



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension



Words from Wendy

Welcome to April everyone!

According to the calendar, winter is over and spring is here. I don't know about everyone else, but I am hoping for more winter moisture up in the Sierras. Bring on that spring rain to the valleys!

This year, our plants are jumping the gun on the season and so are many gardeners. The forsythia and quince are in full bloom in many counties and we have already received calls about pruning roses. If you have roses, this is just a word to the wise, hold off on pruning. We live in northern Nevada, you never know when winter truly starts or ends. Remember snow in Douglas county in June just three years ago?

As for those gardeners jumping the gun—I'll admit I am one of them! I started my cool season vegetables in late February; my lettuce and carrots are already sprouting in uncovered raised beds. I laughed when I saw someone write on their garden blog "Spring is HERE!! Go plant something!" Some people may need those words of encouragement, but us Master Gardeners are chomping at the bit to get out and start working in the soil.

In the past couple of months, it has been impressive how many people have shown an interest in gardening. The movement is not slowing down. The Gardening in Nevada: Bartley Ranch series just finished. The talks focused on growing/caring for food again showed the greatest interest, with 75 attendees for each two hour talk. Thank you so much to all our speakers: Michael Janik, Carol Feldman, Whitney Lauren, Suzanne Adams, Charlene Oakes and Randy Robison. So much to say and so little room...

Until next time— Enjoy the flowers and Happy Gardening!



UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Master Gardener Newsletter

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Potlucks:

- ◇ Reno: 4/9, 5/14 and 6/11, noon.
- ◇ Carson: 5/17, noon.
- ◇ Douglas: 4/4, 5/2 and 6/6, 1 p.m.

2011 MG Class Updates

By: Terri Thomas

Greetings to the MG class of 2011! What an industrious group we are. Several of us MG "newbies" (Trainees) have signed on as "sprouts" in the Greenhouse this year and we are learning a lot while having a lot of fun. Having mentors teach us the ins and outs works really well. I have been tracking weather patterns (daily highs and lows along with conditions) so we can compare those trends with our plant progress as we approach the sale date. It may help us to gauge when to start seeds in the future (or not, I mean this is Nevada).

Some of us Trainees (including me) were a little unclear as to the timeframe for accumulating our 50 volunteer, phones and continuing education hours after completing the classes and the Culminating Exercise. There was a flurry of activity toward the end of December with a call from Wendy and Ashley to get our hours in. Some wondered if that meant we had to have our 50 hours by then. The answer is no. We have a year to earn those hours after completing the class work, but the Master Gardener program itself - with its grant, state and federal reporting requirements - is on a calendar year basis.

The Master Gardener program has an online database now which will help both with the certification/recertification process as well as with those required reports. The database, called the Volunteer Management System, allows MGs to input their hours periodically (<http://nevada.volunteersystem.org>). A new feature to track volunteer hours and notify Ashley and Wendy when MGs are approaching the 50 hour threshold is being added to this database. Until then, Ashley has developed a form that will allow MGs to "certify" that they have their requisite hours and ask for their T-shirts and name badges to be ordered. This new process should be much less time consuming since the Certified and Trainee MGs can take responsibility for inputting their hours and triggering their requests for confirmation of the required thresholds. The old system basically put all of that on Wendy, and with 200+ volunteers in the program, it wasn't very efficient.

So, since we're volunteers, I have volunteered to be the MG program's first "MG Coordinator/Recruiter Volunteer." My role will be to facilitate periodic input of hours into the online system (so that ideally we have on-going input and not a logjam of a year's worth of input for everyone heading toward the Christmas holidays), help MGs input their hours if they don't have the resources to do so at home (Sadie helped with that last year) and coordinate the T-shirt and name tag orders with Ashley.

The "recruiter" part of my title came about because Sadie and I have heard from people in the community who said they used to be MGs but let their hours lapse, or that they went through the classes and did the volunteer hours and then "never heard" if they made their certified status. We certainly don't want to lose those resources!

So I will be sifting through the phone logs for notations from people who called in with such reports, and I will follow up with them. If you know of such a person, please have them get in touch with Ashley, andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or 775-336-0231, and she will give them my contact information.

Here it is already the end of the first calendar quarter. Why don't we aim to input our hours once per quarter? Then, we all will be able to track our progress better, and it won't be such a daunting task to do it all at year end. Let me know if you need help with that!

ATGATT! (All the Gear, All the Time)

By: Ashley Andrews

There is an acronym among motorcycle riders "ATGATT" and it means "All the Gear All the Time." For a motorcyclist, "all the gear" includes a full-faced helmet, a protective jacket and pants, motorcycle gloves and boots. Wearing this gear can prevent a motorcycle rider from injury or death. But motorcycle-riding isn't the only hobby that requires protective gear. Gardeners have their own gear needs. As you amp up your outdoor landscaping and gardening activities this spring, please take a page from the motorcycle crowd and remember to wear ALL of your safety gear ALL of the time.

Prevent common garden injuries by wearing the following gear:

- * **Eye Protection:** To protect your peepers, sport safety glasses (not just sunglasses or prescription eyeglasses!) while applying garden chemicals, using lawn mowers and power tools and while pruning. In order to be able to see the fruits of your labors come harvest time, you have to protect your eyesight all year long.
- * **Ear Protection:** While mowing your lawn, leaf blowing or using other noisy landscaping equipment, wear ear plugs. Remember, if you need to raise your voice to be heard over the machine, it is loud enough to cause hearing damage! If you listen to music via headphones or ear buds while gardening, be sure to play your tunes at an appropriate volume.
- * **Skin Protection:** The largest organ of your body is your skin! Gardeners should wear gardening gloves, sunscreen, a wide-brimmed hat and long sleeves and pants to guard their skin. To avoid skin irritation or damage caused during the mixing and application of common garden chemicals such as fertilizers, pre-emergent herbicides, etc., gardeners should read product labels to find out which type of glove to wear.

In addition to wearing your gear this growing season, be sure to put your health and safety first by:

- * following all directions and warning labels on garden fertilizers, pesticides, power tools, etc.
- * using tools that are in good repair and proper for the job (and the gardener!).
- * receiving your tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccination's booster shot (every 10 years).
- * staying hydrated and not over-doing it.



It's important to wear protective gear while riding a motorcycle. It is also important to be a safe gardener. This spring, wear all of your gardening safety equipment all of the time! Photo by Mark Poesch, DC Motorcycle Travel Examiner.

Volunteer Opportunities: Phones!

By: Ashley Andrews



The Master Gardener office is home to a fact sheet and book library.

Photos by Ashley Andrews.

Office volunteers are **desperately needed** in the Washoe County Cooperative Extension Office! There are two shifts available every day, Monday through Friday: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 12:30-4 p.m.

We would *love* to have these shifts filled by any of you Master Gardeners. To help make that happen, we'd like to dispel some common office service myths.

Myth #1 I am not ready to volunteer in the office because I don't know as much as Wendy knows.

FALSE! Our callers and walk-ins want a friendly listener to talk to about their gardening problems and they want someone who is willing to help them find solutions. If you are willing to open up library books or pick out fact sheets and read from them together with the client, then you are ready to volunteer in the office!

Myth #2 I can't diagnose on my feet when talking to someone on the phone, so I should stay away from phone volunteering.

FALSE! When volunteering in the office and feeling a bit scared of the phone, you have a couple of simple options available to you.

One, let the calls go to voicemail, listen to the message, research the problem and then call back with all of your ducks in a row.

Two, answer the phone anyway and know **it is always okay to say "I don't know! Let me research that for you and I'll call you right back."**

Myth #3 If I volunteered in the office, I'd be all alone and wouldn't have anyone to back me up if I needed help.

FALSE! Volunteers who feel uncomfortable working solo can contact Ashley, andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or 775-336-0231, to be paired up with a partner!

The buddy system works for the Air Force (Wingmen), the Army (Battle Buddies), the Navy (Shipmates) and it can work for Master Gardeners too!

If you have any other questions or doubts about serving in the office, please let us know. We will try our best to address any obstacles you may have. Your phone service is indescribably helpful, both to us and the community.

Volunteer Opportunity: Scope Out Weeds!

By: Susan Donaldson

Potlucks:

Reno: Washoe County Cooperative Extension Office, April 9th, May 14th and June 11th, noon.

Carson: Carson City/Storey County Cooperative Extension Office, May 17th, noon.

Douglas: Douglas County Cooperative Extension Office, April 4th, May 2nd and June 6th, 1 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to help scope out weeds at parks and other sites! Sue Donaldson, our Water Quality Education Specialist, is looking for a few volunteers who like to be outdoors to help Washoe County assess parks, trails and other sites for weed infestations. Training and help will be provided. The results will help guide this year's control efforts, and will allow us to be much more efficient. If you like to visit local parks and get some fresh air, this opportunity is for you! Plus, you'll learn to identify some of the most troublesome weeds in our area, and gain skills using a GPS to map the weeds. Contact Sue Donaldson, donaldsons@unce.unr.edu or 775-336-0242 to sign up or for more information.

Volunteer Opportunity: Junk the Junipers! By: Ashley Andrews

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension's Living With Fire program is holding their annual "Junk the Junipers" event this spring. The program helps homeowners to remove ornamental junipers (a.k.a. "little green gas cans") from their property by providing juniper disposal and offering coupons for a free replacement plant from Moana Nursery. Just like in years past, this year the Living With Fire program needs your help to make this event a success.

Master Gardener volunteers are needed to staff four information booths on Sunday, April 29th from 8:30 a.m.- 1 p.m. in the following locations:

- * Spanish Springs (470 Rockwell Blvd.)
- * Virginia Foothills (East end of Kenneth Dr.)
- * Washoe Valley (1240 Eastlake Blvd.)
- * Carson City (Galaxy Theater- south lot)

To volunteer for this event, please contact Living With Fire Program Coordinator Sonya Sistare at sistares@unce.unr.edu or 775-336-0271. For more information about the Living With Fire program, visit their website, www.livingwithfire.info.



Firefighters refer to ornamental Junipers as little green gas cans. Photo courtesy of the Living With Fire program.

Educational Opportunities (Continued):

Statewide:

- ⇒ Write an article for the *Master Gardener Newsletter*! The time you spend researching and writing the article counts as hours of continuing education. Email your article, any photographs and their captions to Ashley at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu.
- ⇒ Complete the Living With Fire "Wildfire Awareness Word Search." Submit your completed puzzle to Ashley via email (andrewsa@unce.unr.edu), fax (775-784-4881) or snail mail (UNCE, 4955 Energy Way, Reno, NV 89502) to receive credit for one hour of continuing education.
- ⇒ **Non-UNCE Classes:** Many local nurseries host weekly lectures. These classes count towards your *Master Gardener* certification/recertification continuing education hours requirement.

Washoe County: Classes are held at the Reno Cooperative Extension office (4955 Energy Way) unless otherwise specified. For more information about these classes, contact Ashley via email at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or call 775-336-0231.

April:

- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **Hands-on Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop:** April 7th, 10 a.m.-done. Preregistration is required; class is limited to 10 people. Cost: \$5 and includes a ride from the Reno office to the workshop location (Pyramid Lake Tribal Community Orchard).
- ⇒ Green Industry Continuing Education Series— **Early Season Weeds:** April 11th, noon—1 p.m. Preregistration is requested. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **Spring Weed Identification:** April 17th, 1:30-4 p.m. Preregistration is required. Cost: \$FREE!

May:

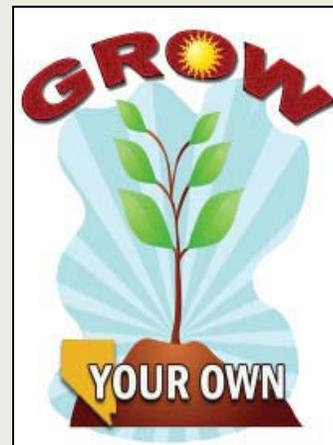
- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **First Detector Training** (protect Nevada agriculture and natural ecosystem from invasive threats!): May 2nd, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Preregistration is required; workshop will be held at the Nevada Department of Agriculture in Sparks, Nevada. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ 2012 Invasive Weed Trainings— **Preventing the Introduction and Spread of Invasive Weeds** (BMP guidelines for construction, aggregate production, maintenance operations and land managers): May 2nd, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Preregistration is required; workshop will be held at the Truckee Ranger

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Save the Dates!

Summer **Grow Your Own, Nevada!** classes will be held

Mondays, July 9th through August 27th from 2-4 p.m.



www.growyourownnevada.com

Educational Opportunities (Continued)

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District Office. Cost: \$FREE!

- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **The Caughlin and Washoe Fires and Bark Beetle Infestations:** May 7th, 9-11 a.m. Preregistration is required. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ 2012 Invasive Weed Trainings— **Weed Warriors Basic Training:** May 16th, 1-5 p.m. AND May 17th 8 a.m.-noon. Preregistration is required. Cost: \$35.
- ⇒ 2012 Invasive Weed Trainings— **Lake Tahoe Basin Invasive Weed Identification Workshop** (for landowners and managers, on-the-ground crews, trails/park staff, volunteers, residents and visitors): May 31st, 1:30-4:30. Preregistration is required; class will be held at the US Forest Service Conference Room in South Lake Tahoe. Cost: \$FREE!

June:

- ⇒ Green Industry Continuing Education Series— **Utility Pruning—Trees under Power Lines:** June 13th, noon- 1 p.m. Registration is requested. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **Microscopy/C.L.U.E.:** June 19th, 9- 11:30 a.m. Registration is required. Cost: \$FREE!

Carson City/Storey County: Classes are held at the Carson City/Storey County Cooperative Extension office unless otherwise specified. For more information about these classes, contact Ashley via email at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or call 775-336-0231.

April:

- ⇒ Green Industry Continuing Education Series— **Early Season Weeds:** April 11th, noon—1 p.m. Preregistration is requested; class will be held via videoconference. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ **Hoop House Demonstration and Construction Class:** April 28th, 9:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Preregistration is required; contact JoAnne Skelly at 775-887-2252 or skellyj@unce.unr.edu. Cost: FREE!

May:

- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **The Caughlin and Washoe Fires and Bark Beetle Infestations:** May 7th, 9-11 a.m. Preregistration is required; class will be presented via videoconference. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ 2012 Invasive Weed Trainings— **Weed Warriors Basic Training:** May 16th, 1-5 p.m. AND May 17th 8 a.m.-noon. Preregistration is required; class will be presented via videoconference. Cost: \$35.

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Educational Opportunities (Continued)

(Continued from page 7)

June:

- ⇒ Green Industry Continuing Education Series— **Utility Pruning—Trees under Power Lines:** June 13th, noon- 1 p.m. Registration is requested; class will be presented via videoconference. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **Microscopy/C.L.U.E.:** June 21st, 9:30 a.m.- noon. Registration is required; class will be held LIVE. Cost: \$FREE

Douglas County: Classes are held at the Douglas County Cooperative Extension office unless otherwise specified. For more information about these classes, contact Ashley via email at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or call 775-336-0231.

April:

- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **Spring Weed Identification:** April 18th, 1-3:30 p.m. Preregistration is required; class will be held LIVE at the Douglas County Cooperative Extension Office. Cost: \$FREE!

May:

- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **The Caughlin and Washoe Fires and Bark Beetle Infestations:** May 7th, 9-11 a.m. Preregistration is required; class will be presented via videoconference. Cost: \$FREE!
- ⇒ 2012 Invasive Weed Trainings— **Weed Warriors Basic Training:** May 16th, 1-5 p.m. AND May 17th 8 a.m.-noon. Preregistration is required; class will be presented via videoconference at the Carson City and Douglas County Cooperative Extension Offices. Cost: \$35.

June:

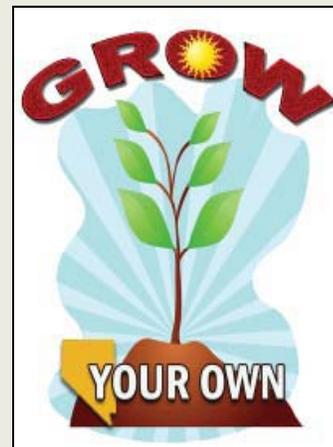
- ⇒ Advanced Master Gardener Training Program— **Microscopy/C.L.U.E.:** Date TBA. Registration is required; class will be held LIVE at the Douglas County Cooperative Extension Office. Cost: \$FREE!

Outlying Offices: Your local Cooperative Extension office is invited to connect to all **Green Industry Continuing Education Series** classes and all **Grow Your Own, Nevada!** classes. To make videoconference arrangements or request a class be offered via videoconference, contact Ashley Andrews at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or 336-0231.

Save the Dates!

Summer **Grow Your Own, Nevada!** classes will be held

Mondays, July 9th through August 27th from 2-4 p.m.



www.growyourownnevada.com

Educational Opportunity: Party in the Garden

By: Susan Lester

The May Arboretum Society is hosting a Party in the Garden as part of its well-known annual plant sale, the single largest fundraiser to support the Wilbur D. May Arboretum. We're inviting you to be a part of this exclusive and exciting inaugural event on the evening of Friday, June 1, 2012, 5:30 to 8 p.m.

A large selection of plants will be available for purchase, exclusively to ticket holders, prior to the public sale on Saturday, June 2. Wine, beer and hors d'oeuvres will be served and are included in the price of your ticket. There will also be a raffle and silent auction of some fun and exciting items.

The highlight of the evening will be a seminar on high-desert garden advice from our special guests, recognized garden designers, consultants and authors, **Scott Ogden and Lauren Springer Ogden**. Copies of *Waterwise Plants for Sustainable Gardens: 200 Drought Tolerant Choices for all Climates*, by Lauren Springer Ogden will be available for purchase and the authors will be on hand to sign copies.

Tickets go on sale March 15, 2012. Society members will have the opportunity to purchase tickets at a 10% discount until April 15. Tickets cost \$50 for general admission, or \$75 for general admission and a copy of the book *Waterwise Plants for Sustainable Gardens: 200 Drought Tolerant Choices for all Climates*. Please contact Lori Garbacz for tickets, lrgarbacz@gmail.com 775-826-5722, or mayarboretumevents@gmail.com.

Teglia's Paradise Park Community Garden

By: Jennifer Fox

Hello fellow Master Gardeners. I would like to take this opportunity to let you know about my experiences gardening at the Community Garden in Teglia's Paradise Park. I've been gardening there for the past three years and have really enjoyed the experience.

Organic vegetable gardening is my passion. My husband and I are vegetarians and much of our diet consists of what we grow, harvest and preserve each season. I live in an older neighborhood in Reno with large established trees that have made it difficult to get enough sunlight to grow as much as we've wanted. When I found out about the community garden, I decided to grow there in addition to my garden at home because I would have more success there with plants that require full sun. It was interesting to see effects of microclimates first hand by comparing how something grew differently at my house as opposed to the community garden across town. Last year I had great success growing Romano bush beans, various heirloom tomatoes and huge, sweet onions. I also had a nice supply of dill that had self-seeded from the year before.

There is a challenge involved in growing at the community garden-- squirrels! They're smart creatures and have nothing but time to figure out how to circumvent any obstacles that you try to put in their

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Harvesting 'taters'! Photo courtesy of Jennifer Fox.

Teglia's Paradise Park Community Garden (Continued)

By: Jennifer Fox

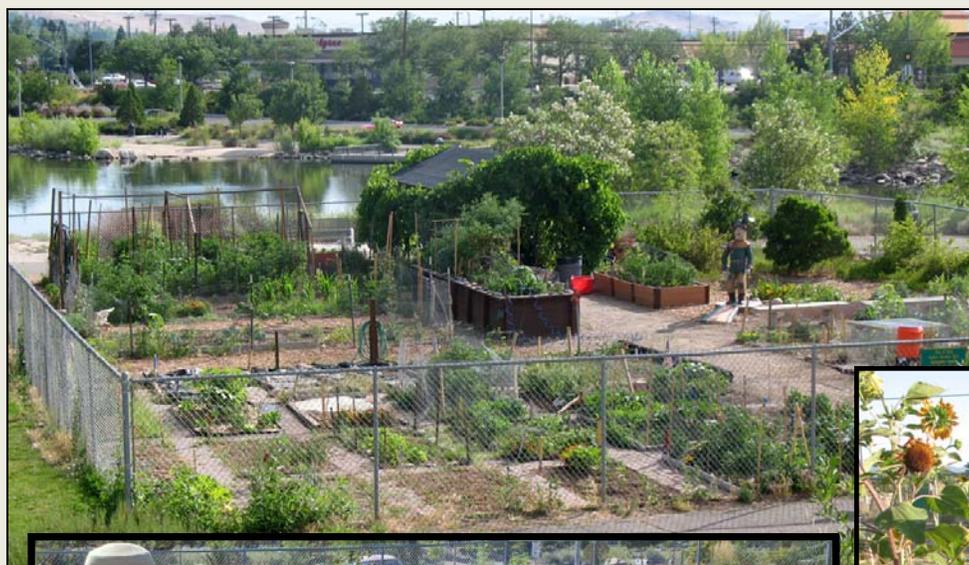
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way. Over the years, we've tried netting and caging our plots, tried commercial products like Plantskydd, and sprinkled cayenne pepper with wild abandon (unfazed, they pranced around in it as they watched me sneeze!) I think I've gone through the five stages of grief over the battle with the squirrels and after spending a long time on the "anger" phase, I have come out on the other side quite zen about the whole thing. I

know that there are plenty of things that I can grow in my plots, like garlic, onions, basil, dill and green beans that squirrels don't seem to bother with. I've also made peace with the fact that if I decide to plant tomatoes, the squirrels will probably beat me to the biggest and most beautiful ones, but they won't eat them all and something is better than nothing.

Despite the popularity of gardening and the

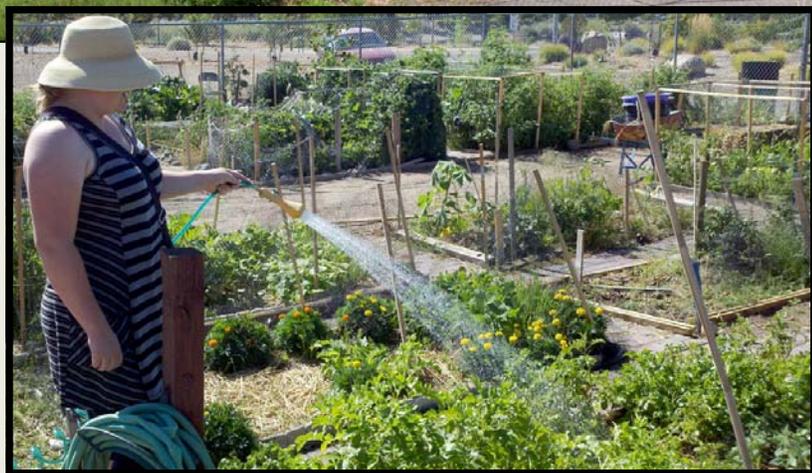
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Top: Teglia's Paradise Park Community Garden.

Bottom: Watering the garden.

Photos courtesy of Jennifer Fox.



Teglia's Paradise Park Community Garden (Continued)

By: Jennifer Fox

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local/sustainable food movement, participation in the garden has been declining. The past few years, new gardeners have abandoned their plots mid-way through the growing season. Our climate can prove to be challenging for new gardeners when cold and unpredictable springs can proceed quickly into hot summers...and then there are those squirrels! I want to encourage Master Gardeners who might be interested in participating in the community garden to give it a try or simply offer it as a option when you're

helping visitors at the Cooperative Extension office. It would be very nice to garden next to some committed gardeners this summer who will put the "community" back into the garden at Teglia's Paradise Park. Happy Gardening!

Registration began March 1st. Call City of Reno to sign up at 334-2260. You must attend a mandatory orientation meeting offered on the following dates:

April 10th or 26th at noon or May 12th at 10:00 am. For more information please visit: [www. http://reno.gov/index.aspx?page=457](http://www.reno.gov/index.aspx?page=457).

I Love Geraniums... Why I Don't Know

By: Vicki Jewell

The argument has always been between family counselors, teachers and social workers. Some believe our likes and dislikes are influenced by our surroundings and upbringings and others believe we are born into this world already programmed. I personally adhere to the belief that we are born into this world programmed with certain likes and dislikes.

Wendy Hanson Mazet, the Master Gardener Program Coordinator, has a pet snake...and she can keep it! Wendy has a pet horse. She loves her horse, she feeds her horse, she rides her horse and she plays with her horse. When I was vacationing in Hawaii, I decided that the best way to get over my fear of horses was to take a two-hour horseback riding trip. After the trip was over, I slowly got off my horse and asked directions to the nearest bar with cold margaritas. I will never ride a horse again.

Last year I decided to grow tomatoes for the first time. I watered, I fertilized, I sprayed. The plants lived but did not produce one tomato - nothing, nada, zero. Not one tomato appeared on the vines. Wendy's tomatoes win State Championship blue ribbons at the Nevada State Fair.

I have never been one to brag - I just state the facts as I see them. My tomatoes failed but, the red

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"My favorite geranium is the common garden variety, although scented leaf geraniums make excellent houseplants. Their scents are wide-ranging-- from apple to peppermint to lemon, just to name a few."

I Love Geraniums... Why I Don't Know (Continued)

By: Vicki Jewell

(Continued from page 11)

geraniums in my front yard grew beautiful and gorgeous - even breathtaking. Like I said, I have never been one to brag, I just state the facts as I see them. I love Geraniums. I love the look, the smell, the feel of the leaves. When entering the University of Nevada Greenhouse Project in January 2006, my main concern was learning and growing geraniums from seed.

Yes, you can grow geraniums from seed! Germination usually occurs in 7 to 14 days. I planted my seeds on February 3, 2006. On March 21, 2006, after the plant germinated and grew its second set of leaves, I transplanted them into 4-inch pots. Always wait until you get your second set of leaves on the plant before transplanting. One thing to keep in mind is the umbrella effect of geraniums and other plants with larger leaves. They sometimes suffer in the greenhouse environment if the leaves get too big. Water from sprinklers will not get to the roots system of the plants if the spray hits the leaves from above. Most geraniums will flower in 95 to 110 days. Geraniums do great in northern Nevada but are considered annuals rather than perennials because of Nevada's winters. When planting geraniums outside in the spring, always wait until after the last frost. Geraniums love the sun and will bloom all summer long. If your soil does not contain high organic matter, you will need to work some into the soil to a depth of six inches. To get the best blooms, prune and dead head all old blooms. Think of it like getting a haircut. When you first get your hair cut, it just grows and grows. It's the same with plants.

The history of the geranium is a long one. Popular belief is that it originated in India, made its way around South Africa's Cape of Good Hope in the 1600's to France, on to England, and then across to the United States in the mid-18th century. It became increasingly popular in California where the climate and soil made growing geraniums year-round a very easy task. This led to an increasing number of geranium cultivars. But, with the outbreak of World War I, cultivation stopped and plant information was lost during the turmoil of the war years - names and plant parentages were lost. The aim of most societies today is to recreate the long-forgotten early hybrids. In 1953 the International Geranium Society was founded. I will be joining soon.

My favorite geranium is the common garden variety, although scented leaf geraniums make excellent houseplants. Their scents are wide-ranging-- from apple to peppermint to lemon, just to name a few. My geraniums are looking gorgeous again this year. The ones I brought home and grew from seed at the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Greenhouse Project are sitting in my home's big bay window, which faces east. I may have over-watered them; I'll need to be careful. And yes, I am trying to grow tomatoes again and, yes, I see more Blue Ribbon-worthy tomatoes for Wendy this year.

If you keep a geranium plant in your house, it'll cleanse the air of dust and bacteria. The simplest remedy is to keep pots of geraniums on your window sills. The secret is that geranium plants absorb all harmful substances and microbes from the air—even humidity and smoke. Scientists in Europe confirmed that phytoncides of this flower efficiently remove microbes and its aroma promotes sound sleep.

Part I: Working the Soil

I've already been working in my garden this spring! So far, we have built our raised beds and applied compost with straw and sheep manure. Our next step was to till/dig the raised beds, but then the rains came!

Do you know when to plant your cool-season vegetables when their seed packages say to "plant as soon as the soil can be worked?" Digging, tilling and walking on soil that is too wet can damage the soil structure. Working wet soil will destroy pore spaces. Some large compacted clumps of wet soil become like concrete-like clods that resist penetration by plant roots and moisture.

You should therefore use a hands-on approach to determine if your soil can be worked. Pick up a handful of soil and squeeze it gently into a ball. Then separate the ball by applying a light pressure with the other hand.

- * If the ball breaks apart easily into loose pieces, the soil is dry enough to dig.
- * If the ball flattens or breaks into large chunks, the soil is too wet. Wait and try again.
- * If the soil won't hold together, the soil is too dry. Set a sprinkler on and soak the soil deeply and thoroughly. Wait again and retest.

Part II: Interesting Ideas I Have read:



Attract butterflies to your garden by planting parsley!

- * To have butterflies in your garden, plant parsley. The adult black swallowtails love flowers but their larva loves parsley.
- * Put your pine needles as mulch around your blueberries, azaleas and other acid-loving plants.
- * To protect your roses from black spot fungus, flank them with garlic and parsley. This is NOT the time to trim your roses.
- * Set strawberries in layered beds and you'll never have to cut back the runners to keep your rows open. You won't have to do any heavy weeding either.
- * When your herbs are growing, heavy frequent trimmings will boost the plants. The clippings should be left around the plants to enrich the mulch or use for cooking or craft.

If you have any gardening questions, you can visit me at the Loylton Library, 511 Main Street, on Fridays from 1-5 p.m. or call me at 530-993-4236.

About the Master Gardener Newsletter

Newsletter Production:

This newsletter is created by the horticulture staff in the Washoe County office with support from our Master Gardener Volunteers. It is published quarterly for the benefit of Master Gardeners, their family and community.

The newsletter is delivered electronically via our website and an email distribution list. To subscribe to our email list, contact Ashley Andrews at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu. To view our newsletter online, visit our website www.unce.unr.edu/areas/western/newsletters/.

If you are unable to access this newsletter electronically due to a disability, we will provide you with a printed copy. Enlarged copies are also available. To request an accessible newsletter, contact Ashley Andrews at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu or 775-336-0231.

Submission Policy:

The Master Gardener Newsletter is incomplete without submissions from you, our Master Gardeners! Please submit photos, event announcements, book reviews, garden visits, how-tos or other garden-related material to Ashley Andrews at andrewsa@unce.unr.edu. We accept previously published articles with consent from the prior publisher.

Your written submissions may be edited for grammar, spelling and readability. By submitting your work to us, you authorize us to republish it in the newsletter and elsewhere. Examples of where we might feature your work include our Facebook page or a UNCE fact sheet.

Our Mission:

UNCE Master Gardeners help people improve their lives through education. They are committed to improving themselves, their community and their environment by participating in horticultural education and activities. Master Gardeners are leaders in environmental stewardship through education.

Legal Notices:

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UNCE encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact Wendy Hanson Mazet, hansonw@unce.unr.edu or 775-784-4848.

Now Recruiting!

We are looking for a few brave Master Gardeners to join our Master Gardener Newsletter Committee. Committee member responsibilities include:

- * writing articles and/or taking photographs
- * recruiting article-writers and photo-takers
- * proof-reading and layout feedback

Interested? Contact Wendy Hanson Mazet at hansonw@unce.unr.edu.

Contact University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

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- Our Email Address: mastergardeners@unce.unr.edu
- Twitter: twitter.com/garden_chat
- Facebook: facebook.com/UNCEMasterGardeners

Living With Fire: Wildfire Awareness Word Search

By: Sonya Sistare

When working in your garden this growing season, consider the impact your landscape has on your home's and your community's ability to survive a wildfire. Study the "Wildfire Awareness Word List," think about how these words apply to you and your property, then find those words in our word search below.

Submit your completed word search to Ashley via email (andrewsa@unce.unr.edu), fax (775-784-4881) or snail mail (UNCE, 4955 Energy Way, Reno, NV 89502) to receive credit for one hour of continuing education.

Name: _____



Wildfire Awareness Word List

- Awareness
- Danger
- Evacuation
- Firefighter
- Matches
- Smoke
- Stop Drop and Roll
- Burn
- Defensible Space
- Extinguisher
- Hazards
- Risk
- Smoke Alarm
- Wildfire
- Chief
- Embers
- Family
- Home
- Safety
- Smokey Bear

Wildfire Awareness Word Search

M S K R B W H O Y D C S B Q Y
A U M U E A I T T L D R O P Q
T O R O Z G E L C H I E F L W
C N O A K F N B D I A B S M W
H I R G A E T A X F A M Y R K
E D T S K S I R D I I E U A X
S T O P D R O P A N D R O L L
E X T I N G U I S H E R E A N
E C A P S E L B I S N E F E D
N O I T A U C A V E J R H K N
R E T H G I F E R I F G O O S
S M O K E Y B E A R F K M M I
Y L I M A F A W A R E N E S S
U L P F Q O O Q V E N P Q R K
E P V W C D T T T N Z N O A V