

THE TILLAMOOK THYMES

The Tillamook Master Gardener Association
February 2018



The President's Corner
February 2018
Karen Sarnaker



Looking through my window to where the North Fork and the Nehalem Rivers merge, the sun is trying its best to peek through the cloud cover and the water is slowly flooding the fields from the drenching rains we have received. The light is slowly increasing and a new season approaches.

I marvel at how colorful it is with the fields and evergreens so green, the sky blue and grey and the deciduous trees still bare and asleep. As gardeners we are preparing to add to this remarkable spring process as we plan and make preparations for this year's gardens.

By now, we have amassed several seed and plant catalogs. Indoors or in a greenhouse we may have planted garlic, or are beginning to plant seeds of cold crops like cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and Brussels' sprouts. February is a good time to plant roses, fruit trees and deciduous shrubs and to replace with resistant cultivars varieties of ornamental plants that are susceptible to disease. If the ground is warm enough we can also plant asparagus. All this is amazing for me - we couldn't do any of that until mid-May in my former garden in Maryland.

CONTENTS

- P 2 - Karen's Komer
- P 4 - A Wrinkle In Thyme
- P 6 - Neal's Compost Pile
- P 7 - Claire Moody
- P 8 - Save The Date
- P 9 - Karen's Recipe
- P 10 - Garden Hints
- P 12 - Executive Board
- P 13 - Calendar of Events

Preparations are under way for some new and exciting adventures for you and the community. Have you ever been on a "Garden Safari"? Our Education Coordinator, Neal Lemery is gearing us up for members to lead day trips to your favorite garden, nursery and other beautiful locations in Oregon. Monthly gardening mini classes are being organized. Stay tuned into the TCMGA Blast to learn more about these exciting opportunities.

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul. -- Alfred Austin





LIFE'S LITTLE JOYS

I have found joy every morning the past few weeks, opening the blinds on our window that overlooks the herb garden, to see numerous birds foraging for food. At the feeder I've seen finches, scrub jays, juncos, and towhees, so far. Out the French doors I see them playing in the red-twigged dogwood branches, which is two joys in one. If I open my front door to gaze down our walk, I also see two joys, first the addition to our walk — with its yin/yang connection design — to better enable safe passage for disembarking auto passengers, and the daffodil shoots nudging their way skyward. It won't be long now!

Recently, when I caught the bug that's going around, I found joy just lying on my bed and reading old garden magazines. One article caught my fancy because it concerned *amaranthus*, one of my favorite plants since I first saw it. Ten or so years ago, my mother had taken me to see the garden of her friend, Neva Needham, because it was so spectacular, and what was most amazing in that garden were the 9' tall *amaranthus* plants. I'd never seen *amaranthus* before, and I was smitten. At the end of their tall, greenish-golden spikes were feathery red-golden flowers composed of teeny-tiny grains. Viewing them rustling in the wind and shimmering in the sunlight, I felt like I was an ancient Aztec, or Egyptian. I know we went inside to the kitchen table for conversation and coffee, but I was only partially there. Most of me was staring out the window regarding the *amaranthus*.

Of course, I determined I would have some of these in my garden next summer. Mrs. Needham couldn't remember the exact name of the plants she'd sown because she'd sown them from leftover seeds, so I was on my own. Every year, I bought a different variety, hoping for these tall, tall wonders, but every year, my *amaranthus* plants, while pretty, weren't the amazing tall beauties I'd seen. Finally, I gave up trying to find what I wanted.

Imagine my surprise, and joy, then, to find an article on these very plants in an old issue of Country Gardens. What's best is that I found the name of the tall plant I'd been searching for, plus the names of the other kinds I'd tried over the years. No surprise, then, that I got busy and made several orders of the varieties I liked the best. I know what's going to be bringing me joy once spring light and warm soil arrives.

Amaranthus is a plant that gives as it grows. The leaves of most varieties are edible and are used in soups and salads when young. After it grows full term, the seeds can be captured and ground into flour. In fact, this is where flour before wheat flour came from. I have tried this before and must say it is time-consuming because the heads are miniscule and once you've shaken them off the branches, then you must get rid of the chaff before you can grind them. I ended up just leaving them for the birds that over-wintered here. Sometimes, they can self-seed, but if you don't like where they plant themselves the following spring, then just pull them up and eat their leaves.

Where to find *amaranthus*:

From Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds, rareseeds.com, I have sent for 'Golden Giant' which grows 6' (but 5'-9' according to reviews). I will grow some as ornamentals in the back of flowerbeds, as filler and interest.

From selectseeds.com I have purchased 'Chinese Giant Orange' organic which promises to grow 8' tall and 3' wide. Also promised are great-tasting greens and grain. Suggested growing companions are sunflowers 'Mexican Torch' and 'Claret,' Rudbeckia 'Brown-Eyed Susan,' and Quinoa 'Brighter Brilliant Rainbow.' (I ordered the quinoa and am going to try that, too. Who knows if it will like to grow here?)

From Seeds of Change, you can find 'Hopi Red Dye' which I've grown before. It gets 4'-6' tall and the leaves are edible. From Nichols Garden Nursery, you can get Burgundy Amaranthus, which says it gets 6' tall, but mine only got 3' - 4' tall here on the coast.

Because I like variety and also have some shorter favorites, I ordered from swallowtailgardenseeds.com these three *amaranthus*: '**Love-Lies-Bleeding**' *Amaranthus caudatus*, for beds, borders or containers; '**Green Tails**' *Amaranthus caudatus* 'viridis' which gets 3' - 5' tall, sporting lime green tassels; and '**Perfecta**' *Amaranthus tricolor*. Perfecta grows 4'-5' tall, its leaves scarlet and yellow on top and on the reverse, chocolate brown, yellow, and green. Those should look dazzling among a mix of sunflowers, coreopsis and rudbeckia, don't you think?



One of life's little joys for gardeners in January is when you open the mailbox, and there are the seed catalogs, from which you plan your future garden. The next little joy you can count on, and one I hope to receive in a few days, is opening your mailbox to find the seed packets you sent for! There you are, you Golden Giant and Chinese Orange

Giant, finally! I've been searching for you so long now. Ahh!

Here's a fascinating *New York Times* article about amaranth:

<http://www.nytimes.com/1984/10/16/science/ancient-forgotten-plant-now-grain-of-the-future.html?pagewanted=all>



A Wrinkle In Thyme
by
Cris Roberts
Moving On



The past two weeks have been memorable for those of us in the garden program at the Oregon Youth Authority (O.Y.A.) as we've tackled the messy but rewarding tasks of tearing down our old, temporary chicken coops (which have been in place w-a-y too long to qualify as "temporary" structures) and moved our happy hens into their new, wonderful, fresh straw-scented barn. This represents letting go and moving on, but in a happy sort of way.

During this time, we've also been growing Pearl Oyster Mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) using sawdust spawn and clean, sterilized (with hydrogen peroxide), chopped straw. These were layered inside plastic bags which were tied shut and placed in our humid greenhouse. Once fruiting (or pinning) became evident, the bags were punctured then covered with another plastic bag to produce a humidifier affect.

Yesterday we made chicken-mushroom fettucine (no, *not* with our own chickens!) and it turned out great. A couple of the young men weren't crazy about eating the mushrooms, but at least they were in on the process. Once again, the youth are trying new things and moving on in their life experiences.

To some of our youth, change of any kind is uncomfortable and threatening. For that matter, isn't it true that it can be uncomfortable to some of us adults as well?



It takes a team effort to move us through life, gain new experiences and build trust and it's a privilege to be experiencing some of life at this point in time and with these particular youths.

Cooking and baking in the greenhouse, and over the firepit, have become terrific ways to interact with this crew of naturally energetic guys and introduce them to some new ways of living and to a new skill set. Our principal, Jerry Dorland, likes to emphasize the importance of our role here as educators in equipping the youth with proper tools for their life tool belts and teaching them to use those tools in effective ways. I love that way of thinking as it prepares these young men to go out and apply themselves to positive, constructive projects. They are getting ready to move on with success and we get to be a part of that. *You* get to be a part of that as well in your support of our agriculture/horticulture program.

As we see January passing her mid-point already, we are grabbing her tailcoats and hanging on for the windy ride. We are moving on with our new year, 2018, with much eager anticipation of a good time and a job well done.



Neal's Compost Pile

By
Neal Lemery

Twinberry
(*Lonicera involucrata*)



(Photo: Hansen's Northwest Native Plant Base)

Twinberry is a nice native addition to the landscape, adaptable to either shade or sun, but liking its roots in moist soils. It tolerates dry summers in my yard, though I water young plants regularly as they settle in.

The small yellow springtime flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies, and the deciduous foliage is glossy and dark green. The shrub soon achieves its six- to ten-foot height, with little to no attention from the gardener. It responds well to light pruning to shape it according to your garden design, but it can thrive without much attention, too.

As summer progresses, the flowers turn into small purple-black fruits, which are inedible. Some Native American tribes used them for dyes and called the fruits “raven’s food”, “crow berry”, and “monster food”. Some tribes had taboos about eating the berries and believed that the berry rendered you mute.

One source states that the berry was used by indigenous populations for gastrointestinal conditions and as a contraceptive.

A member of the honeysuckle family, it does well at the edge of freshwater and brackish wetlands. The mature bark is grayish and appears to be stringy or, as one source says, “shreddy”. In fall, the leaves turn a pleasant golden yellow, though certainly not as showy as a birch or maple.

Our local variety grows from southeastern Alaska to central California up to several thousand feet. Another variety is found in the Rockies.

It is easily propagated by seed and hardwood cuttings.

Twinberry is a popular planting for local stream bank and estuary restoration projects and can occasionally be found in local retail nurseries. I find it tolerates wind and seasonal extremes very well and is a good shrub for borders, fencerows, and areas you want to naturalize and not have to fuss over. It tolerates the full range of our climate well, and after the first year, I might water it occasionally during the late summer dry season.

Sources:

http://www.nwplants.com/business/catalog/lon_inv.html

https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week/lonicera_involucrate.shtml

<http://www.centralcoastbiodiversity.org/black-twinberry-bullnbsplonicera-involucrata.html>

***Note to Readers:** *Neal's Compost Pile* is the new name with which Neal Lemery has crowned his articles. Please enjoy his wonderful sense of humor!

Bees, Bees, Bees

By

Claire Moody

President of the Bee Keepers Association

(Claire Moody presented an informative talk on Honey Bees and Bee Keeping at the January TCMGA Board Meeting.)

The goal is to plant more forage that blooms after the blackberries. We are encouraging shrubs and trees rather than flowers since a tree with a fifteen-foot radius puts out about as many flowers as two acres of land. When using the spreadsheet go for things that bloom for a longer period of time and, if possible, have either a nectar or pollen rating of 4 or higher. Probably needless to say, honey bees need patches of a flower rather than single plants.

1. We sometimes have people who want to keep bee hives but their location is not conducive to it due to winds, lack of forage, near neighbors, or even someone who is allergic to honey bees in the family. If there is anyone in the Master Gardeners group who might like to have a hive in their yard, we might have folks who would like to put one there and we, of course, would take care of it completely. Anyone interested should send me an email: claire@vanirmail.com
2. We would like to set up a "Honey House". A honey house would be a small space (12' by 12'?) with a concrete floor, water, and electricity. We would bring in an extractor and all the equipment needed to uncap and spin honey. It would be set up and used only in August and September. Having a central location to extract honey saves each new beekeeper from having to purchase their own extractor.

Extractors run from \$200 to \$1500 and the more professional models allow one to extract more frames at once with less effort. We would be happy to pay for the space in either cash or honey. It would probably be helpful if it had access to a bathroom. If you know of someone who might have such a space they would be willing to let us use, please send me an email or call. (503) 318-9149.

A handout: *Garden Plants for Honey Bees* (that are also good for Bumble Bees) will be in the OSU Extension Office for your perusal.



SAVE THE DATE

***2018 Spade and Wade Garden Tour
July 21st***

10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M

OUR FAVORITE RECIPES

Katharine Hepburn's Brownies

by
Karen Sarnaker

INGREDIENTS

2 squares or 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
1/2 cup butter (1 stick)
2 eggs
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup flour
1 cup chopped or broken-up walnuts, almonds or pecans
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
Pinch of salt

Heat oven to 325 degrees.

PREPARATION

Melt butter and chocolate in a heavy saucepan. Remove from heat and stir in sugar. Cool a bit, then add eggs and vanilla and stir a lot to make sure eggs are fully incorporated. Blend in flour, salt and nuts (if desired).

Pour into a greased 8 x 8-inch-square pan. Bake at 325 for 40 minutes.
Do not cut until cool.

Enjoy!

TILLAMOOK MASTER GARDENERS
are famous for their wonderful
Potlucks

We have established a space for recipes in the Thymes and welcome you to share your favorite recipes.
Please make sure to state that it is your own original recipe or site the original Cookbook and author.

FEBRUARY

GARDEN HINTS FROM YOUR OSU EXTENSION FACULTY for Western Oregon

“The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices.”

Planning

- Tune up lawn mower and garden equipment before the busy season begins.
- Have soil tested to determine its nutrient needs. For more information, contact your local Extension office for a list of testing laboratories or view *Laboratories Serving Oregon: Soil, Water, Plant Tissue, and Feed Analysis* (EM 8677).
- Select and store healthy scion wood for grafting fruit and nut trees. Wrap in damp cloth or peat moss and place in plastic bag. Store in cool place.
- Plan an herb bed for cooking and creating an interesting landscape. For example, choose parsley, sage, chives, and lavender. Choose a sunny spot and plant seeds or transplants once the danger of frost has passed (late-April or early-May in the Willamette Valley and central Coast; June or July in eastern and central Oregon).
- Plan to add herbaceous perennial flowers to your flowering landscape this spring. Examples include candytuft, peony, penstemon, and coneflower.

Maintenance and Clean Up

- Repair winter damage to trees and shrubs.
- Make a cold frame or hotbed to start early vegetables or flowers.
- Fertilize rhubarb with manure or a complete fertilizer.
- Incorporate cover crops or other organic matter into soil.
- Prune and train grapes; make cuttings.
- Prune fruit trees and blueberries.
- Prune deciduous summer-blooming shrubs and trees.
- Prune and train trailing blackberries (if not done the prior August); prune back raspberries.
- Prune fall-bearing raspberries (in late-February or early-March).
- Prune clematis, Virginia creeper, and other vining ornamentals.

Planting/Propagation

- Plant windowsill container gardens of carrots, lettuce, or parsley.
- Plan to add herbaceous perennial flowers this spring: astilbe, candytuft, peony, and anemone.
- Good time to plant fruit trees and deciduous shrubs. Replace varieties of ornamental plants that are susceptible to disease with resistant cultivars.
- Plant asparagus if the ground is warm enough.
- Plant seed flats of cold crops (cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts), indoors or in a greenhouse.
- Where soil is dry enough and workable, plant garden peas and sweet peas. Suggested varieties of garden peas include: Corvallis, Dark Green Perfection, Green Arrow, Oregon Sugar Pod, Snappy, Knight, Sugar Snap, Oregon Trail, and Oregon Sugar Pod II.
- Good time to plant new roses.

Pest Monitoring and Management

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Use delayed-dormant sprays of lime sulfur for fruit and deciduous trees and shrubs.
- Remove cankered limbs from fruit and nut trees for control of diseases such as apple anthracnose, bacterial canker of stone fruit and Eastern filbert blight. Sterilize tools before each new cut.
- Control moles and gophers with traps.
- Elm leaf beetles and box-elder bugs are emerging from hibernation and may be seen indoors. They are not harmful but can be a nuisance. Remove them with a vacuum or broom and dustpan.
- Monitor for European crane fly and treat lawns if damage has been verified.
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Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Pasteurize soil for starting seedlings in pots or flats or use clean sterile commercial mixes.

For additional OSU Extension gardening information, visit: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening>



WANTED

**VOLUNTEERS
to serve on the
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

We need volunteers with some financial record-keeping experience to conduct an independent review of financial records and render an opinion as to their fairness and reliability.

Please contact Karen Sarnaker
ksarnaker@gmail.com
240-727-3127

TCMGA Executive Board

Elected:

President: Karen Sarnaker
Past President: Neal Lemery
Vice President: Sarah Ostermiller
Recording Secretary: Jodi Derrick
Corresponding Secretary:
 Betty Lyons
Treasurer: Larry Goss
Historian: Jake Lyons
OMGA Representative:
 Linda Stephenson
OMGA Alternative:
 LeRoy Satter
Class Representatives:
2016: Arla Ayers
2017 Jerilee Henderson
Extension Agent: Joy Jones

Appointed and Standing Committee Chairs

Audit: Jean Scholtz, Jon Orloff
Awards: Karen Sarnaker
Banquet: Cammy Hickman
Budget:
 Larry Goss
 Neal Lemery
 Karen Sarnaker
Communication/Webmaster:
 Cammy Hickman
 Neal Lemery
Community Pruning Day:
 Barbara Casteel
 Evelyn VonFelt
Education Coordinator:
 Neal Lemery
Garden Tour: Karen Sarnaker
 Betty Lyons
Hospitality: ???
Learning Garden Coordinator:
 Linda Stephenson

Mentors: Linda Stephenson
Newsletter: Karen Sarnaker
Nominating Committee:
 Neal Lemery
 Karen Sarnaker
Picnic: Linda Stephenson
Photo Contest: Jake Lyons
Plant Clinics:
 North County Farmers Market:
 Mark Kuestner
 Tillamook Farmers Market:
 Marilyn Perl
 South County Farmers Market:
 Tim and Pam Burke
Plant Sale: Jodi Derrick
Publicity: Cammy Hickman
Volunteer Coordinator:
 Sarah Ostermiller



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2018

FEBRUARY 1	MASTER GARDENER CLASS, 9:00AM-4:30PM BOTANY, PLANT ID
FEBRUARY 6	LEARNING GARDEN, 9:00PM-4:30PM
FEBRUARY 8	MASTER GARDENER CLASS, 9:00am-4:30pm PROPAGATION, PNW'S
FEBRUARY 13	PLANT SALE MEETING, 9:00-10:00AM TCMGA BOARD MEETING, 10:00AM-12PM GARDEN TOUR MEETING, 12:15-1:15PM 4-H DORM
FEBRUARY 14	BONSAI CLUB, 6PM - 9PM, TPUD MEETING ROOM
FEBRUARY 15	MASTER GARDENER CLASSES, 9:00AM-4:30PM ENTOMOLOGY, IPM
FEBRUARY 20	LEARNING GARDEN, 9:00PM-4:30PM THYMES DEADLINE
FEBRUARY 22	MASTER GARDENER CLASS, 9:00AM-4:30PM PLANT PATHOLOGY, PLANT PROBLEMS DIAGNOSIS
FEBRUARY 27	LEARNING GARDEN, 9:00PM-4:30PM

