



## Sandoval Extension Master Gardener Newsletter

<http://sandovalmastergardeners.org/>



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

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NMSU and the U.S.  
Department of  
Agriculture cooperating.

**SEMG Newsletter  
Submissions  
Deadline: 25<sup>th</sup> of each  
month**

Please submit news,  
articles, events and  
photographs to:  
[newsletter@sandovalmastergardeners.org](mailto:newsletter@sandovalmastergardeners.org)

Editor:  
Kate Shadock

### From Meg Buerkel Hunn, Advisory Council Chair

My kitchen companion is a Pom Pom Palm. I got her years ago, it was love at first sight... maybe because she made me smile in the middle of a hard day. Lucky for me she's also quite forgiving, as I am not the best plant mama! Yes, I know I am anthropomorphizing a plant. And yet... she has lessons to teach (at least to me).



These past months have been hard ones. Our backyard garden has struggled with the summer heat and drought. So far, this year's monsoon has yielded very little rain or relief. I watch as the Rio Grande runs lower and lower, and I think about all who depend upon the river - the plants, the animals, the humans - and my heart starts to crumble. Wildfires are always a risk here, but have been a devastating reality in Canada for much of the summer and absolutely heartbreaking in Hawaii. While wildfires burn in some places, in others, deluges of water from large hurricanes and other storms have caused great damage and disruption. It's hard to accept that our (human) behaviors have influenced and impacted the climate of our world and it's even more difficult to see how anything I do can make a difference.

That's where my kitchen companion, the Pom Pom Palm comes in, and her lived wisdom... she takes life as it comes. She's very accepting and flexible (at least the green parts of her are!). She stays put, she doesn't run away to a better home, and, so far, she hasn't given up on me. She possesses hope and a sense of humor (I mean, curly leaves?!?!).

She can still make me smile. She's like a little cheerleader of sorts. When I feel 'stuck,' she reminds me that little things can make a difference. Growing and sharing food with neighbors. Tolerating (even inviting!) more insects in my yard. Buying from local farmers. Picking up trash on walks. Talking with others. Learning more about how we are all interconnected - not only human beings, but plants, animals, soil, air, mountains, rivers.

I am grateful for this interspecies relationship I share with my green, smiling, hopeful, forgiving kitchen companion. Who/what helps and teaches you in your moments of despair?

-Meg

## Down & Dirty with Rachel – Sandoval Extension Agent

As I watched the Women's FIFA World Cup last month, it sometimes struck me as odd how much power a single ball holds. Players push themselves to their physical and mental limits and risk injury to direct the ball where they want it to go and prevent the opposing team from doing the same. The ball crossing a line between two posts and hitting netting causes simultaneous eruptions of jubilation and downcast looks. People travel halfway around the world to watch this spectacle. Tears are shed by players, coaches, and fans on both sides when one person in the middle of the field blows a whistle three times. Soccer, or any sport for that matter, begins to look silly when viewed from a remove.

Yet, I understand why people so earnestly chase a ball 28 inches in circumference and weigh one pound. For me, there is almost no better feeling than a good day on the soccer pitch, having pushed myself to exhaustion. My mind becomes clearer, my body relaxes, stress melts away.



All in. Photo courtesy Rachel Zweig



En garde, weeds! Photo: Carol Reeves

On the face of it, gardening isn't so different. Why spend hours in the cold, heat, and sun, battling weeds, insects, and other pests to grow food you could easily buy at the store? If you are reading this newsletter, you can probably think of dozens of reasons. Being able to grow varieties you can't find in the store. Better taste. The satisfaction of raising a plant from seed. Spending time in the fresh air and dirt. Knowing what went into your food. Environmental concerns. Educational opportunities for your kids. I'll let you follow your own reasons.

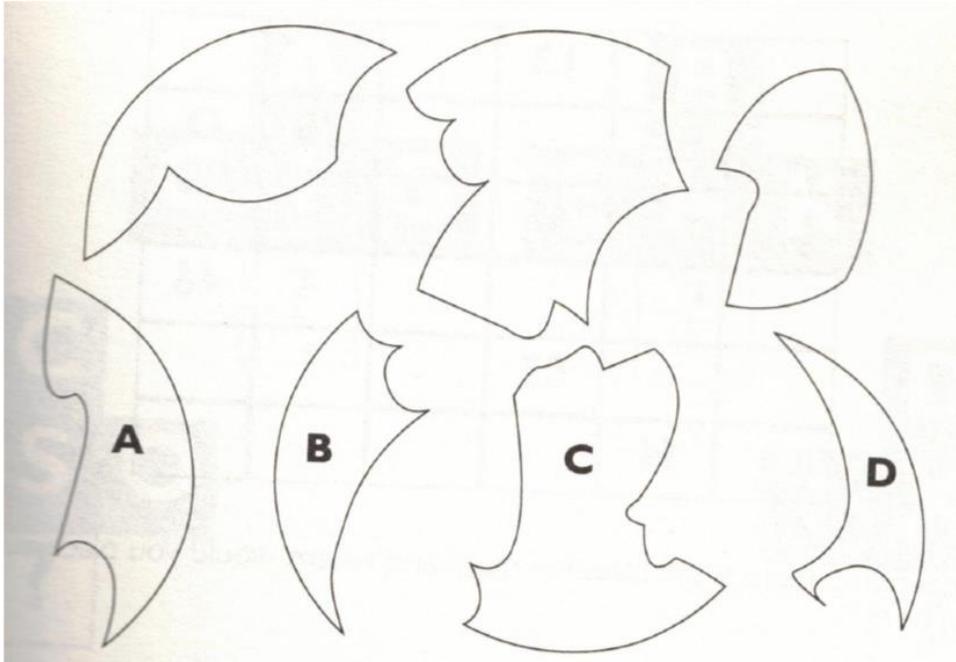
Many things we do in life often seem pointless on the surface. But often it is these "pointless" activities that bring the greatest joy and give life flavor. A few years ago, one of my aunts, a painter, asked me why I liked running. The best I could come up with at the time was that it felt good after a hard run. I wasn't satisfied with that answer and thought about it over the next year. The next time I saw her, I had a better answer. **"It's probably similar to when you are painting. My entire mind and body are focused on one task, and I don't have room for any worries or distracting thoughts."** That she could relate to. I hope you have the chance to lose yourself in something today, silly or otherwise. You just might get a finger-sized carrot out of it.

**Last month's puzzle:** There are twelve balls of identical size. All are the same weight, except for one which is slightly heavier, but you can't tell by holding it. With a set of balance scales, can you determine which is the heavier ball with just three weighings? (Adapted from Mensa presents the ultimate puzzle challenge, Carter, Russell, and Bremner, 1999).

**Answer:** Split the twelve balls into two groups of six, and place one group on each side of the scales. The group that is heavier, has the heavier ball. Repeat this, splitting the heavier group into two groups of three. Now you know the heavier ball is one of three balls. Select two balls and compare these on the scale. If one side is heavier, you know that is the heavier ball. If both balls weigh the same, you know the heavier ball is the third ball.

## Down & Dirty with Rachel – Sandoval Extension Agent (Continued)

**This month's puzzler:** Which piece is missing to construct a circle? (*From Mensa presents the ultimate puzzle challenge, Carter, Russell, and Bremner, 1999*).



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### September Garden Checklist

1. Update your garden notebook with success and “could have been better” garden results
2. Harvest the summer garden and prepare it for cool weather crops
3. Fall is a wonderful time for planting trees and shrubs
4. Perennials need dividing every 3 to 5 years. Before digging up decide where to put the divisions
5. Check your roses – If they have lost more than half their canes, they need a cooler/shadier spot

*Source: Month-by-Month Gardening: Arizona, Nevada & New Mexico Jacqueline A Soule,*

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## Public Training Opportunities

### Ready, Set, Grow

- **Sep. 20 "Container Gardening: Raised Beds & Potted Plants (indoors & out!)"** with John Garlich, Bernalillo County Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent
- **Oct. 18 Composting** with John Zarola, President and Outreach Coordinator for the Bernalillo County Extension Master Composters program
- **Nov. 15 Season Extension with Hoop Houses** - Title/Presenter TBD
- **Dec. 13 ANTS!** with Dr. Joanie King, NMSU Extension Entomology Specialist

To register for a class go to: <https://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/grow.html>

Previous classes are recorded and archived for access. Check out the [Ready, Set, Grow website](#) for those links.

### Gardening with the Masters – New Time & New Place

Upcoming, in-person, classes, held at Loma Colorado Library the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month. The class runs from 6:45 pm to 7:45 pm as the library closes at 8:00 p.m. These classes are not recorded. We encourage you to join us in person, so your individual questions get answered. New Gardening with the Masters classes will be announced here as they are created.

*September 25, 2023 – Beekeeping For Beginners Speaker – Bruce Burnham*

*October 23, 2023 – Strawbale Gardening – Cathryne Richards*

*November 27, 2023 – Poisonous Plants – Sandra Liakus*

### Pre-recorded Classes

Courtesy of COVID, we adapted some of our in-person classes to Zoom, recorded them and they are available at <https://sandovalmastergardeners.org/gardening-classes/gardening-with-the-masters-online/>

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## Congratulations, Loren and Ben! – SEMG County Fair Winners

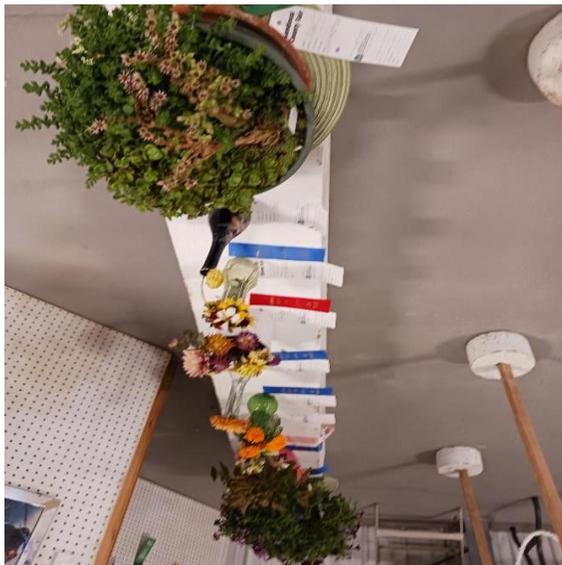


Congratulations to our Sandoval Extension Master Gardeners for placing in the open senior category of the indoor exhibit at the Sandoval County Fair. Loren Mainz won first place in the cherry tomato class with his Sweet Million Hybrid tomatoes (*Solanum lycopersicum*; seed from R.H. Shumway’s Seeds). He placed second in the carrot class with his Danvers 126 (seed from Burpee’s Seeds). He grows in raised beds, and his carrots and tomatoes are still going strong. He leaves the carrots in the ground until needed.



Photos by Loren Mainz

Ben Wakashige submitted nine flower entries. He won blue ribbons for his begonia, coneflowers, petunia, marigolds, and dahlia "Prince of Orange". His begonia was also named Best of Show. His dahlia "Clearview Daniel" won a red ribbon, and his succulents won a green ribbon. Ben says he hopes more SEMGs will submit next year and asks that you contact him if you have any questions.



Photos: Ben Wakashige

## Safe Gardening

*Avid gardeners tout the benefits of gardening, which are many. It's easy to forget gardening also can be hazardous, at least until the gardener is in a doctor's office with an injury or condition that needs professional support. In April, we covered hand safety; in May, avoiding sunburn; In June, preventing heat stroke. In July, various kinds of skin cancer and August covered muscle cramps, sprains and strains.*

### Tips To Prevent Common Garden Injuries

[MedStar.Org](https://www.medicinenet.com/medstar.org/)

Here are eight simple tips for preventing common gardening injuries:

- 1 Wear gloves at all times.** This will protect your hands and fingers from cuts and scrapes and potentially harmful bacteria.
- 2 Wear protective clothing.** Always wear long sleeves, long pants, and sneakers to protect your arms, legs, and feet from insect and spider bites, as well as cuts and scrapes. Additionally, wearing hats and sunscreen can protect your skin from prolonged exposure to the sun.
- 3 Remove rings.** By taking off your rings, you eliminate the chance of ring avulsion\*.
- 4 Don't sit back on your knees.** Sitting back on your knees stresses knee joints and requires you to use your hands and wrists to stabilize. It also requires your hands and wrists to bear your weight while shifting from kneeling to standing. Try using a garden stool or bench.
- 5 Use good body mechanics,** especially when picking up heavy items like mulch or topsoil. You can prevent upper extremity and back injuries by distributing the weight, using your legs to lift, and keeping the load close to your body when lifting. Remember not to bend at the waist. You can also use a wagon or wheelbarrow to transport heavy loads.
- 6 Safely store your tools.** Store sharp blades facing down and keep tools out of reach of children.
- 7 Don't drink alcohol.** Avoid alcoholic beverages while gardening or mowing the lawn. Save the beer or cocktail for when your yard work is done.
- 8 Take breaks.** Stretch before, during, and after your yard work. Try to minimize sustained periods of repetitive motions, which can lead to tennis elbow and tendonitis.

**\* A ring avulsion is an injury to one of your fingers that happens when a ring you're wearing is suddenly pulled with a strong force. Can be a very serious injury – requiring amputation of the finger.**

## HELP WANTED #1 – Corrales Harvest Festival

The **Kiwanis Club of Corrales** is looking for volunteers to help with parking and clean up at the Harvest Festival Sept 30 - Oct 1.

The money they raise provides grants (to kids projects and community organizations like Sandoval Extension Master Gardeners).

If you have time to help it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Lynn Martinez at [lynn.martinez@cblegacy.com](mailto:lynn.martinez@cblegacy.com) for additional information

## HELP WANTED #2- Help Line Coverage

We still have need of volunteers to cover the **Helpline**. This is online, from the comfort of your own home. Each week of coverage earns 10 hours of Outreach credit. For more information, contact Penny Lindgren or Sandra Liakus via their email or phone numbers in the member roster.

## HELP WANTED #3 Co-Chair Needed

**Project is Sandoval County Administrative Building Plant Watering/Maintenance**

Backup for watering schedule

Assistance analyzing plant problems.

Help resolve plant issues in the building.

Annual repotting coordination

**Contact Michelle Wittie if you are interested.**

## HELP WANTED #4 Co-Chair Needed

SANDOVAL SEED SHARE PROJECT

Seek seed donations from large companies.

Analyze seeds for viability in Sandoval County.

Assist in packaging and distributing seeds.

**Contact Michelle Wittie if you are interested.**

