

# THE DIRT SHEET

A Publication of the Wasco County Master Gardener™ Association

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# QUIZ TIME!!! – Ronnie Smith

## Master Gardener Trivia: true or false?

March flowers



Crocus



*Puschkinia scilloides* – striped squill



Early tulips



*Hydrophyllum capitatum* – Thompson's waterleaf



*Dicentra cucullaria* – Dutchman's breeches

1. Allspice is a blend of cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg.
2. Corn (maize) differs from most other members of the grass family in that the male flowers are separate from the female.
3. Sprinkling table salt on a plant infected with aphids will kill the bugs within twenty-four hours.
4. Botanically a banana is a berry.
5. Slugs are more closely related to oysters than insects.
6. You can easily tell the male tomato plants from the females by looking at the underside of the leaf. The male has a "beard", or heavy fuzz.

## ROSE PRUNING AT SOROSIS PARK

Our annual rose pruning at the Sorosis Park rose garden will be this Saturday, March 12 beginning at 9 am until we are finished, usually by noon. This is a great opportunity to learn to prune roses, with plenty of bushes to practice on. You will get a brief training on how to prune the roses first, then you can team up with an experienced pruner to work with. Bring bypass pruners, loppers, small saw, sturdy gloves, a tarp or wheelbarrow (don't worry if you don't have everything) and dress for the weather.

# The Dirt Sheet

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Bill Marick

It's been so good to be back to meeting in person for our classes. I would encourage everyone who can to attend the classes as I think we get much more when we share time with each other. No refreshments on Zoom also! We will continue to improve the quality and dependability of our electronic presentations for those who need to attend by Zoom.

We have talked about the different projects and activities we will be involved in this year. Now is the time to decide which one or ones we want to do. Don't try to do them all but pick the ones you are most interested in. The rose pruning will be on March 5, weather permitting. If the weather is too bad, we would move to the 12<sup>th</sup>. We still need someone to help with the coordination. The greenhouse cleaning is done and planting will begin soon. We should be able to do a Seeds & Soils presentation at NORCOR after mid March. Some help will be needed for that presentation. The DIG will also be starting before long.

There will be a Cherry Festival this year, April 22 – 24. A suggestion has been made to enter the parade on the 23<sup>rd</sup> as it would be a good time to advertise that we are back and that the Plant Sale is two weeks later. Any interest in this project? I have some ideas but would need help.

We are planning to have our next Board meeting during the lunch time on March 16. All who wish can come and see what a smooth operation we have going and see that it is not scary. The Board meetings are always open to anyone who wishes to attend, especially the project leaders and anyone who has a request or project in mind. We welcome new ideas and suggestions for activities and projects.

I am still wanting to connect with each one of you to get your ideas on how we can operate better, attract more members and better serve and educate our community. I'll be reaching out so when you see me coming, please don't run and hide.

See you in class,  
**Bill**

## WCMGA Executive Committee Meeting, 2/15/2022

Members present: Jean Zylka, Annabelle Lavier, Bruce Lavier, Bill Marick, Hilary Jensen, Marilyn Richardson, Peggy Peterson, Tammie Oakes Extension: Kim McCullough Guest: Garry Peterson

**Minutes:** Accept the minutes as presented with correction.

**Treasurer:** \$992.85 as of 2/14/2022. Ronnie moved and Bruce seconded to accept the report subject to audit.

**OSU report:** Classes: Kim reviewed the Master Gardener training – scheduled to begin February 16. Board members have volunteered to introduce the speakers. The sessions are a mixture of in person and video link with a few online viewings.

**Plant Sale:** Peggy and Marilyn are in discussions with Barb about using the greenhouse at NORCOR. At this time, we will not be able to use bleach. We will need to sanitize the trays and pots. Set up March 5, Saturday, 9:00 – 12:00 to clean and set up for growing plants for the May Plant Sale. Members will need to have background checks.

**Coordinator:** The job listing closes within the next few days. Kim has received three applications.

**Annabelle Lavier, Secretary**

The winter 2022 issue of the OMGA Gardener's Pen newsletter is available at: <https://beav.es/wW8>

## Grape Vines and the Dreaded March Pruning! Jean Zylka

As many of you know, I have a small vineyard. March means pruning time in the grapes. My brother, who established the vineyard told us that one always prunes in March. "You can prune them early or prune them late, but prune them in March" was the mantra. Well, pruning grape vines has proven to be a challenge to get great production. I found this information at:

<https://extension.wsu.edu/maritimefruit/grape-research/pruning-grapes-in-home-gardens-some-basic-guidelines/> and thought I'd share with our group. I have pulled just the information that is relevant to my established vines.

*Standing in front of a mass of tangled grape vine and wondering what to do with it can be a scary experience for the novice or even for the more experienced pruner. Keep in mind two essential ideas:*

1. **Don't be afraid to cut.** When you finish, about 90% of last year's growth will be cut.
2. **Grape plants are vigorous, and forgiving.** Even if you make a mistake, you'll get a chance to fix it next year.

*With that said, you can approach your pruning in a spirit of learning and adventure, not panic. Grapes are best pruned in spring (February/March, or even as late as early April) because if pruned too early a hard frost in late winter can damage the canes and buds.*

*Grapes bear fruit on the green shoots that arise from **one-year-old canes**. Pruning is based on producing fruit in the current season, and **renewing young canes** for the next year. The old canes that produced fruit this season will not produce again.*

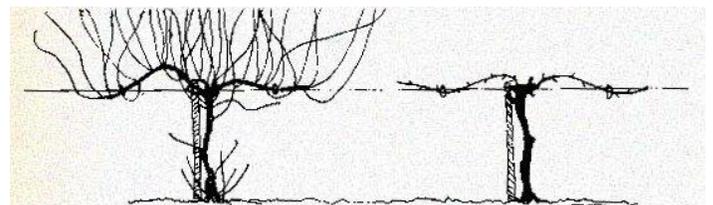
*There are several methods used in pruning established grapevines. **Cane pruning** is the usual system in climates like ours where heat units may not be high and vigorous vines can shade the fruit.*

*In this system a permanent trunk is established, and every year new canes are selected from the **head** of the vine, where trunk and wire intersect. One or two canes on either side, each **8-10 buds long**, are selected and tied to the wire, and all other canes cut out.*

*Choose canes that are about the thickness of your little finger, that come out as close to the head as possible, and that have buds fairly close together. Try to avoid large thick canes with buds spaced far apart. Also **leave one or two spur canes, cut to two buds each**. They will provide additional canes to select from for the next year's pruning.*

I will be pruning soon and hope that this year I get some good big grapes. Currently I have been using them to make jelly. Sangiovese grape jelly is delicious! Maybe next year I will make some wine if they do well. One never knows with gardening...there are no guarantees!

**Jean**



Before and after pruning grapes

## 2022 GROWING OREGON GARDENERS LEVEL UP SERIES

Here are some other learning opportunities. These will count for continuing education hours, but do not replace required classes. You must register to join the presentations live online at 12 noon (Zoom) or the recordings can be watched later. The 2021 Level Up series is available at the same site.

The 2022 Growing Oregon Gardeners, Level Up Series speakers and topics have been announced. More topics and speakers will be added, once confirmed.

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg/growing-oregon-gardeners-level-series-2022>

February 8: [The Science and Practice of Seed Starting: Secrets to success when growing by seed](#)

March 8: [Local Beauties: Native Plants for Ecologically Enhanced Gardens and Landscapes](#)

April 12: [Plant Grow Harvest Repeat: Succession Planting](#)

May 10: [Growing Great Roses!](#)

June 14: [Irrigation Choices and Design for the Home Garden and Landscape](#)

July 12: [Best Ecological Ways to Control Pests in Green Spaces](#)

August 9: [Should You Leave Your Leaves? How autumn yard maintenance affects overwintering insects](#)

September 13: [Compost Can-do: develop a system that meets your needs](#)

October 11: [Soil Fertility and Nutrient Cycling in Garden Beds & Home Landscapes](#)

## NORCOR GREENHOUSE

Seed planting will begin in the greenhouse the week of March 14 – eight weeks ahead of our Spring Plant Sale. There will be lots to do, getting peppers and tomatoes started plus other plants that take awhile to establish. In the past we've begun planting in January so there are a number of things we won't have this year, especially perennials, geraniums, and petunias. Watch for more information for how you can help.

Some scenes from the 2019 Spring Plant Fair



# The Dirt Sheet

Newsletter of the Wasco County  
Master Gardener™ Association

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## Officers

President – Bill Marick

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Historian – Hilary Jensen

OMGA Rep – Marilyn Richardson  
Alternate OMGA Rep – Tammie Oakes

## OSU Extension Staff

Kim McCullough, Interim Program Coordinator

## Find Us Online

<https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/wcmga/dirt-sheet/>

For those of you *not* on **Facebook**, you can still  
view our page and read articles posted there.

Here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/WascoMG/>

If you are on Instagram follow us at: <https://www.instagram.com/wascocountymastergardeners/>

## Calendar

March 2	9 - 12 1 - 4	Home Orchards Insects & Entomology
March 9	9 - 12 1 - 4	Soils Compost
March 12	9 - 12	Rose pruning at Sorosis Park
March 16	9 - 12 12 - 1 1 - 4	Plant Pathology Board meeting Integrated Pest Management
March 23	9 - 12 1 - 4	Gardening with Native Plants Pesticide Safety
March 26		Deadline for April newsletter
March 30	9 - 12 1 - 4	Diagnosing Plant Problems Berries/Grapes
April 6	9 - 12 1 - 4	Vegetable Gardening Test Review & Project Fair

## Answers to trivia quiz

1. False – allspice is the dried, unripe berry of a West Indies laurel, *Pimenta officinalis*, one of Columbus's favorite discoveries in the New World.
2. True – the corn tassel is the male flower that produces the pollen; the female flowers are the silk and juvenile ear.
3. False – It may kill the plant within twenty-four hours, but not the aphids.
4. True – to botanists a berry is a fruit with some or even many seeds that develop from a single ovary. The grape, tomato, and pepper are botanically berries.
5. True – Both slugs and snails are mollusks, and so they are in the same family with oysters.
6. False – There is no such thing as male and female tomato plants.