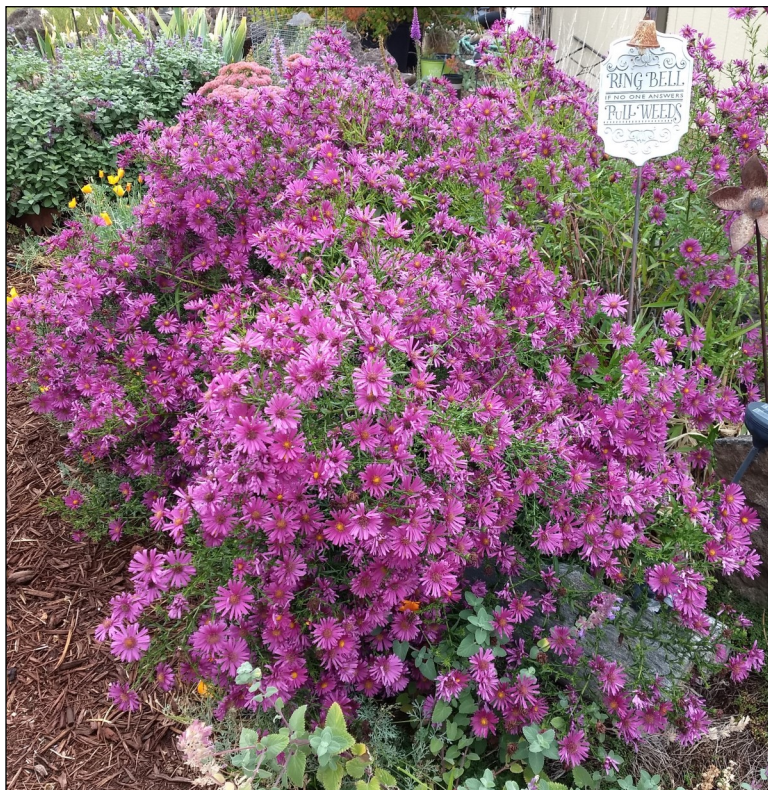


H O E D O W N

October 2023



Board members 2023

President: Janet Dart, 818-486-1583, janetdart@gmail.com

Vice Pres: Cher Hinerman, 503-750-7168, cahinerman@icloud.com

Vice Pres: Tim Schindele, 541-526-1490, TJSFishes@bendbroadband.com

Secretary: Tammara Waterman, 541-280-5913, waterman2712@gmail.com

Treasurer: Marilyn Clark, 541-419-4625, piperdoug64@yahoo.com

State Rep: Karen Simonet, 661-713-5694, emsnurse1923@gmail.com

Alt. State Rep:

Historian: Kris Knoernschild, 541-410-2795, oaktree2448@gmail.com

Membership Coordinator: Deb Goodall, 816-885-5466, debgoodall48@gmail.com

Communication Liaison: Rocky Bessette, 541-420-8817, rockyb820@gmail.com

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President's message



VOTE! Time to vote for your 2024 COMGA Board. Please respond to the Survey Monkey that Rocky emailed.

ATTEND RECOGNITION NIGHT! I hope you can join us for a fun evening recognizing our newly certified Master Gardeners along with our Master Gardener superstars. Good food, good friends, and a fun slide show.

This past month has shown me what an incredible group of Master Gardeners we have. As I recovered from shoulder replacement surgery (I'm now bionic!), my Master Gardeners friends took up the slack: running the Board meetings, setting up our fantastic picnic, driving me around, bringing me food, sending healing notes. And many thanks to the Alpenglow volunteers who did all the work while I merely watched.

See you all at Recognition Night!

Collecting and Storing Seeds from Your Garden

by Kathy Geary

One of the first requirements for growing a successful garden is finding good seed from plant varieties that have been adapted to our Central Oregon climate. When you calculate the value of the food you grow, you will find that high-quality seed is a bargain.

At some time, though, you may want to collect, store, and plant seeds from your own garden rather than buy it. So let's chat about the how-to's of collecting and storing seeds from your garden.

Don't save seeds from vegetables or flowers labeled "hybrid." Seeds from hybrid varieties produce a mixture of plant types, most of which are inferior to the parent.

Some seeds are easier to collect and save than other seeds. Here is a list of the easies:

For tomato

Squeeze the seeds onto a paper towel or a piece of screen. Leave the seeds at room temperature until they are thoroughly dry.

For peppers

Select a mature pepper, preferably one turning red, and allow it to turn completely red before extracting the seeds. Place seeds on a towel or a piece of screen until they are thoroughly dry.

For eggplant

Separate seeds from the mature fruit and dry thoroughly at room temperature. Continued on page 5

COMGA Calendar

for contact persons go to gocomga.com

October

3 Redmond Demo Garden workday, 9:00am
 4 Alpenglow Demo Garden workday, 9:00am
 7 Hollinshead Community garden closes
 8 Hollinshead Community garden closes
 14 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon
 15 Hollinshead Community Garden closes
 15 Discovery Park Community garden closes, 600pm
 17 Redmond Demo Garden workday, 9:00am
 18 Alpenglow Demo Garden workday, 9:00am
 19 Hollinshead CG volunteer meeting, 10:00am
 19 Discovery Park CG volunteer workday, 5:00pm
 28 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon

November

2 Board meeting, OSU Extension, bldg. #3, 10:00am
 11 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon
 16 Hollinshead C G Volunteer meeting, 10:00am
 16 Discovery Park C G Volunteer meeting, 6:00pm
 25 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon

December

7 Annual Holiday luncheon
 9 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon
 23 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon

The Gardener's Pen

The fall issue of the OMGA newsletter The Gardener's Pen is now available .

This is our statewide recap of what is happening in the Master Gardener Association - updates to the hiring process for vacant positions and opportunities for education hours and great gardening events. Happy reading!

<https://omga.org/newsletter/>

Karen Simonet emsnurse1923@gmail.com
 COMGA State Representative

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, rockyb820@gmail.com

Community Education Report

by Cher Hinerman

From January through September we ran 12 live classes. This does not count the eight Spring Seminar Webinars, the two Zoom discussions on veggies, and the four classes offered at the Home and Garden Show. Those are tracked by other groups with other means. September completed our live class series with "Putting Your Garden to Bed" taught by Jan Evan with an overall rating of 5.0 out of 5, and "Seed Saving and Storing" taught by Terri Logan. Seed Saving and Storing was a new class this year with a new instructor from our 2023 Trainee Class with an overall rating of 4.9 out of 5. Our classes ranged in overall ratings from 4.25 to 5.0 throughout the year. The instructors can be proud of their work!

What we learned: In the twelve live classes we had 665 registrations through Eventbrite, 438 attendees, 227 No Shows, with a total of 808 Wait Listed for the classes. The full spreadsheet of data is attached for those of you who like to study the details.

SCHEDULE: Our goal is to post the entire 2024 schedule in January so people will be less likely to stack a Wait List for two class posted in January if they can see a class in their neighborhood booked for March. Last year post-COVID it was difficult to get the right contacts at the various venues to book all the classes early.

NO SHOWS: We also plan to over-book our classes by 25% to compensate for some of the No Shows without risking an overfull class.

REGISTRATIONS: We filled classes in 2-3 days with social media ads and taking registrations electronically on Eventbrite. We have planned our 2024 Budget to work with those outlets again-Eventbrite, Facebook, GOCOMGA, and the OSU Extension marketing lists.

EVALUATIONS: We get more participation in the live classes using the paper evaluation forms than we do with the QR Coded systems. Sometimes old fashioned is best for in-person contacts!

BUILDING STAFF: This year we added two new teachers (Kris Knoernschild and Terry Logan) and two new Teaching Assistants (Liz Brackmann and Shawna Larson). In addition, Stewart Taylor has stepped up to be our sound and video tech giving class participants a much better experience.

EVENT UPGRADES: For each Demo Garden we have added pop up canopies, folding tables, black washable table cloths, plus 2- 8' x 2.5' banners- 1 with the COMGA logo and one with the logo for the OSU Extension service. All demo gardens now have a selection of educational literature to work with at their events.



Indian Pipe

by Judy Shearer

It is that time of year when ghostly things appear and the plant world is no exception. When you chance to come upon the wildflower, Indian Pipe, *Monotropa uniflora*, in the forest it appears almost unearthly (see picture below). The plant lacks chlorophyll and is totally white, although on occasion there may be a tinge of pink to the stem. It is in the family Ericaceae, the same family as blueberries. When flowering, the heads are nodding, in fruit they are erect. The flower is bell shaped consisting of 2-4 sepals, and 4-5 petals. Within the interior are 10-12 stamens surrounding the pistil. Time of flowering may be variable from spring to fall, however the blooming period lasts only 1-2 weeks. The flowers produce no obvious scent. After flowering, the entire plant becomes blackened and each flower is replaced by a capsule containing many small seeds that are wind dispersed. The root system is a mat of bristly fleshy roots. The wildflower is most likely mycorrhizal with a fungus by which it acquires nutrients from a nearby plant that is able to photosynthesize. It is thought to be pollinated by bumblebees. Bears may also feed on the plant when they develop above ground or they may dig up and feed on the root mass. Indian Pipe may be found throughout North America extending south into Central America.



Photograph by Samantha Shearer

References

Fagan, D. 2019. Wildflowers of Oregon. Falcon Guides, Guilford, CT.

Meyers, S.C., T. Jaster, K.E. Mitchell, T. Harvey & L.K. Hardison, eds. 2020. Flora of Oregon, Volume 2: Dicots A-F. Botanical Research Institute of Texas, U.S.A.

Turner, M., and P. Gustafson. 2006. Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest. Timber Press Field Guide, Portland, OR.

Oregon Wildflower APP.



OSU Demo Garden

Thank you again for joining us on our regular scheduled workdays on the OSU Extension Service Demonstration Garden on Sept. 19th and October 3rd!

On September 19th we had 21 volunteers energetically harvest fruit and vegetables, such as Asian pears, Italian prunes, apples, cucumbers and tomatoes totaling 184 pounds! Many volunteers also helped with the regular task of weeding and deadheading throughout the Demo Garden. Three Indian paintbrush plants were transplanted into the native garden bed. Check those out next time you visit the garden.

On October 3rd we had 19 volunteers harvesting pears, apples, cucumbers and tomatoes totaling 71 pounds! Like usual, we weeded, deadheaded and pruned back spent perennials as needed.

All of the produce was donated like usual to NeighborImpact food bank.

We still have October 17th regularly scheduled workday, so join us if you can.

Vicky Kemp & Karen Simonet, Demo Garden Coordinators

Alpenglow Demonstration Garden

September was a busy month at Alpenglow! Fortunately we got a few events in before the weather turned chilly! The City of Bend held their State of the City event at the park on Friday, September 8. Cher Hinerman, Laurie Eimans, Liz Leeberg, and Lisa Nakadate were there to show people around the demonstration garden, answer questions, and provide educational handouts. We interacted with 92 people who were interested and engaged in the garden!

On September 14, Lisa Nakadate gave a tour of the garden to the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon. We had 12 enthusiastic attendees who enjoyed touring the garden and learning more about how plants were selected. Later in the day they also toured the Hollinshead Demonstration Garden and Worthy Brewing.

We held two maintenance days in September and have found that the mulch is doing its job in keeping the weeds away - the work has been fairly minimal. We're working with Bend Parks and Recreation to repair the irrigation controller (it's not holding the programming) and are pleased to report that the bulletin board has finally been installed. Jenni Whelan is working on creating content and we're excited to have some educational resources posted before too long.

In the coming weeks we'll be adding mulch and putting the garden to bed. Thanks to the many volunteers who have been a joy to work with this season!

Lisa Nakadate & Janet Dart

IT'S ELECTION TIME! The nominees are:

President – Janet Dart
 VP MG Education - Tim Schindele
 VP Community Education – Cher Hinerman
 Secretary – Tammara Waterman
 Treasurer – Marilyn Clark
 Historian – Berta Keller
 OMGA State Rep – Karen Simonet
 Alternate Rep – OPEN
 Appointed Positions:
 Membership – Deb Goodall
 Communications - Rocky Bessette

Discovery Park Community garden

by Gary Weber

The Garden will be locking its gates on the end of the day of October 15. In the mean time, gardeners will be harvesting the rest of their produce, removing plant debris, and securing plastic and covers against the coming winter gales. A few optimistic souls will be sowing cloves of garlic into cold October dirt and still others have ideas about planting winter cover crops. Walking the garden this past week there is no doubt that 2023 has been good to gardeners. I've seen tomatoes, egg plant and chilis ripening even now. Enthusiastic gardeners are already talking about what they're going to plant next year.

As reported in the last issue, our donated garden shed has received a make-over by generous volunteers and now looks as good as new. We appreciate the donation of this shed from Extension and the 4H program. All that remains to be done is to apply a second coat of paint and move it to its new home.



A volunteer day for applying the 2nd coat will be held Thursday 10/12 at 1:30 pm till 3:30 pm just north of the Demo Garden. If you'd like to help, contact Gary at Discovery@goomga.com



Saving Seeds continued from page 2

For beans and peas

Leave the pods on the plant until they are "rattle dry". Pick dried pods and place them in a well-ventilated area, again, at room temperature. When the pods are completely dry, remove the seeds. To control possible weevil infestation, place seeds in a freezer for 24 to 30 hours before storing.

Lettuce seeds are more difficult to collect, but you can save them. Leave a plant or two to produce a seed stalk. After the plant blooms, and the flower forms a miniature "dandelion head," gather the seeds. Separate the seeds from the chaff by rubbing them with your fingers. They are ready to store.

It's possible to save many flower seeds by gathering mature seedpods (like stock and poppies) or seed clusters (like zinnia and strawflower), though crossing some varieties can cause deterioration from the original flower over time.

Leave sunflower heads on the plant as long as birds don't bother them.

When the top of the blossom separates from the seed, or birds start eating the seeds, cut the head and finish curing the seed in a warm, ventilated

area. You also can eat seeds or use them as bird feed after the seeds dry.

Storing seeds is as important as the collecting and handling of the seeds.

Keep seeds in a labeled container or envelope in a cool, dry place where they are protected from insects.

Placing a well sealed jar of your seeds packets in the refrigerator or freezer will keep them ready for next season. To help absorb moisture, place a small cloth bag filled with dry powdered milk beneath the seed packets in the bottom of the jar. A Master Gardener friend suggested placing a silica gel packet (like the ones that come in spice jars) in with your packets of seeds to keep moisture out.

When planting time comes, test seeds for germination before planting:

Moisten two or three layers of paper towels.

Place 25 to 50 seeds on the towels and roll the towels loosely. Place them in a plastic bag.

Keep the towels in a warm place such as on a kitchen counter or on top of a water heater.

Some seed, such as radish, germinates in 2 or 3 days. Peppers can take 10 to 14 days. Observe the seed at 2-day intervals to determine the percentage of germination.

Testing for germination will help to ensure a successful harvest.

LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD

October 5, 2023

The meeting was held at the OSU Extension classroom and Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Janet Dart, President; Tim Schindele, VP MG Education; Marilyn Clark, Treasurer; Rocky Bessette, Communications Liaison; Deb Goodall, Membership Coordinator; Nancy Glick, Past President; Tammara Waterman, Secretary, Karen Simonet, OMGA Rep, Amy Jo Detweiler, Betty Faller, Bonnie O'Hern, Stewart Taylor

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Janet Dart.

The minutes of the meeting held September 7, 2023, were approved upon motion by Nancy Glick and a second by Deb Goodall.

OSU Report from Amy Jo Detweiler: OSU recognition night to be held October 25. Please get your hours updated in VicNet.

Master Gardener applications for next year are currently being reviewed. There are approximately 150 applicants, and we may need to consider limits for admission next year. The price will remain the same next year with \$275 available for scholarships. A hybrid model with partial online and partial class time is currently being worked on.

Thank you to COMGA for the \$5,000 donation toward the printing of the Firewise publication. It will be available online sometime in October. OSU is waiting on hardcopy publication until they secure more funding to do a larger run at a more cost-effective price.

Statewide, MG Coordinator search committee will begin the first round of interviews in 2 weeks.

High Desert Garden Tour for 2024: We're still looking for sites in Powell Butte and Crook County. The thought is that we will use the OSU Demo Garden as the starting point. If we cannot get enough gardens in these locations, we will need to look to Deschutes County for sites.

Amy Jo received grant money from OMGA which will be used for signage at various COMGA gardens.

Amy Jo has someone that can do 360-degree pictures of the gardens at Hollinshead and Discovery Park. Let her know if you are interested.

Pitch in at Plant Clinic if you can. Amy Jo is looking for feedback on how not having required hours for plant clinic worked. She may send out a survey for feedback.

Continued on page 6

LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD Continued**BOARD REPORTS:**

President's Report: Janet Dart reported that board nominations will be voted on Via SurveyMonkey with results announced at the OSU Recognition Night. Survey to be sent out Friday, October 6.

Treasurer's Report: Marilyn Clark advised the group that August was a slow month.

Summary of revenues and expenses.

Total Income \$517.13

Major Income items include:

\$40 rewards contribution from Kroger/Fred Meyer

\$80 row cover sales

\$384 Tee shirt sales

Total Expenditures \$6493.96

Major expense items include:

Community Education (\$868.92) items as follows:

\$132 for Four banners

\$82 for tablecloths and placemats

\$360 for six plastic folding tables

\$83 for Storage bags, bungies & tie downs

\$213 for Plastic literature holders for tabletop display

\$88 for Redmond Demo Garden toolbox

Donation of \$5,000 to Horticulture Program for Fire-wise Landscaping brochure printing.

Opportunity Fund: \$375 for three canopies (One for Alpenglow and two for Redmond storage)

\$75 for MGOY certificates charged to Recognition Night category.

\$70 for replacement plants at Hollinshead Waterwise garden

There were no PayPal or Square activities.

A \$2,500 check from the Horticulture Fund will be written to OSU today.

QuickBooks conversion will be done shortly. Marilyn and Janet will work on this and are looking for someone with QuickBooks experience to assist.

The budget proposal was presented. After a motion by Nancy G. and a second by Deb G. to approve the budget as presented, the board voted to approve the budget. A general meeting was held after the board meeting and COMGA members had the opportunity to provide feedback and vote on the budget.

MG Advanced Training: Tim Schindele shared advanced training opportunities.

1. OSU Extension has the 2021 and 2022 Level Up Series presentations available to view at your convenience: <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/growing-oregon-gardeners-level-series-2023>

These are approved for advanced training, and most are about an hour in length. Click the buttons on the left-hand side of the page and you'll be able to see the list of presentations for 2021 and 2022. You can register for 2023 classes and take part as they occur or go in later to view them. The next class is October 10 entitled Picky Fruit: Establishing Blueberries in a Home Garden.

2. Tour of US Forest Service Seed Extractory facility in Bend on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 12:30. There is only room for 12 people total so you need to contact Tim if you want to go. Will not count toward continuing education hours. More information to follow.

3. COMGA Holiday Luncheon, Dec. 7. OSU Extension Office Bldg. 3 classroom, 11:30 am.

Spring Seminar classes will be posted on YouTube. Details will be sent out shortly.

Community Education: Cher Hinerman submitted a report. From January through September, we ran 12 live classes. This does not count the eight Spring Seminar Webinars, the two Zoom discussions on veggies, and the four classes offered at the Home and Garden Show. Those are tracked by other groups with other means. September completed our live class series with "Putting Your Garden to Bed" taught by Jan Evan with an overall rating of 5.0 out of 5, and "Seed Saving and Storing" taught by Terri Logan. Seed Saving and Storing was a new class this year with a new instructor from our 2023 Trainee Class with an overall rating of 4.9 out of 5. Our classes ranged in overall ratings from 4.25 to 5.0 throughout the year. The instructors can be proud of their work!

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NO SHOWS: We also plan to over-book our classes by 25% to compensate for some of the No Shows without risking an overfull class.

Continued on page 7

LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD Continued

REGISTRATIONS: We filled classes in 2-3 days with social media ads and taking registrations electronically on Eventbrite. We have planned our 2024 Budget to work with those outlets again-Eventbrite, Facebook, GOCOMGA, and the OSU Extension marketing lists.

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BUILDING STAFF: This year we added two new teachers (Kris Knoernschild and Terry Logan) and two new Teaching Assistants (Liz Brackmann and Shawna Larson). In addition, Stewart Taylor has stepped up to be our sound and video tech giving class participants a much better experience.

EVENT UPGRADES: For each Demo Garden we have added pop up canopies, folding tables, black washable tablecloths, plus 2- 8' x 2.5' banners- 1 with the COMGA logo and one with the logo for the OSU Extension service. All demo gardens now have a selection of educational literature to work with at their events.

Historian: Kris Knoernschild was absent but asked that people send pictures of recognition night.

OMGA Rep.: Karen Simonet. The OMGA quarterly meeting was held on September 8th. The meeting minutes can be reviewed on the OMGA website. <https://omga.org/>

There are 2 articles available by Kym Pokorny (OSU Public Communications Specialist), about the "Joy of Gardening" Conference and 5 Gardeners Recognized Statewide Awards at the following links:

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/joy-gardening-conference-draws-enthusiastic-crowd-osu>

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/five-oregon-gardeners-recognized-statewide-awards>

Grants presented at the Joy of Gardening Conference can be viewed at the OMGA Newsletter: The Gardener's Pen Fall issue. It includes a \$500 award to Central Oregon to be used for signage at the Demonstration Garden for composting. Congratulations AmyJo!

The Gardener's Pen is our statewide newsletter, filled with information of what's happening in the Master Gardener Association - updates to the hiring process for vacant positions and opportunities for education hours and great gardening events. Happy reading!

<https://omga.org/newsletter/>

Our OMGA Executive Board elections will be held at the November meeting. If you are interested in joining this area of our organization, please contact our President Chris Rusch or myself. We need to fill the President-elect, Secretary and Database Manager positions. If you are interested.

Next year the Joy of Gardening seminar will be held July 12-13.

Communications Liaison: Rocky Bessette. If there is anything for the HoeDown newsletter, please send it to her by Friday.

Past President: Nancy Glick provided a policies and procedures update.

Tim's job description is currently being rewritten and all other positions may need to be reviewed.

Inventory and Assets policies and procedures being rewritten.

Master Gardener of the Year policies and procedures being rewritten.

ACTION/INFORMATION ITEMS:

Discovery Park: Gary reported on the shed painting project and thanked volunteers for helping get that done.

Alpenglow Demo Garden: Janet reported that they are having major issues with the sprinkler system and are working with Bend Park and Rec to resolve the problems. Natives are all still alive, but they have been hand-watering.

The new bulletin board has been installed and looks great. The bulletin board has a QR code that links to information regarding putting your garden to bed and winterizing.

Waterwise Garden: Pat reported that they will be replacing mulch and some native plants.

Hollinshead Community Garden: A link to that fabulous 360 view of Hollinshead, taken in August. Thank you to the photographer, Fletcher Jackson, who is a gardener at Hollinshead.

<https://fstop360.viewin360.co/share/collection/7JJvQ?logo=0&info=0&fs=1&vr=1&sd=1&initload=0&thumbs=1>

OSU Extension Service Demonstration Garden in Redmond: Karen Simonet

Thank you again for joining us on our regularly scheduled workdays at the OSU Extension Service Demonstration Garden on Sept. 19th and October 3rd!

On September 19th we had 21 volunteers energetically harvest fruit and vegetables, such as Asian pears, Italian prunes, apples, cucumbers, and tomatoes totaling 184 pounds! Many volunteers also helped with the regular task of weeding and deadheading throughout the Demo Garden. Three Indian paintbrush plants were transplanted into the native garden bed. Check those out next time to visit the garden.

On October 3rd we had 19 volunteers harvesting pears, apples, cucumbers, and tomatoes totaling 71 pounds! Like usual, weeding, deadheading, and pruning back spent perennials was done as needed.

OPEN FORUM:

Janet D. asked that everyone look at the email regarding Gayle Langellotto's new project, OSU Garden Ecology Lab, and consider donating. Amy Jo is going to get more information on this project.

Tim thanked everyone for helping with the COMGA summer picnic. 56 people signed up and 32 attended. Weather may have been a factor.

Marilyn presented thank you gifts to the hostesses of the summer meetings. Thank you to Jan E., Kris K., and Rocky and Toni.

Janet reported that all Trowel Award winners will be acknowledged in an email that will go out at the end of the year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammara Waterman

brought bags of potatoes to give away. She and her husband Ken had a bumper crop. If you've been to a COMGA potluck, you know that people always bring excellent salads, sides and desserts and there are always too many choices and too little time.

The Alpenglow picnic shelter is close to the Master Gardener demonstration garden so most people went over and walked through the garden before or after eating. Amy Jo was able to come and she informed us of the upcoming MG Recognition Night, set for October 25 at OSU Cascades.

The weather held and was actually partly sunny and the temperature was comfortable. The wind was picking up and starting to become a nuisance by about 6:00 pm. We were pretty much done by then and people were heading home.

Tim Schindele

COMGA End of Summer Picnic

COMGA postponed the summer picnic scheduled for August 24 over concerns about poor air quality at the time. It was also going to be really warm. When we rescheduled the picnic, the air had cleared and the temperature had moderated. A total of 57 initially signed up to attend, then that number dropped to 52. In my email blast about the picnic, I jokingly said that t-shirts and shorts were optional. By the day of the picnic, September 26, it was definitely not shorts weather. It seemed like summer was over and it had turned cool and rainy so the End of Summer picnic was aptly named.

It was dry but looked threatening when Renee and I left home in Redmond at 3:00 to go get the rotisserie chickens at Costco. Leaving Costco, headed for the park, there were raindrops on my windshield. The rain held off at Alpenglow but it did look stormy in other parts of Bend. I suspect some people stayed away for that reason but I only got one phone call asking me if the picnic was a go or not. I counted 32 people who came.

We had a lot of rotisserie chicken since I bought 10, planning for 50+ people to be there. A team of 6 volunteers (Lisa Nakadate, Cher Hinerman, Nancy Glick, Laurie Eimans, Tammara Waterman and Renee Schindele) who spent time cutting up the chicken before it was served. It was very good and you can't beat the price of those large chickens from Costco at \$4.99 each. I mostly failed to note who brought what to eat, sorry about that, except I remember that Jeff Johnson brought baked beans which I thought they were especially good. Vicky Kemp brought a peach crisp which was made with fresh picked peaches from her yard. Cher Hinerman brought deviled eggs. There were lots of sliced tomatoes from members' gardens. Lea Dahlen



Gazing at the Campfire

by Jan Even

I'm always on the lookout for colorful plants that are deer-resistant, and this year I discovered one that was new to me: "Campfire," a coleus.

Unlike most coleus, it thrives in full sun. Its leaves are a rich burgundy. There aren't any flowers to speak of, but the foliage is a good foil for the colorful blossoms of other plants.

Here's what Select Seeds & Plants has to say about it:

"'Campfire' shrugs off extreme heat and is an easy to grow, vigorous plant. Intense colors of fiery copper red shine in both sunny or shady locations — a surefire choice for your summer pots and beds.

Size: 1-2.5' h x 1.5-2' w

Sun: Full sun to partial shade

Soil: Rich, moist, well-drained"

Despite the "moist" soil note, I found that It's not particularly thirsty. It was ignored by the deer. In fact, its deer-bombproofness seems comparable to lavender and daffodil. So I was surprised I'd never heard of it before.

I looked it up in my bible of plant selection, the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station's database, Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance (<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/deer-resistant-plants>). The Campfire variety isn't mentioned, but they rate coleus in general a C, "occasionally severely damaged." My rule of thumb is to choose plants rated A or B. I have tried a few Cs, with mixed results. These are how Rutgers Cs have performed in my home trials (there are many more Cs than this, these are just the ones I have tried):

Atlas Cedar: Died a slow death from deer nibbling

Blanket Flower: Thriving

Cosmos: Usually OK

Daylily: Stella D'Oro survives, others don't

Geranium: Usually OK

Penstemon: Survives if caged until it reaches mature size

Phlox: Creeping variety survives, tall one eaten

Rugosa Rose: Gets "pruned" but survives

Shasta Daisy: Thriving

Sunflower: Usually OK but varies from year to year

Virginia Creeper: Ignored by deer

Willows: Nibbled but they survive

I found Campfire at Whistle Stop in late July, on their last day of business for the season, when they were giving away all the remaining annuals. Normally I shun annuals, begrudgingly planting only a few each year in pots on my patio. They represent work I will just have to do again next year, and I have way too much garden work. But FREE was a very enticing price, so I thought, why not try it?

Now I'm hoping they will offer it again next year. I'd even be willing to pay for it!

