



Seeds For Thought

February 2017 Volume 17, Issue 1

A newsletter of the
Master Gardener
Foundation of
Washington State

From the President

~~Kathleen LaFrancis Eaton, MGFWS President

In This Issue

From the President 1

Greetings Master
Gardeners! 2

Pend Oreille County
Demo Garden 3

International MG
Conference 4

Visit our website:

[MGFWS](http://www.mgfws.org)



Apple nameplate photo
by [Justin LaBerge](#)
Snow Tea Roses by
[jen durbin](#)



Photo by Richelle Taylor

Happy New Year! 2017 presents with a bitter cold lasting much longer than we are accustomed to, yet it is a bitter sweet time to plan for the warm seasons that will surely come.

Tradition has us reflecting on the year past as well. In 2016, MGFWS updated its mission statement, set new strategic directions, embarked upon an endowment campaign, and set sights on becoming a larger presence in social media to

accomplish these goals.

Our Mission is to share best practices with foundations and support the State Master Gardener Conference. To this end, we plan to include more best practice sharing in the Advanced-Education Conference this year and include a short state-wide MGFWS Annual Meeting open to all Master Gardeners. We encourage MGs to take advantage of the International Conference. Also, include the WA State Advanced-Education Conference in your plans. It is an economical and productive way to learn and share with your colleagues.

The endowment effort is slowly gaining momentum. To date, we have received a small-business contribution, two contributions in memoriam, and one personal contribution. One of these was in the form of an extensive gardening library, which will be on sale at very reasonable prices at the Yakima conference. Soon our new home page will be up on the MGFWS website enabling online contributions and acknowledging our generous donors. Future donors will also be acknowledged in *Seeds for Thought* once our Board Committee has fleshed out protocols.

Another exciting event to look forward to is a state-wide effort to contribute by fundraising for MGFWS. This, too, is still in the designing phase, but you will be hearing about it soon. Remember, this is for *you and your clientele*, that is all the people we serve across the state. By participating in advanced education we can continue to provide the very best science-based gardening advice to our communities. MGFWS Endowment is designed to finance the state MG AEC, not just for one year, but in perpetuity. Imagine what we can do for our state!

(Continued on [page 4](#))

Happy New Year Master Gardeners!

~~Nicole Martini, State Master Gardener Program Leader



I hope your holidays were restful and full of fun and meaningful time with friends and family. As we venture into the beginning of 2017 I always like to take stock of the year before to savor the memories of those moments that were so perfect. At the same time, I find it so important to ponder those valuable lessons learned from the inevitable missteps that offered surprising and not so surprising challenges over the year.

Admittedly, working for Extension offers loads of opportunities to practice being flexible and not too fixed on my own expectations or routine ways of doing things. I say this because Extension is ever-changing, constantly evolving to position our department within WSU on the front-lines of upcoming issues that we can help our communities address. While at times this constant change can test my patience and agility, it is something I take great pride and comfort in because it means we're growing! We're growing to build capacity and understanding, to improve efficiencies and to adapt to be what our communities need right now and tomorrow. Why does this matter and why does this give me goose bumps? Because this is what keeps Extension relevant to the people who rely on us for research-based information that improves their quality of life!

I'm sharing this with you because you, my friends, are the face and voice of WSU on the ground. You are the troops that carry our message and research to the people in need of that information. It is truly an honor to work with such a dedicated group of people. To that end, I feel a tremendous responsibility as your state lead to ensure the work you do is promoted and recognized for the value it brings to your communities. I am also excited and thankful to the WSU State MG Foundation that they have recognized this as a goal of theirs, as well!

This spring, it is my hope to be able to roll out an evaluation plan that allows us to begin to demonstrate in an irrefutable way the positive impact you all are having in your communities. This means evidence that clearly shows how people are changing their behavior, and consequently the environment or their own well-being, as a direct result of what they are learning from you. To reach this goal will be no easy feat and your participation is not only greatly appreciated, but absolutely necessary. I realize we all want to see the Master Gardener Program continue in perpetuity and to realize this sustainability it's time we begin to show the real value of the program. The real value is far beyond the number of attendees at workshops or number of visitors to the clinics; it's not even about the number of people who learned a certain topic from you. The real value is the impact of these activities, the changes we're seeing in our communities, as a result of what you've taught our WA State residents.

None of this change can happen without you, so I want to thank each one of you so much for all that you do for the Master Gardener Program. The program saw a great year in 2016, which I look forward to sharing about in the May issue of Seeds for Thought. Your contributions make such a difference and you are truly valued for your dedication and your expertise! Here is to a fabulous 2017!



Pend Oreille County Master Gardeners Host Gardening Classes in Local Demonstration Garden

~~ Dixie Chichester, Pend Oreille County Master Gardener

This headline may not seem very exciting to most Master Gardeners across Washington State but to the Master Gardeners in Pend Oreille County, it proclaims a significantly historic event. For the first time ever, Pend Oreille County Master Gardeners now have a Demonstration Garden of their very own!



Abandoned garden with WSU Extension Office in background
Photo by Dixie Chichester

It all started in the fall of 2015 when the Pend Oreille County Commissioners gave the go-ahead for WSU/Pend Oreille County Extension to move to the newly remodeled offices at 227 S. Garden Avenue in Newport. Much to the Master Gardeners' delight, adjacent to this building, on County property, was a 24' x 30' greenhouse, originally built with funds from the County Social Services Department. Just a few feet south of this greenhouse was a 60' x 60' fenced garden, built but then unfortunately abandoned by the County Sheriff's Department when project funding expired. Of course, this garden, uncontrolled for many years, was full of overgrown weeds, choked with Quack Grass and boasted deer fencing that was leaning in (and out in some spots) at 45-degree angles. The greenhouse plastic was torn and tattered and the weeds inside the greenhouse seemed to be competing with the weeds in the adjacent garden to see which could grow thicker and taller. But the Master Gardeners didn't

see these things as obstacles; they only saw the potential of what could be. They were determined to convert the "Beast" into a thing of "Beauty"; however, with the limited budget and manpower of a small county, that conversion would not be an easy task.



A scarecrow with head from a gourd was the focal point of the garden the first year.
Photo by Dixie Chichester

Enter the King County Master Gardener Foundation and their Ellen A'Key Grant program designed to assist and support small county Master Gardener Programs in Washington State. With \$1500.00 from the King County MG Foundation and \$1700.00 of their own hard-earned plant sale money, the Pend Oreille County Master Gardeners began finalizing their garden plan in early spring of 2016. A basic design was adopted and the first phase of a three-year plan to reclaim their "neighborhood eyesore" began. The fence was straightened with additional fence posts. The County Maintenance crew with their bulldozer scraped the weeds and grass from the surface. A truckload of soil and several trailer loads of mulch were delivered. Then a series of raised beds was put in place along with one central, bean-shaped garden bed. Donated vegetables, perennials, and annual flowers along with some leftovers from the plant sale in



Temporary sign at new garden entrance.
Photo by Dixie Chichester

(Continued on page 5)

Seeds for Thought is a quarterly publication of the
 Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State (MGFWS)
 Published February, May, August & November

Officer	Name	County	Email address
President	Kathleen Eaton	Snohomish	presidentmgfws@gmail.com
Secretary	John Strong	Yakima	strongware@me.com
Treasurer	Margaret Morris	Yakima	Mmorris0615@hotmail.com
VP Peninsula	Candice Gohn	Jefferson	cgohn@embarqmail.com
VP Northwest	Linda Bergquist	Whatcom	lbergquist41@gmail.com
VP Southwest	MaryJo Christensen	Lewis	christensenmj@comcast.net
VP Metro	Vacant		
VP Eastern	Kathy Brenberger	Benton-Franklin	kbrenberger@frontier.com
WSU MG Program Leader	Nicole Martini	WSU	nmartini@wsu.edu

(President’s Message Continued from [page 1](#))

The very first donation came simply because I happened to talk about the program to someone who cared! Viola! \$500, a small, but not insignificant start; and many people work for companies that match their donations. I believe our total at the end of 2016 was \$10,600 (\$5,000 was from MGFWS). And there’s my study full of books, with thanks to Dode Carlson for helping me lug them.

We’ve just begun to wrap our arms around this. Open your minds to the possibility. Think \$2 million. I know we can do this, *together!*

Happy garden planning ...

2017 International Master Gardener Conference
~~Erin Landon, Grays Harbor/Pacific County Master Gardener



The International Master Gardener Conference (IMGC) has been held every two years since 1987. The IMGC provides an opportunity for Master Gardeners, State and County coordinators to come together and learn through seminars and tours, celebrate successes through the International Search for Excellence Program, and meet and network with Master Gardener volunteers, faculty and staff from across the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and South Korea.

In 2017, the Oregon State University Extension Master Gardener Program and the Oregon Master Gardener Association will host the 2017 International Master Gardener Conference at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon, July 10-14, 2017.

The early bird deadline for [registration](#) has been extended to February 28. Keynote speakers for the conference include Dr. [John Marzluff](#), Professor of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington, [Dan](#)

(Continued on [page 6](#))

Pend Oreille County Demonstration Garden (Continued from page 3)

April were planted, and with the help of a newly installed drip irrigation system, their new garden began to take shape. The Master Gardeners supplied lumber and hardware to the Grizzly Discovery Center 21st Century After-School Program Construction Class and those high school students built a beautiful new wood arbor/gate for the main garden entrance. The greenhouse was cleaned, reorganized, weeded, and then new geotextile fabric was placed over the ground to prevent more weed growth. New plastic for the greenhouse was purchased, thanks to funding from WSU/Pend Oreille County Extension, and installed in October.

From the very beginning, gardening education was the foundation for all the plans for the new Demonstration Garden. Topics for the complete line-up of gardening classes to be presented during 2016 to the general public were chosen based upon what was currently happening in the Demonstration Garden. For example, in March, when they were finalizing plans for the new garden, the Master Gardeners offered a landscaping class called “Landscaping a la Pend Oreille County”. During this class, participants were taught landscaping techniques; were provided with background



Master Gardener Jan Wood teaches class participants about square foot gardening during the May class on “Preparing Garden Beds.”
Photo by Dixie Chichester

information and the new Demonstration Garden dimensions; and then were asked to help provide planning and design elements for the new garden. Many of these ideas from community members were incorporated into the basic garden plan. In May, Master Gardeners taught community members “How to Prepare a Garden Bed” and were able to use the Demonstration Garden that provided examples of raised beds, flat beds, straw bale gardening, square foot gardening, lasagna gardening and Hugelkulture. In all, the Demonstration Garden played an important role in six different gardening classes helping to explain and show elements of drip irrigation, basic gardening techniques, sustainable gardening, vegetable production, harvesting and cooking, and garden clean-up and winterization. Being able to combine in-class presentations with outdoor garden tours has greatly increased the popularity of gardening classes in Pend Oreille County. “The Demonstration Garden is a real plus,” stated one class participant on a post-class survey.

The veggie garden was packed with educational gardening experiments and topics to demonstrate to the public. One-half of the row of green beans was planted with inoculant; the other half was not. And, yes, inoculant does make a noticeable difference in plant growth and bean production.

The Master Gardeners also planted corn, beans, and squash together to create a “Three Sisters” bed and were pleased with the results of that planting technique. The lasagna garden and the Hugelkulture garden bed both did well but no better or worse than traditional raised beds during this first year. The straw bale garden was quite a success producing vigorous broccoli, squash, and cucumber plants. There were also some unexpected things learned; try planting hops next to hollyhocks. The hops vine winds its way up the hollyhock stalks, fills in the scraggly lower branches and the result is a gorgeous tower of flowers and foliage.



The Garden before
Photo by Dixie Chichester

(Continued on page 6)

Pend Oreille Demonstration Garden (Continued from page 5)

But the garden is not just an educational tool. The project also provided pounds of fresh healthy produce for the local food bank. In addition, a future project may involve partnering with Pend Oreille County to use the garden and greenhouse to propagate and grow native plants to be used in re-vegetating construction adjacent to County road projects. This new venture will provide the opportunity for Master Gardeners to learn and then teach about area native plants and propagation techniques. The greenhouse will also be a great asset in assisting Master Gardeners in growing healthy and attractive plants for their annual plant sale in April. Of course, the reclaiming of the garden has really improved the appearance of the neighborhood along Circle Drive and the “County Campus” in general. Best of all is the boost the garden has given to the local Master Gardener program. Having this new area to develop and use in their educational programming has been energizing. This small group of dedicated volunteers has pulled together as a team and has accomplished more than they ever thought possible. Thanks to the King County Master Gardener Foundation and all of the local community members that support Master Gardener programs here in Pend Oreille County the first phase of developing the new demonstration garden has been a great success.



The Garden after - the south one-third of the garden has been converted to grow vegetables.
Photo by Dixie Chichester

The Demonstration Garden is now put to bed for the winter but planning for 2017 is on-going. The Master Gardeners already have raised enough money to continue on to the second phase of development which will involve educating the public about growing small fruits and berries. After these “year one” achievements, the local Master Gardeners are determined, re-energized, and confident that by the end of the third year of development, the Pend Oreille County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden will be one of the finest educational gardens in Eastern Washington.

(IMGC Continued from page 4)

Hinkley, Plantsman, Author, Plant Collector, Lecturer, and Renee Shepherd, Seed Developer, Gardener, Entrepreneur and Author, Founder and Owner of Renee’s Garden.

There will be over 40 session talks include Diagnosing Plant Problems with Neil Bell, Ten Years of Rooftop Gardening in Portland with Marc Boucher-Colbert, Teaching with Demonstration Gardens with Sheri Dorn, IPM for fruit trees with Chuck Ingels, and Vertical Vegetable Gardening with Harry Olsen. In addition to a wealth of speakers, the conference includes sixteen tours, a trade show with nearly 80 booths of exhibitors, and a mini film series including Plant this Movie, Microsocosmos, Symphony of the Soil. A complete list of speakers and tours, as well as registration information can be found on the IMGC website. Sessions of the IMGC that enrich and support an MG’s role as a community educator may be eligible for continuing education hours. Please check with your County Coordinator to verify which, if any, sessions qualify and how many hours may be counted toward CE.

Search for Excellence (SFE) is the recognition program of Extension Master Gardener volunteer work throughout the United States, Canada and South Korea. First, second, and third place winners will be recognized across 7 categories during the conference. The Snohomish County Master Gardener program is being recognized in the category of Innovative Projects for “The Mentor Approach: Building Community” as well as in the category of Research for “McCollum Park Pollinator Garden.” The Spokane County Master Gardener program is being recognized in the Youth category for “Garden Lesson in a Box.” Congratulations to Snohomish and Spokane County Master Gardeners for this international recognition! You can find a complete list of SFE award recipients on the IMGC website.

Island County Master Gardener Foundation
WSU Extension
PO Box 5000
Coupeville, WA 98239

Contact: Sheri Gerhard (206) 321-1168 sheri.gerhard@gmail.com

FOR RELEASE: as of January 15, 2017

Registration Now Open for
WHIDBEY GARDENING WORKSHOP 2017
An Opportunity for Area Gardeners to Learn from Experts

Area gardeners from novice to advanced will be able to choose from over 45 classes covering a wide array of gardening topics at the day-long Whidbey Gardening Workshop to be held at Oak Harbor High School, Saturday, March 4, 2017.

The workshop is open to the public and will feature classes in garden design, care and maintenance with a focus on sustainability, including classes on growing herbs, vegetables, fruits and ornamental landscape plants and flowering perennials. Several sessions will focus on the challenges of gardening in the Maritime Northwest and on simplifying the garden landscape for easier care and suitability to our climate.

- **New this year:** enjoy a selection of 20 new-this-year classes including Rain Gardens, Hot Composting, Fruit Tree Problems and Care, Hardscape Design, Year'Round Cut Flower Garden Design, Groundwater and Garden Watering, Soil Improvement, Conifers in the Garden, Container Gardening, Children in the Garden, ..and more!
- Keynote - *"Up Up and Away - Designing 3-Dimensional Gardens" with Lucy Hardiman, longtime NorthweSt horticultural treasure and nationally recognized garden designer, writer, educator and sought-after speaker coast to coast*
- Instructors have credentials in Horticulture, Agronomy, Biology, Hydrogeology, Conservation and Landscape Architecture, and include WSU scientists, Certified Master Gardeners with decades of experience, area garden service providers, nursery staff, local farmers, professional educators and published authors.

The workshop will also feature a Garden Marketplace highlighting nurseries, vendors and artisans offering the latest plants, garden art, furniture, gardening accessories and books, and featuring a selection of educational exhibits to browse.

Now in its 29th year, the Whidbey Gardening Workshop is presented by the Island County Master Gardener Foundation. The Master Gardener Program is an outreach and education program of Washington State University Extension.

Whidbey Gardening Workshop is open to the public. Online Registration, with opportunity to secure class preferences, is open as of January 15 at www.whidbeygardeningworkshop.org . Or call 360-240-5527 to request a registration packet by mail. \$40 advance registration or \$45 at the door.