

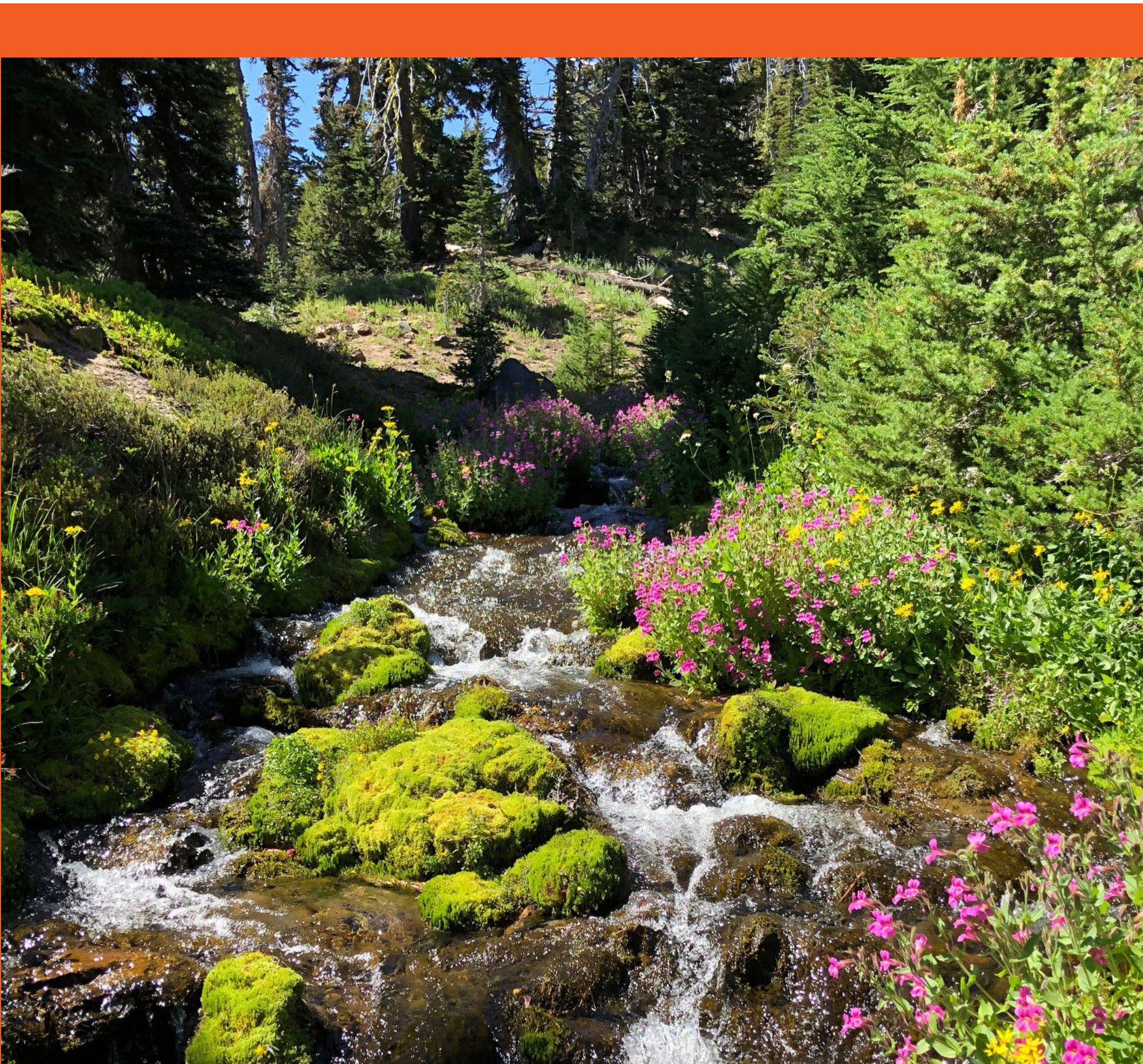


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THE DIRT SHEET

A PUBLICATION OF THE WASCO COUNTY MASTER GARDENER™ ASSOCIATION





INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2

President's Corner

3

Board Position Spotlight

4

The DIG - Share the Bounty

5

Confessions of a Plant Killer

6

How to Make a Scarecrow

7

Become a Master Gardener/ Renewal

8

Upcoming Webinars from OSU Extension

9

Recipe of the Month

10

September Calendar

11

OSU Extension Garden Calendar

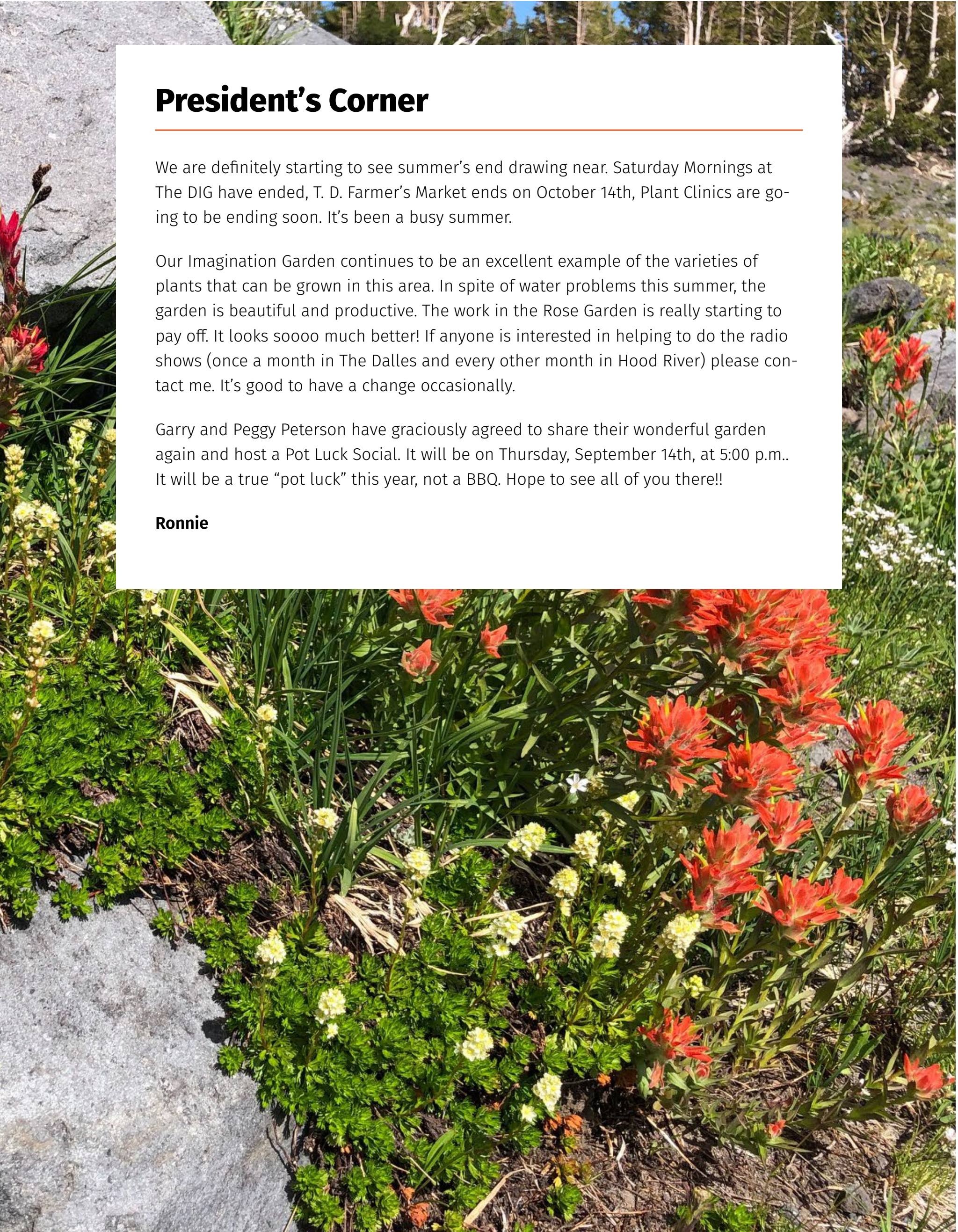
President's Corner

We are definitely starting to see summer's end drawing near. Saturday Mornings at The DIG have ended, T. D. Farmer's Market ends on October 14th, Plant Clinics are going to be ending soon. It's been a busy summer.

Our Imagination Garden continues to be an excellent example of the varieties of plants that can be grown in this area. In spite of water problems this summer, the garden is beautiful and productive. The work in the Rose Garden is really starting to pay off. It looks soooo much better! If anyone is interested in helping to do the radio shows (once a month in The Dalles and every other month in Hood River) please contact me. It's good to have a change occasionally.

Garry and Peggy Peterson have graciously agreed to share their wonderful garden again and host a Pot Luck Social. It will be on Thursday, September 14th, at 5:00 p.m.. It will be a true "pot luck" this year, not a BBQ. Hope to see all of you there!!

Ronnie



Board Position Spotlight

1. OMGA (Oregon Master Gardener Association) Representative: The OMGA Rep shall attend quarterly meetings of the OMGA as the WCMGA (Wasco County Master Gardener Association) representative. These meetings take place in-person as well as via Zoom. The OMGA Representative shall act as liaison between WCMGA and OMGA providing information and submitting quarterly reports as requested. The OMGA Representative shall attend all WCMGA Board Meetings. This position is currently held by Tammie who has been a Master Gardener since 2013.

2. Alternate OMGA Representative: The Alternate OMGA Representative shall attend quarterly meetings of the OMGA in the absence of the OMGA Representative and shall assume the office of OMGA Representative in the event that the OMGA Representative should be unable to perform the duties of the office. The Alternate OMGA Representative shall attend all WCMGA Board Meetings. This position is currently held by Ann who has been a Master Gardener since 2022.

Now that all board positions have been featured, it's time to submit nominations to Kendal for our upcoming board elections. The new board term begins on November 1 and run through October 31. If you are interested in serving on our board or know of someone who would be a good fit, please contact Kendal on or before 9/15. All positions except President, Past President, and Treasurer are open. Current board members may run for reelection, however they must state intent to Kendal by 9/15 to be included on the ballot.

We would love to have some Master Gardeners on The Board who have not served before. Our program direction is changing in these post-covid years and fresh ideas to help us move in a direction that will meet the needs of our county are in great demand. Join me, your next President, in helping to strengthen our program and ensure that we will be here to serve our county for many more years! I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about our board so please don't hesitate to reach out.

The DIG - Share the Bounty

The Share the Bounty program at The Dalles Imagination Garden was a great success. Contributions of flowers, herbs, fruits, and vegetables covered five tables. By the time the program had finished there was only a little left in the bottom of a box.

Fourteen master gardeners contributed produce that was shared with twenty-five attendees.

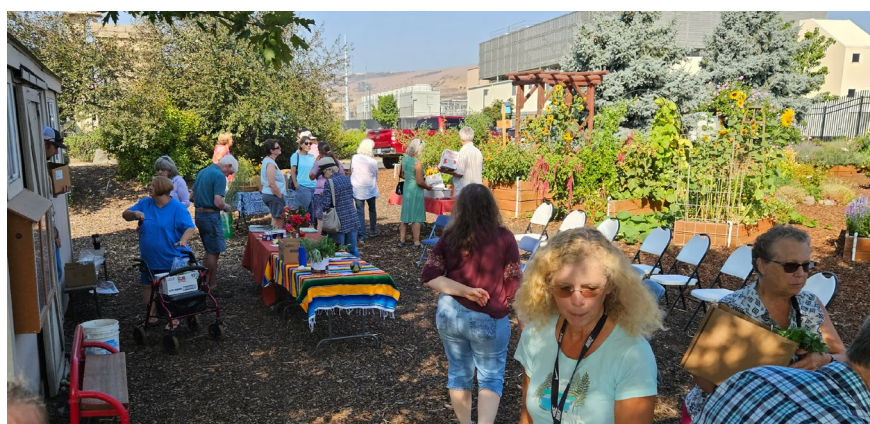
The program was opened with a presentation by Peggy about gardening in general in this area followed by Garry with a brief description of various cultivars from their garden.

Several other master gardeners talked about the produce they contributed which was very interesting. Approximately ten others contributed information and participated in the program. Very good participation from the audience.

I wish to thank everybody that participated and contributed.

Based on the feedback we got from attendees the program was very well received.

Thank you Master Gardeners.



Confessions of a Plant Killer

As a newbie to the area I can take the fall without too much guilt for the dead daphne when I first moved in. Naively, I thought tucking it below the rim of a raised bed would protect it from the wind. Nor did I consider that life below a gargantuan cedar tree might not be the best placement, even temporarily. After all, there were all those adorable hand-painted veggie identification rocks left in behind in those clearly homemade (and hideous) cement beds, I assumed they were a great place to grow veggies, if not daphne.

Wrong.

The cedar tree cast too much shade and acidic needles for most veggies—except some stubborn kale from the previous year I could only eat so much of, and my husband refused to eat.

I ripped out the bed, knobby kale and all.

Some of the soil from that raised bed—heavily amended—found its way into my new galvanized animal trough beds. Hmmm, that soil had a lot squash seeds. I didn't put them there, and no squash grew in beds last squash season. Yet in the new beds, volunteer squash grew faster than Johnny's beanstalks. The mystery squash flowered profusely, but all but three of the flowers were male; two are mature enough to recognize as pumpkins.

Amidst the volunteer squash (and sunflowers) and sprawling cucumbers, I couldn't differentiate the seeds I did plant—carrots, beets, and more—from the weeds. At least the squash sprawl (and the late addition of some mulch) provided enough shade for my peppers to finally gain some harvestable size without desiccating.

After hearing the legendary stories about the piles of steaming horse poop the prior homeowner added to the terraced front yard beds, I figured that soil was full of good sh*t.

But plant after carefully sited and prepared plant, whether bought or gifted, struggled mightily or outright died. The sole foundation plant, a beautiful little Japanese lace maple with dried leaves may or may not survive the rampant fungus infection after I hacked off the most obviously infected branches.

When an excavator dug a hip-deep trench to replace our leaky water pipe from the main at the street to our house, our already crappy front lawn got annihilated by compaction. Saying our "lawn" lacks curb appeal is far beyond a gross understatement. The only thing that kept me from replacing that empty eyesore with a "manufactured lawn" was my inability to find a contractor to give me a quote, much less do the install. I considered rocks, but wanted something a little more eco-friendly that you could walk on barefoot.

There are a few successes, like the four towering conifers I can't take any credit for, and the mature lavenders that filled in with a bounty of blossoms and new growth in gratitude for much needed trimming. Hostas. Catmint. Cherry tomatoes. Daffodils and other bulbs, Hummingbird vine. Free-seeding columbine, milkweed and California poppies all of which for now I consider wildlife-friendly volunteers. Also flourishing: dandelions (I pulled 800 over two consecutive spring mornings—yes—I counted!) and bindweed (aka morning glories), which are all most definitely weeds in my books, along with the overly friendly invasives from my neighbors: Himalayan blackberry and the hellish tree of heaven.

One master gardener thanked me for letting me see "the before." Another told me "Your yard has good bones." Another

empathized, saying "All our gardens are challenges."

I remember how heartening it felt when another master gardener—a particularly masterful one—told me about the plants she put in that died. Another master gardener admitted as many of her well-placed natives die as live (a problem I also share). I also loved how Kathy, the Portland rose expert and class presenter, reframed failures as opportunities. "When you do kill a rose," she said, gleefully, "you just get another rose!"

Finally, I heeded the advice given in our very first Master Gardener topic—soil—and got a soil test. Two, actually: one for the terraced beds, the other for the site of our former lawn, where I'm about to put in a clover mix and wanted to know what would be needed before putting in the effort as well as looking for useful information to put a stop to my black thumb.

The result? Despite all the horse doody, at 5-10 ppm, our yard is practically bereft of nitrogen, as well as super-sandy (86-96%), and at 5.3-5.8% pH, fairly acidic.

Each existing (surviving) plant got dosed with ammonia sulfate, some 10-10-10 fertilizer and a little calcium to counteract the acidity. The percent sand revelation reinforced my habit of planting with water crystals and stepped up the importance of using compost and mulch (which I was not that good about doing) to hold in as much moisture as possible in my quick-draining sand.

Where the clover lawn mix will be sown, I've just spread my sixth truckload of Dirt Huggers' organic plant compost and am about to lightly rototill it into the area (in addition to the mulch just added to my planting beds). If later I decide I don't like a clover lawn, at least it will be adding nitrogen to the soil.

Maybe it's a break in the heat, maybe it's the amendments, but I swear my mostly stagnant evergreen clematis suddenly grew a foot in the last week. The two rhubarb plants gifted to me are thriving; they replaced the two that only showed a brief glimmer of life. The elephant ears that I planted in early spring just decide to pop up. Progress.

Every year is different and brings with it new challenges: heat, cold, freeze, thaw, refreeze, wet, dry, windy, insects and other critters. I'm still mostly out of alignment with the what-to-do-when gardening calendar.

"It's all an experiment," another master gardener said, encouragingly.

Bit by bit, I am learning a lesson behind each failure, and how to garden more successfully and help others with experience as well as following Master Gardener guidelines for assessment and research.

Next year at the final DIG class, I plan on having some bounty worth sharing (instead of just excuses for why I don't) and when friends pull up to my front yard in late summer, there will be flowers to greet them.

How to Make a Scarecrow

Traditionally, scarecrows were created and placed to do exactly what their name says: scare away the crows (or birds) that would damage crops or gardens. Scarecrows are easy to make and budget-friendly, and they can be made of almost anything around the house, with any shape or character.

For a scarecrow to be functional in protecting a vegetable garden, remember that you'll need to be able to move it and place it on different spots. Otherwise, birds will get used to your scarecrows. Make sure to relocate them from time to time. Also, consider adhering reflective things or accessories that move with the wind on your scarecrows, as the light reflection will also help scare birds away. Reflective strips of paper or old CDs hanging from the arms that would move in the breeze would be an example.

Let's get creative and begin by collecting the materials you will need.

Materials

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------|
| 1 | 1 in x 2 in x 6 in wood strip (for the vertical torso) | Nails & hammer |
| 1 | 1 in x 1 in garden stake or wood strip (for the arms) | Staple gun & staples |
| 1 | burlap giftbag (a pillow case/cushion case or a squared piece of burlap would also work by tying the bottom with twine) | Zip ties |
| 1 | set of worn-out or unused set of clothes | Googly eyes |
| 1/4 | bale of straw (or dried grass) | Colored Buttons |
| | Plastic bags, bubble wrap or old newspaper works too, I decided to use straw to keep the project "bird-friendly" | Sharpies |
| | Twine & scissors | |



Instructions

1. Build the scarecrow frame.

Lay the horizontal stake at a 90 degree angle over the vertical stake that you'll later drive into the ground, around 12 inches from the end of the vertical stake that would later support the head. Nail them together carefully, making sure the smaller piece does not break.

2. Hang and button the shirt onto the scarecrow.

Clothes play a part in creating the scarecrow character. You can use any old garments you may have around the house. Make sure the clothing items have enough room for stuffing.

3. Tie both of the sleeves shut using pieces of garden twine. Staple the back of the shirt's neck and the bottom of the shirt to the vertical frame and tie the waist with twine as well.

4. Using handfuls of straw, stuff the scarecrow arms and top.

5. Next, tie off both pant legs and stuff the pants with straw before attaching them. You will need to create a hole between the pants legs to pass the vertical frame through it. After that, staple pants to the frame, and buckle on the overalls, sew or staple a worn-out pair of jeans or pants to the bottom of the shirt, and tie off the waist.

6. Now, it's time to make the head. Fill in the burlap giftbag with straw until the bag is almost full and tightly packed. Close the giftbag from the strings, and shape it round.

7. Add the head to the top of the frame and zip tie the bottom to the frame tightly. You may need to adjust the top edges either by gluing/sewing/stapling them in or simply sewing/gluing/stapling a hat on.

8. Create the face and top it off with an old wig, straw hat or cap.

You can use your imagination and add on to it with crafts at home. Use googly eyes, buttons for the nose, and permanent marker to make the mouth and eye brows. Other ideas: pipe cleaners for mustache, colored cotton balls for the nose, wool or straw if you want to add hair.

You may want to add old shoes or boots after setting them up in your home. If you add old boots, drill a drainage hole in the bottom so that they will not get filled in with water when it rains.

Have fun with your gardening project!



Oregon State University Extension Master Gardener volunteers are neighbors, friends and family who you can go to for garden advice that is grounded in science and locally relevant.

We are garden educators and on-the-ground community scientists.

Master Gardeners receive extensive training and complete a university-taught course in topics including botany, pest identification, soil management and diagnosing plant problems, to name a few.

Let's talk plants!



Apply now for 2024 training!

In person and Online based classes begin in February, with the hybrid model allowing for people with full time jobs and families to participate. In person classes are taught by OSU experts and experienced Master Gardener Volunteers.

Volunteer hours are a key learning experience in becoming an OSU Master Gardener. In 2024 we are requiring 40 hours of volunteer service for new gardener's. All volunteer experiences are carefully selected to help you learn and engage with the community, including farmers market plant clinics, community garden classes, seed exchanges, and more.

Cost: \$70

Interested?

541-298-3577

wascomginterest@lists.oregonstate.edu

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Oregon State University



Upcoming Webinars from OSU Extension

September 12, 2023 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm PDT

[The Healthy Gardener: Preventing Injuries and Staying Fit](#)

About:

Gardening can be great exercise, but it can also be hard on your body and put you at risk of injury. Aging and elderly gardeners may find it especially difficult or dangerous. Our presenter, a retired physical therapist, has advice that gardeners of all ages can benefit from, including strategies for preventing injuries while gardening, how to adapt after injuries occur, and how we can continue gardening safely throughout life's seasons.

Presenter: Patricia Kolling is a retired physical therapist who has been a certified Master Gardener since 2007. She uses her extensive career experience to teach other Master Gardeners and the public how to prevent injuries while gardening, as well as how to continue to garden as they age. She is a graduate of the University of Washington.





Butternut Squash Bars

- 4 eggs**
- 3/4 cup salad oil**
- 2 cup sugar**
- 2 cup cooked, mashed butternut squash**
- 2 cup flour**
- 2 teaspoon cinnamon**
- 3/4 teaspoon each - ginger cloves and nutmeg**
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt**
- 2 teaspoon baking powder**
- 2 teaspoon baking soda**

1. In large bowl beat eggs lightly, beat in oil, sugar, and squash. Mix together dry ingredients and gradually add to squash mixture, blending thoroughly.
2. Pour batter into greased and flour-dusted 9x13 baking pan. Bake 350 degrees for about 40 minutes or until edges begin to pull away from pan sides and center springs back when lightly touched. Let cool in pan on rack.
3. Orange cream cheese frosting. In small bowl beat 1 3 oz package of cream cheese and 2 T butter until fluffy. Beat in 1-1/2 t vanilla and 3/4 t graded orange peel. Gradually mix in 2 C powdered sugar to make a spreadable icing. Frost the squash bars.



September 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Plant Clinic 9am-1pm TD Farmers Market
3	4	5 Plant Clinic 2-4pm ---- Rose Garden Work Party 6-8pm	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Plant Clinic 2-4pm	13 The Dig Work Party 7-9pm	14 Annual Summer Picnic & Potluck	15	16 Plant Clinic 9am-1pm TD Farmers Market
17	18	19 Plant Clinic 2-4pm ---- WCMGA Monthly Meeting 5:10-7pm	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Plant Clinic 2-4pm	27 Rose Garden Work Party 9-11am	28	29	30

September Garden Calendar

Produced by OSU Extension, each month provides reminders of key garden chores, such as fertilizing, pest control, planting and maintenance.

The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices. Preventive pest management is emphasized over reactive pest control. Identify and monitor problems before acting and opt for the least toxic approach that will remedy the problem. The conservation of biological control agents (predators, parasitoids) should be favored over chemical controls.

Maintenance and cleanup

- Harvest winter squash when the “ground spot” changes from white to a cream or gold color.
- Pick and store winter squash; mulch carrots, parsnips and beets for winter harvesting.
- Protect tomatoes; pick green tomatoes and ripen indoors if frost threatens.
- Reduce water on trees, shrubs and vines east of Cascades to harden them for winter.
- Stake tall flowers to keep them from blowing over in fall winds.
- Dig, clean and store tuberous begonias if frost threatens.
- Harvest potatoes when the tops die down. Store them in a dark location.
- Optimal time for establishing a new lawn is August through mid-September.
- Aerate lawns.
- Early-September: Apply 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet to lawns. Reduce risks of run-off into local waterways by not fertilizing just prior to rain, and not over-irrigating so that water runs off of lawn and onto sidewalk or street.
- Recycle disease-free plant material and kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps into compost. Don't compost diseased plants unless you are using the “hot compost” method (120 degrees to 150 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Apply parasitic nematodes to moist soil beneath rhododendrons and azaleas that show root weevil damage (notched leaves).
- Control slugs as necessary. Least toxic management options include barriers and traps. Baits are also available for slug control; use caution around pets. Read and follow all label directions prior to using baits, or any other chemical control.
- Monitor trailing berries for leaf and cane spot. Treat if necessary.
- As necessary, apply copper spray for peach and cherry trees.
- Spray for juniper twig blight, as necessary, after pruning away dead and infected twigs.
- Continue monitoring late-season soft fruits and berries for Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD). If SWD are present, use an integrated and least toxic approach to manage the pests.

Indoor gardening

- Clean houseplants, check for insects, and repot and fertilize if necessary; then bring them indoors.

Planting/propagation

- Divide peonies and iris.
- Plant or transplant woody ornamentals and mature herbaceous perennials. Fall planting of trees, shrubs and perennials can encourage healthy root growth over the winter.
- Plant daffodils, tulips and crocus for spring bloom. Work calcium and phosphorus into the soil below the bulbs at planting time. Remember when purchasing bulbs, the size of the bulb is directly correlated to the size of the flower yet to come in spring.

Pest monitoring and management

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options (insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides — when used judiciously).

The Dirt Sheet

NEWSLETTER OF THE WASCO COUNTY
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