

## February 2024 Garden Clippings



### McMinnville Garden Club

PO Box 386, McMinnville, OR

Email: [pollygarden27@gmail.com](mailto:pollygarden27@gmail.com) Facebook: McMinnville Garden Club

Website: <https://mcminnvillegardenclub.org>

#### 2024 Garden Club Board:

*Elaine Pollak – President Kay Fitkin – Vice President  
Charlene Drake – Treasurer Dian Berg – Secretary*

## Dates to Remember 2024

**NOW ONLINE!!!** Our new website: <https://mcminnvillegardenclub.org>

Please let Elaine P. or Adele O. know if you notice issues. THANKS

- Feb. 10 Plastic Project Turn-In** See article below
- Feb. 19 Club Meeting 9:30 Social 10:00 Business 11:00 Speaker**  
**Speaker: Alan Wenner**
- March 1 & 2 Yamhill County Soil & Conservation District's Native Plant sale.**  
Details in the article below.
- March 18 Club Meeting Speaker: Native Plants: Lisa Blackburn**

Show up early to our meetings and stay a bit late to help us with SET UP/TAKE DOWN please.

## February Speaker

This month, Alan Wenner, Garden Manager for the Community Gardens in McMinnville, will give a talk on the Community Gardens. He has been an OSU Master Gardener since 1998, and an active industry and community volunteer for forty years, while working at Bailey Nurseries in Yamhill for 30 years. He is also an Oregon Certified Nursery Professional and we are delighted to have him speak with us. When asked for a bio, Alan said, "I am now 87 years old and there is no short bio". You'll love this speaker!

## President's Corner

Elaine Pollak

Mother Nature certainly reminded us who is in charge!! I sincerely hope no one slipped and fell, lost power, suffered burst pipes, or sustained serious damage to their gardens. We pity our members who missed all the excitement as they were out of town in exotic places like Costa Rica, Hawaii, and Arizona.

McMinnville seems to have fared better than other areas. Long-time members can probably remember how often a meeting had to be canceled because of weather or if at all. January was the only time in the twelve years I have belonged. We are lucky in our microclimate.

The calendar says otherwise but I have long been convinced that February is the longest month of year. 2024 even added another day! Warm feelings and memories from the holidays are fading and spring is definitely not yet here. There may be a minute or two more of daylight each day but there are still hours more of darkness.

Indoor plants help alleviate our need to work in the soil throughout the winter months. They are green, and some of them even bloom. The library has gorgeous, large indoor plants. We have been tending them for many years. Dian Berg was doing it and Norma Jean just took over that job. Be sure to thank them when you get a chance.

Also thank Kim and Lynelle and their helpers. I had to mail a package and the post office looks great!

Before the ice storm the daffodils were already poking through the earth. They are tough. Soon they will be greeting us at the Post Office, the West End Garden, the Serenity Garden and in gardens all over town. They will be followed by camellias and tulips and SPRING!

## **Good Eats**

Betty Ballentine

### **Waldorf Blue Cheese Couscous Salad Serves 6**

1 C couscous prepared and cooled.

1 small, diced apple

2 stalks diced celery

½ C dried cherries or cranberries

¼ C chopped hazelnuts

Place cooled couscous in salad bowl. Add in fruit and nuts. Toss with dressing and crumble blue cheese on top.

Dressing: whisk together the following ingredients.

¼ C hazelnut oil or olive oil

3 T cider vinegar

2 t Dijon mustard

1 T honey

pinch of salt and pepper

Salad pairs well with a grilled steak.



## Mark your Calendars: Sunday - June 9, 2024

We are very excited to be celebrating the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Garden Tour and Faire on Sunday, June 9th.

We want to thank all of the members who are volunteering this year for Garden Tour and Faire Committee leader roles. We are thrilled Bonnie Schultz and June Benson will be leading the Day of Tour -Greeter/Hostess Coordinator role

At this time, we have some open fun Garden Tour Committee positions for club members to volunteer and support our annual fundraiser. Below is a brief summary of responsibilities for your consideration:

1. **PR – Social Media/Website:** (January – June)
  - a. Promotes the Tour and Faire via online channels, social media, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Association, Visit McMinnville, Garden Club Website, Facebook, etc.
2. **PR – Garden Tour Road Signs:** (April – June)
  - a. Organizes signs (40), corrects dates and coordinate a few volunteers to place signs in designated areas throughout Yamhill County.
3. **PR – Tour & Faire Member Yard Signs** (April – June) **NEW POSITION**
  - a. Organize signs (40) and coordinate the tracking of yard signs for members to the place in their respective front yards to promote the Garden Tour and Faire.

Please consider volunteering your great talents to ensure the success of the 2024 Garden Tour and Faire.

**“The truest measure of a garden’s worth is not in its appearance, but in its biodiversity.”** *The Gardening Secrets* Facebook page.

## **Serenity Garden Update**

Patty Sorensen

February will find us adding a portion of the concrete pathway, 3 benches and additional plants as well as enjoying the dozens of daffodils we planted last Fall. We were thrilled to receive a grant from the National Garden Club’s “Plant America” program. The funds will be used to add additional plantings to enhance the garden. Three Zelkova “Claim Jumper” trees were already planted onsite! We are in the process of revising the landscape plan due to the bog land in one of the corners and the need for a retaining wall in another area. Sounds just like what we have to do in our own yards, huh? Updates to come! Join us as we grow!



## **Yamhill Soil & Water Conservation District’s Native Plant Sale**

Check out all the details at:

[https://yamhillswcd.org/nps/?mc\\_cid=408eb0be49&mc\\_eid=e8806ccb81](https://yamhillswcd.org/nps/?mc_cid=408eb0be49&mc_eid=e8806ccb81)

Their online sales began Jan. 1 via the above website.

Many of these native plants will sell out quickly, so don’t wait too long to order yours! Can’t beat their prices. Preorders will be available at the sale for pickup on **March 1 or 2**. You can also purchase plants on those dates at the Yamhill Valley Heritage Center on Durham Lane/Hwy 18.

## Chamber of Commerce Greeters Meetings 8:00-9:00 am Fridays

We are always hoping to find club members to represent the club by attending these 8 – 9 AM Chamber get togethers. Bring \$1 and a business card for the door prize drawings. Garden Club has business cards for your use. Breakfast items are often served. It is important that we support our chamber and its members! Please check with Elaine.

**Feb. 2**                      **8-9 AM**

**Evergreen Museum** Campus (Columbia Room in the Evergreen Theater/Event Center)  
500 NE Captain Michael King Smith Way

**Feb. 9**                      **8-9 AM**

**Impact Jiu Jitsu** Ribbon Cutting Ceremony 1290 NE Hwy 99W McMinnville

**Feb. 16**                    **8-9 AM**

**Serendipity Ice Cream** 502 NE 3rd Street

**Feb. 23**                    **8-9 AM**

**City of McMinnville** McMinnville Community Center 600 NE Evans Street

## Plastics Committee Updates

Linda Hansen

The Plastics Recycling Committee recently participated in an orientation held by local Plastics Project. More information will be forthcoming regarding the process for us to collect and sort recyclable plastic items .

We are excited to announce **Beth Frischmuth** and **Adele O’Neal** will be co-leading this Committee. And, a big thanks to all of the members who signed up for this Committee.

## McMinnville Plastics Collection Event

### ***THE PLASTIC PROJECT***

**Saturday, February 10, 2024, 10 am – 1 pm**

**First Baptist Church 125 SE Cows, McMinnville**

Cost is \$4 per full paper grocery bag/12 bag limit. Tax-deductible cash or checks only, please.

All items must be sorted, clean, dry, and bagged together as follows:

#### UN-NUMBERED MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

\*Bag all straws, utensils, and bread bag clips separately

\*Bag all screw-on and flip-top plastic caps together  
(with or without numbers)

#### NUMBERED ITEMS

Does it have a number on the bottom? Bag together by its number!

\*#1s CLEAR ONLY plastic clamshells, to-go containers, cups (NO COLOR)

**\*#2s, #4s, #5s, or #6s bagged separately.**

**Examples: cold/hot drink cups and lids, take-out containers,  
prescription pill bottles (caps go with other caps),  
all plant pots and seedling trays, yogurt tubs under 6 oz., etc.**

**NO STYROFOAM, COMPOSTABLE ITEMS OR CURBSIDE RECYCLING ITEMS**

**QUESTIONS call: 503.207.5482**

**[theplasticprojectzwm@gmail.com](mailto:theplasticprojectzwm@gmail.com)**

**[zerowastemcminnville.com](http://zerowastemcminnville.com)** (See How-to-Sort video on website at The Plastic Project page.)

**PARTNERS**

**>Zero Waste McMinnville >Sustainable Rituals>James Recycling >First Baptist Church**

**Next collection event is June 15, 2024**

## **First Federal Customer Ballots**

First Federal Bank has a contest in February for nonprofits. Patrons of their bank are given a ballot to vote for a local nonprofit organization yearly. The Garden Club has been on the ballot for the past few years. Winners receive a portion of the total dollar figure determined by the voting percentages they received. Monies can be used for our various projects.

SO, club members who have a First Federal account should be **watching their emails for their First Federal electronic ballot** for non-profits. This is the first year it will be available online *rather* than through US postal service delivery. **Voting takes place only in February.** Encourage friends and relatives to vote for us!

## **Horticultural Hints:**

Christine Pritts

### **A Best-Practices Management of Our Unique Clay Soils in The Willamette Valley.**

As a new McMinnville Garden Club member, I am aware that most of our members are seasoned gardeners who have wonderful established gardens. Yet, I think it can be interesting for new members and hopefully, even long-time members, to learn more about the benefits and challenges that come with our Willamette Valley's unique soil.

My interest started because I decided to plant a long hedge along my fence line. When I looked at most plant tag recommendations, they usually read, "Does best in well drained soils". Some online articles went further with dire cautions, such as " There may be eventual problems with root rot in heavy clay soils." I definitely have heavy clay soil in my yard, so I dig a hole larger than usual, and I incorporate lots of organic material. Yet, I am still left with the question of how to improve the soil beyond the hole. Since planting a long hedgerow can be quite an investment, I decided to do some further research. I went to the Oregon State University Extension Service department site, "Have a Question? Ask Extension!". This is a handy site for a variety of horticulture questions. I submitted my hedgerow planting concerns regarding heavy

clay soil. The very next day! I received the following answer from Susan, one of the department's Yamhill Master Gardeners.

*Christine, thanks for contacting Ask Extension. We sure do have heavy clay soil! And it can be difficult! A couple of cautions: DO NOT rototill it, it only makes bigger clumps. DO NOT add sand, you'll end up with low-grade cement.*

*Do be patient. Honestly it may be a few years before you will be able to plant a hedge. One possibility may be to pile on a lot of top soil alternating with a pile of compost. That will give you the equivalent of a raised bed.*

*Susan, Yamhill County Master Gardener*

Here's a link for a website Susan described as "particularly good because it's local", (Corvallis). <https://today.oregonstate.edu/news/diamonds-clay-soils-are-forever>. It starts out with a query about something I have experienced, asking, "When you walk about your yard on a wet day, do your shoes stick in the mud? Could you make ceramic pots out of the soil in your garden? If the answers are yes to both, odds are you have clay soil, one of the biggest challenges for the home gardener." After this entertaining entry, it gets down to science-based information about clay soil challenges & benefits, while offering the history and best-practices management of our unique clay soils in the Willamette Valley. Ironically, the article is titled, "Like Diamonds, Clay Soils are Forever". There I found an in-dept explanation for why Susan cautioned not to add sand or rototill clay soils. Basically, in order to avoid "forever diamond-hard soil", or "low-grade cement" as Susan described it, the reader is directed to add amendments, such as bark, manure, leaf mold and compost TO THE SOIL SURFACE. The article elaborates upon this surface technique, stating that these materials form a protective blanket that slows evaporation and reduces soil hardening. It cautions, "It's common for people to want to rototill or dig these materials into their garden beds, but experience has shown that the best and easiest way is to apply two or three inches of organic materials to garden beds, without trying to mix them in."

There you have it: no digging it in, just piling it on. So simple! Now that I've saved you all that digging time, if you would like to take a deeper dive into clay soil recommendations, click on the above link for even more information on this topic. The fact is, clay soils have many benefits: just look around at the many lovely gardens in our area. And there's a reason this area is a mecca for wineries. Yes, it's a challenge to garden in heavy clay soil; yet with patience and repeated applications of compost, you can build local soils that will foster amazing gardens and landscapes.

*If you have a horticulture question that I can look into for our next Garden Club newsletter, please send a note to [news@mcminnvillegardenclub.org](mailto:news@mcminnvillegardenclub.org) Stay Calm & Garden on, Christine Pritt*

## Websites to Explore

Patty Sorensen

**National Garden Club** <https://gardenclub.org>

**Pacific Region National Garden Club** <https://pacificregiongardenclubs.org/>

**Pioneer District Website** <http://oregongardenclubspioneer.97048.info/home.aspx>

**Oregon State Garden Club's Website** <http://oregongardenclubs.org>

**Yamhill County Master Gardeners** <https://ycmga.org/>

**McMinnville Community Garden** <http://www.mcminnvillecg.org>

**Serenity Garden** <https://mcminnvillegardenclub.org/serenitygarden/>

**Determine Your Yard's Sunlight:** <https://www.bhg.com/gardening/how-to-garden/understanding-your-yard-s-sunlight/>

**Pruning Roses Video from OSU Master Gardeners**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ois08vuz98>



Above: (Dec. 11, 1958) A gold foil ornamented tree, made by Mrs. Harold Cox, will be one of the "Holiday Inspirations" displayed Sunday in St. James' Parish Hall. The show is sponsored by the McMinnville Women's Garden Club, assisted by the local men's organization. Shown at a workshop meeting are (from left) Mrs. Cox, Mrs. Stanton Bennett, Mrs. Elliott Cummins and Mrs. Edward Kienle.