

# Scoop o' Dirt

## Yakima County Master Gardener News



August 2025

## ***It's Picnic Time!!***

Our annual picnic is planned for **Tuesday, August 6th at noon** at the Ahtanum Red Barn. Enjoy fellowshiping in the shade of the big trees with lots of yummy food provided by fellow Master Gardeners.

**A-C:** Bring chips, breads, relishes, condiments

**D-G:** Bring a dessert

**H-M:** Bring a main dish

**N-Z:** Bring a side dish

The foundation will provide a meat entree, plates, napkins, plastic table service, some serving utensils & water. We're still looking for door prize donations. You can bring them with you that day.



*Picnic in the Park 2024*

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

## ***TOMATO FEST 2025***



**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 AT THE RED BARN 12:00 pm**

**Bring a potluck dish based on your favorite tomato recipe.**

Besides eating lunch, we'll be taste-testing tomatoes.

Categories are: Ugliest Tomato

Most Beautiful Tomato

Sweetest Tomato

Best Tasting Tomato

Best Cherry Tomato

ENTRIES IN ALL THESE CATEGORIES HAVE BEEN DECLINING IN RECENT YEARS! Come on!!

We need more entries to make it fun! If you bring a tomato for judging, your name will be

# **Heirloom Garden**

## **And the Wheel Goes Round and Round** by Reggie Sanderson

During the recent clean-up in the Heirloom Garden there was a broken-down wagon wheel hidden behind the arborvitae. What a piece of junk...rusted and missing spokes...who can take it to the landfill?

Rotating it up. Then down. Still a piece of junk. Maybe the Heirloom Garden can use it for some garden art? A call to **Jenny Manfield**, Art Team Director and she donated it to the garden. It is rickety, barely holding together, but it goes into the back of my car. On my way home, I am thinking, "what can I do with this? What was its past purpose?" I wondered how was it made? How did they bend the wood into the circle? How did the iron wheel get forged?

My ideas rambled from a sign to a trellis. I took the wheel out to my workspace and begin to clean, sand and care for it. As I try to reenvision its purpose, I am feeling its struggle, the weight it carried, the children that walked beside it, the men and women that pushed and shoved the wagon and repaired it along their long journey.

My initial plan was to paint and decorate it, my usual fix. But as I cared for this wagon wheel, giving it hydration, I started to feel how hard this wheel has traveled. I realized the meaning it has to the Heirloom Garden.

As the pioneers left the east, they packed only the essentials to survive: food, water and seeds they had saved to create gardens and food. A vegetable garden alongside the homestead was almost a requirement for pioneer families. Without it, their food would be bland and repetitive. Not only did they grow their own veggies, but their own herbs as well. Some herbs were used for medicinal purposes too. We are grateful that they had the forethought to prepare us. That is the result of the Heirloom Garden. The vegetables grown here are grown not to feed us now, but for the seeds to save for our future. To some, it is an unkept garden...unpicked and left to seed, but to us its seeds are for our next year's garden.



The Heirloom Garden, located across the driveway from the big greenhouse on 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, was started in 2014. The garden class area is undergoing a transformation with a pallet fence on the east side of the garden and we're gathering seeds for next year's seed saving class. Be sure to attend our next class "Planting a Winter Garden" by **Phyllis Pugnetti** on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.



*Reggie, Sally, and Janice paint the "new" pallet fence.  
Photos by Reggie Sanderson.*

# **Heirloom Garden**



*Janice and Sally collect seeds from the Heirloom Garden.*



*Sarah and Phyllis work on constructing the pallet fence.*

## ***Call for Mentors...It Could be YOU!***

As we gear up for the next class of Master Gardeners, mentors are needed. Contact [Debra Kroon](#) if interested. Responsibilities include frequent communication with assigned trainees, guiding them through the process of fulfilling their requirements, including attending labs, while also introducing them to the greenhouse, the different demonstration gardens, and the answer clinic. It's a fun way to introduce new members to the program and get to know them.

Friday, August 15th 9-10: Mentor Informational Meeting

Wednesday, August 20th 12-1:30: Meet and Greet with Trainee Interviews

Wednesday, Sept 10th 12-2: Orientation Luncheon with Trainees and Mentors

Wednesday, Oct 1st 12-2: First of six labs

## ***Take Note! Meeting Change***

The August Program meeting will be held at the Extension Office. There will be no Foundation meeting. The August 20th meeting will be at 10:30 am, followed at noon by the Meet and Greet, including interviews, with the new prospective trainees.

# GivePulse Tip of the Month

by Julie Hunziker

How has the change to the New View gone? Are you finding it easier to navigate your way through entering an impact? I strongly encourage you to spend a little time “experimenting” and exploring. I have always found that this is the best way to familiarize myself with something new. Some bugs are still being worked on so don’t be surprised by small changes along the way. We hope to soon have a “QuickGuide” link for instructions on editing and deleting impacts.

It has been strongly suggested that when logging in, DO NOT use the “Log In” route going through the pull-down menu in the upper right corner. Rather, click on the blue “Log In” button at the bottom of the page. It has been found that people accidentally click on “Sign In” and find directions to claim their account. Subsequently, they get locked out of their account.



**Reflection of the month:** “Hot” listed under Answer Clinic/Farmer’s Market.

Also: “Always good to review and learn new ideas and information” listed under Continuing Ed.

And: “Finished writing up and scheduling the herb series from Carol’s herb class handouts. Those really bad puns take time!” listed under Other Educational Delivery/Writer’s Guild-Writing/Editing

**Why be timely in entering your impacts? In case of injury claim, L&I needs a record of our activity/work. Also, when applying for grants, our hours matter.**

WSU Yakima County Extension ~ Master Gardener Program



## Become a Master Gardener!

### 2025 REVISED SCHEDULE

#### **APPLICATIONS OPEN JULY 1**

[Join us | Yakima County | Washington State University](#)

with notice of acceptance/denial by end of August

#### **MEET & GREET – required**

Wed. August 20, 12:00 – 1:30  
Includes info on Registration

#### **ORIENTATION LUNCHEON**

Wed. September 10, 12:00 – 2:00

#### **ONLINE CLASS SCHEDULE & 6 IN-PERSON HANDS ON LABS**

Oct. 1, 2025 – March 11, 2026

#### **COST: \$275**

Partial scholarships available

Meetings and most in-person county labs will be held at the Extension office:

**WSU Extension**

2403 S 18th St. Ste 100, Union Gap, WA



Contact Master Gardener  
Program Coordinator  
Patty Ratzlaff

[patty.ratzlaff@wsu.edu](mailto:patty.ratzlaff@wsu.edu)  
for more information

[Master Gardeners | Yakima County | Washington State University \(wsu.edu\)](#)

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of non-compliance may be reported through your local Extension office. Reasonable accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities and special needs who contact (name of contact) at (address, telephone, email) at least (set a specific number of days, weeks) prior to the event.

## Reminder!

### Program Meeting

**Wednesday, August 20th @ 10:30**

**at the Extension Office**

**(There will be no Foundation meeting)**

## Guiding Principles

**Act Respectfully**

**Lead Supportively**

**Adaptability**

**Work Together**

**Always Learning**

**Emphasize Quality**

**Communicate Effectively**

**Be Honest**

**Take Responsibility**



**WSU EXTENSION  
Yakima County**

## **Plant a Row**

Did you buy extra plants at our big sale? Are your vegetables taking off with the heat? Are you beginning to wonder what you will do with all those peppers, squash, or zucchini? How many tomatoes do you really need? No need to fear being overtaken by your garden. Sarah Judd and Kelly Klingman are spearheading the Plant a Row project. If you have extra produce, donate to a local food bank. Use the form [here](#) to record your donations and then turn it in to Patty at the end of the season. Each 10 pounds of produce equates to 1 hour of time in GivePulse, with a maximum of 10 hours/year. A list of food banks can be found on our volunteer portal at <https://yakima.mastergardenerfoundation.org/volunteer-portal/>



## **Plant a Row For Our Greater Yakima Community**

**"Plant Your Garden, Grow Your Community."**



Join WSU Yakima County Master Gardeners and **"Plant an extra row"** of produce to donate and feed Yakima County families.



scan code to go direct to our volunteer website.



WSU EXTENSION  
**Yakima County**

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# **Floribunda: Fertilizing Containers**

by Carol Barany

**wilt** \verb: (of a plant, leaf, flower, or Yakima gardener) to become limp through heat or loss of water; droop, sag, flop; wither, shrivel; to lose freshness.

Blame it on the 'Dog Star.' For twenty days, beginning in late July, Sirius, nicknamed the 'Dog Star' by the ancient Egyptians to honor the god Osiris, rises and sets with the sun. This led them to conclude the star was adding its heat to amp up already sizzling temperatures. And they were right. The Dog Days of Summer are here, with a vengeance.

Our container plantings and hanging baskets have baked in temperatures in the nineties and even higher for weeks on end, and the season is far from over. Giving exhausted container plants a spa treatment this week can rejuvenate and renew them, sending them into the glory days of September and October with lush new growth. Plant grooming should be done throughout the summer, but if you haven't kept up with regular deadheading, trimming, watering, and fertilizing, it's never too late to start.

Armed with a sharp pair of pruners and a cool drink for you, a good haircut for flowers and foliage is the first order of business. Cascading annuals like sweet potato vine, bacopa, lantana, million bells, petunia, verbena, and lobelia can be cut back by a third, or even by half, if they're really sad and leggy. Taller annuals like coleus, zinnia, marigold, cosmos, salvia, and geranium can also be cut back, at least by a third. Trust me. A radical shearing will encourage a flush of new growth faster than it takes your bangs to grow out.

Plants growing in containers depend on regular watering, but vacations and the summer doldrums can upset the schedule. Sometimes, despite our best intentions, pots dry out and plants suffer. Does this sound familiar? I have a few plants growing in gallon-sized pots that seem chronically wilted, even though I supply them with plenty of water. When I take a closer look, I can see that a gap has formed between the edges of the dry soil mass and the pot wall. Most of the water I provide rushes through that gap and out the bottom of the pot, with little actually being absorbed by the dry roots.

Compounding the problem is the fact that rewetting potting mix once it dries out and shrinks can be tricky. The best way to revive plants in this predicament is by watering from the bottom. Dry soil quickly wicks up water through the drainage holes at the bottom of the pot, thoroughly saturating the parched root ball. Find a tub or other container big enough to hold your pot and fill it with water. Dunk your dry pots inside. When the surface of the soil inside each pot is visibly wet (this could take hours or even overnight), remove them from the standing water. You'll notice that the moist soil has expanded, filling the gap around the inside edge of the pot, making them easier to water effectively.

As long as the weather remains hot and dry, be generous when watering. It's hard to overwater pots if they have proper drainage holes and fast-draining potting mix. Never underestimate how much a large planter, filled with thirsty plants, needs on a hot day. Water early and check again, later. In weather like this, pots might need a second or third helping of water.

By now, your container plants have developed mature root systems, and if you added a timed-release fertilizer at planting in May or June, it's likely long gone. Add more to carry plants through the rest of the growing season. Or start adding a soluble balanced

*(continued on next page)*



### ***(Floribunda, continued from previous page)***

fertilizer to the irrigation water. Just remember that fertilizers dissolve in water and a portion is lost in the water that drains from the plant. Many nurseries keep their containers and hanging baskets looking lavish by using dilute soluble fertilizers every time they irrigate, or at full strength every week or two.

If some of the plants in your containers and hanging baskets can't be revived, pull them out and put them out of their misery. Is there anything more depressing than a container full of dead plants? Forgive yourself and move on. In a few weeks, fresh new fall arrivals like ornamental kale, pansies, and mums will be available and can be tucked in wherever you have a space.

## ***Materials Needed***

Dear Pressed Flower Enthusiasts,

We Master Gardeners who enjoy pressed flower art are low in material. Projects in the fall and winter include greeting cards for our sunshine committee and then to community outreach classes and demonstrations. Please take some time each week as you garden to collect and press material to include flowers, herbs, leaves, stems, etc. There are many techniques to press. However, simply sandwich material on paper towel and place a heavy book on top. Let dry for 2 weeks. Store in a dry place. It's that easy.

We can advise, help collect, and/or store your stuff. Just reach out.

*~Mary Kearney and Diana Pieti*



## **WE WANT YOU—**

To think about becoming a member of the Writer's Guild by contributing an article for submission to the Yakima Herald Republic. You do not have to be a professional writer; you just need to be willing to tell a story and put it down in writing. Well, it does have to have something to do with gardening here in Central Washington, but other than that it is your story to tell.

Some possible topics to write about are: what's happening in your garden right now; how did you design the layout of your garden; what are your favorite plants to grow; who got you into gardening in the first place; what challenges have you faced in the garden; what has been your most successful garden adventure; what is the best thing about gardening for you; and the list goes on and on. You are only limited by your imagination!

Each article needs to be about 700-750 words long and if you have a photo to go along with the article even better. If you are worried about things like punctuation and grammar, we can help you with that. If you think your writing is not polished enough, we can help with that too. You just need to be willing to try – and think about this, you will enjoy a bit of local fame when you see your name in print!

Please contact ***Carol Barany*** or ***Melody Westmoreland*** and we will help you get started; we

## ***Happy Birthday!!***

- 8/1 Marguerite Kirby**
- 8/2 Judi Hemenway**
- 8/5 John Strong**
- 8/5 Alice Wikstrom**
- 8/6 Terry Travis**
- 8/12 Julie Hunziker**
- 8/19 Edna Pettyjohn**
- 8/21 Melody Westmoreland**
- 8/27 Ray Yates**
- 8/27 Cary Asuncion-Tauscher**

Children's Village came to the garden last week. Not as many kids as we hoped, but the heat deterred some. The teen mentor volunteers, however, all showed, were great with the kids and enjoyed the garden crafts as well.

~Kelly Klingman

(Photos by Kelly K.)



## Youth Team



WSU Extension Master Gardener Advanced  
Education Conference

# Cultivating **RESILIENCE**

September 26-27, 2025

Registration opens June 1

## Shared Learning Experience



## *You are Invited to our Regional AEC Shared Learning Experience!*

WSU Yakima Extension Conference Room

Friday, September 26, 2025

9:00 am - 12:20 Annual Meeting,  
State Awards & Keynote Speaker

12:20 Potluck\*

1:00 Session 1

2:40 Session 2

You can stay for a portion or  
all of the event

AEC Cost: \$109 June 1 - July 15

\$129 from July 16 - Sept. 25

There is **no additional cost for this gathering**. Please check the **Yakima Shared Learning Experience box** when signing up for the AEC.

*\*For those traveling from Benton-Franklin or Asotin Counties  
please bring easy items to share for the potluck.*

# Master Gardeners at Home



**Beatrice** was away from home for one week and returned to a bounty of produce. The food bank was happy to have the zucchini. Look at those gorgeous tomatoes! Hope she has some competition at our Tomato Fest!!



**Kelly K's zucchini, cucumbers and tomatoes are coming on and the food bank was happy to take them.**

## Master Gardener Mission Statement:

*"Engaging university-trained volunteers to empower and sustain communities with relevant, unbiased, research-based horticulture and environmental stewardship education."*

WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension Office.

REPORT JAPANESE BEETLE



AGR.WA.GOV/BEETLES

## Be on the Look Out!

Have you seen this pest? Thousands of Japanese beetles have been found in Yakima, Benton, and Franklin counties. If you spot this pest, take a photo and report it at [agr.wa.gov/beetles](http://agr.wa.gov/beetles).

See it? Report it! Japanese beetles are destructive, invasive pests that attack over 300 types of plants.

Snap a photo and report at [agr.wa.gov/beetles](http://agr.wa.gov/beetles).

# ***Garden Classes***

## ***2025 Demonstration Garden Classes***

Date	Topic	Presenter
Aug 9th	Pruning, Tree ID, & Firewise	Arborist Sean Tait
Aug 23rd	Grow, Dye-Wearable Art From Plants	MG Renee Holwegner
Sept 13th	Winter Garden, Deciduous Forest, Tree & Shrub Data Project **A MG/Yakima Area Arboretum collaborative class, to be held at YAA	Karl Graf, YAA Board Member

## ***2025 Heirloom Garden Classes***

Date	Topic	Presenter
Aug 2nd	Planting for a Winter Garden	MG Phyllis Pugnetti
Sept 6th	Fall Tool Maintenance	MB Rick Russell

## ***2025 WVFG Garden Classes***

Date	Topic	Presenter
Sept 20th	Gardening to Help Native Bees	MG Don Flyckt

## ***Looking for Continuing Education?***

### Local Resources:

- \* **Arboretum Classes**
- \* **Master Gardener Demonstration Garden Classes** (Every Saturday in a different Garden)
- \* **Master Gardener Yard Tours** (June)
- \* **Enrichment Classes** (January and February...they've passed, but look for them in 2026)
- \* In-person labs for trainees (and veterans): Oct 1st & 29th, Nov 19th, Jan 29th, March 11th &18th

### Online Resources:

- \* Evergreen Thumb Podcast (WSU Master Gardeners)
- \* WSU Extension Master Gardeners Virtual AEC (Sept 26th-27th, recordings available online until 2/6/26) Register [here](#).
- \* Oregon State University (Free webinars the 2nd Tuesday of each month at noon) Click [here](#).
- \* Oregon State University MG Short Course Series (some free, most have a low cost). Click [here](#).
- \* Cowlitz County Master Gardeners Online classes [here](#). Most Tuesdays at noon.
- \* From Roots to Results: Exploring the Cooperative Extensions Role and Impact. Click [here](#)
- \* San Juan County WSU MG Garden Workshop Series (\$35; online webinar Oct 14, 16, 18, & 23) Click [here](#) for information and registration

# **Yakima County MG Leaders**

**Answer/Plant Clinic:** Andrea Altmayer/Kim Foster

**Greenhouse:** Camille Smith/Skip Brockman/Kelli Barton

**Annuals:** Lorie Harrison/Camille Smith/Deanna Husch

**Perennials:** Carol Barany/Melody Westmoreland

**Herbs:** Diana Pieti/Diane Berthon

**Hanging Baskets:** Mary Hewitt/Shellie Oshie/Cathy Penny

**Vegetables:** Don Flyckt/ Beatrice Reiss

**Art:** Jenny Mansfield/Mary Hewitt/Debbie Sundlee

**Plant Sale:** Laura Willet, Reggie Sanderson

**Demonstration Gardens:**

**Ahtanum:** Sue Schauer/Skip Brockman/Kelli Barton      **Classes:** Annette Olson/Sue Schauer

**Heirloom Garden:** Sally Mayo/Reggie Sanderson/Sarah Judd

**West Valley:** Camille Smith/Kelli Barton/John Strong

**Youth Program:** Kelly Klingman/Jennifer Harris

**Writer's Guild/Speaker's Bureau:** Carol Barany/Melody Westmoreland/Claudia Steen

**Publications:** Julie Hunziker/Debra Kroon/Rhonda Gardinier/Steve Kuhn

**Social Media:** Kelly Klingman

**Garden Tour:** Jenny Mansfield/Lucy Stevens/ Barbara Schmitt

**Facilities:** Reggie Sanderson/Mary Kearney

**Advisory Board:** Debra Kroon/John Strong/Melody Westmoreland/Michelle Murphy

## ***Yakima County Master Gardener Garden Locations***

**Demonstration Garden (Ahtanum):**

1000 Ahtanum Road, Union Gap  
(by Red Barn)

**Heirloom Garden:**

1522 South 18th Avenue, Yakima  
(just south of the greenhouses)

**West Valley Food Garden:**

602 South 123rd Ave, Yakima

## ***MG Program Priorities***

**Local Food**

**Pollinators**

**Wildfire Preparedness**

**Water Conservation**

**Clean Water**

**Climate Change**

**Nearby Nature**

**Plant Biodiversity**

**Soil Health**

## ***Foundation Board***

**President:** Rick Russell

**Vice President:** Dick Larson

**Treasurer:** Gilbert Plascencia

**Secretary:** Carrie Chicken

**Members at Large:** Beatrice Reiss/Steve Kuhn

**Past President:** Dan Fortier

**Program Coordinator:** Patricia Ratzlaff

**Newsletter submissions are due on the 25th of each month. Please send to Julie at [jbhunziker@gmail.com](mailto:jbhunziker@gmail.com). Texting photos (portrait format preferred) and brief descriptions are fine, as well: (530)209-4329. Please include your name so that credit can be given to the source.**



# August 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 YKM Herald Article  Farmer's Market/ Youth Team 9-1					1  Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	2  Garden Class Planting a Winter Garden 10-11 Heirloom DG
3 Yakima Herald Article  Farmer's Market 9-1	4 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	5	6 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4  Demo Garden  Picnic@ Ahtanum	7 WVFG  Heirloom Garden 8-11	8 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	9 Garden Class Pruning, Tree ID 10-11 Ahtanum DG
10 Yakima Herald Article  Farmer's Market 9-1	11 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	12	13 Demonstration Garden 8-11  Answer Clinic	14 WVFG  Heirloom Garden  Answer Clinic Mtg 1:30-3	15 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	16
17 Yakima Herald  Farmer's Market 9-1	18 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	19	20 Answer Clinic Demo Garden Program Mtg @ 10:30 Ext Office/ Meet & Greet 12-1:30	21 WVFG 8-11  Heirloom Garden 8-11	22 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	23 Garden Class Wearable Art from Plants 10-11 Ahtanum DG
24 YKM Herald Article  Farmer's Market 9-1	25 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	26	27 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4  Demonstration Garden 8-11	28 WVFG 8-11  Heirloom Garden 8-11	29 Answer Clinic 9-12/1-4	30



Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information or reasonable accommodation need to contact: WSU Extension/2403 South 18th Street/ Union Gap, WA 98903/509-574-1600.

For accommodation please call at least two weeks prior to the event. WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination.