

# Master

Gardener

Newsletter



Gold Star for Effort

Master Gardener Program

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

JUNE 2022 304 Cowlitz Way, Kelso, WA 98626

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#### **WSU Gardening Websites**

mastergardener.wsu.edu/ gardening.wsu.edu cowlitz.wsu.edu

HortSense Fact Sheets hortsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/

PestSense Fact Sheets pestsense.cahnrs.wsu.edu/

**Pest Leaflet Series** puyallup.wsu.edu/plantclinic/ pls/

WSU Educational Materials

http://pubs.wsu.edu

WSU Master Gardener

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.

# **REFLECTIONS FROM THE GARDEN**

**Gary Fredricks** 

"Success is not a result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire."  $\sim$  Arnold H. Glasgow

It was a late night last month, and as I was getting ready for bed, my son arrived home from work. When I asked how his day had gone, he said he had stopped to help someone on the side of the road whose car was leaking water. He was there to get tools and water. I helped him collect water in milk jugs, and we headed back. They had managed to get off the freeway but had no options for help and still needed to drive 50 miles. It was a young couple with two very small kids and she was 7 months pregnant. After 90 minutes in the rain, my son managed to get the old hose off that had a three-inch gash, wrap it in duct tape, replace it, add water and send them on their way. You could see the relief in the young mother's eyes as she gave my son a really big hug.

I hear stories of service all the time from those people in this county. A family that received a raised bed garden has many of their plants growing with small tomatoes growing. On another day. A person stopped me in a store and enthusiastically told me that her mason bee house is nearly full. A lady with tomato plants was thrilled at the success of already having small tomatoes when past plants have yielded little to nothing. A man whose hedge was dying brought a sample into the clinic, learned how to treat it, and was happy to be able to save the plants from destruction. The list goes on and on. Hundreds of people have been helped by the Master Gardeners in the plant clinic, in workshops, at Farmer's Market, and in a variety of other ways. The result is people's quality of life is much better because of the time and energy given unselfishly by MG volunteers.

Like my son, there were no awards handed out or newspaper articles, just a grateful thank you for touching a life and making it better. I hear the words Thank You almost daily in regards to people who have been helped by a Master Gardener volunteer. The community is far better because of your efforts, and I pass along the countless thank you I have heard from those who appreciate everything you have done.

On this Holiday of celebration, my thanks to all those that helped make this county so wonderful and the Master Gardeners who have given so much of their time. Know that you do great work. Your effort is recognized and appreciated.

# **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: <a href="combitzecomg.com/workshops-videos">com/workshops-videos</a>

#### In this issue

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

- <u>Reflections from the Garden</u> Gary Fredricks
- It's Fair Time--Volunteer opportunities galore!
- Old Boots
  Louise Bozorth
- Where the Rubber Meets the Road—Jerry Winchell
- <u>New Noxious Weed—Turkish Thistle</u>—Jennifer Mendoza
- Adventures on the Farm—the Pruning, Driver's Ed, and Other Disasters—Sara Clark
- <u>Summer Garden Tips</u> —shared by Master Gardeners
- June Foundation Mtg. Minutes

# Log your Volunteer Hours

#### wsu.givepulse.com/group/453100-WSU-Cowlitz-County-Master-Gardeners

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# - 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 **Articles for June issue due July 20, 2022** 

# **Meetings & Event**

# **Foundation Meeting**

Next Foundation meeting: July 12, 2022



# Upcoming Workshops (12 pm on Zoom unless otherwise noted)

July 5	Cool Weather Gardens	Sara Clark
July 12	Summer Watering	Art Fuller
July 19	Welcoming Beneficial Insects	Anne Wolff
July 26	Draught-Tolerant Land- scaping	Alice Slusher

# cowlitzcomg.com/public-events

COWLITZ COUNTY FAIR—July 27-30 FEEL THE EXCITEMENT!

# **Master Gardener**

**Directory** 

On members' page of website

**COWLITZ COUNTY FAIR JULY 27-30** 

#### THEME: FEEL THE EXCITEMENT!

Every (non-COVID) year, our MGs host the Floral Building at the Fairgrounds—we clean it up, set up the tables, place the flower displays after the superintendents judge them, decorate the building, offer educational "QuickClasses" to fairgoers, and main-

ence at the Floral Building during the fair.

This is how we pay back the Fairgrounds for their generosity in allowing us to use their buildings free of charge for our Plant Sales.

tain an active hosting pres-Please consider sharing your special interest or expertise in a short informal talk at the fair. It's fun to do, NOT a formal presentation, just sharing something you love with people who want to hear about it. Contact Sara Clark.

> If you are interested in helping with children's activities, contact Patricia Bosh.

nity-most have no idea about our free Plant and Insect Clinic, Demonstration Gardens, and our educational programs. This is our chance to tell them about it! It's also one of our greatest opportunities to recruit new Master Gardeners for our next train-

As you all experienced during our Plant Sale activities, we tend to have a really great time working together. There's always something for everyone to do.

It's also an amazing opportunity for our Master Gardener program. We get a lot of visitors during the fair, and we MGs have a chance to talk with fairgoers and tell them about what we offer to the commu-

Please help in some way—you'll be glad you did!

2022 Fair Schedule SIGNUP LINK https://signup.com/go/OgbswiJ

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- Friday, July 22, 9:00 am noon PREP THE FLORAL BUILDING
- Saturday, July 23, 9 am- noon, Noon-3 Afternoon as needed--may not be necessary) DECORATE THE FLORAL BUILDING!
- Monday, July 25, 5:30 pm 9 pm Place new floral entries on tables for judging
- Tuesday, July 26, 7 am 9 am Place new floral entries on tables for judging
- July 27-30, 5 shifts/day available HOSTING THE FLORAL BUILDING!! Sunday, July 31, 10 am- noon CLEANUP

#### **Committee Chairs**

- Setup/cleanup--Sara Clark (sarabrown123@hotmail.com, text/ph 360-577-0123
- Decorating Committee-Lori Martinson (text/ph 360-904-0179)
- Hosting committee--Alice alslush@gmail.com text/ph 330-518-8628)
- Education Committee--Sara Clark (text/ph 360-577-0123) (Poster QuickClasses) Patricia Bosh (Text/ph 614-404-5257) (Youth Activities (Ideas--coloring pages, leaf rubbings, chia pets, planting in potato cutting, etc.)

# OLD BOOTS

# Louise Bozorth

In the back of my closet, behind my good shoes,

Lie battered old work boots, looking weary and bruised.

The uppers are tattered, the soles most worn through,

The laces are broken.

I know what I should do.

They are one of the many things I should toss. (It certainly wouldn't be much of a loss).

As I stand musing, I think of the past And of the many places

we have passed. Digging post holes, stretching wire to keep fences good. Going out in the forest to cut firewood Hiking Souixon Creek for lots of fly fishing Rowing the Lewis River for salmon, we are wishing We could stay on the water all day, Watching the ot-

ters,kingfishers, and eagles play.

But we head to the pickup, load the boat in the bed,

And drive home for the new outings ahead, Like rock hunting in Kalama near the railroad line

Finding agates and red carnelians so fine. Up Clear Creek and Quartz Creek for bright colored jasper.

Red, green, yellow and brown are the colors we're after.

Up the hill through Devil's Club, woods, and downed stuff

To a solid rock wall near house rock, a bluff Full of strange looking round lumps, easy to bust,

Then liquid squirts out, and there's amethyst!

Hunting for fossils up near Lower Falls, In solidified mud are leaves, large and small. East of the mountains for opalized cypress wood.

Whole trees in the ground, fallen where they once stood.

But it is out to the barn to milk and do chores, Feed the chickens, gather eggs, and close all the doors.

We'd clean the barn all winter and in the spring, Throw the manure on the garden before disk-

ing,

Plant the garden in long rows. Peas, carrots, beans, beets To eat on all summer and can for winter eats.

Back to the mountain to pick huckleberries, Watching the rock rabbits and the grass they carry.

Picking up walnuts as fast as they fall, Making applesauce to

can, a pleasure for all.

We've been many places and done many chores,

But the most fun was in the great outdoors.

These family outings are all in the past, The good times and bad don't always last. My parents are gone, my brothers are all wed. So these pleasant memories are all in my head.

Then I look at the battered shoes in my hand, And think of the house cleaning I'd planned, So with a strange feeling and for no good reason,

I put them back in the closet, maybe next season.





# WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD!

# Jerry Winchell

In 2017 I knew NO active Master had recently retired and were the Master Gardener class in Janwith people, but didn't really the plant sale came along. Someing. And that was the beginning of thing happens—bonding, a sense pens when we work together for Yes,--it takes a lot of time and enand friends.

How do I connect and make more fun?

Work in the Demo gardens, Market...Plant sale... <u>Ask</u> any MG officer and likely Show up at work parties &



# JOIN THE FUN!

Something happens bonding, a sense of us, respect, joy. It happens when we work together for something bigger

than us.

Gardeners. Carolyn and I frankly lonely. We joined uary 2018 and sat in a room <u>know</u> a lot of them. Then body cornered us unto helpmany relationships. Someof us, respect, joy. It hapsomething bigger than us. ergy, but it creates family

friends or just have more

greenhouse, PIC, Farmers

any Master Gardener. meetings

# New Class A Noxious Weed in Cowlitz County: Turkish Thistle —Jennifer Mendoza





Please report to the Cowlitz Co. Noxious Weed Board if you see this new weed.

It's important to stop it before it spreads! (360) 577-3117

Turkish Thistle quickly outcompetes native plants and other desirable forage plants. Larger infestations discourage grazing from native animals and livestock, and reduce the value of hay crops. With a very short life cycle between germination and flowering, Turkish Thistle presents a challenge for land managers in terms of finding and treating infestations in a timely manner. Turkish Thistle reproduces by seed; seeds can be spread by wind, water, animals or in soil relocated through recreation activities.

Read more about it **HERE** 

# Pruning, Driver's Ed, and Other Disasters—by Sara Clark

"Do you need a Band-Aid?"

My friend, Pete, asked me this question one sunny afternoon in my orchard. At that moment, he was standing on the ground, watching me prune my Jonagold apple tree. I was not on the ground, or even on a ladder. Instead, I was balanced precariously 12 feet off the ground on a sturdy branch, cutting off some fairly hefty vertical branches, also known as water sprouts.

Normally, I would have cut these branches off when they first shot up the previous spring, but a Fairly Major Life Event (my first husband dying of cancer) had completely derailed all normal activities during that year. Also, I would not normally be climbing a tree to prune it.

In my defense, 95% of my orchard is composed of well-mannered, 12 foot tall fruit trees, easily pruned standing on my handy 100-year-old, 8-foot, tripod orchard ladder. No climbing required.

However, THIS tree was an example of how NOT to buy a fruit tree. I had bought it impulsively at Costco about 9 years before. Costco knows its customer base, and they understand the addictive nature of plant shopping. This is why they put the plants section right at the front of the store. When I saw the rows of bagged apples, of course I had to stop.

"Hey! They have a Jonagold apple tree! And it is only \$15.95? What a deal! It even says it is *'semi*- dwarf, "I said to myself. Of course, all of my other trees were M26 rootstock, but surely "semi-dwarf" meant something similar? What could go wrong?

Sigh.

Every time I look at this tree, I tell myself to NEV-

ER AGAIN buy a fruit tree from anywhere but a reputable nursery! After 9 years, the LOWEST branches of this tree were at least 7 feet off the ground, and most of the branches were a good eight inches in diameter. The water sprouts I was trying to cut off were already almost 2 ½ inches thick. So much for "semi-dwarf" meaning much.

About 15 seconds prior to Pete's offer of a Band-Aid, I had been using my trusty Stihl<sup>TM</sup> folding pruning saw to cut through one of the vertical water sprouts. My left

hand held the branch at a spot just over my head as I sawed with my right at the base of the sprout. Then, three things happened simultaneously.

1. The Stihl<sup>TM</sup> saw [which I highly recommend for its exquisite sharpness and ease

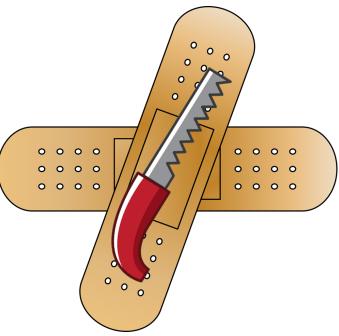
of use], sliced neatly through the last of the branch.

2. The branch, obeying the laws of physics, and the Law of Gravity in particular,

dropped towards the ground, bringing my left arm with it.

3. The saw, following Newton's law about bodies in motion remaining in motion

unless something gets in the way, made perfect contact with my wrist, and then stopped moving.





"Ummmm...." I said to Pete. "Yeah... a Band-Aid would probably be a good idea."

I climbed down in a daze, took the Band-Aid, and then tried to apply it to what was basically a hole the size of a quarter in my arm. I had my right hand applying pressure on my cut, holding the Band-Aid in place, and conveniently hiding the extent of my injuries from Pete. He had an appointment to go to about then, but he asked if I needed him to stay.

Being a typical PNW person who does not want to be a bother to anyone, I said, "Oh, no, don't worry about me! I'll be fine!" and sent him on his way.

About one minute after he drove away, I realized that I was in a bit of a pickle. At least the Band-Aid and the pressure I was applying were working to stop the bleeding. However, I could drive myself to the hospital for stitches only if I could do so without the use of either of my hands.

There was only one option: I would have to ask my daughter, Rachel, age 15, to drive me to the hospital.

An alert reader might note that my daughter, as a 15year-old, could not possibly have a driver's license. This was true. She did have a permit, though. I had the gray hairs to prove it.

During January and February of this same year, my daughter, her brother, Max, and their friend, Ryan, all had taken Driver's Ed together. What I did not realize at the time they started was that *Someone Would Have To Help Them Practice Driving and That Someone Was Me.* 

I will spare you the details of those terrifying weeks of letting all three kids practice driving with me in the car. I will admit to clutching the edges of my seat cushion, hard enough to leave dents, and cringing at every mailbox or telephone pole that whizzed by mere millimeters outside the passenger window. Most of the time, I just kept my eyes shut. It was easier on my heart that way. Rachel did drive me to the hospital that afternoon, where I got 5 stitches. As I recall, she did an excellent job of getting me there safely, although I may not be the best judge; I kept my eyes shut most of the way.

Eventually, I finished pruning that huge tree, without any further injury. I still have that Stihl<sup>TM</sup> pruning saw, and I still highly recommend it for (cautious!) pruning.

My daughter, now 30, vividly remembers the day I asked her to drive me to the hospital. She still marvels at how I came in, clutching my arm and bleeding, to ask for her help. "You were so calm, Mom! You just walked in, and said that you needed to be driven to the hospital, like it was no big deal!" she always says.

And you know, she was right. After all we had been through that year, a trip to the emergency room was a piece of cake.





#### IRRIGATION

Install drip irrigation in as many places as possible. Put it in your vegetable garden, ornamental beds, around blueberry bushes, etc. No need to hire anyone to do it. And it's inexpensive. Video series to learn how to do it:

#### https://youtu.be/PetfxgFeOkM

Also the simplest and best tip is to water at the base of the plants and not overhead.

Set up drip irrigation and mulch around my garden vegetables. This small task gives me more time and saves money by reducing watering needs and water usage. By adding the mulch over the garden staying clear of the base of the plant smothers weeds and keeps the soil moist longer. The bonus besides reducing garden maintenance time is giving me healthier vegetables with less work

Save water in the garden. Last year you made possible for some of us to have an <u>olla pot</u>. Mine is one of the smaller ollas and should provide water for a three feet area. I recently purchased a galvanized fire pit and plan to place the olla inside. An instant raised bed of sorts. I hope to save time watering and save water itself.

We water when we know that there will not be any water standing on top of the leaves- we do not want to invite powdery mildew in!

To save time, I water 50% of the plants every other day. I spend half the time watering on a given day.

#### POTS

My biggest goal this year is to plant fewer pots and more in ground. With last summers heat wave I was watering nearly constantly, and when it was over, had to add nutrients back in. Lots of mulch, in ground planting for me this year

#### MULCH

Lots of mulch, in ground planting for me this year. Smother the weeds with a THICK layer of mulch.

Mulch to reduce weeds, Etc.

making sure that plants are mulched with hay or other medium to keep that water in the ground longer

Put grass leaving from your mowing on your garden to mulch. Make sure the ground has warmed up first for your heat loving plants such as tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers. For plants that like it a bit cooler (lettuce, broccoli, cabbage), add it while the ground is still a bit cooler. A thin layer of grass will do the trick and won't tend to harbor slugs.

Best kept secret—don't use artificially colored mulch—go to <u>Roy Morse Park in West Longview and</u> <u>load up on Free arborist wood chips</u> to enrich your soil, keep down weeds, and retain soil moisture.

#### FRUIT

Blueberries: They are shallow rooted and need to be kept moist (not allowed to dry out but not flooded or in standing water) Blueberries are the heaviest feeder in the garden along with roses. Mulching with composted bark, (not cedar) at least 2-3 inches is the best way to maintain moisture and keep weeds down.

Blueberries should be planted in full sun 5-8 feet apart. If planting in rows, the rows should be 8-10 feet apart. No fertilizer for small plants the first year. Beginning the second year, they should be fertilized with 5-10-10 March 15th, & ammonium sulfate on May 20th and June 15th. Amount varies with size of bush.

Best reference: <u>Growing Blueberries in Your Home</u> <u>Garden</u>

### GARDEN MANAGEMENT

Ask for help! From friends, spouses, children. Don't try to do it all alone. Break it up into many talks and dele-gate them to helpers.

Most weed seeds stop germinating once the rains stop and summer sets in. If you are caught up on weeding at the beginning of summer, you'll be able to enjoy a weed-free garden for a few, precious months.

I dig weeds most everyday this time of year. I use a 5gallon bucket and a trowel which saves me time and makes it easier to remove the weeds from the garden area.

Make a list of garden activities each day to stay organized and use my time efficiently. Being organized encourages participation in physical activity and to complete goals efficiently.

Keep a written fertilization schedule and stay mindful of plants exhibiting nutrient stress.

#### POLLINATORS/BENEFICIALS

Resolve to allow some pests in your garden. Beneficial insects who control them will come to feast on the bad guys. You can reduce or eliminate pesticide use by planting flowers that attract beneficial insects.

Remember that using any kind of insecticide kills beneficial insects, too. Spot spray and afflicted plant.only when absolutely necessary.

Get rid of the lawn, even a little at a time, and <u>replace</u> with wildflowers or an <u>eco-lawn mix</u>. (<u>Native wildflow-</u> <u>er mixes PNW</u>)

If your lettuce, kale, or broccoli go to flower, and you don't need the garden space, leave it for the bees. They will love the nectar.

We have a lot of plants in our yard that flower all summer long to attract pollinators....We also plant annual flowers in our larger garden beds so the bees can come in and do their magic! Learn to recognize our <u>native banana slug</u>. It is a beneficial decomposer of decaying plant matter and will not harm your plants. Don't harm it!

## PRUNING FLOWERING SHRUBS

Stay caught up on pruning plants just after they've flowered, before they've started to set buds for the next year! Once they've started to set buds, it's too late. You'll either have to wait until next year to prune or sacrifice the next year's buds.

## PLANT PROTECTION

Offer your plants a bit of shade in the summer months with a shade cloth "wall" giving protection from the strong afternoon sun/heat.

Take a shade cloth and vertically attach it to bamboo sticks that are stuck into the ground with twine or zip ties. The "wall" would be temporary.

Keep your strawberries or blueberries covered with row cover that lets the sun and water in and the birds out. Row cover is more bird friendly so that the

Birds do not get tangled up in it and die....which has happened to us before.

## PLANTS

Love pole beans. Very productive, low maintenance and they don't take up a lot of space. Can be planted up until the end of June.

Think about planting crops for fall harvest or overwintering and harvesting through the winter and spring. It's amazing how many vegetables and herbs survive the winter just fine, and it's wonderful to be able to eat fresh garden produce in the winter. Swiss chard, parsley, beets, carrots and many brassicas are examples.

Use native plants in your landscape if you can give them their optimum native habitat.

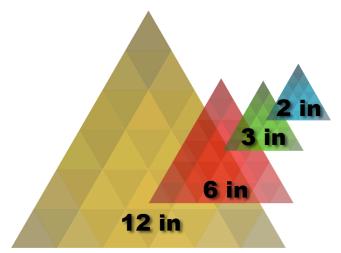
## PLANTING IDEAS

In raised beds plant your plants close enough to keep the weeds from growing because of the lack of sunlight for them.....so less to no weeding and keeps water in better. You're creating a "leafy mulch!"

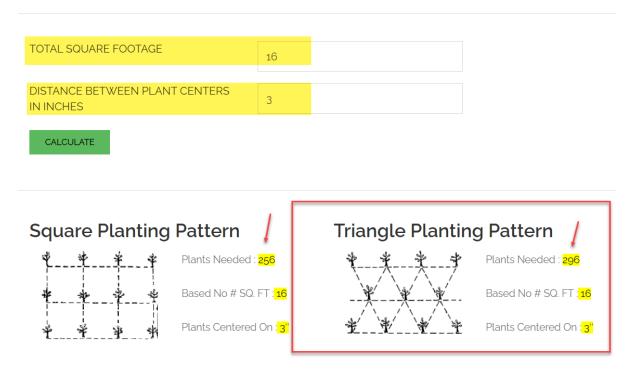
To maximize garden space and to great more "shade" that will help to reduce weeds, consider planting your garden in a staggered pattern, not in straight rows. Look at your seed packet to determine how close the plants should be, then zigzag plant them. You can safely fit MANY more plants in your available space compared with the straight row pattern. <u>Here's how to calculate how many plants</u> for your space.

If you make a planting guide-- equilateral triangle-out of cardboard that corresponds to the suggested spacing you are supposed to have for lettuce (or maybe a bit less--if I plant in a raised bed I cut that distance in half--then you plant lettuce or whatever on each corner of the triangle then flip the triangle over and plant on those corners. Repeat. It makes a very dense planting with virtually no weeds once

they plants are growing. Jerry made me a set of colored plastic triangle planting guides of different measurements so I just carry my triangles out and plant whatever I'm planting on triangles.



Guides for staggered planting pattern



# GARDENING TIPS FROM MGS

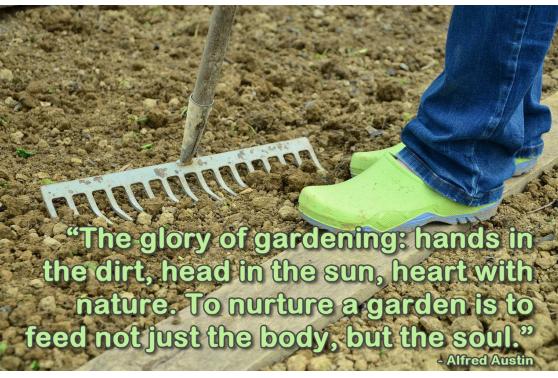
## PLANTING IDEAS

Kathy and I faced a problem and we needed a quick solution. Our ever-expanding number of dahlia tumors needed to be planted soon but we were out of room in our normal beds. In addition, our SW Washington spring was keeping the ground sopping wet; too wet to prep a new planting bed.

The answer?... put down some hay bales for a raised bed border, fill the area with soil, and then plant the tubers. It worked so well that we did the same for our seed potatoes that were also in need of being planted. In the fall the rotted bales will go into the compost and we will reclaim the soil for, what we hope to be, a more permanent raised bed.

Straw is besting preferred but spoiled hay is what I had on hand. I was careful to use this idea for plants/crops that will be taken up from the raised bed soil at the end of the season. I will compost the bales and screen the soil for weeds before I reuse.





# GARDENING TIPS FROM MGS

### **GARDENING REFLECTIONS**

I love to garden and reap the fruits of my labor, squash, onions, tomatoes, leeks, etc. I go out to the garden each day with much delight to see how much each has grown.

Most delight comes from my flowers. Yes, each with their own colors and fragrance not only attract my eyes but watching the bees, butterflies and birds enjoying them as well, that makes my day.

Don't aim for perfection. It will wear you out and you won't enjoy gardening. Allow yourself to make mistakes, including planting more plants than you can possibly care for. Regard it all as learning and getting more experience and, best of all, moving and getting outside, which is a really healthy thing to do!

When it is not raining, be outside, enjoy the sunshine, stay active, you can always find SOMETHING to do.

Leave some time at the end of day to enjoy the fruits of your spring tasks, the warm summers with longer days and the beauty of your garden. Set up a nice seating area in a place where you can stop, sit and smell the roses!



# Thanks to all the MGs who shared their wisdom and experience with us this month!!

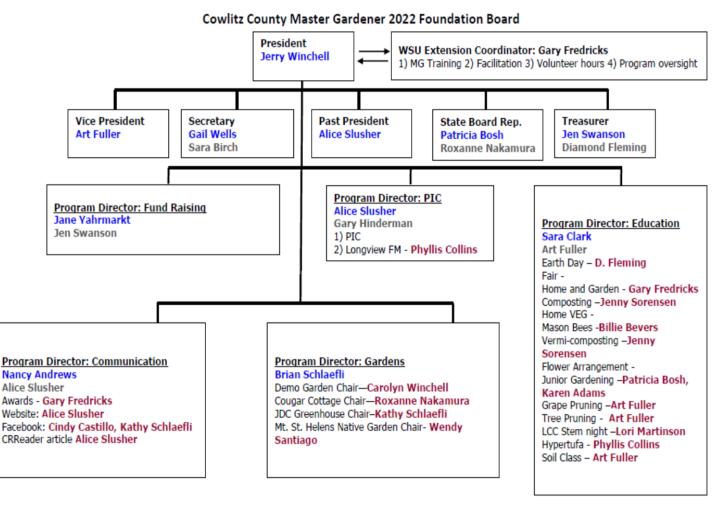
Art Fuller, Brian Schlaefli, Carolyn Winchell, Roman, Trisha, Dale Wheeler, Wendy Santiago, Billie Bevers, Jenny Sorensen, Jen Swanson, Wanda Hamm, Terrie Phillips, Phyllis Collins, Alice Slusher Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.

~ Marcel Proust



# **MEETING MINUTES**

**June Foundation Meeting Minutes** 



Foundation Officer Alternate Program Chair

