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www.sandovalmastergardeners.org

New Mexico State University
Cooperative Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Sandoval County Master Gardener Newsletter

December | President's Corner

As I write this the temperature is dropping ... it's the end of November and we've seen our first snow flurries. Yes, I do believe winter is fast approaching. My Snapdragons are still green and I even have a few buds left on the plants. I love this time of year.

The 2017 Intern class is filling up and if you know someone who would like to participate in the 18 weeks of training, please send them to the Sandoval County Master Gardener's Web site to enroll. The Education Committee has done a fantastic job of re-tooling the class. The syllabus and quality of the education continues to improve.

We are cancelling the Board Meeting for December and will resume our monthly Board meeting in January. The Board meeting will be held at Sabana Grande Community Center, the 3rd Tuesday, starting January 17th from 10:30 to 11:45. Interns and Master Gardeners are invited to a Brown Bag luncheon each Tuesday from 12:00-1:00 so the BOD meeting will conclude by 11:45.

As we close out 2016, I want to sincerely thank all of you who so generously contribute your time and talents to this very worthwhile and productive organization. Have a wonderful end of the year and abundant 2017.

PS. You may notice that I'm signing off as President. That's because at the National Master Gardeners Conference that Lynda Garvin attended in September the title "Coordinator" is refers to the Extension Agent (Lynda Garvin here in Sandoval County) that works with NM State University.

Thank you,
Barbara Dawson
SCMG Board President 2015-2017
505-897-3773

Lynda's Corner

December is the month of the Winter Solstice where we experience the shortest day of the year on December 21st. The good news is the days begin to lengthen after that. We are blessed to have abundant sunshine in New Mexico so winters don't have to be a gloomy affair.

December is a great month to sit down and review your gardening notes for 2016, pour over seed catalogues, and begin your garden plan for 2017. Think about seed starting. We offer a seed starting class at the Sabana Grande Recreation Center on Tuesday January 17 at 7:00 PM. If you are traveling over the holidays, safe journey.

Happy Holidays to all and may you remember that an authentic human connection, a kind word, and heart felt appreciation are the most important and uplifting gifts we can give each other.

Lynda Garvin
Agriculture/Horticulture Agent



Classes Start Soon! 2017 SCMG Intern

Training Class. [Click here to find out more.](#)



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2016 Holiday Gift List for the Gardener in your Life

You can find all of these items and more online – pull up your favorite search engine and type in the item you are interested in finding and voila-Christmas gifts galore!

Gardener's seat – portable with pockets- is a must have!

Gardening Tool Set – one can never have too many trowels and nippers.

Gardener's Compost Container- Compost happens...

Potted Plant Hand Truck – Moving a heavy plant made easy!

Gardening Themed Jewelry – earrings, pendants, bracelets and rings – makes your gardener happy!

Birch Handle Angle Weeder – Weeding help is always needed.

Seed Keeper Album- Organized is a zen-like state of being.

Solar Outdoor Thermometer- some display time too.

Rolling Gardening Cart- Everything at hand – a nifty helper!

Nail Brush – no really.. it is literally a nail bent in half with a brush – best thing EVER to clean that dirt from under one's nails.

Law and Garden Ladder- Wide base works on soft surfaces.

Hummingbird Swing – Yes, a swing for hummingbirds – unique and practical for the fast-moving little creatures.

Butterfly Puddler- That is what it is called and you just add water and it attracts butterflies!

Ceramic Bee Finder- Help the bees by filling this little ceramic doohickey with sugar water that they can bring back to the hive.

Organic Mushroom Farm – Grow their own oyster mushrooms!

Seed Bombs- Great for planting open areas, empty lots and corners unfilled (if there is such a thing in a Master Gardener's yard!)

Heirloom Seed Collection – Help keep original varieties of flowers and veggies alive – buy heirloom kits and make any gardener jump for joy!

SCMG Newsletter Submissions

Deadline: 21st of each month

Please submit news, articles, events

and photographs to: scmgnewsletter@gmail.com

Editor: **Jannetta Lamour-Dodson**



Become a Master Gardener



Sandoval County Master Gardeners Training Class Begins January 3 Apply NOW

Applications are being taken for this 18-week course. Classes meet 1:00pm – 5:00pm each Tuesday from January 3 – May 2 at: Sabana Grande Rec Center in Rio Rancho. The cost is \$175 and includes all course materials.

This training class is ideal for anyone interested in improving their home gardening knowledge. A variety of classes are taught by area specialists and NMSU professors, here are a few of the topics:

- Botany (taught by Dr. Curtis Smith of the PBS show Southwest Yard & Garden)
 - Permaculture
- Chemical Safety for you and your garden
 - Vegetable production
- Gardening problems by the season

Applications and more information is available at our website: sandovalmastergardeners.org



New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. NMSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

If you are an individual with a disability who is in need of an auxiliary aid or service to participate in classes, please call (505) 867-2582.

'Tis the season!

While we are busy enjoying the holiday season our gardens need some TLC too. Here are some essential gardening tasks to remember.



Mid-winter yard chores may include general cleanup but also:

- * Potting forced bulbs
- * Starting your Allium crops, such as garlic and leeks
- * Planning the vegetable garden and purchasing seeds
- * Spreading organic mulch over perennial fruit and vegetable gardens
- * Trimming off broken and dead branches and stems from trees/shrubs
- * Turning over beds and adding compost
- * Cleaning lawn furniture
- * Sharpening and oiling garden tools
- * Plotting and planning your spring herb and flower gardens!

Daytime at Meadowlark- Lectures

Improving Desert Garden Soil

9 Jan. 2017 1:30PM - 2:30PM Free. Open to seniors. Walk-ins welcome. Meadowlark Senior Center, 4330 Meadowlark Lane, SE, Rio Rancho
Improving Desert Garden Soil: presenter - John Zarola
"Amending garden soil is a continuous process for the high desert gardener. Straight forward take-home methods for improving soil fertility and resiliency will be presented."

Bokashi Bucket Composting

28 Feb. 2017 1:30 - 2:30 PM Free. Open to seniors. Walk-ins welcome
"The Bokashi composting method may be done indoors during Winter. Particularly useful for those living in small spaces, eg. apartments. The science and methodology will appeal to those who prefer an easy home composting technique in any season."

Composting with Worms

9 March 2017 1:30 - 2:30 PM Free. Open to seniors. Walk-ins welcome.
"Worm composting may be done indoors or outdoors, year round. Particularly useful for those living in small spaces, eg. apartments. Specifics and guidelines will assist the home owner in the set up and management of this useful technique."



Free classes open to the public
Third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm
Sabana Grande Recreation Center
4110 Sabana Grande Ave SE Rio Rancho
For more information visit

sandovalmastergardeners.org/gardening-classes

Upcoming Classes

- Dec 20** Building and Using Cold Frames with Dr. Curtis Smith
- Jan 17** Seed Starting with Lynda Garvin
- Feb 21** Planning Your Vegetable Garden with Loren Meinz
- Mar 21** The Challenge of Growing Tomatoes with Sam Thompson
- Apr 18** Chickens 101 with Gary Sims
- May 16** Raised Bed Gardening with John Zarola

Sponsored by the Sandoval County Master Gardeners



volunteer opportunities

Opportunity for a community-based project in Placitas

The Placitas Community Library (PCL) is looking for a leader or co-leaders to head up its Landscape Team. The landscape and gardens of the library are the result of local muscle, generous donations and grants to PCL. The gardens are comprised of native and xeric perennials, shrubs and trees, and a drip system and were featured on the Placitas Garden Tour this year. PCL's gardens also contain a community-designed and built, walking labyrinth, educational signs listing the names of plants, a 1000+ gallon cistern, bluebird houses, and a solar-powered water feature that keeps our "Designated Wildlife Habitat" status intact. Families are routinely spotted walking the gardens with their children eagerly leading the pack. It's truly a community-powered project and is Master Gardener sanctioned. If you are interested contact Suzanne Maxwell, Suzanne@aboutchanging.com or 505-867-3942.

Corrales Growers' Market Leader

After two successful years as the Corrales Growers' Market leader, Tom Neiman is stepping down and moving on to other master gardener projects. He is looking for interested veterans or interns to take over the project and is very willing to provide assistance. If you have any questions, please contact Tom at 505-681-4511 or tsubmit55@hotmail.com.

Placitas Elementary School Garden Club Leader

We have 13 third, fourth, and fifth grade students who maintain a garden within the school grounds with a greenhouse. Where: Placitas Elementary School When: Every Wednesday from 2:30 to 4:00 pm during the school year Please contact Ginger Golden 463-5264 or email gingergolden@msn.com

Intern Mentors Needed: Let's Make 2017 a Great Year!

We are excited about our new Sandoval County Master Gardener Intern Class of 2017. Each year we have an opportunity to welcome new applicants and ensure their successful integration into our organization as community volunteers. [Click here to volunteer to become an intern mentor.](#)

Help Needed: Communication and Publicity Committee

The Communication and Publicity Committee has a lot on its plate this coming year and we could use some help!! Those of you with writing, Facebook, photography, web development or other social media skills are really needed to help us with our communications and the outreach which is our mission as Master Gardeners. Please contact Janet Blair at jtblair@swcp.com or 505-259-0203. Thanks!!!

Chairperson for Gardening with Masters lecture series [Click here to Volunteer TODAY!](#)

The SCMG Board would like to invite each member to check out the opportunities listed below to serve the SCMG organization. These are volunteer/appointed positions.

Annual Meeting Chair:

This meeting occurs annually at the end of SCMG's fiscal year, sometime in October. The Chairperson is responsible for organizing this meeting in conjunction with the Coordinator, the Agriculture Agent, and Membership. Final voting and initiation of new Board members take place during this meeting.

Intern Graduation Ceremony:

This event occurs at the end of the Intern Training. The chairperson is responsible for organizing this important and fun event in conjunction with Coordinator, the Education Committee Chair, and the Agriculture Agent, including location, logistics, refreshments, room set up, and agenda. Please contact the Education Committee Chair, Sam Thompson.

Registration:

While Marianne O'Sullivan has graciously volunteered to be the Chair for this posi-

tion, she can always use a few responsible people to help at various venues for registering participants in SCMG classes, including Intern Training, Continuing Ed and any other SCMG sponsored classes. Please contact Marianne if you are interested in being a part of this important team.

Fund Raising:

The chairperson is responsible for specific fundraising projects that are subject to approval by the Board of Directors. May include – but not limited to - overseeing the purchasing of SCMG logo clothing and items, plant sales, etc. What could be fun than buying and selling stuff?

Librarian:

The Library Chair shall be responsible for the organization and upkeep of the Extension Office Casita Library reference books, NMSU horticultural circulars, and any other pertinent periodicals. Since the Extension office was flooded out during a storm re-

cently, they could really use some help with this one!

Outreach/Hotline:

The chairperson for Hotline shall work with the Extension Agent to organize and coordinate Hotline activities, including scheduling phone volunteers, outreach clinics, and other special outreach events. Remember, all members need to have at least 10 hours of Outreach service in order to maintain their membership – so this is easy-peasy to get volunteers!

Refreshments:

This chairperson is responsible for refreshments served at SCMG training and events, such as the Intern Graduation Ceremony and any other special SCMG training classes and/or events, such as HomeScapes Solutions. Yay! Yummy food for all! [CONTACT VIA EMAIL TO VOLUNTEER TODAY!](#)



Membership dues for 2017 are due now.

You may mail your check made out to SCMG to our new SCMG Treasurer, Johanna Johnson for \$15. A new feature this year also allows members to conveniently pay their dues on the SCMG Website via PayPal; there is a small fee of \$.75 for this service. The link to pay dues via PayPal is on the first page of the SCMG Website in the top right corner or [CLICK HERE](#). 48 Camino de los Desmontes; Placitas, NM 87043 johannaj@comcast.net

important dates

For a full explanation of the what, when and who on these Calendar items, please visit our website

DECEMBER

- 6 Rio Rancho Tree Stewards: Steering Committee Meeting 4 pm
- Gardening with the Masters 7pm
- 7 DeLavy House Garden Work Session 9 am
- 4 Seasons Gardening Series 7pm
- 21 SCMG Newsletter Articles Due

JANUARY

- 3 SCMG Master Gardener Class 1pm
- Rio Rancho Tree Stewards: Steering Committee Meeting 4 pm
- Gardening with the Masters 7pm
- 4 DeLavy House Garden Work Session 9 am
- 9 Improving Desert Garden Soil -Meadowlark Senior Center 1:30pm-2:30pm
- 17 SCMG Board of Directors Meeting 10:30 am
- 4 Seasons Gardening Series 7pm
- 21 SCMG Newsletter Articles Due by 6 pm

5 HOLIDAY PLANTS TO KEEP AWAY FROM YOUR PETS

With the festive season upon us remember that some of the popular plants you may purchase or receive as a gift are dangerous for animals to ingest.

1. PINE NEEDLES
2. MISTLETOE
3. HOLLY
4. AMARYLLIS
5. POINTSETTIA



HANDY HOW TO: Growing Vegetables from Scraps!

The days are short and much colder now and for most of us our gardens are hidden under compost and left to lie dormant until spring. So, what can we do to continue saving money and enjoying home-grown produce through our New Mexican winters? There are many of our common vegetables which can be grown in water alone, conserving space and providing a bit of greenery indoors, and a fresh addition to our meals.

General Tips: You don't need a lot of water – just enough to cover the roots. About 1/2" of water seems to be sufficient otherwise the food can get moldy and slimy. Be sure to check the water every 2-3 days to ensure that a) there's enough water, and b) no rogue pieces fall off and slime up your bowl. The size of container should be similar to the size of the food you're growing. Lettuce and celery grows best in shallow bowls. Green onion and lemongrass can be in taller, skinny glasses. You can regrow multiples of the same plant if you're not overcrowding the container.

Southwest Plant of the Month- December Nolina microcarpa (Big Beargrass or Sacahuista)

A hardy native to the Southwest, and a member of the asparagus family, Big Bear Grass or Sacahuista is extremely useful for use in xeriscapes and in butterfly and songbird sanctuaries. This evergreen, grass-like succulent, blooms in early summer with tall spikes of tiny white flowers and requires little water to thrive as a drought resistant/drought tolerant plant. Visually, Beargrass is a clumping grass growing from underground stems. Narrow leaves have curly threads at the end of each leaf point giving the plant a unique "shaggy" appearance. Thousands of tiny white flowers are placed at the end of the stalks that rise above the foliage and bloom in July. This hardy, drought tolerant perennial will survive our dry cold winter weather with deep roots and woody trunks.



Common Name	Beargrass (sacahuista)	Evergreen	Yes
Botanical Name	Nolina microcarpa	Native	Yes
Zones	5-10	Soil Type	Clay/Sandy Soil
Advantages	Deer resistant, Native, Evergreen	Planting Time	Spring/ Summer and Fall
Light Requirements	Full Sun	Soil Moisture	Very Drought Resistant
Water Requirements	10 to 20", 20 to 30"	Mature Height	6-7' tall
Flowering	Early to mid-summer	Mature Width	4-6' wide

Cabbage: Place the root end in a shallow bowl of water and watch it regrow from the center. Be sure to harvest on the smaller side to get the best flavor.



Garlic Chives: grow garlic sprouts—from a clove or bulb. Place a budding clove (or even a whole bulb) in a small container. Add water until it covers the bottom of the container and touches the bottom of the cloves. Do not submerge the cloves. Snip off the greens once they're around 3 inches tall. Just be sure not to remove more than one-third of each sprout at one time.



Scallions/ Green Onions: Keep the white part of the onion with any roots that are in still intact. Place in a glass with water and snip the greens as they grow

Lettuce (Romaine, red and green leaf): Cut off the bottom of the head of lettuce and place it in a small bowl of water. New growth begins from the center of the in as little as 3 days and you'll have a new half-head of lettuce in about 2 weeks. Snip and enjoy!

Celery: Cut off the bottom 2" of the stalk and place in a small bowl of water. New growth begins from the center in 3-4 days. It might take a while for a full stalk of celery to grow, but you'll get great growth in the center for flavoring dishes. The leaves are great for making dried celery powder.

Basil/Cilantro: Basil and cilantro can regrow roots, and grow new plants once replanted. Simply place cilantro stems in a bowl of water, put the bowl in a sunny area, and change the water every other day.

Bok Choy: Cut off the bottom of the stalk and place in a small bowl of water. New growth begins from the center in 1-2 days with significant growth in less than a week.

Fennel: Cut off the bottom 1" of the base so that the roots are intact and place in a small bowl of water.

Leeks and Lemon grass are also quick growing and will also grow in water and low light.