



The Sage Gardener



From the Editor... *Bob Prchal*



WE ARE A
COMMUNITY

Volume 12, Issue 12

December 2016

Meetings & Events

- **December 05**
Holiday Mtg. in the New Hall, Park County Fairgrounds @ 6:00 pm
- **January 09, 2017**
MG Mtg. in Cody @ 7:00 pm
- **February 06, 2017**
MG Mtg. in Powell @ 7:00 pm

"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream..."

- C. S. Lewis

Congratulations
to the new
2017
PCMG
leadership team

The new year is right around the corner; we do not know what awaits; but with the combined support of the membership, the new leadership team possesses the capabilities to guide and forge a new agenda for 2017 and beyond.

Special thanks and best wishes to the following members for their willingness to serve in leadership roles; and assume the responsibilities for their respective offices... **the best is yet to come!**

- **President:** Kathy Clarkson
- **Vice President:** Andi Pierson
- **Treasurer:** Denise Fink
- **Secretary and WMGA delegate:** Open

Please consider volunteering to fill these important positions!

- **Newsletter Editor:** Kathy Clarkson... assisted by Brian Beauvais



Meeting Minutes... submitted by Teri Boyd



Sandy Frost welcomed members/friends to the December 05, 2016 Christmas gathering @ 6 pm in the Park County Fairgrounds, New Hall meeting room.

Attendance... Sandy Frost, Andi Pierson, Kim Pierson, Della Sheridan, Bob Prchal, Denise Fink, Rhonda Faulkner, Brian Beauvais, Linda Pettengill, Mickey Waddell, Joyce Johnston, Ann Hinckley, Mary Vogel and Valerie Bates. **Guest (s):** Jeremiah Vardiman & Valerie Bates family/friends

Approval of Minutes... No business conducted **Treasurer's Report...** No business conducted

Old Business... Committee Reports, Announcements, etc.

- **Christmas season activities:** Linda Pettengill is coordinating the tree & wreath decorating. The Christmas tree will be part of a community silent auction and is located @ the Powell Chamber of Commerce. A Christmas wreath will be on display @ the Riley Arena in Cody and also be part of a community silent auction.

New Business...

- No business conducted

Reminders...

- **Northwest Area MG Workshop:** Planned for February 8 and 9, 2017 in Riverton or Worland. Be thinking of workshop activities.
- **New MG training:** In Thermopolis, March 3-4; 10-11; 17-18, 2017. All weekend dates... Anyone is welcome.
- **Wild West Gardening Conference April 22,23,2017 in Laramie... \$90/person**
- **2018 WMGA State Conference:** Planned for Casper. Details will be forthcoming as they develop.

December Christmas Food/Desserts/Decorations: Appreciation extended to the members & Christmas committee

Educational Program: No business conducted

Adjournment... 7:20pm. **Next Meeting:** In Cody on January 09, 2017 @ 7:00 pm in the EOC room of the Park County Courthouse. **January Refreshments:** Unknown

Extension Musings... from Joyce Johnston

Growing Hostas



There is no better way to brighten up a shady spot than by planting hostas. Although the plants bear tall spikes of white or lavender flowers in midsummer, hosta are planted primarily for the season-long show of their striking foliage. It takes more than good looks, however, to make a plant a world-class winner. Few perennials are truly carefree, but hostas come close. They never need dividing. Once established, they shade the ground so thoroughly that they reliably crowd out most weeds. Hostas are not fussy about soils, and many cultivars even do quite well with considerable sun. It's no wonder gardeners are planting them in record numbers.

Hosta leaves come in a broad range of solid colors, from blue-gray to deep green to light green or gold. Blue hostas often have a soft, waxy bloom (a powdery-looking coating on the leaves, also found on grapes), especially early in the season. Some green varieties have very shiny leaves; others have a matte appearance. Variegation can be white, cream, or yellow and can occur on the edges of the leaves, in the centers, or streaked throughout the leaf. The most common leaf shape is heartlike, but some cultivars have narrow, straplike leaves. The largest hostas are 3-4 feet tall; the smallest are under 8 inches. Mix all these factors together and you get an idea of why plant breeders are having such fun with this group of plants.

Hostas are among the most adaptable perennials. They do well from USDA Hardiness Zone 3 (-40°F minimum) southward as far as zone 9 (20°F minimum). Hostas need a period of cold weather, at the onset of which they turn a pleasing yellow and then go dormant. Insufficient winter chill and dry air, such as in western deserts, are the chief limiting factors.

Some hostas are native to woodlands and others grow in moist meadows where tall grasses provide some shade. In the garden, one-third shade is ideal. If soil moisture is ample, most hostas can take direct sun, especially in cooler climates and at the northern limit of their range. Gold varieties must have some direct sun for their full color to develop; in shade they become chartreuse. Blue varieties develop best color in shade. When hostas get too much sun or not enough water, the leaf edges become papery and brown. At the southern edge of their range, more shade is beneficial.

Planting Hostas

Typically, the plant you buy is a one- or two-eye division. The eye is a piece of a stubby underground stem, called a rhizome, containing a single squat, conical bud from which the leaves arise. The many roots that grow from the rhizome are about as thick as heavy twine, something like the roots of daylilies.

New rhizomes form slowly, and a clump may take a few seasons to fill out. However, don't be tempted to crowd the plants; follow spacing recommendations carefully. You can fill in between the plants with daffodils, Virginia bluebells, or annuals.

Care

A little extra TLC will get new hosta plantings off to a strong start. Be sure to water the plants during dry spells, especially during their first growing season. Apply a 2-inch-thick mulch of compost or leaf mold each year to provide nutrients. Hostas growing in the shade of large trees may need supplemental waterings to help them compete with the tree roots.

The only major pests of hostas are slugs, which thrive in the moist, cool, shady areas that hostas love. Controls include handpicking, traps, and deterrents like a layer of diatomaceous earth or crushed eggshells spread underneath the plants.

Unlike many perennials, hostas do not need regular dividing to keep them growing strong. Established hosta plantings have been in place for 30 years and longer with no need for dividing.

Barnyards and Backyards... from Jennifer S. Thompson @uwyo.edu**Dry in your part of Wyoming ?**

If the weather has been dry in your area it may be time to get out the garden hoses (again). Many perennial plants are more likely to survive our tough winters if they go into it with some soil moisture. You can read all about fall/winter irrigation in the University of Wyoming Extension short publication Winter Watering.

For this and other resources on irrigation visit our 'Water' page at:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/resources/water.html>

For more resources on a wide variety of topics on trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals visit our 'Landscaping' page at:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/resources/landscaping.html>

New Website from Rachel Vardiman

Just an FYI... the Master Gardener newsletters are being uploaded to our new website. Not sure how many of you have had a chance to look at it yet, but here is the address:

<http://wyoextension.org/parkcounty/horticulture/park-county-master-gardeners/>

We have a lot of potential here, so let us know if you have thoughts on the webpage.

~ ~ Rachel Vardiman

Debunking urban myths about Christmas trees/care

- ◆ **Save the vodka for the New Year's Eve party, not your Christmas tree. Should you add 7-Up, aspirin, bleach, vodka or sugar to the water? No!**

The tree experts suggest mixing the 7-Up with the vodka, use the sugar to get rid of the hiccups after laughing with friends and family, and take a few aspirin before bed... but don't add it to the tree stand. Clean water works best, and some additives can even cause your tree to shed needles and dry out more quickly.

- ◆ **It's bad for the environment to cut down a tree and use it for Christmas.**

It is much better environmentally to use a natural agricultural crop and recycle it after the holidays. Real Christmas Trees are a renewable, recyclable, natural product grown on farms throughout North America. Unfortunately many people have the misconception that Christmas Trees are cut down from the forest. Real Christmas Trees are grown as crops, just like corn or wheat, and raised on a farm. Once they are harvested, new seedlings are planted to replace harvested trees. These would NOT have been planted if trees hadn't been harvested the previous year. Fake Christmas Trees however are a non-renewable, non-biodegradable, plastic and metal product most often made in overseas factories.

<http://thechristmastreefarm.net/tree-care-myths.html>

New Plant Variety Release submitted by Sandy Frost

Variety... BIRTHDAY GIRL/BOY

- ⇒ A new release from public domain, horticulture plant breeders will sweep across America.
- ⇒ A tomato plant has been developed that synchronizes with gardeners. The determinate tomato plant matures at 3 feet high and 2 feet wide.
- ⇒ It can be planted after all chance of frost has passed. Vegetative growth is similar to other tomato cultivars, however, the yield is not. Bright red, succulent tomatoes mature all at once in a number equal to the age of the gardener.
- ⇒ This makes the cultivar suitable for canning, depending upon the age of the gardener. Watch your catalogs and gardening center for releases.



Importance of Volunteer Service... Park County Master Gardeners

Aiding Park County Horticulture & the University of Wyoming

Redoubles number of contacts... better service to the public

Expands 'pool of resources' ... increased manpower

Increases the number of 'work' hours to address questions and/or make yard calls

Permits the Horticulturalist to work one-on-one with more clients

Allows more time for development of educational materials and programs

Extends the Horticulture season... extra, available resources

Public Education Forum

Brown Bag Lunch Talks

Spring Brown Bag Series

February	March
8	1
15	8
22	15

***Wednesdays
Powell Library
@ 12 Noon***

PCMG Christmas Wreath... Submitted by Linda Pettengill

**Displayed @ the
Riley Arena**

*~ supporting the
Cody community ~*



Member Birthdays

December

Nikki Andrews

Rita Lewis

Nancy Ryan



It is
scientifically
proven that
people who
have more
birthdays live
longer



Asian-Inspired Christmas Tree submitted by Kathy Clarkson



Japanese-lantern ornaments provide a pleasing change of scale on this artificial bonsai, but the crowning glories of this tree are the birds -- coated in glitter and grouped in flocks of like colors... *from Martha Stewart Living*

Christmas Gathering Pics submitted by Sandy Frost





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2017 Officers

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Vice President... Andi Pierson
Secretary... Open
Treasurer... Denise Fink



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'Newsletter of the Park County
Master Gardeners'

~~ Content cannot be altered or
changed ~~

Newsletter Articles should be submitted by
the 15th of each month to Bob Prchal

rjprchal@tritel.net

Committee Chairs



Newsletter... Kathy Clarkson
Scrapbook/Historian... Cathy Swartz
Park County Fair... Andi & Kim Pierson

Cody Garden Tour... Suzanne Larsen
Park County Delegates... Sandy Frost & one open delegate

Change of Address/Phone/"e" Mail... Rachel Olsen (Powell)
or Rachel Vardiman (Cody)



REMEMBER... Keep it pithy!

Jeremiah Vardiman

Extension Educator

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