



Seeds For Thought

November 2020 Volume 20, Issue 4

A newsletter of the
Master Gardener
Foundation of
Washington State

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Events shown in time zone:
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Iris photo by Erin
Landon Grays Harbor
County Master
Gardener

From the President

~~Don Enstrom, MGFWS President



I suspect we all have experienced times when a perplexing problem became clearer after changing our perspective. I recently experienced such a moment while reading an article that quoted the Sustainable Development Solutions Network's March 23rd article "[Navigating Happiness Amidst COVID-19](#)". The statements that caught my eye noted that that "the meaning of happiness has become very skewed amidst the

COVID-19 pandemic ... Remaining socially connected with friends, colleagues, and family is crucial in finding happiness during this public health crisis". It then offered that "happiness is not lost, and the key to finding it during this time is not through social distancing but rather through distance socializing." Following the clicks as I explored the topic "distant socializing" lead me to realize that just how universal this challenge is across all groups.

In my August column, I discussed the social aspect of our commitment to the Master Gardener program. A [Stanford News Service article by Melissa DeWitte](#) quoted psychologist Jamil Zaki's as saying "... we should begin by reframing what we're doing right now. 'Social distancing' was the wrong term to begin with. We should think of this time as "physical distancing" to emphasize that we can remain socially connected even while being apart. In fact, I encourage all of us to practice 'distant socializing.' Ironically, the same technologies we often blame for tearing apart our social fabric might be our best chance, now, of keeping it together.

Reports showing that in-person friendships supporting happiness, while on-line connections do not. COVID 19, and the limitations it puts on in-person meetings, offers a chance for electronic connections to develop their potential for creating and maintaining the social bonds that support happiness." "FaceTime, Zoom and other tools like these are our friends right now. We know to use these tools for meetings and teaching but why stop there? In my opinion, we should also use them for much less formal interactions – digital "hanging out." When we meet in person, we don't expect every



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WSU Master Gardener Program Update

~~Jennifer Marquis, Statewide Program Leader



WSU Extension will offer Home Horticulture Training in 2021 to deliver on WSU Extension's outreach mission and to meet the growing interest in learning to garden sustainably. Students who take the training will learn to be better home gardeners and stewards of the environment. Training focuses on a wide range of horticulture topics such as botany and plant identification, entomology, plant pathology, soil science, vegetable gardening, growing small fruits and tree fruits, and sustainable lawn care. All classes will be taught online by WSU faculty, staff, Master Gardeners, and other regional experts on Saturday mornings from 9 AM. to 12 PM starting on January 9, 2021, and continuing weekly through April. 24, 2021 (sans April 3).

This top-notch training will also give students access to WSU Extension's online Master Gardener Training modules and the extensive Master Gardener Manual. Normally, the training is available to persons who wish to learn and become WSU Extension Master Gardener volunteer educators who teach

unbiased, research-based sustainable gardening education to their local communities. Home Horticulture 2021 offers a very similar syllabus but does not require a volunteer component and does not include all of the steps necessary to earn WSU Master Gardener certification. Students who wish to earn a Home Horticulture Certificate of Completion will need to successfully complete weekly online quizzes, a final exam, and attend most Saturday morning classes. Homework, in addition to the Saturday morning sessions, is expected to average 3-5 hours a week. All training is open book, and no memorization is expected. Interested persons who wish to become WSU Extension Master Gardeners should contact their [local program coordinator](#).

Here is an example of what students can expect. In Botany and Plant Identification, students will learn basic botany including how to identify plants. Upon completion of the Botany and Plant Identification modules

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Master Gardener of the Year - Deborah Smeltzer

Skagit County Master Gardener

Deborah Smeltzer has been an active Master Gardener in Skagit Co. since 2012 with cumulative hours to date of 5,256.5 (1/1/12-5/30/2020)

From the beginning of her tenure with the Skagit County Master Gardener Program Deborah Smeltzer has made lasting contributions that constitute a legacy for both the Master Gardeners and greater gardening community. Her background in science and business combined with a passion for adult and youth education and commitment to community service has enabled her to share her experience and skills to strengthen the Master Garden Program in Skagit County and expand its reach into the local community.



Deborah has been a valued member of the SCMG Training Team ensuring that trainees receive the quality of education that will enable them to become knowledgeable and engaged members of the Master Gardener community. She conceived and developed the comprehensive training binder provided to new trainees and takes responsibility for its annual update. She has served as a mentor to trainees/interns supporting them during their training and helping them to find their place within the organization. She also works diligently to retain MGs in the program, frequently reaching out to make people feel valued for their contributions.

As Chair of the SCMGE Plant Fair, an annual fundraising event, Deborah re-established a dedicated Plant Fair Leadership Team, developed master documentation, streamlined operations to make them more efficient and fun, and promoted online volunteer signups. She expanded marketing, signage and championed adding credit card sales leading to increased public attendance and record-setting profits.

During her four-year term as President of the SCMGE Board, Deborah strengthened the framework of the board by introducing annual goal setting, establishing a 3-year budget planning process, championing grant writing for special projects, setting-up a recruitment process for new MGF board members and other leadership positions, and ensuring that the foundation maintained at least a one-year financial reserve. She created board binders to facilitate understanding foundation documents and organizational memory. She also championed the establishment of Star Awards to recognize MGs for their exceptional "behind-the-scenes" service.

Deborah has been a strong advocate in expanding the use of the Discovery Garden to educate the public about sound gardening practices. She trains interns and veteran MGs as docents for the Discovery Garden and developed and maintains the DG Docent pocket guides to assist them. She has supported more educational and Spanish language signage in the garden. She has been an active participant in the annual, public outreach and educational Discovery Garden Ask a Master Gardener Day as well as for DIG-It!, our youth outreach program in the Discovery Garden.

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*Ed LaCrosse Distinguished Service Award**Kathleen Eaton*

Kathleen Eaton trained as a Master Gardener in 2011 with the Snohomish County Program and has reported over 3,400 hours total. In 2016 she was awarded the State Media Award. Kathleen worked as part of the team that made the 2013 Advanced Education Conference in Everett the great success that it was. She was appointed Snohomish County Representative to the MGFWS Board for County. She soon responded to the urgent need for a new direction for the State Foundation, and volunteered to run for, and was elected MGFWS Board President. Right away Kathleen began to formulate a plan to rejuvenate the State Foundation, providing inspiration, innovation and leadership.

Upon her husband's retirement, they relocated to Arizona. In spite of that distance, she remains involved in Washington State Master Gardener matters, contributing her insight, support, and monetary donations to our State Foundation. She arranged for a sponsor to bring in a professional facilitator who helped the Board identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A new mission and purpose were developed. She organized a cadre of other leaders on the board and held planning retreats at her home, whereby today's board structure was born. She was bold enough, and optimistic enough about the future of MGFWS, that she almost single-handedly began the campaign to raise enough money in an endowment to fund future MG advanced education into perpetuity.

As a leader not only in her home MG chapter, but at the head of the State Foundation, Kathleen's work has had, and will continue to have an effect on thousands of MGs across the state. Many MG volunteers will gain advanced education opportunities over many, many years because of her vision. The quality of work done today in the MGFWS is a tribute to Kathleen's vision and leadership.

One of the most significant accomplishments of her term was to set us on a path to host the Advanced Education Conference, which comes to fruition in 2021. No better time and place to recognize Kathleen's impact on the statewide MG program, than at this first State Foundation - sponsored Advanced Education Conference.

- from the nomination submission.

Congratulations Kathleen and thank you for your service to the Master Gardeners!

Media Award - Alice Slusher

Cowlitz County Master Gardener



Alice Slusher has become the primary source of communication and education for the Longview/Kelso community, Cowlitz County Master Gardeners, and as a very active member of Askextension.org answering questions from across the state of Washington, the Pacific Northwest, and countries around the world with plant problems and identification questions. She has been recognized by the State Master Gardener program and the Presidents Volunteer Service Award for the past three years for giving over 500 hours annually as a Master Gardener volunteer.

Alice uses her technical skills to design, develop and maintain the MGFCC Facebook page to announce community and MG activities, report program accomplishments and publicize workshops and to design, develop and maintain MGFCC Web page to provide information to general public like Look Ahead,

What's happening in the garden next month and private access for local Master Gardeners to access newsletter, interactive calendar and directory. She has created countless posters, flyers and handouts to use online and in print; announcing plant sales, workshops, trainings, and public events such as the Co-Victory Plant Give Away. She has improved the overall quality of on-line classes and MG presentations. She has supported MGCC with ZOOM gatherings and instructions for joining said gatherings for foundation board meetings, the weekly Happy Hour at 10 am. All the in-person classes have been reconfigured by Alice into Zoom Instructional classes. She opened a virtual Plant and Insect Clinic so we may continue to provide the public with answers to all their questions about insects, plant disease and identification. She co-coordinates and teaches weekly on-line gardening classes open to the public, She also coordinates an annual Advance Master Garden Clinic training offered to Master Gardeners from throughout Washington. She authors "Northwest Gardening" a monthly article for Columbia River Reader (SW WA magazine) and a monthly article for and edits the monthly MGFCC newsletter plus she contributes articles to Seeds for Thought.

*Her knowledge in plant diseases and pests is the reason she has been sought out to by the international askextension.org. This platform has increased community, state, national and international awareness of MGs.

* During this difficult time she developed and implemented a virtual Plant and Insect clinic, thus providing a crucial service to the community and MGs. She continues to promote the virtual Plant and Insect Clinic through FB and WSU information emails.

* She developed and organized the Zoom platform for classes, continuing education and workshops, Doodle sign ups and Dropbox allowing MGs and the community to stay connected and safe during the time of COVID.

* Alice Slusher has improved the audio and visual quality of MG presentations and classes. She consistently posts MG workshops and events on FB that support MG programs such as sales, symposiums, home and garden fairs, county fairs and workshops. In 2018 she developed and implemented a Fall Symposium featuring MG speakers. She was instrumental in the successful distribution of co-victory garden plants using FB, newsletters and flyers. She organizes and promotes annual Continuing Education workshops using the

Ellen A'Key Grant Winner - Cowlitz County

~~Patricia Bosh, Cowlitz County Master Gardener

For those non-urban counties of Washington State who have not read the details of the Ellen A'Key King County Master Gardener Foundation Grant, the Master Gardeners of the counties who have won the award encourage you to peruse the [Ellen A'Key Grant site](#) at the King County MGF website. These words are part of the introduction to the grant: "Through this program we hope to foster innovation and creativity, stimulate problem solving and creative solutions, encourage a sense of unity and community among all Master Gardeners in our state, and to make possible programs that otherwise might struggle or never be able to progress beyond the planning stage."

The 2020 Ellen A'Key King County Master Gardener Foundation Grant was awarded to Cowlitz County Master Gardeners: Master Gardener Greenhouse for At-Risk Youth. CCMGs are improving a gardening space previously used by Loowit High School students in Master Gardener-directed raised bed gardens. We believe participating in learning to grow vegetables and other plants will provide them with valuable life skills and introduce them to alternatives to unlawful behavior. As the photos below show the greatly appreciated grant funds will be used soon for lighting, seedling mats/thermostats, storage, utility sink and floor mats. Two fans are already installed. Covid-19 problems have slowed the construction; however, we are confident the area will be ready for the Cowlitz Co. youth from Juvenile Services Center, a court-directed community service, and students from Loowit High School to begin Master Gardener-directed greenhouse gardening activities in the next few months.



MG's Billie & Gary Bevers and Gene McConnell (contractor).
Photo by Don Enstrom



Edward LaCrosse 1927-2020

~~Former King County Master Gardner

We received the following letter from Annamarie LaCrosse, daughter of Ed LaCrosse, for whom our Distinguished Service Award was named. As you will see in the letter, Ed was an active and widely recognized Master Gardener for 25 years. The MGFWS is honored to be listed among the organizations to receive memorials. The full obituary of Ed LaCrosse can be found on the [Legacy website](#).

September 20, 2020

Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State
PO Box 10533
Yakima, Wa 98909

For your Newsletter,

It is with great sadness, I wish to report the passing of long time Master Gardener, Edward L. LaCrosse on August 15, 2020. Ed completed his Master Gardener Training in 1991, and was active for 25 years in a variety of roles! He served King County Clinics, plant sales and became a Board member and President of the King County MG Foundation in the 1990s. He went on to be Board Member and President of the Washington State MG Foundation, 1999- 2006, and served as Historian for the State Foundation. In 2008, the State Foundation Distinguished Service Award was renamed the Edward LaCrosse Service Award in recognition of his commitment, involvement and service. WSU recognized his contributions to the MG Program with a Dedication and planting a Sequoia tree with a Plaque at the WSU Research Center in Puyallup. Ed was honored as the MG Gardener of the Year in 2010. He was, also, recognized by the Mayor and City of Kent for 15 plus years of Coordinating Volunteer Services at the Neeley-Soames Historical MG Demonstration Gardens in Kent, in 2013. Ed was a member and Steward of the Native Plant Society, and a speaker for the KC MG Speaker's Bureau on Gardening with Native Plants. Ed was instrumental in developing and maintaining the Native Plant Garden at Wesley Homes in Des Moines. Remembrances may be directed to Bonney Watson.com or "Celebrate the Life of Ed LaCrosse" on Facebook.

Sincerely,
Annamarie LaCrosse
206-909-5616



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minute to be productive or scintillating. We kibitz, dawdle and goof off, and those “in-between moments” are vital to a sense of connection. Find ways to replicate them online.”

As evidenced by our 2020 MGFWS award winners, the value of leveraging technology for the benefit of our MG program is not a new idea. State Media Award winner Alice Slusher’s (Cowlitz ‘11) nomination cited her extensive use of multiple technologies to support local, state, and national MG programs, and State Master Gardener of the Year Deborah Smeltzer’s (Skagit ‘12) nomination cited her success at using technology to support both her county and the Puget Sound joint counties forum.

The value of technology is not missed at the state program and foundation levels, either. WSU State Coordinator Jennifer Marquis’ broad strategies to strengthen and grow our MG program ‘in spite of’ never cease to amaze me! And Zoom has allowed State Foundation volunteers to conduct business ‘face to face’ without regard to the wide geographical footprint of our chapters. I think it is fair to say that a year ago none of us would have guessed the obstacles we would face in 2020. Over the year we have experienced many successes and a few setbacks, but it has left us smarter, stronger, and well-positioned for success in 2021. Congratulations on your persistence and successes as we continue working together to guide our WSU Extension MG Program into the future!

Warm Regards - Don

(Continued from [page 2](#)) which include videos, recorded PowerPoint presentations, exercises to help with terminology and quizzes and after participation in the Saturday morning session, students will fully understand the role of a plant’s flower and why flowers are important. Botany and Plant Identification will be taught by **Paula Dinius**, Urban Horticulturist, WSU Extension Chelan County. Paula began her career with WSU in 2004 in urban horticulture. She is a botanist and plant pathologist who shares her urban horticulture expertise with the landscaping industry, local governments, and municipalities. Paula is also known for her work in educating the WSU Extension Master Gardener Program volunteers.

Tuition for this extensive training program is \$300 and requires a computer with internet access, an e-mail account, and a Zoom account. Registration opens November 14, 2020. More information can be found at <http://mastergardener.wsu.edu/home-horticulture-training/>.

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Deborah championed placing MG Outreach Clinics at several Farmers' Markets and ensured that they were supported with internet accessible tablets and appropriate resource materials broadening the influence of Master Gardeners throughout the county. She helped in the establishment of a dedicated SCMGF website which has facilitated the opportunity to provide expanded educational materials to the public and more support for members.

As one of a two-member team, Deborah initiated a Joint Counties MGF Forum in 2013 where representatives from 4-5 NW county foundation boards meet twice yearly to share best practices. This has proven to be a very productive ongoing meeting that has resulted in the exchange of useful information for all involved.

- from the nomination submission.

Congratulations Deborah and thank you for your service to the Master Gardeners!



Deborah Smeltzer with Don Enstrom and Jennifer Marquis at the Discovery Garden in Mount Vernon. Photo by Jessamyn Tuttle.



Alice Slusher with Don Enstrom and Anne Wolfe.
Photo by Patricia Bosh

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FB page, emails, and the MG website This includes providing printed information and internet resources to attendees.

Alice's media activities are focused on the Master Garden program. In addition to the activities mentioned above, she teaches classes for the community and other MGs on-line and before 2020 in person.

Alice has used her knowledge, technology, writing and communication skills to increase the visibility of the Master Gardener program. Her creative talents, promotional efforts and media skill are a crucial part of communication to MG and the public regarding events, sales, presentations, workshops and trainings. Her articles and online publications provide pertinent information about gardening and increased community awareness of the MG

program locally, throughout Cowlitz and surrounding counties. Her contribution as communications director increased program participation of MG and the general public. This increased visibility led to stable funding for the program by the County Commissioners and has securing a local \$15,000 grant to build a greenhouse to support juvenile detention youth education and volunteer activities.

She established an on-line communication capability within our foundation during the Pandemic shutdown which allowed MG to attend foundation meetings and education opportunities safely. She continues to guide and support new trainees virtually during this time of Covid, helping them with on-line technical problems and creating power point presentations. She attends most of the training programs and teaches some of the classes through Zoom. Her communication and people skills allow her to easily interact with the trainees, encouraging them to become more involved with volunteer activities through leadership, presentations and workshops.

As the Foundation president for Cowlitz County, her leadership skills along with her media communication and writing skills have promoted the program to reach new audiences with gardening information. Her greatest skill lies in the Plant and Insect Clinic. Her mastery of on-line resources such as Hortsense, PNW handbooks and web search engines allow her to quickly solve problems. Alice's participation metrics demonstrate her exceptional capabilities in this area. Since her involvement, questions are usually answered in less than 12 hours. The number of questions from the general public has almost doubled in the last 4 years. Prior to her presence in the clinic, about 10 samples were sent to the state lab at WSU every year. That number has been reduced to 1 annually. Her teaching ability continues to expand her visibility. She is sought after by local and out of county organizations to speak on aspects of gardening. Other MG chapters have contacted her to provide trainings for their clientele. The Master Gardener program in Cowlitz County also continues to expand due to Alice's communication skills. Prior to her participation in the program training was offered every other year averaging 17 trainees attending. Since Alice has taken over as communication leader in the county program, membership continues to grow. The program has been offered annually for the last three years with increasing attendance culminating with 37 attending in 2020 (the biggest class ever for the program). The number of Master Gardeners in Cowlitz County has grown from 86 to 114 in three years. Our program is well known and highly respected throughout the county thanks to Alice's media skills.

- from the nomination submission.

Congratulations Alice and Thank you for your service to Master Gardeners!



*Advanced
Master Gardener Training
Online Series 2021*

Cost: \$15 for series

Tickets available on [TicketSource](#)

February 12, 2021 (Friday) 9:00 –11:30 am Jenny Glass: Diagnosing Plant Problems

Jenny is WSU's Diagnostic Plant Pathologist at the Puyallup Plant & Insect Diagnostic Laboratory. Jenny will share her practical and often humorous approach to diagnosing plant problems. There will be something there for new and experienced MGs alike!

February 19, 2021 (Friday) 9:00 –11:30 am Linda Chalker-Scott: Horticultural Myths

Linda is an Associate Professor and Extension Urban Horticulturist at WSU PREC. She is also WSU's Garden Professor, whose blog's stated purpose is "Advancing the science of gardening and other stuff since 2009." Are Epsom salts a horticultural cure-all? Does water on leaves act like a magnifying glass to burn leaves in sunlight? Join us as Linda challenges long-held gardening beliefs with science-based facts, and helps us evaluate reliable information sources.

February 26, 2021 (Friday) 9:00 –11:30 am Daria Gosztyla: Urban Forestry

Daria is Projects & Outreach Specialist at Washington State Dept. of Natural Resources. She will be talking about tree planting, tree and site selection, urban invasive species, and diagnosing tree problems. Even experienced Master Gardeners need more information on this topic as we are seeing more tree problems associated with heat and drought as our climate changes.

Hosted by

Master Gardener Foundation of Cowlitz County