takes care of that issue, although it takes some work to dig that damp, heavy last foot of castings out of the bottom of the bin.*

Research Links:

[Composting with Red Worms:](#)

[Information on Worm Bins and how to manage them:](#)

[Feeding and caring for your worms, and how to use the castings:](#)



Roxanne N., Phyllis C.

Roxanne, Deane, Phyllis





# Demo Garden Spring Cleanup



Rhonda Dowling

Jane Y. & Jenny S.

Margaret Nunnelly

SPRING CLEANUP  
March 10, 2022



Doug M.



Margaret N.



Jenny S.



Wanda H. & Charlene P.







Rhonda Dowling  
**March in the DG**

Dale Wheeler

Roman



**March in the DG**

Bob Laves

Doug M.

Dale Wheeler

Dale, Bart, Linda, Bob, Michele



## LOTS GOING ON THIS MONTH!

### Plant Propagation Workshop

Follow [Link](#) for more photos (click on 1st pic to view slideshow)



*Report by Education Program Director Sara Clark:* It went great! Very enthusiastic group. Katie Metzger, photographer from The Daily News was there. Above is the photo that was in the paper on March 27. The people were very excited to take the cuttings home to try making them grow. Roxanne had a [fantastic worksheet](#) for them to take home with all the information on it. Then there was a tour of the CC and Demo gardens, and Jane and I lured several people into taking home some California Poppy that had to be dug up. (Mwah ha ha!) I dug up some violets and Black-Eyed Susan plants and even about 4 Hot Poker plants. Wanda Hamm was there to help, too.

Roxanne had really cool metal buckets for everyone to take home their cuttings in.

I took some pictures, already uploaded to the drop box. The links on the emails are very helpful for that.

Since the red-hot poker plants are all going to be removed, Roxanne and the CC team might work on getting them potted up for the plant sale (there are PLENTY). I had never dealt with them before, and I was surprised to see the size of the ROOTS on those. Yikes! (as big as my arm, and deeeeeeep.) Maybe they can be squished into gallon pots for the sale.

Toward the end of the workshop, there were a pile of plant sale bookmarks on the table that Alice had dropped off with other handouts. Jane asked if anyone would be able to take and distribute them-everyone of them were gone! The ladies in the class could not have been more willing to spread the word about the sale. A great time was had by all, and we even cleaned up the Cougar Cottage before we left. The tables are all clean and we even vacuumed, as much as we could.





## DIVIDING AND SHARING PERENNIALS

Roxanne Nakamura



On nice spring days (just not pouring or howling!) It feels good to be outside doing Anything with the garden and landscape. While cleaning up the wild stems (having left them in place for the birds and insects), you will see your perennial flowers reaching their tender new growth from the earth. Clumping plants with many growing points or buds can periodically benefit from a rejuvenation this time of year.

If you want to divide the clump and replant to fill your landscape or share plants, you can divide the plant every 3 to 5 years. Root division will also help to maintain healthy, vigorous plants. If the plant is big and crowded, the center of the plant is dying out, or the plant was weaker or thinner last year, it's time to divide.

**Hostas and Daylilies:** Pry or cut apart sections of the ball of tubers. Keep several tubers together to make a nice show this year. Make sure there is a growing point or a viable bud and hopefully a few roots with each division.

**Bee Balm and daisy-type flowers:** Dig around the plant and pop it up onto the ground nearby. A small tarp under it will make cleanup easier. Gently separate sections of "plantlets."

**Grasses:** Tie the top of the old grass and cut the bundle close to the ground. If you cut too close you will be cutting the tips off the new year's growth. Use a sharp shovel to cut straight down on the root mass into sections. A Hori Hori knife with its saw edge and sharp knife edge is a great tool for separating roots and cleaning up the root ball.



Reset one of the plants in the hole with refreshed soil. Mix a little compost and earthworm castings in the hole. This is the time to mix a little slow release fertilizer around the plant. If you can, cup your hands under the roots and press soil up into and around the roots and set at ground level. Make sure it is set at the right

When moving plants, especially when giving a plant to another gardener, we need to do our best not to pass on problems: invasive plants, pests and diseases, and weeds. Wash the dirt off the roots and plant and inspect for hitchhikers.



### GIVING PLANTS!!

**While you are touring your garden kingdom, look at your plants and spy a few that you'd like to share with Master Gardeners in the Cougar Cottage garden.**

**Cougar Cottage MG Demo Garden** is expanding the garden's plant base to fill the beds with colorful flowers and educational signs for visitors. While you are touring your garden kingdom, look at your plants and spy a few that you'd like to share with Master Gardeners in the Cougar Cottage garden. We will make it a beautiful refuge and destination location.

**Giving the gift of a plant is a wonderful way to add memories and love to each person's garden.**

## HAVE YOU SEEN THESE IN YOUR YARD?



# Late Winter - Early Spring

**What's coming up in your yard?**

Have you seen any of these popping up in your yard? Do you know what they are? These are weeds identified in the past month from MGs' yards with links to information about them.

**If you have any plants you would like ID'd or just to share with us and add to this slide deck, please send to [alslush@gmail.com](mailto:alslush@gmail.com)**

### **Volunteer opportunities in April**

#### **Plant Sale Growing in the Greenhouse**

The response by volunteers, both veterans and trainees, has been great! Lots of folks have signed up to sow, grow, and water all our baby plants. And what a great time you'll have!

#### **Home and Garden Show, April 30 and May 1.**

We will be hosting a booth at the show in the Event Center at the Fairgrounds. We're going to be engaging folks and showing them our posters about tomato problems, and showing them ways to protect their veggie transplants early in the season, showing them tomato support methods, and how to plant tomatoes.

We will have 2 hour shifts on Saturday from 8:45am to 5pm, and Sunday 9:45am to 4:30pm.





# MEETING MINUTES

Minutes [March 8, 2022](#)

## Cowlitz County Master Gardener 2022 Foundation Board

