



Seeds For Thought

August 2019 Volume 19, Issue 3

A newsletter of the
Master Gardener
Foundation of
Washington State

From the President

~~Don Enstrom, MGFWS President

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Visit our website:

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



We now have a calendar! Please check the [calendar](#) for deadlines, meetings, and events in various counties.

Iris photo by Erin Landon Grays Harbor County Master Gardener



Helen Mirren is credited with saying “Gardening is learning, learning, learning. That’s the fun of them. You’re always learning.” In this spirit the Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State, in partnership with WSU Extension, continues to strengthen its commitment to deliver advanced education and best practice sharing across our state and to all Washington Master Gardener Volunteers.

Our first major endeavor is to deliver the 2020 Advanced Education Conference. AEC 2020 Program Chairs C-J Nielsen and Kathy Brenberger continue to impress & amaze us with their success in filling conference leadership roles and recruiting committee members. If (like me) you’ve not worked on a conference team before, I encourage you to get involved – you’ll be amazed how much you’ll enjoy learning the process and contributing to the conference’s success! The Facilities Committee has secured Fort Worden as our venue and offers opportunities in coordinating housing and supporting the instructors in delivering their presentations. The Program Committee has secured an incredible keynote speaker and offers opportunities to help identify advanced education topics and recruit exceptional instructors. The Procurement Committee should be called the Hero’s Committee, as it offers you the opportunity to recruit sponsors that will add interest and variety to our offerings and help defray everyone’s cost of attendance. The Marketing and Publicity Committee has launched the conference’s MGlearns.org website and offers opportunities to work in social media and to support the ever popular raffle, vendors, and silent auction. If you’d prefer to help put together conference materials or work at the registration table, consider the Registrar Committee. Or consider helping with pre-conference tours – Jefferson County has so many amazing offerings!

With 2020 conference planning well under way, our state foundation’s greatest challenge is to add strength and depth to our active membership. Each chartered county is entitled (in addition to any officers) to 3 voting seats on the board. Most counties have filled at least one seat, but many seats remain empty. I encourage any master gardener volunteer reading this article to consider expanding their MG experience to include service on the board as we work together to deliver enjoyable advanced education and best practice sharing opportunities to Washington master gardener volunteers. In addition to the county appointed members, current open

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WSU Master Gardener Program Update

~~Jennifer Marquis, Statewide Program Leader



We are in the midst of summer. All of you are out in your communities proudly serving and teaching as WSU Master Gardener volunteers. My mental image of 4000 plus volunteers serving on behalf of WSU Extension and counties is powerful. When I ponder all of you volunteering your time and expertise across our great state of Washington, I am humbled and inspired. Each of you give so much of yourself to empower environmentally sustainable communities. Last year, I quoted the Seed Man from a novel by Joanna Goodman. I want to share it again because it simply and plainly describes the work you do every day. The Seed Man said, “he who plants a seed plants life”. You all know that a planted seed gives hope, provides food for the table and creates beauty all around. As WSU Master Gardeners you share your gardening and environmental stewardship passion in all that you do. Your work inspires growth, encourages caring, and builds strong, healthy

communities.

Your work also inspires WSU faculty and staff to serve you as best as we can. For nearly a year, teams of program coordinators have been working on four areas of improvement that were defined in our face to face meeting in June of 2018. Progress has been made in the four areas of quality resources, infrastructure, professional development and telling our story. We also elected to add a fifth team focused on increasing the diversity of volunteers serving the WSU Master Gardener program. Four of the five teams have coalesced around their goals and objectives and have made consistent progress.

We are piloting volunteer management software in Thurston County. We are working on an on boarding program for new program coordinators, which will grow into a fully interactive professional development curriculum for Master gardener program coordinators on how to lead, engage and supervise volunteers. We are working on making sure Hortsense, Pestsense and Gardening in Washington State meet WSU Master Gardener volunteer needs.

Most recently we began work on reviewing and revising our program’s vision and mission. We are also developing program values. Once this work is complete we will start work on statewide program priorities and goals. We must be able to tell a compelling and impactful story about the work our program does to internal and external stakeholders. Telling our story and how what we do impacts the health of our environment and our communities will help us have a highly recognized, diverse and fully supported program that is the go-to resource for horticulture and environmental stewardship education.

I’ll leave you with our WSU Master Gardener program tagline: *Cultivating Plants, People and Communities since 1973*. I do not think there is a better way to describe what we do. Our program has changed immensely in the years since the beginning, but two things have remained the same. Volunteers are the heart and soul of our program and we strive to grow plants, engage people and empower communities. You are the face of WSU across our state. You have the power and influence to create resilient communities that not only survive but thrive in our constantly changing climates. Seek out opportunities to tell the story of what you do, what your projects do and what your county program does for you, for your community and for the environment.

Trees and Drought

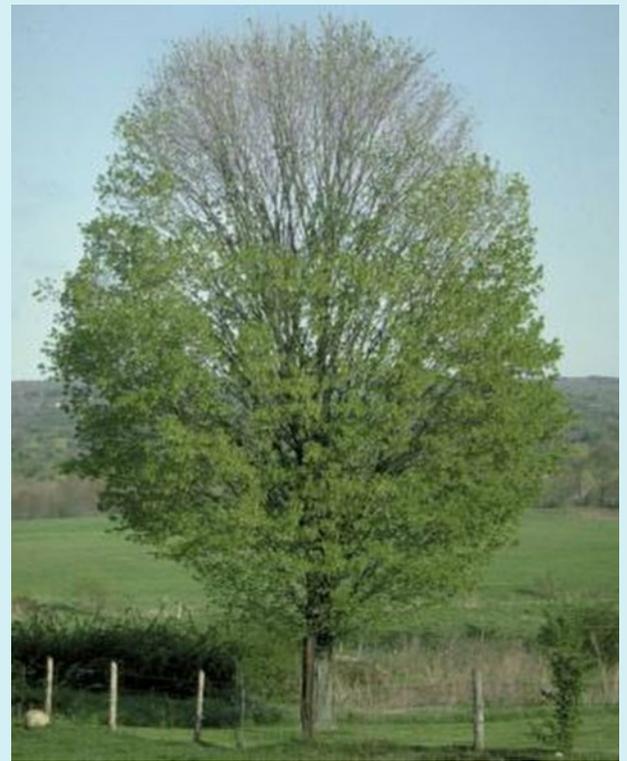
~~Barbara Guillard- Grant/Adams County Master Gardener

Losing a tree that has grown for years at your home is a sad event. Over the past few years, our springs and summers in the Columbia Basin have been warmer and so have our winters. Knowing what to say to clients at our Master Gardener Clinics in the summer when they describe the symptoms of their dying trees causes a dilemma, because some times by the time they have noticed the symptoms of drought in the tree and look for help, the damage is too great and the tree can't be saved. If that happens, it's time to refer them to a certified arborist.

The point of this article is to think about trees as valuable assets that are going to require care year-round from the time they are planted, perhaps even watering during the winter months, as the climate changes and the trees grow older. Researchers write that planting one tree to the west and one to the south of a house can significantly reduce energy use. It's also important to know that some trees do better in our hot dry climate than others. There are recommended pines, spruces, and maples and other species at your local nursery. If you choose to grow a tree not native to the environment, it is important to know what to do to keep it healthy and green for its long life, a life span that is greatly reduced by drought conditions. Gardeners should become aware of the gradual changes that occur to trees as they experience drier, windier winters.

Drought conditions may vary from year to year. There can be short-term damage from one dry spell that will cause wilting, leaf scorch, and leaf loss, but if there is too little moisture over a period of years, you will begin to see other signs of not enough water reaching the root system such as stunted growth, branch die-back, and death. Stem dieback occurs when the soil under the tree dries out in hot summer months and continues to be dry during the winter months. During drought, the tree first increases the number of fine feeder roots it grows as it searches for water, but if the drought period continues through the year, the fine roots die and are not able to take up water when it finally is available. The result may be that branches in the upper canopy of the tree die.

The bad news for some homeowners is that many trees, especially evergreens, can take up to three years to show the symptoms of inadequate water. When a tree is weakened by drought, insects such as wood borers and bark beetles can invade it. The presence of these kinds of pests is a sign of a weak tree. Some pests, like aphids, spider mites, and lace bugs, which do not ordinarily harm a tree, begin to take away from the appearance of the tree as the tree loses its ability to grow new twigs and leaves faster than the insects can damage them. The tree's root system's ability to take up water is out of balance with the normal rate of growth



Long term dieback in the upper branches. Internet photo.

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Israel - A Fascinating Land of Many Faces

~~Dennis Tompkins, Pierce County Master Gardener

Our Washington Ag-Forestry Leadership group spent eight days traveling throughout the nation. We visited various agricultural endeavors, ancient religious sites, listened to well-informed speakers and began to understand that many of our preconceived notions were often negatively tainted by our seemingly anti-Israel press and vocal activists.

Master Gardeners would be impressed by some of the agriculture and gardening practices by farmers and homeowners as noted below.

Innovation is Prevalent

Israel has earned the designation of the “start-up” nation. Over 350 R&D centers of multinational corporations, including all of the major high-tech companies, have been established to take advantage of the highly skilled talent pool and the support of innovation by the government.

Some of the significant contributions include the creation of drip irrigation systems, development of the USB flash drive, establishing itself as a world leader in desalinization and agricultural technologies and in many other fields such as medicine.

An example of these contributions was demonstrated during a visit to Kibbutz Hatzerim, the site of Netafim that invented drip irrigation. This firm is a leader in research and manufacturing of these systems used throughout the world. Its jojoba tree plantation demonstrated the use of a buried drip system. This tree produces an oil widely used in cosmetics.



Crops grown under shade at a co-op that houses and supports troubled youths. Note the extensive drip irrigation tubes. Photo by Dennis Tompkins.

A Water Surplus in a Desert Country

One of the highly visible developments has been the management the water resources over the decades so that Israel has a water surplus in this arid region of the world. Over 60 percent of the water is derived from five desalinization facilities, the recycling of sewage and from the brackish water in the southern Negev desert.

Most of the recycled gray water is piped throughout the country to supply the drip irrigation systems and other needs of agriculture.

This has led to the “blooming” of portions of the desert where several crops are grown in greenhouses or under shaded structures. These include the development of tasty varieties of cherry tomatoes which have become a major Israeli export. A few palm tree plantations dot the desert countryside along the Dead Sea.

Most of the agriculture is produced further north where greater rainfall and fertile soils are located such as in the Jezreel Valley.

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Cherry tomatoes grown in greenhouse in the Negev desert south of Jerusalem. They are a leading export of Israel. Photo by Dennis Tompkins

Save the Date - 2020 Conference

The 2020 Master Gardener Advanced Education Conference is scheduled for October 1-3, 2020 at historic Fort Worden in Port Townsend, WA. Look for additional information coming up!



Hawthorn by Erin Landon

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positions include Historian, Communications Director, Nominating Chair, Financial Review Chair, Webmaster, and Social Media Chair. For more information, e-mail me at PresidentMGFWS@gmail.com. Abraham Lincoln once remarked “We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.” In years gone by our state foundation garnered a bit of a thorn bush reputation. We’re working hard and applying all our MG energy & skills to grow roses – please volunteer to work in the foundation and join us in making our educational roses bloom!

By the way – have you seen Helen Mirren’s movie “Greenfingers”? A 2000 British comedy film, it is based on a true story about the award-winning gardening prisoners of HMP Leyhill. Available on streaming services, I think you’ll enjoy it!

Warm Regards – Don

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

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of the tree's branches and leaves. Injuries do not heal well and other diseases like cankers can invade.

The practical thing to do is not to wait until there are signs of drought damage, but to anticipate tree needs. Some things to do when you live in climate which is dry and where water for landscapes may be sporadically scarce are to choose plants that are known to do well in your area and to care for them in ways that will help them stay healthy during long hot summers and cold dry winters.

Incorporate organic matter in to your soil. Weed regularly-- Some healthy weeds are actually an indication of good soil but you don't want them taking moisture away from your tree! Water deeply (as much as 12 inches for some trees) rather than frequently. Use soaker hoses or drip methods rather than watering overhead. Apply mulch properly around the base of your tree.

If you have lost a tree or if you simply want to add a new one to your property there are many trees that do well in our area. A few, however, become invasive such as Tree of Heaven, Siberian Elm, and Russian Olive that you should not plant, but you will find tree lists on Eastern Washington Master Gardener websites and Facebook sites or you can consider the following list of small trees or shrubs for Eastern Washington taken from the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board website:

- Black Chokeberry, *Aronia melanocarpa*
- Smoke Bush, *Cotinus coggygria* & its cultivar 'Royal Purple'
- Eastern Redbud, *Cercis canadensis*
- European Elderberry, *Sambucus nigra* & cultivars
- Western Serviceberry, *Amelanchier alnifolia*
- Apple Serviceberry, *Amelanchier x grandiflora* and cultivars
- Autumn Applause Ash, *Fraxinus americana* 'Autumn Applause'
- Smooth or Staghorn Sumac, *Rhus glabra* & *R. typhina* 'Lacinata'
- Raywood Ash, *Fraxinus angustifolia* 'Raywood'
- Blue Weeping Atlas Cedar, *Cedrus atlantica* 'Glauca Pendula'
- Double File Viburnum, *Viburnum plicatum* var. *tomentosum* 'Mariesii'
- Rose-of-Sharon, *Hibiscus syriacus*
- Weeping Katsura, *Ceridiphyllum japonicum* 'Morioka Weeping'



This tree in Moses Lake was uprooted by the October 2013 storm. It was very drought stressed, with dead top branches and very few supporting roots which may have been some of the reasons it blew over.
Photo by Barbara Guiland.

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A Tourist Haven

We were exposed to the fascinating biblical history, several archeological sites dating back thousands of years, a desert agriculture research station, a prickly pear cactus plantation, greenhouses growing various crops, a wildlife refuge hosting over 50,000 cranes and other birdlife and traveled through the northern pine forests planted around 50 years ago.

We visited a company that grows and exports bumble bees for greenhouse pollination, med fly control agents and other insects for the organic control of various pests. I recommend readers check out this enterprise's website at biobees.com. It is absolutely fascinating!

The many stops around Jerusalem included a fun-filled experience sifting through debris from an archeological site near the Temple Mount. We recovered several pottery shards, small bones, coins, and other objects from a time long past.

Security is a Priority

Each morning, Israeli citizens awaken to unfriendly parties on three sides of the country, many wishing the destruction of the Jewish state. There is a history of many wars since the nation's establishment in 1948.

It is a complicated picture often dominated by politics and hatred directed toward Israel. The Palestinian question, the capture of the West Bank and Golan Heights in the 1967 war and Israeli settlements are major issues that see little hope for solution in the foreseeable future.

The question from us to a group of soldiers was "What message would you have us take back to the U.S.?" Without hesitation, a tank commander emphatically stated, "Do not believe everything you read about Israel!" The commander was a member of an IDF (Israel Defense Forces) unit we visited that patrolled a segment of the Israel-Lebanon border.

One result of the past conflicts is the development of one of the most advanced militaries as Israel reacts to the outside threats from Hamas in the Gaza strip, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Iranian-backed units in Syria.

Security issues aside, tourism is a big business and travel throughout the country is very safe. Israel is a wonderful country to visit to view the past and learn about the present – and hope for the future. It is an excellent bucket list candidate for the adventurous!

Dennis Tompkins is an ISA Certified Arborist, ISA Qualified Tree Risk Assessor and a Master Gardener since 1996 from the Bonney Lake-Sumner area. He provides pest diagnosis, hazard tree evaluations, tree appraisals, small tree and shrub pruning and other services for homeowners and businesses. Questions or comments? Contact him at 253 863-7469 or email at dlt@blarg.net. Website: evergreen-arborist.com.



Young workers at the co-op processing freshly harvested onions.

Photo by Dennis Tompkins