

Seeds For Thought

May 2022 Volume 22, Issue 2

A newsletter of the
Master Gardener
Foundation of
Washington State

In This Issue

From the President **1**

*From the Program
Coordinator* **2**

Conference Update **3**

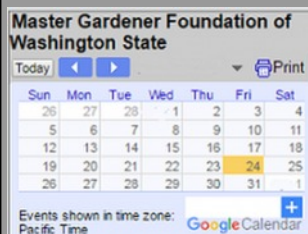
Nominees Wanted **4**

Create a Snag **5**

Meadow Gardens **6**

Visit our website:

[**MGEWS**](http://mgews.org)



Iris photo by Erin
Landon Grays Harbor
County Master
Gardener

From the President

~~Don Enstrom, MGFWS President



"Master Gardeners across the state have been busy earning money from gardening seminars and plant sales. They are planning activities to bring the joy of gardening to children and adults alike. School and community gardens are popping up everywhere as the public embraces eating healthy and nutritious fruit and vegetables. Produce from our Demonstration Gardens is also being donated to agencies that provide food to

the hungry. It's truly a rewarding time to volunteer your time as a Master Gardener."

I'd like to take credit for having written these words, but the quote is actually from Chris Bailey's MGFWS President column in the May 2012 issue of our Seeds for Thought. Stumbling across this article got me to wondering how long we have been publishing our newsletter (22 years) and how old our state foundation is (35 years old). In verifying the age of our state foundation on the Secretary of State's website, my curiosity got the best of me, and I soon found myself falling down the rabbit hole of the Washington Corporations and Charities Filing System. The records of the formation of each of our 21 county MG foundations (as well as the MGFWS) make for interesting reading.

The first Washington MG Foundation was formed by King County in 1984, eleven years after the launch of the WSU Extension Master Gardener Program. As additional Foundations were formed, their stated purposes evolved from the Foundations that preceded them. The original King County purpose focused on supporting educational delivery and was replicated by the Pierce, Kitsap, and Olympic Peninsula (Clallam & Jefferson) Foundations in 1987. In the fall of 1987, the Puget Sound Foundation was formed. Representing Snohomish, Skagit, Island, and San Juan Counties, the Puget Sound Foundation's purpose introduced fundraising, sharing ideas and information between programs, and the concept of enhancing and supplementing the WSU MG Program.

In late 1987 a group of volunteers along the I-5 corridor from Vancouver to Tacoma formed the State Foundation, incorporating the Puget Sound declarations and introducing a chapter-based organization offering state-wide volunteer-based unifying leadership and communication. Before 1987 ended, Clark County formed its foundation, borrowing the Puget Sound language and introducing the award of grants to support horticulture education-related projects and programs in their county. Cowlitz County's 1990 formation also borrowed Puget Sound's language

(Continued on [page 4](#))

WSU Master Gardener Program Update

~~Jennifer Marquis, Statewide Program Leader



The College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences named a new Dean who will begin her new role on August 15, 2022. Dr. Wendy Powers is the current leader of the University of California's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. According to Provost Chilton, "Dr. Powers draws from a deep well of experience leading the land-grant mission." She comes to us with experience and success fostering academic excellence, resilient partnerships, and community engagement.

When asked about coming to CAHNRS, Powers said, "Discovery in this college touches all corners of Washington, and I am excited by the opportunity to harness that potential. What's really drawing me is the change to make a difference for all Washingtonians by supporting advancements and sharing new ideas in agriculture, natural resources, and the human sciences".

I decided to do a little digging myself to see what Dr. Powers knows of the Master Gardener Program. After all, she hails from UC, and we all know that the UC Master Gardener Program is one to look up to. I found a [UCANR Adventure Blog](#) penned by Dr. Powers. In her August 28, 2017, blog she writes, "It turns out there is far more to the UC Master Gardener Conference than talk about gardening! The talks were well attended, reflecting the strong commitment to continued education by the volunteers." She learned about the first place Search for Excellence awardee, which was a victory garden project, "complete with evaluation data that demonstrated the personal benefits one achieves due to gardening". Wendy attended conference sessions and even participated in the silent auction and marketplace.

In a July 2019 blog, Powers writes about the reach of the Master Gardener Program. Wendy was doing her own research on foxtail because one of her dogs got a foxtail deep in her ear canal. In her search, she found that the Master Gardeners can be found nearly everywhere and come up in places she never expected, like in a Facebook post shared by her non-gardener sister. At any rate, that led her to the 2018 Master Gardener Annual report. She connected the highlights of the report to the broader UCANR goals and says, it is "a fantastic reminder of how fortunate we are to have dedicated volunteers."

I continued to search through the blog and found several other instances where she mentions Master Gardeners. In fact, I randomly clicked on her posts and found that Master Gardeners were named in nearly all. In her May 13, 2021 post, she mentions that a goodly number of county Master Gardener Programs have adopted implicit bias training requirements for volunteers involved in the selection process in an effort to build a more diverse volunteer population.

CAHNRS, Extension, and the Master Gardener Program will be in good hands under Dr. Power's leadership. We should all look forward to what's to come with her guidance and with the 50th Anniversary celebration right around the corner. You can read more about Wendy's career and experiences that have led her to Pullman in the [WSU Insider](#), April 25, 2022 edition.

2022 WSU Master Gardener Advanced Education Conference Update

~~ Melody Westmoreland, Conference Chair, Yakima County Master Gardener

REGISTRATION OPENS MAY 1ST!

THE PLACE – The Olympia Hotel at Capitol Lake offers classic lodging with views, a restaurant, a pool, and meeting space. It is located on a lush property overlooking the lake with beautiful lawns for walking around the buildings and ample free parking on site. There are lots of shopping and dining opportunities nearby as well as a year-round Farmers Market in downtown Olympia. They are offering excellent room rates to conference attendees so you'll want to book early to ensure your spot.

THE PROGRAM – This year's Conference offers an exciting program of CE/Continuing Education classes across the new WSU Master Gardener Program priority areas...all taught by well regarded subject matter experts.

Choose from over thirty classes along the themes of Nearby Nature, Plants, Food, Water, and Master Gardener Skills. Highlights include Fire Resistant Landscaping, Seed Saving/Seed Bank Gardening, Plant Physiology/Response to Heat & Drought Tolerance, Soils Biology/Food Web, Increasing Vegetable Garden Yields, Gardening to Support Pollinators, and much more! Watch the conference website – mglearns.org – as classes are announced.

THE PEOPLE – September 28-October 1st will be the first time since 2018 that we've been able to gather together in person. It will be a chance to reconnect with old friends, meet some new folks, and learn together about the latest trends and opportunities in gardening. We are planning a great program, great food, and ample opportunity to shop our Marketplace, purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win great prizes, and visit with friends new and old.

WHY REGISTER EARLY? – Space is the limiting factor and we are capping registration at 350 attendees. You don't want to miss the chance to be part of this event! AND, the first 100 registrants will have their name entered into a special raffle for a chance at a lovely prize. So please, mark your calendars and keep your fingers poised over your keyboard. We look forward to seeing you in September.



What can You/Your County do right now?

1. You can get the word out to folks that registration opens May 1st and register early to ensure your spot at the Conference.
2. You can check the website often to see how the event is progressing and learn more Mglearns.org.
3. You can watch your email for opportunities to volunteer on-site during the Conference (if we all give a little no one will have to give a lot)
4. Your Foundation can be working on putting together 5 items to include in our Raffle (watch for an email specific to this request)

Nominees Wanted!

~~Awards Committee, Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State

There are many Master Gardeners throughout the state who deserve an award for sharing their time, knowledge, talent, leadership and friendship. We want to encourage the Master Gardeners who know these people to nominate them for one of the state level awards: Master Gardener of the Year or Media or Ed LaCrosse Distinguished Service.

The nomination criteria, award descriptions and nomination forms for all three awards are at www.mgfws.org/awards. Read the nomination form carefully and decide on a nominee who meets all the criteria. Describe your nominee's best qualifications as you fill in each of the nomination's criteria with as much information as you and your colleagues can gather. It is important that your nominee's qualifications are described as completely as possible.

All state level awards: Master Gardener of the Year or Media or Ed LaCrosse Distinguished Service nomination forms are due on or before July 1, 2022. The email address is awardsmgfws@gmail.com.

(Continued from [page 1](#))

and introduced increasing the general public's awareness of WSU Cooperative Extension's home horticulture services.

In 1997 Grays Harbor-Pacific's Foundation and Whatcom's Foundation were formed, borrowing language from Puget Sound and Clark County. Thurston County formed its Foundation in 1998, borrowing language from Cowlitz County, and Lewis County formed its Foundation in 1999. 1999 also saw the Puget Sound Foundation become Snohomish, with Skagit, Island, and San Juan forming Foundations in 2002, 2008, and 2013 respectively. Similarly, the Olympic Peninsula Foundation was succeeded by the Clallam and Jefferson Foundations in 2001. The first east-side Foundation was formed in 2000 by Benton-Franklin Counties, followed by Chelan County in 2001, Yakima County in 2003, Grant-Adams in 2005, Spokane County in 2012, and Mason County in 2016. (Note that, beginning in 1999, the stated purpose listed in each of the Foundation's Articles of Incorporation is generally lacking in detail.)

This collection of purposes declared over the 38-year history of County MG Foundation formations all remain valid today and are encompassed in the Master Gardener Program Handbook and the WSU-County Foundation MOA template. The State Foundation's role has expanded to include a state-wide recognition and reward program and co-sponsorship (with the WSU Extension MG Program) of an annual Advanced Education Conference.

Going through this little exercise brought back memories of an old Massey Morris seminar entitled "What You Are is Where You Were When," which led me to wonder what events and experiences each of our county programs and foundations have shared that history has shown to be significant in the success of our MG program today. I suspect many of these successes were driven by single sets of volunteers switching between their MG and foundation roles with clever dexterity. I would love to hear your stories of how the collaboration between your county's MG program and your foundation has been instrumental in building the strong and enduring organization that we enjoy today!

PS – I apologize for any errors I may have introduced in summarizing the formation history of our Foundations – please let me know so that I can make corrections. Thanks!

Give Old Trees New Life - Create a Snag

~~Nancy K. Crowell, Skagit County Master Gardener

When you must remove a tree, whether it is dying, storm damaged, or has outgrown its space, if it's not a safety hazard posing a disease risk for other plants, consider leaving a snag instead of having the entire tree and stump removed. Why leave a snag? While some people may view a snag as unsightly, snags are actually an important element of any natural landscape and can attract birds and wildlife to your yard.

According to the USDA Forest Service, west of the Cascades some 39 species of birds and 14 species of mammals depend on tree snags for their survival. More than 100 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians in Washington state use snags for everything from food storage to nesting. Snags are especially critical in winter, when birds such as northern flickers may find insects in them to eat, brown creepers and even bats may roost behind loose bark on snags, and raptors and owls may perch on them to hunt for food.

All types of woodpeckers are attracted to snags and will hollow out spaces that will be used by other birds, but that process takes a while. If you are removing a tree, you can not only create a snag but enhance it to speed up the usability for a variety of birds and wildlife.

Any kind of tree is a potential snag, but certain trees are especially good for snags in our area. According to the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), large trees, 12 inches in diameter and at least 15 feet tall, make the best snags but even smaller snags will accommodate species such as nesting chickadees. Conifers tend to rot more slowly than deciduous trees, but both create snags used by wildlife. WDFW suggests the trees most favored by wildlife in our area include Douglas fir, western red cedar, big-leaf maple, cottonwood, and alder. The softwood trees, like fir, are preferred for food foraging, while hardwoods make better homes for nesting cavities.

There are many ways to create snags in your landscape. Simply cutting off the top third of the tree is sufficient to create a snag that will eventually rot and make room for new residents. However, an experienced arborist can use techniques to improve a snag and make it wildlife-ready from the day you cut down your tree.

First, if the treetop isn't already broken off, the top can be roughed up and a hole drilled in it to make it more open to water, which will seep in and speed up the decay process. Other cuts in the snag provide options for wildlife – long slits might be attractive to nesting bats and small birds such as brown creepers, holes might attract woodpeckers, and cavities that have been carved out and re-capped with bark “doors” offer options for nesting birds.

It's even possible to create a snag out of a living tree. If you have a tree that shows signs of decay, such as weeping sap, dead limbs, fungi on the bark, or holes from woodpeckers, you have a potential snag. To improve its use for wildlife without removing it, you can opt to leave the tree as it is, but remove a majority of the side limbs, cut off the top third of the tree, girdle the tree trunk or girdle the branches. *(Continued on [page 7](#))*



A natural snag might have the top broken off. Arborists can modify the top of a snag by roughing it up and drilling a hole inside to allow water to seep in and start the decaying process. Photo by Nancy K. Crowell

Creating a Meadow Garden

~Barbara Faurot, Mason County Master Gardener

“Leave room in your garden for fairies to dance.” – Celtic proverb

A meadow garden of native grasses and wildflowers is a beautiful and ecologically beneficial way to add a little magic to your home landscape.

Turning over just some of our monoculture lawns or other cultivated areas to meadowscapes can offer year-round forage and habitat for songbirds, pollinators, and beneficial insects. A native meadowscape will also improve soil, save water, and sequester carbon.

A wildflower strip alongside a food garden can help increase crop yields and eliminate the need for pesticides and herbicides. Even a small space like a parking strip or street border can add biodiversity and habitat benefits to your landscape.

Eric Lee-Mäder, author and co-director of pollinator conservation efforts at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, shares that the ecological benefits of “meadowcraft” are compelling. “Even with 100 square feet in the middle of an urbanized or cultivated area, you can begin to see rather uncommon and interesting small creatures,” says Eric. “You can attract the gray hairstreak and checkered skipper butterflies fairly reliably” and grow the diversity of beneficial species in your home garden.

For inspiration, you might visit the 1.4-acre Kah Tai Prairie near the Port Townsend Golf Course to observe more than 90 species of meadow plants. Mid-late April should be a good time to see native wildflowers in bloom, including blue camas and chocolate lily. The Olympic Peninsula chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society manages the site, a rare remnant of our native prairies

Meadow plant options for our area include meadowfoam, western columbine, self heal, Douglas aster, pearly everlasting, lacy phacelia, tufted hairgrass, and baby blue eyes. The key to success is investing in site preparation, whether you’re starting a meadow from scratch or overseeding an existing grassy area.



Camas, fritillaria, and lomatium in a meadow garden.
Photo by Barbara Faurot

“We have 100 years of introduced plant species like tenacious velvet grass and tall fescue grass. They are effective at quickly crowding out a space,” Eric explains. “It’s important to understand the weeds or other species you want to eradicate, and invest in good site prep to give your meadow the best chance to succeed.”

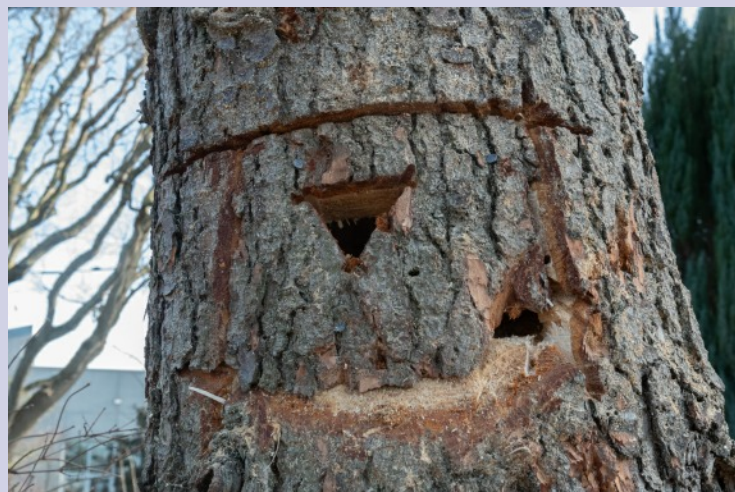
(Continued on [page 8](#))

(Continued from [page 5](#))

The US Forest Service suggests one snag per three acres is a good ratio for large forest areas or tracts of land. WDFW offers this advice to prevent invasive species, such as European starlings and house sparrows, from taking over a snag: reduce the size of an existing hole to 1 and 1/8 inches. An arborist can create a cavity in the tree and then cover it with the original bark with the right-sized hole as well.

Scientists are still studying the contributions of snags to biodiversity, but the research collected so far indicates snags truly play an important role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. As the snag decays it will eventually put nutrients back into the surrounding soil, and in the meantime, you will have the benefit of watching all the wildlife that takes advantage of all a snag has to offer.

Sources: https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/snags-the_wildlife_tree-1.pdf
<https://www.conservationnw.org/our-work/wildlands/snag-trees/>
<https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/Cover/Trees-and-Snags>
<https://www.conservationnw.org/our-work/wildlands/snag-trees/>



A knowledgeable arborist can modify a fresh snag to make it wildlife friendly immediately. This is a close-up of an open cavity that has been covered with original bark. A hole was put in the bark to enable wildlife to enter the cavity and use it for nesting. Photo by Nancy K.Crowell

Originally printed in the Skagit Valley Herald

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

Officer	Name	County	Email address
President	Don Enstrom	Lewis	PresidentMGFWS@gmail.com
Executive Vice President	Paul McKenna	Island	exvpmgfws@gmail.com
Secretary	John Strong	Yakima	SecretaryMGFWS@gmail.com
Treasurer	Gilbert Plascencia	Yakima	treasurerMGFWS@gmail.com
Conference Director 2022	Melody Westmoreland	Yakima	westmoreland9108@yahoo.com
Conference Director 2021	C-J Nielsen	Island	cjnielsen2@gmail.com
Conference Director 2023	<Open>		
Development Director	<Open>		DevelopmentMGFWS@gmail.com
Communications Director	<Open>		
Historian/Archivist	Cathi Lamoreux	Spokane	cathi.l@comcast.net
Membership Director	Marylou Krautscheid	Grant	maryloukrautscheid@gmail.com
Awards Director	Kath Brenberger	Benton	brenberger2020@gmail.com
Past President	Kathleen Eaton	Snohomish/AZ	kmleaton@me.com
WSU MG Program Leader	Jennifer Marquis	WSU	jgmarquis@wsu.edu

(Continued from [page 6](#))

To prepare your site, clear the area of weeds and unwanted plants. The planting site should have at least 6 hours of sun. Choose forbs (flowering perennials) with a variety of bloom times and colors to offer pollen, nectar, seed, and shelter throughout the season.

Owen Wormser, author of *Lawns into Meadows*, recommends starting with at least two native grasses to add visual character and soften the look when flowers are finished blooming. Wildflowers may get all the attention, but grasses provide stability as well as food and habitat for beneficial insects and butterfly larvae.

You can start with seeds, small plant plugs, corms, bulbs, or rhizomes. You may want to choose plants with similar height, so that taller ones won't shade out the others. If you want a neater look, add a focal point — a small tree, boulder, stump, or large pot — or use a border of mulch, gravel, or stone. Plant in masses or "drifts" for foraging efficiency.

Plugs can be placed close enough together so that mature plants will crowd out weeds. Plant now, in early spring, or in the fall. Use a coarse organic mulch between plants to help suppress weeds, shade the soil, and retain moisture.

You can opt to plant seeds into an established lawn with a drill seeder (to score a hole into the lawn), or just scatter the seed over the lawn. Eric shares the challenges of this approach. "Some wildflowers can be introduced into an existing matrix of non-native grasses, but it's harder, and results are slower" than starting from scratch. You can mow the grassy area short, rake out the thatch, and overseed repeatedly for several years to get the meadow established.

As with any new plantings, supplemental irrigation is beneficial until the meadow is established. Going forward, it's important not to over-water; the plants should just dry out so the roots will grow deeper in search of water.

Once plants are finished blooming, leave everything in place to provide essential resources for overwintering wildlife. In nature, grazing, fire, or drought helps maintain meadows. In home landscapes, you can simply mow once a year in early spring, leaving the organic matter in place to feed the soil and build your seed bank to regenerate the meadow.

Deer may browse even deer-resistant young plants, so you may need to protect them until the root system is well developed. Once the meadow is established, grazing should not be a big issue, as plants outgrow the ability of the deer to over-graze.

The initial investment of time and materials can result in a beautiful meadow garden and better economics: less water used, less mowing, and no need for fertilizers or herbicides. As Eric's family observes, "There's a lot of stress and hardship in the world, and meadows are a logical and completely sensible response to it all."

For more plant ideas and tips, visit the Xerces Society <https://xerces.org/pollinator-resource-center/pnw> and Northwest Meadowscapes, the Lee-Mäders' small family business in Port Townsend <https://northwestmeadowscapes.com/pages/planting-advice>.

Published in the Port Townsend Leader March 9, 2022



 WSU EXTENSION
Spokane County

MOTHERS DAY WEEKEND
SAT & SUN MAY 7-8TH 2022

Annual Garden Fair

VEGGIES, HERBS
PERENNIALS
TREES, SHRUBS
VENDOR MARKET

Become a Foundation Member
& Shop Early
Friday May 6th!

 FOUNDATION SIGN UP
WWW.MGFSC.ORG

 Master Gardener
FOUNDATION
Spokane County

WSU Extension Master Gardeners of King County Gardening Classes for 2022

Longer days, warming soil, garden shops bursting with seed packets and plant starts: spring is in the air. The WSU Extension Master Gardeners of King County continue their gardening classes and workshops with more great presentations. Growing Groceries classes continue into June on Wednesdays, and Bellevue Demonstration Garden Saturday Workshops begin Series 2 workshops in April. All classes will be presented on Zoom and registration is required.



Growing Groceries: Classes are presented on specific Wednesdays, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. through April, May and June. Home gardeners can still register for the series and receive recordings for each class. The series of classes is offered at a discount. Each individual class is \$7.50. Registration is required for the series or individual classes. (There will be a limited number of financial need fee waivers available for individual classes.) The full schedule, series/class, and registration information are available at <https://mgfkc.org/education/growinggroceries>. The series subscription and individual registrations for remaining classes are available now. The WSU Extension Master Gardener Foundation of King County uses the funds collected to support activities of the WSU Master Gardener Program in King County.



Bellevue Demonstration Garden Saturday Workshops: Workshops continue on Saturdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. to mid-October. Topics in Series 2's nine workshops (April, May, and June) include rain gardens, container gardening, gardening with children and more. New: Series 2 and Series 3 workshops will be recorded! Series subscriptions are offered at a discount. There is a \$5 fee for each individual workshop. Registration is required for the series or individual classes. (There will be a limited number of financial need fee waivers available for individual classes.) The second series subscription and individual registrations are available now. The full schedule, registration information, and the workshop descriptions are available at <https://mgfkc.org/education/bdg-workshops>. The fees help the WSU Extension Master Gardener Foundation support the activities of the WSU Master Gardener Program in King County.