

H O E D O W N

November 2020



The November garden

Board members 2020

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President's message



To close the Master Gardener year, I salute you, my fellow Master Gardeners, with my take on the poem on the base of the Statue of Liberty in N.Y. Harbor (with apologies to Emma Lazarus).

The New Horticulturist

(See The New Colossus, below)

Not like the brazen giant of YouTube fame,
With denim-covered limbs astride from plot to plot;
Here at our sun-washed, high desert gates shall stand
A mighty gardener with a trowel, whose sheen
Is the organic fertilizer residue,
and her name Mother of Seedlings. From her grass-stained fingers
Glows backyard-wide zeal; her sunglassed eyes command
The soil-bridged shelter that twin trellises frame.

"Keep, manicured lawns, your storied turf!" cries she
With sun-parched lips. "Give me your tired, your wilted,
Your overgrown plants dreaming to be free,
The wretched refuse of your Big Box Store.
Send these, the homeless, untended rejects to me,
I lift my spading fork beside the greenhouse door!"

"The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus
on the Statue of Liberty in NY Harbor



Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Nancy

Agent's Corner



Hi All,

Well, it has been an interesting year to say the least. I appreciate your PATIENCE in waiting to complete the certification process for the class of 2020, hopefully in 2021! I know many of you wanted to volunteer but we had very few opportunities this year. It was sad not to hold our annual Recognition Night this October, where we recognize our volunteers and their annual achievements. With that being said I do want to recognize each of you that were able to contribute to our limited projects we had going including the OSU Demonstration Garden, Hollinshead Water-wise Garden, Discovery Park Community Garden, Hollinshead Community Garden, teaching Zoom webinars, Community Ed committee, ECCO tech team, Remote Plant Clinic team, KPOV Radio crew, HoeDown, High Desert Garden Tour, and all of the COMGA board members and project coordinators that continued to meet and work behind the scenes throughout 2020 despite the circumstances! (Apologies if I forgot a project). I personally appreciate that you were all optimistic and supportive of me, Toni, Carrie given this challenging year. Your words of encouragement and spirit of cooperation were greatly appreciated. You are amazing! As a reminder those that were recertified coming in to 2020, will be carried over into 2021. We will send out recertification information in late December or January. Looking forward to our new advanced training offerings coming in the new year for recertified volunteers and trainees alike. Stay tuned!

Wishing you a safe and restful winter season!

Amy Jo

OSU Extension Service Demonstration Garden

Like most of us as we get a little older we have to pace ourselves when it comes to physical activities such as gardening! Liz Douville has decided to step down from being a project coordinator with me for the OSU Demo Garden in Redmond. I will miss her but will still welcome her input when she can join us again in the garden.

There are 2 Master Gardener Trainees that have accepted the offer to help me as Project Coordinator for the OSU Demonstration Garden going into 2021. Please welcome Karen Simonet and Kaileen Mendall as Co-Coordinators for this project!

At this time, we anticipate resuming regular workdays in the garden in April 2021, pending adjustments for COVID-19 guidelines.

Vicky Kemp, Co-Coordinator with Karen Simonet and Kaileen Mendall



Hollinshead Community Garden

by Nancy Glick

After a late start and installing a few very important guidelines, the Hollinshead gardeners came together, signed in with every visit, socially distanced themselves and grew fantastic vegetables once again.



By the time the Garden closed, the generous gardeners had harvested and donated 532 pounds of produce for the Central Oregon Food Bank at NeighborImpact. Really impressive for a Garden that was shortened by two months due to the pandemic!

The changes put in place this year didn't dampen the spirit of the Garden and the plot renters were so delighted to have their gardens, they were compliant with the OSU Covid guidelines presented to them by their Master Gardener Mentors. They grumbled a little but, overall, agreed the rules didn't stop the plants from flourishing and they were grateful.



The Master Gardener volunteers were everything a Coordinator could wish for: they each took a turn once a week to sanitize all common Garden surfaces like

hose nozzles and faucets, they answered gardeners' hard questions about the Covid protocols we used and they attended every meeting to keep updated on any issues the Garden was having.

It hasn't been an easy year but these Master Gardeners did all that was expected of them – and more! When Kirsten Hinton and Jim Salber take over as Coordinators in 2021, they will find a great team to work with.

If you are interested in joining this great group of volunteers at Hollinshead Community Garden, contact either Kirsten (kirstenhinton5@gmail.com) or Jim (salberjim@gmail.com). I know they'd be happy to give you all the details about volunteering in the Garden.



Closing Day – October 11

Hollinshead Community Garden

by Kirsten Hinton

What did the mother buffalo say to her son when she dropped him off at school? You'll find the answer in the following text:

Hollinshead Community gardeners need mentors. Should I dare to suggest that with an abundance of enthusiastic mentors we can have smaller patches? Some of the community gardeners are highly capable from whom you may possibly learn a thing or two; others may need a hand, and a few need a nudge once in a while. Don't be intimidated. Jump on board. Your participation in the garden will be greatly appreciated. And if you prefer, sanitizers, ice-providers and general assistants are also an option.

Barring unforeseen issues, the 2021 community garden season will open on Saturday, April 24 and Sunday April 25 following the same COVID protocols that were successful in 2020. Unfortunately, Plots 4 & 16 will again need to be planted with herbicide-sensitive plants: tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant and beans. Tentative garden closure is Saturday, Oct 16 and Sunday October 17.

And what did buffalo mother say? "Bi Son."

The new coordinators, Jim Salber and Kirsten Hinton, look forward to working with you.



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Discovery Park Community Garden

by Gary Weber

As of October 27, the 2020 season at Discovery Park CG was finalized. Our gardeners took good care about doing everything that was asked of them to get their raised beds ready for winter and all met the target date, leaving a minimum amount of things to take care of for our volunteers. Our 3 active volunteers were very dedicated. Becky McKee, Lisa Kieraldo and Lisa Nakadate were really very consistent about doing the sanitizing routine and also helped take care of regular maintenance at the garden. Our delayed opening of the garden to June 20 was later than normal, however, with the extra warm summer weather I do believe we more than made up for those lost days compared with a normal year. The lack of midsummer frosts helped as well. Our rodent friends were off to a slow start, but finally did increase their activity to the point where some bed's veggies were damaged. That is unfortunate but hopefully it is a live-and-learn situation for them, and next year those lessons can be put to use. The more or less enforced use of an alternative registration system, going on-line rather than in person, was very successful (thanks Nancy Glick) and I would recommend we continue to use that method in the future. The closing date of 10/27 was also 2 weeks later than the past, and given the warm fall and lack of a really hard freeze early on in the fall, seemed appropriate. This gave gardeners a chance to continue to harvest late season veggies, ripen some tomatoes and get their clean up done. I'd like to express my gratitude for the support the garden has received from the Board in 2020 and I look forward to an even more successful year for the garden in 2021.



Hollinshead Water-wise Garden

by Pat Kolling

Looking back on the gardening season of 2020, it's good to reflect on what we have been able to achieve during this challenging year. The garden prospered even with imposed neglect at the beginning of the year – which demonstrates how hardy and resilient plants are. We had a dedicated team of volunteers at the workdays who wore masks and socially distanced, but worked hard, had fun, and learned about the plants in the garden. We are all wondering how we will get through the winter months without the garden work and the volunteer interaction. We may have a winter walk through the garden in the late fall to rake up any remaining leaves. We will continue to work on the plant database over the winter, and will have something to share with COMGA in the spring.

The final fall workday at the water-wise garden was held October 29th. We cut back appropriate perennials and prepared the garden for the fall and winter months. We raked pine needles (there are lots) and leaves and laid down a yard of bark mulch to the inside garden. The native beds are left without mulch, as that is what the natives prefer.

We also installed the new Hollinshead Community Garden Bulletin Board permanent background. It is made of thin galvanized steel and matches the other signage at the garden. The water-wise team will be adding featured plants each month to the board, and it will be a place to add community education offerings and other education for both the water-wise and the community garden.

The garden is open to the public all winter, so stop by and see what it looks like in the fall!



REMINDER

**THERE IS NO NEWSLETTER IN THE
MONTH OF DECEMBER**

SEE YOU ALL IN JANUARY

Getting to Know You!

By Deb Goodall

Angelena Wentzel: Creativity in Motion

Angelena strung grow lights under her piano this past spring to make more room for her plant seedlings. Of course, she did. As a freshly minted 2019 Master Gardener, she went from discovering the very basics, like the benefits of watering plants ("Amazing what happens when you actually water your plants!") to enthusiastically creating a 30' x 50' fenced garden plot and ultimately convincing husband Eric they *really needed* a greenhouse, not to mention an automatic irrigation system to replace tennis elbow-inducing hand-watering.

"I learned a lot," she says of Master Gardener training and this past growing season. One lesson? "I won't be planting 75 kale plants again!"

Creativity, determination, and good humor are repeat themes in Angelena's life. After growing up in California's tiny town of Glennville and then not-so-tiny Bakersfield as the oldest of five children, she headed to Los Angeles after high school to attend the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. There she discovered the fashion industry was a little too competitive and fast-paced for a 19-year old. She switched gears and headed to California State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in digital communications. While interning in a psychiatric hospital, she again listened to her heart and realized she had no interest working in the psychology field. For a second time, she mustered courage to rethink her career options.

Drawing upon what she knew and loved about fashion and graphic design, she took a job with a clothing company. That work led to another job as a computer-aided design (CAD) trainer for a company that developed fashion design software. Eventually, she moved into the product design field, creating among other things, Disney design-related bedding and children's lighting. One favorite project was a lamp - inspired by Pixar's animated film Cars - that included slots for all of the car characters.

About that time, she and her husband Eric started a family. First came daughter Paige and then son Carter a few years later. Paige is now a high school senior and Carter a sophomore. To spend more time at home, Angelena quit the demanding design field and directed her energy into selling Arbonne skincare products for 5 years, meeting sales goals rewarded by getting to drive a white Mercedes, out-cacheting any pink Cadillac!

The Wentzels visited Central Oregon in 2011 and felt they had finally found where they belonged. They moved here in 2014 and landed jobs. Angelena studied to become an esthetician, her design skills having gotten a bit rusty. Eventually, they purchased their own piece of heaven, five acres in Sisters, which they now share with a beloved herd of nine Nigerian dwarf goats composed of her children's 4-H animals and irresistible waifs.

The property they purchased needed a lot of work, and Angelena sought help landscaping it. A friend who had worked for a landscaper got her started. She loved it. As most newbie gardeners do when they move to Central Oregon, she struggled and admits to killing off most of the

plants she touched. But she didn't give up, determined every year to improve the odds. She'd heard of the Master Gardener program and realized she could complete it working around the children's busy schedules and her jobs at different spas.

As in the past, Angelena threw herself into her work, this time the greening of her thumbs. Master Gardener classes, picking the brains of more experienced gardeners in the program, volunteering in the Extension Service greenhouse and Redmond Demonstration Garden, her research in Plant Clinic, and her experimentation at home, including use of the GrowVeg.com planning app, has buoyed her gardening self-confidence.

Angelena continues to draw upon her array of creative skills. She compares reimagining the landscaping of her property to a complex graphic design project, but with several different and interesting challenges.

"Landscaping and graphic design both feature design, color, and texture, but a landscape also entails the ever-changing impacts of weather - and, of course, plants, those critical living design components that change size, shape, and color," she explains.

Angelena's gardening savvy will be another gem in her collection of talents and skills - and will undoubtedly provide inspiration in future works of art. She has started compiling a portfolio of her work, intending to pursue a Master of Fine Arts degree once Carter completes high school. Bravo, Angelena! Keep going and growing!



Newsletter Notes: Deadline for submission of material to the HoeDown is 1st Friday after the board meeting. All articles, notices and other journalistic efforts are welcome and appreciated. All information provided by the "HoeDown" is believed to be accurate but readers must assume all responsibility for their own actions based on this information.

Occasionally a product or company may be named in an article but this does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of said product.

Published by : COMGA Send ideas & articles to: **HoeDown** Rocky Bessette, 8200 NW Yucca Ave., Redmond, OR 97756 or rockyb820@gmail.com

LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD

November 5, 2020
via Zoom online

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Glick (President), Elizabeth Hughes Weide (VP-Community Education), Liz Anderson (VP-MG Education), Vickie Minor (Secretary), Tim Schindele (Treasurer), Janet Dart (OMGA State Representative), Diana Hardin (Alternate State Representative), Rocky Bessette (Communications Liaison), Jolene Dodge (Membership Coordinator), Pat Kolling, Vicky Kemp, Carroll Minium, JoAnne Abbott, Linda Gregory, Toni Stephan, Beckie Moran, Mimi Thomas and Amy Jo Detweiler.

The meeting started at 2:01 PM and adjourned at 3:25 PM. The board discussed the following items:

Approval of minutes of previous meeting (Nancy Glick)

Diana Hardin made a motion to approve the minutes, Elizabeth Weide seconded the motion, which the board approved, with no objections.

BOARD REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report (Tim Schindele)

Tim reported that activity in October was minimal. Income included an additional \$10 from the yard sale held at Liz Anderson's home, \$15.40 in CD income, \$60 from row cover sales at the Extension Office and \$10 from a row cover sale at Discovery Park. Expenses included \$152.42 for purchases of materials used at Discovery Park when the garden opened in June. We have approximately \$37K in cash assets, with more than \$19K in our checking account. Tim does not anticipate needing to cash out a CD next year to cover expenses. Finally, 37 votes were received on the 2021 budget proposal, all in favor, so we now have an approved budget for 2021.

Membership Report (Jolene Dodge)

Jolene purchased 120 thank you cards, which Amy Jo, Toni, Carrie and COMGA signed. The cards are in the process of being mailed. Nancy has uploaded a photo of the message from OSU and it is now on the Flickr site. Cards were completed for all trainees and recertifying master gardeners. Certification stickers will be included in the cards for the recertifying MGs.

OSU Report (Amy Jo Detweiler/Toni Stephan)

Amy Jo reported that tentative dates for advanced training are January 22 – March 25th. Right now, it looks like there will be ten classes. She also shared that there are plans to have statewide classes on the culture of gardening for food and the culture of gardening for beauty, tentatively offered in May and June. Gail Langellotto is planning to bring in national speakers for these sessions. Amy Jo also expects a horticulture series will be included, but the dates have not been set yet. Detailed discussion followed on the need to coordinate advanced training and community classes, to avoid substantial overlap and/or conflicts. Regarding certification requirements, Amy Jo reported that all MGs, statewide, are getting a "pass" this year, i.e., advanced education and other volunteer hours are not required to be recertified. We do not know yet what the situation

will be for 2021. In other areas, Amy Jo is working on a revision to the fire-resistant plants for home landscapes publication. There will be 5-6 co-authors so the work can be completed in time for next year's fire season. The publication will include information for Washington, Oregon and Idaho. There is new research since the publication was last updated, so new plants will be added. Regarding plant clinic, Toni had volunteers to help over the summer and since business has slowed down, Toni is handling the calls now. The new ECCO went live during the summer and Amy Jo expects an advanced training class sometime in early 2021. She also has some unexpected funding to help with additional programming requirements. Stay tuned for more information as things develop.

PROJECT STATUS REPORTS:

Community Education (Elizabeth Weide)

Elizabeth emailed the board a list of classes and topics we might consider doing next year. Extensive discussion followed on this topic, primarily focused on avoiding overlap and conflicts with efforts going on at the statewide level. Nancy will work on putting together a meeting with an education committee, to coordinate with Amy Jo. Members right now include Elizabeth Weide, Lizzy Anderson, JoAnne Abbott and Pat Kolling. Nancy will contact Gary Weber about joining the group. JoAnne noted that in Gail's state of the MG program address, several counties are actively meeting and holding classes online, so we do not need to start our process from scratch. Amy Jo would like to see a matrix developed that would show all planned training offered through COMGA, spring seminar, the community gardens, OSU, etc. Discussion followed on providing training via zoom or online. The consensus was that we need to plan to offer online classes and training but we also need to be prepared to pivot to in-person training, if circumstances allow. Janet is attending the OMGA quarterly meeting this week and will report back on what their plans are, as well as what other counties are doing.

Discovery Park Community Garden (Gary Weber)

Gary submitted his report via email. The garden closed October 27 and everything has been put away for the winter. Gary acknowledged the dedicated work of Becky McKee, Lisa Kieraldo and Lisa Nakadate in completing the sanitizing routine and taking care of regular maintenance at the garden. Although the garden opening was delayed to June 20, with the warmer summer weather and the lack of mid-summer frosts, the garden thrived. The rodents did appear finally and one bed's veggies were damaged. Gary noted that the use of an online-only registration system worked extremely well and he recommends using the same system going forward. Gary expressed his gratitude for the support the garden received from the Board in 2020 and he is looking forward to an even more successful year in 2021.

Hollinshead Community Garden (Nancy Glick)

Nancy reported the garden closed in early October. Gardeners received two weeks' notice to clean up their plots and most complied. The garden donated 532 pounds of surplus vegetables to NeighborImpact. Nancy transferred the garden binder to Kirstin Hinton

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LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD continued

and Jim Salber, who will take over as coordinators next year. They will be looking for volunteers to help in 2021 and a blurb will be in the HoeDown.

OSU Demo Garden (Vicky Kemp/Liz Douville)

Vicky reported that Liz Douville has decided it is time for her to bow out as co-coordinator for the demo garden but she still plans to help when she can. After meeting with Amy Jo and Liz, Vicky approached Karen Simonet and Kaileen Mendell (both of whom are trainees) about helping with the coordinator duties. With the garden expanding and oversight needs growing, Vicky noted that it will be a big help to have two more people assisting as coordinators. Work days are expected to start again in April, continuing on the first and third Tuesdays. Based on the COVID-19 restrictions, we expect the number of people allowed to work will still be limited. Donations to NeighborImpact included 208 pounds of pumpkins and 270 pounds of other vegetables.

Waterwise Garden (Chris Miao/Pat Kolling)

Pat reported that while the garden stays "open" all winter, the final cleanup was done last week and she acknowledged that there was a great group of volunteers this year. The new bulletin board was installed and looks great. It will be shared with the Hollinshead Community Garden. Going forward, Pat expects different water-wise plants will be highlighted monthly, with plant-specific information. Featured plants will be marked in the garden, so people can find them easily.

ACTION ITEMS:**Open Forum**

Tim asked about moving the board meetings from the afternoon to the morning on the first Thursday of the month. Discussion followed, after which, we agreed to start having the meetings at 10:00 AM, beginning with the January 2021 meeting, since there is no board meeting in December.

A brief discussion followed on the status of the trainees going into 2021 and their membership in COMGA. They are still in trainee status so their membership fees are waived. If anything changes at the OMGA level, Janet will let us know.

The Volunteer Reports Page was updated and hours for the year beginning November 1, can now be posted.

We discussed no other business and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Minor, Secretary

**Winter Reading**

by Nancy Glick

After another fun season of working and playing in the community garden and my home garden, I enjoy hearing how Central Oregon Gardeners cope with being sequestered indoors watching the rain, snow and ice out the window.

Some of us catch up on long overdue, neglected projects. Cleaning and organizing garden tools is a terrific way to get some exercise in the garage. It fits my new year strategy of having a fresh start with a work-bench ready for the new year.

One of my favorites is giving TLC to indoor container plants. My favorite book, *The Houseplant Care Manual*, covers all the basics of plants light and moisture needs. With beautiful color photos, I get lost for the afternoon with earl gray tea and a comfy chair in the sun. Some info is basic such as apply water until it begins to run out of the container's drain holes. Container plants need more fertilizer because frequent watering constantly leaches fertilizer minerals out of the soil. For best results, start a feeding program for container plants 2 months after planting. Use a water-soluble fertilizer at its recommended rate of application every 2 to 3 weeks. Mealy bugs are annual winter visitors and are treated with cotton swab soaked in rubbing alcohol.

Growing Vegetables in Central Oregon, an OSU publication, provides inspiration for planning my vegetable garden. It has recommendations on how to enrich our soil and precipitation history for Bend and other central Oregon cities. The detailed 'how to plant hints' for veggies include color photos and critical days to maturity information. When designing your vegetable garden, remember to include plants that will attract native pollinators and beneficial insects that can help increase your yield and naturally reduce pest populations.

Planting dates for high-elevation short-season areas generally lag behind some parts of the state. In high areas, gardens usually are planted from mid-May for cold-tolerant plants to mid-June. Use plant protection devices, such as row covers and Walls-o-Water, to extend the growing season for vegetables requiring longer periods to mature.

Vegetables can be grown in a variety of areas. One book highlighted a 'kitchen garden', consisting of container gardens outside the kitchen door. The tomatoes, herbs, kale, lettuce, chard, cucumbers and zucchini along with containers of annual flowers flourish on my 2nd story deck with only a few critters digging in the dirt. I have a favorite Massaged Kale Salad with lacinato kale, a fruit (avocado is yummy), nut of your choice, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper.

At a friend's greenhouse, I envied the automatic system which opens and closes roof vents based on temperature. Solar heated greenhouses can provide a longer growing season for some beautiful outdoor container plants that need protection from the cold and windy nights. It was just like going to the spa on a cold winter day, with a bit of humidity and lovely plants. OSU Department of Horticulture has a great section on Greenhouses and a couple local Bend plant nurseries will help get what you need. (Cont. pg. 8)

Winter Tree Care

by Deb Goodall

Winter is a tough time for trees. They stand to be battered by drying winds, temperatures that bounce from freezing to balmy, bouts of heavy snow, ice and the indiscriminate use of salt, and hungry rodents, rabbits and deer. They can survive and thrive if we lend a hand and invest in their winter care.

A first and best investment is to select the right trees to plant. Many trees die in the winter because they are not "cold hardy" to a given region. Species that are marginally hardy in Central Oregon might make it through a few mild winters, but more than likely they will succumb when our traditionally cold temperatures hit.

That said, even trees that can withstand Central Oregon's winters need our help. For starters, make sure your trees go into winter – and get through it - with sufficient water. All trees but especially evergreens and those that aren't well established or that have shallow root systems need several good drinks of water throughout the winter. Take advantage of our frequent days with no snow pack and temperatures above 40 degrees Fahrenheit to give them a good drink. Just be sure to finish up by mid-day so the water soaks into the soil before freezing night temperatures hit.

A good layer of mulch insulates tree roots from cold when there isn't any snow on the ground. A 2'- to 4'-inch layer near the base of your trees will also reduce soil evaporation and improve water absorption. Just be sure you don't pile the mulch up against the trunk.

Winter sun is another challenge. As its name suggests, sunscald is akin to a sunburn caused by lack of shade and temperature fluctuations. Warm winter days that we appreciate unfortunately nudge trees out of dormancy. When freezing nighttime temperatures hit, the warmed bark cells don't have time to go back to their protective sleep. Irreparable cracks in the bark result from repeating cold and warmth. Protect young and thin-barked trees, such as cherry, crabapple and mountain ash, by wrapping their trunks with white tree wrap or plastic tree guards. Remove the wrap in the spring but be prepared to reapply it in the fall for a year or more depending on tree bark frailty.

Wrapping these trees in winter can also help protect them from gnawing rodents and rabbits. Using screen wire or hardware cloth can be even more effective, particularly when we have prolonged, heavy snow cover and food is scarce.

Heavy snow and ice can wreak havoc on all kinds of trees, but multi-stemmed and upright evergreens, such as arborvitae, yew and juniper, are especially vulnerable. Protect trees from limb breakage by gently wrapping branches together prior to winter with strips of cloth or wide plastic tape. Again, be sure to remove it in early spring.

We often resort to spreading some sort of ice melt when our walkways get slippery. Salt can cause significant damage to plants, damage that doesn't show until spring or early summer. Whenever possible use the minimum amount of salt needed or, better still, use alternative products such as calcium chloride or calcium magnesium acetate.

Clearly no one can thwart all of Mother Nature's challenges. Trees do survive the winter, but given they are the most expensive investment we make in our landscape, anything we can do to help them come through unscathed is well worth the effort.

Winter Reading continued

My most pleasurable winter project is planning my spring garden. I read seed catalogs for inspiration. Color pictures of the veggies make me very hungry. The intense orange of the bell peppers, soft white of the cauliflower and verdant green lettuces are in most catalogs. This year I will plant lacinato kale for my most favorite Massaged Kale salad. Remove the rib from the kale and tear in small pieces. Mix Kale, a fruit of your choice, a nut, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper. Massage until the kale starts to soften. Parmesan cheese is a nice addition.

Reading some garden books can be an education. While looking for landscape shrubs, I found pictures of Gray Rabbitbrush with golden yellow flowers and Green Rabbitbrush with green needle-like foliage. They are great carefree shrubs and we have small rabbits who spend the winter under the shrubs. Research said Lewis and Clark collected the samples in Idaho in May 1806.

Houseplants to Get You Through the Winter

by Mary Ann Hart

It's that time of year again. You've raked all the leaves, trimmed your trees and bushes, composted and covered your outdoor beds, cleaned and stored your gardening tools. You're ready to settle in for winter in Central Oregon. The new seed catalogs haven't arrived yet. What should you do?

This is a great time to purchase and care for indoor houseplants. Newly purchased houseplants, have probably been growing in greenhouses with perfect conditions for them. There may be a bit of a transition as they adjust to the conditions in your home. Give them time to adjust before repotting new plants.

There are four basic requirements to consider when caring for houseplants: Watering, Lighting, Temperature and Humidity.

Let's begin with watering. Houseplants are probably killed or injured more often by improper watering than by any other single factor. Each plant and the environment in each home will determine how often and how much you should water. Learn to gauge the moisture content of the soil by its color and feel. Observe the soil and place your finger down into it. As the surface dries, it becomes lighter. As it continues to dry, the soil will crack and pull away from the sides of the pot. You'll want to water your plants before this happens. On the other hand, soil kept too moist will invite root rot and other disease problems.

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You will need to learn to gauge each plant's watering requirements. Never let leaves wilt and never allow plants to stand in water for long. The happy medium for your plant is somewhere in between.

Plants may be watered from above or below. If you water from above, use a watering can with a narrow spout to keep as much water off the foliage as possible. Wet the entire pot of soil until the water runs out of the drainage holes. Discard standing water an hour after watering.

To water from the bottom, place the pot in a pan or bucket of water. Once the water reaches the top of the pot, remove it and drain completely then return to its saucer. Good drainage is essential for potted plants.

Let's talk about lighting which probably ranks second as a cause of houseplant failure. The amount of light needed varies by plant and this information will be available on the tag attached to the plant when you purchase it. In general, flowering plants need more light than non-flowering plants. South, east or west windows are excellent for most flowering potted plants, with the exception of African violets which prefer a north window. Light in the average room away from windows is not sufficient for flowering plants.

Most foliage plants do well near a north window without direct sun or sunlight diffused through a light curtain. Foliage plants requiring full sun should be placed near a south window. Leaves will gradually face toward the light. Plant growth can be balanced by turning plants once a week.

Most plants do best with indoor temperatures between 65 and 75 degrees during the day and 55 to 60 degrees at night.

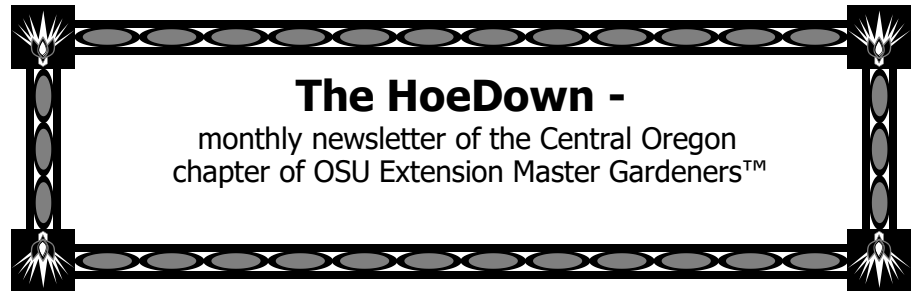
In the winter when the furnace runs, humidity can be an issue for houseplants. You can use a humidifier or place trays filled with moist sand or gravel beneath houseplants. Misting of the leaves can also help. In the winter be sure to gently rinse off the leaves with a dampened paper towel or rag to remove the dust and grime that accumulates and makes water absorption difficult. Keeping houseplants in the kitchen area or bathrooms can also help increase humidity near them.



Central Oregon Chapter of OSU Extension Master Gardeners™
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