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YELLOWSTONE MASTER GARDENERS NEWSLETTER



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Brittany Moreland

At first I did not think that the person who walked into Honey's Café in Red Lodge could be Brittany because she looks under 35 years old. She certainly does not fit the current mold of MGs in Yellowstone County, gray haired pensioners that we are. And that aspect addresses what she considers to be a direction the MG program should reach: younger people. She was only able to take the classes after Bob Wicks, her inspiration while in the classes and beyond, started hosting evening sessions. She highlighted the wide interest in the farm-to-table movement that young folks especially embrace. If you have read previous interviews I have written, parents were the key influence to motivate MGs, and Brittany fits that pattern, but her parents took it to the zenith. Her mom and grandmother canned produce from a huge garden, and Brittany helped. Tomatoes were grown in pots, and they are currently Brittany's favorite plant along with ground cherries, although she feels excited about the outcome of her apple orchard. I have no doubt that the love of gardening will transfer soon to her two toddlers, as the apple does not fall far from the tree. They are already learning what is ripe in the here and now.



She approached the MG program much like she has proven to tackle any project: Brittany completed all three levels in one year, 2011, made all the more impressive by the fact that she commuted from Red Lodge to do it. This focused and ambitious gal just started a gardening business called Elevated Harvest last fall with her husband. By March, their CSA had 35 customers. Having seven years of employment at the Stillwater Mine behind her must make this step of creating a business all the sweeter. Her interest lies in edibles, not houseplants or flowers. Elevated Harvest grows hydroponic (growing in water without soil) lettuce and herbs. With a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of Montana (Go Griz!), Brittany has the perseverance to make this business a success. Their lettuce is distributed to numerous vendors in this region. Using no pesticides, herbicides, or sprays, they however are not currently seeking organic certification. They donate produce to the Food Bank and accept SNAP dollars.

Create your own Sunshine.....

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What a whirlwind of passion! Her broad experience includes gardening when floating from apartment to apartment during her university years, and working during harvest on a grain farm. Her favorite Level 3 work involved grafting. Successfully grafting apple trees, her participation in the MG program has her volunteering at Farmers' Markets and helping Carbon County MGs Maggy Hiltner and Marcella Manuel conduct an annual seed swap. Embrace change. Take the long-term view. Gardening is a palpable act of hope. Try again. Her philosopher emerges; ideas precede actions.

I feel like I completed Level 4 of the MG program after this interview! Consider the following definitions: aquaponics- growing with fish. haskap- a fruit from Saskatchewan that can be eaten raw, cooked, or made into juice or wine, it's bigger than blueberries and without the thorns. Its bush like structure must be netted from birds, and it grows to one and a half meters tall. REAP grant- Rural Energy Assistance Program. Brittany and her husband were currently applying for a grant during the time of the interview. Recommended: consider adding Passion & Stir podcast from the Share Our Strength program, which is the backbone of the No Kid Hungry movement, to your cultural intake. Plus pistachio and carrot top pesto is her current favorite in the kitchen. shiso- a purple leafy Asian herb. On the broader plane, Brittany recognizes that growing our own food is a powerful move which ties into our culture, creating an economic connection with the environment. Will local food become the upper echelon? How can we move to a sustainable local economy? She has been a formative link during the conception phase in creating a food producer co-op with Northern Plains Resource Council. The next generation of gardeners will revitalize and inform us all! Brittany will make sure they do, and let's thank her for richly adding to the conversation. To read more about her farm visit, go to:

<https://www.freightfarms.com/blog/freight-farmer-qa-elevated-harvest>.

Submitted by Bess Lovec



Nigella

Among the interesting flowers that are easy to grow from seed are the intricate and dainty nigella, or Love-in-a-Mist. Grown in Elizabethan cottage gardens and popular for centuries, they are not the fan favorite in nurseries and garden centers these days since they are not great transplant candidates. They are so easy to grow from seed that it is truly a shame if you never try them for medium-height, season-long delight in any sunny location. To create a display from mid-spring to late summer, sow successive plantings from early spring to early summer. Plant when weather ranges between 65-70 most of

the day in full sun with a little space for each plant to reach out. They don't require much but decent drainage for soil, so water when dry and apply a little fertilizer in July and August. Watch for the deeply cut first leaves to break through in about 10 days and then prepare to enjoy the show. Multiple branches on 1-2' plants will produce blooms with intricate stamens and pistils. The leaves are finely divided and lend an airy quality to the middle of edge beds and cottage gardens. The show doesn't stop with the bloom – the seed pod is just as delightful with a balloon-like case tipped with spikes and surrounded by the net-like collar. These can be dried for quaint little arrangements or left to self-seed for next year.



Submitted by Corinna Sinclair

Summer in Review



Dan giving last tour to Master Gardeners



Bob Wicks and his new friend



MG Dan Walt Lunch Photos by Gail Tesinsky



August Master Gardeners On the town Cold Stone Creamery

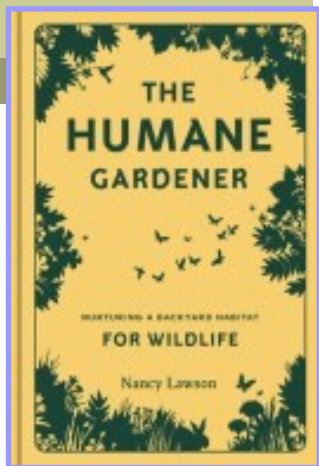


Tina and Daughters Iris Garden tour



Tina and Daughters Garden

If nothing ever changed ,There'd be no butterflies.—Unknown



The Humane Gardener: Nurturing a Backyard Habitat for Wildlife,

Naturalist Nancy Lawson's primary purpose is to help animals. She writes a column called Humane Backyard (http://www.humane-society.org/animals/wild_neighbors/humane-backyard/humane-backyard.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/) for the Humane Society publication All Animals, and is the founder of The Humane Gardener, a comprehensive website and outreach initiative focused on gardening for animals. (<http://www.humanegardener.com/>)

In six chapters, Lawson introduces the reader to the ideas of:

- Trying Something New – By abandoning preconceived notions of what a garden should be and focusing on native plants.
- Embracing the Wild – By allowing nature to take over a portion of a garden to see who sets up housekeeping.
- Supporting Ecosystems - Fostering habitat by providing desirable food and shelter for native animals, and making gardens safe for the animals that make their homes there.
- Providing Natural Food for Wildlife – By understanding that the creatures that live in our gardens must eat, too.
- The Importance of the Full Life Cycle – By taking a new look at decaying plant material that may be messy, but that provides food and shelter to garden inhabitants. At the end of each chapter is an in-depth profile of a pioneer who has reclaimed a landscape for wildlife. There is a handy “Getting Started” guide at the end of the book that includes:
 - General Information
 - Regional Books on Habitat Growing
 - Native Plant Information and Regional Databases
 - Native Plant Retail Sources and Supplies
 - Co-Existing with Wildlife
 - Habitat Certification and Yard Signs Each provides valuable resources for readers who would like further information on native plant species, humane gardening, and wildlife habitat. Also included is a section titled “Plants Mentioned in this Book,” a comprehensive list of the many native and non-native species discussed, with their common and Latin names. The Humane Gardener is an idea-packed examination of what happens when we view our yards as opportunities to preserve and foster habitat for native plants and animals. As Lawson says, “Even in a small yard, you might be surprised by who shows up if you let them.”

By: Tracy L. Livingston

Certificates & Awards

Level 1 Certificate and Shirt: Becky Buckley, Connie Aaberg, Dan Altmaier, Rebecca Egan

Level 2 Certificate and Shirt: Dan Altmaier, Sheryl McCandless, Valeria Ann Jeffries

200 Hours – County pin reward: Ann Guthals

400 Hours - \$25: Marion Grummett

1000 Hours - \$100 : Mertia Murdock



- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound spicy Italian sausage, casing removed
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 onion, diced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, optional
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 5 cups chicken broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 pound red potatoes, diced
- 3 cups baby spinach
- 1/4 cup heavy cream



Directions:

1. Heat olive oil in a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add Italian sausage and cook until browned, about 3-5 minutes, making sure to crumble the sausage as it cooks; drain excess fat.
2. Stir in garlic, onion, oregano, basil and red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring frequently, until onions have become translucent, about 2-3 minutes; season with salt and pepper, to taste.
3. Stir in chicken broth and bay leaf, and bring to a boil. Add potatoes and cook until tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Stir in spinach until it begins to wilt, about 1-2 minutes. Stir in heavy cream until heated through, about 1 minute; season with salt and pepper, to taste.
5. Serve immediately.

<http://damndelicious.net/2014/10/29/sausage-potato-spinach-soup>



A QUICK MEAL WITH FRESH GREENS

My friend in Switzerland taught me to use kale, spinach, Swiss chard or beet greens when in season for a delicious meal. Put about a tablespoon of butter in a pan; add coarsely chopped greens and sauté. She adds a small amount of chicken or beef bouillon with a little water to dissolve it for added flavor. When ready to eat, add a grated cheese of your choice on top. The stalks of kale, swiss chard or beets can also be used in this manner or saved for soups and salads.

Meat is very high priced in Switzerland and used sparingly. She tries to get vitamins, minerals, fiber and protein from other sources. They have a vegetable garden, fruit trees and current and berry bushes. Mountain cheese is used a lot because the family has it on hand year round. Sometimes the above recipe would have cream added instead of cheese. For desert berries and currants are served.

Submitted by Sheri Kisch



<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/horticulture/mastergard...asp>

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4X4 Square Gardening Winners

This year, once again, we had some stiff competition with our METRA Square Foot Garden Contest. There were 5 competition 4x4 beds this year. You all made our garden demonstration something to check out. There were many very nice compliments this year. Special thanks to all of you who competed: Cindy Roesler, Joann Glasser & Pat Morrison, Rick Shotwell, Roy Wahl, Susan Carlson And the winners are:

First Place – #1 Cindy Roesler (\$50)

Second Place – #5 Joann Glasser and Pat Morrison (\$25)

Third Place – #2 Rick Shotwell (\$10)

Thank you to Mary Davis and Rosemary Power for being our honored judges. Our judges suggested sharing with you what they will be looking for next year. Here's the list: 1. Well thought out design 2.Space utilization 3 Creative plant choice 4.Plant health 5.Care & maintenance of garden 6.Overall attractiveness 7. Labeling/Educational 8. Mixture of color, form & texture Please consider being a part of the 4x4 Garden Contest in 2018. There are 2 available competition beds that you could use to share your ideas of what could be done in a small space garden.

Submitted by Amy Grandpre



Have you ever thought about bringing in some of your summer plantings in the fall to grow through the winter? While researching different plants that we could grow here in Montana I came across some that most of us have in our yard during the summer. After such a scorching summer, we are usually ready to send everything to the dumpster or compost pile. But think outside the box. How about some color, plants for decorating, or use for cooking. Some of these plants will need to be repotted for indoors or take cuttings.

Geranium – Bring them in before frost and give them a light trim. Water when dry, feed monthly and give bright direct light. <http://www.wikihow.com/Propagate-Geraniums-from-Cuttings>

Caladium – The same plants sold as tubers and potted and sold, at a much higher price, as houseplants. Indoors they like indirect light. Keep their soil moist, but not wet. They prefer temps from 60 to 85 degrees. If they yellow and die back, just let rest until spring. Store in a cool dry spot and repot in February or March. They like low to moderate light.

Boxwood– Small potted evergreen boxwood make easy going houseplants and special winter decorations with a little pruning. Turn the pot every few days to keep growing evenly. Humidity is crucial to evergreen houseplants so keep a mister handy. Put plenty of pebbles in the bottom of the pot. Water when the soil dries and feed monthly. They like bright to moderate light.

Coleus – Coleus come in so many different colors it's a shame not to try cuttings from your favorites. They like indirect bright light and to be warm. Keep the soil moist and feed monthly. Pinch off any flowers to prevent them from going to seed.

Hot Peppers – Peppers are tropical perennials and can be kept growing and producing. Smaller hot peppers are the easiest to bring indoors. They like their soil a little dry and underfed. Bright direct light is necessary to set flowers and grow peppers. Think orange, yellow, green and red for winter color. Do watch for aphids and fungus gnats.

Herbs – Many herbs do well indoors. Do you have chives, basil, parsley, rosemary or lemon grass? It is best to start with small, young plants. Perennials, like lemon grass and rosemary can be potted and brought back and forth from outdoors to an indoor window sill. Be sure they get bright light and trim to keep bushy. They like bright light. If you are bringing plants in from outdoors you may think about isolating them before bringing them indoors. Make sure all the hitchhikers are gone. You don't need extra pests to infect your existing plants. Fungus gnats are generally caused by overwatering.



Submitted by Sheri Kisch

Here's The Dirt!

How well do you know your gardening myths? Here are a few Myth questions to test your knowledge .

1. Is it important to cover a newly pruned areas with varnish, tar, or paint?
2. Do water droplets magnify the sun and burn the leaves?
3. If you have blossom end rot ,will adding tums to the soil work?
4. Do ants help to open Peony buds?

Submitted by Donna Canino

(1.False 2.False 3.False 4.False)