



Green Valley Gardeners

A Service Club Made Up of Gardeners

SAND N SEEDS

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT – Bill Berdine

The 2016 Winter/Spring Seminars got a kick start from Tony Sarah's (Magic Garden Nursery) presentation on propagation "Nature's Give Away." Mr. Sarah's presentation, for our region of Arizona, was thorough and directly on target. I anticipate that the January 14 seminar, by long-term Green Valley resident Les Hayt, on "Care of Roses" will continue our stellar seminar series.

I want to reiterate my outreach to both new and on-going members to actively pursue volunteer time with one of our existing committees. At this time, we are very much in need of expertise in continuing education with the Seminar Committee. Another area of need is computer technology with an emphasis on both data and web site management. With the increase in membership to nearly 350, the Membership Committee needs additional assistance in maintaining its database and lines of communication. Our web site (www.greenvalleygardeners.com) has been managed for nearly six years by a GVG member who is requesting assistance in not just maintaining but updating the site. Anyone with a background in website management is encouraged to contact me (bill@greenvalleygardeners.com 520-904-9020) or (raydine@greenvalleygardeners.com 520-625-0961). With the increase in membership and dues income, the financial management of the Green Valley Gardeners is in need of updating. We have benefitted from significant grant awards for Desert Meadows Park and the Arid Garden, however this income does not have a guarantee of renewal and we need to focus on the income we get from membership and donations. We will continue to seek grant funding and anyone with expertise in grant writing is encouraged to contact me. The next couple of years may well be a time for "belt tightening" and we can use expertise in financial accounting/management.

If you have not already renewed your membership, please do as soon as possible. Be sure to note, on the renewal form, what committees and/or projects you would like to participate in this coming year.

I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible and I am willing to meet with you individually or in groups of specific areas of interest. Take care and be sure to sharpen your hula hoe as it won't be long before spring weeds will be with us.

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE – Thom Metcalf, Raydine Taber & Mark Thompson

As Bill mentioned above, "...the financial management of the Green Valley Gardeners is in need of updating. ...we can use expertise in financial accounting/management." If you are interested in

working with us to update our financial processes, procedures and reports, please contact: Raydine @ rs_taber@msn.com or 520-625-0961 or Mark Thompson bluehillfarm@metrocast.net or 520-625-0384.

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MEMBERSHIP – Judy Christensen

January is *MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL* time!

HOW MUCH?

Dues remain the same this year, \$25 for individuals and \$35 for a household. New members who have joined since September 1, 2015 are paid-up through 2016. For the rest of us, renewal fees are due by the end of January.

FORM CHANGES?

You should have received a renewal form pre-printed with the information provided last year. Take a minute to review it for corrections or changes.

- If you reside somewhere else during certain months, please let us know your other address. Our election mailing is sent in early October; it will reach you in a timely manner if mailed directly to you.
- Please check all projects/ committees that pique your interest. Let us know so the chair can contact you and answer any questions you may have about possible involvement. It's also a wonderful way to learn from experienced gardeners and meet great fellow gardeners.

HOW TO PAY?

You can pay your dues at a Thursday Seminar during January, starting at 9 AM. Credit Card (Visa or Master Card) payment will be accepted. You can also drop off your envelope and check or cash at the Membership Table and save the postage. Alternatively, you can mail your renewal form with a check to our PO Box listed at the bottom of the form using the pre-addressed envelope enclosed with your renewal.

NEW MEMBERS IN DECEMBER

We are excited to welcome **10** new members. CeCe Jennings, member of Brownie Troop 471, and her mom, Melissa are joining the group gardening at Allen Ogden Community Garden. Also sending in their membership applications were David and Paula Perino, Carl and Kathy Rust, Lynett Westergard and Chris Gibson. Thanks to each for your support and interest in Green Valley Gardeners.

Our **MEMBERSHIP** at the end of 2015 numbered an all-time high **346!**

MEMBERS SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

MEMBERS' ACTIVITY COMMITTEE –

Marita Ramsay and Cathy Merritt, Co-chairs

Our January Potluck at La Posada will be held on Saturday the 9th. The room can accommodate 60 and as of now we have exceeded that number. We are exploring other venues such as GVR which have larger facilities for future events.

Our Members' Activity for Thursday, February 18th, will be a visit to Tucson Botanical Gardens. We will see the Butterfly Magic event, tour the Gardens and enjoy lunch at their Café Botanica. Signup sheets will be available at the seminars beginning the middle of January.

PROJECT UPDATES

ARID GARDEN – Mary Kidnocker

Because two major holidays were on Fridays, the volunteers got a much appreciated winter vacation at the year's conclusion!

With the new year will come a season of much trimming, tree pruning, removal of damaged plant parts, raking of fallen leaves, and pickup of winter wind debris. February and March are particularly busy times in the desert garden.



The balance of our White Elephant 2014 Grant has been used to hard-surface the front entry pathway. This will keep loose gravel (which must then be swept and gathered) from being carried into the street. The plan is to continue upgrading the paths until all are more predictable underfoot and safer for our handicapped visitors and volunteers.

Besides occasional sparring hummingbirds, the garden has acquired a certain winter quiet. If you yearn for a bit of tranquility after the hectic holidays, stop in and sit a bit... remember that it is your garden. Have a healthy, happy 2016!

HISTORIC CANOA RANCH (HCR) –

Jack Davis, Raydine Taber & the GVG volunteer team.

Finishing out 2015, along with adding some winter color to the window planter in Junior's house, we added a small decorated pine tree and three poinsettia plants for the fireplace. This provided a

festive touch for the luncheon held by Pima County, department of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation for the volunteers at Historic Canoa Ranch. Volunteers received certificates of appreciation, group photos were taken, speeches were short and lunch was enjoyable allowing us to meet and exchange information with the docents and other volunteers. Another new facet to Junior's house is the addition of 3 heaters in the main living area. This is a big help to keep all our plants alive during the cold weather.

We would like to extend many thanks to our winter/spring volunteer maintenance team. Each of you brave the cold, wet weather to make sure our gardens are in condition to be viewed by the public and you continually cover and uncover the frost cloths to keep everything from freezing in the below freezing nights. We could not do it without you. THANK YOU.

ALLEN J. OGDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN - George Stone, 520-343-9690

Several of the Ogden gardeners are able to garden through these winter months by the use of frost cloth. The other day, I peeked under the cloth of Jerry and Linda Weibe's raised bed and saw all those great veggies growing. I walked back to the Imagination patio and looked at the thermometer and it read 33 degrees. It was 10:00 am. I was so jealous. Jerry & Linda just prove that gardening can be done if you REALLY want to. We just have to put out the effort and do some planning.

We had a great year in 2015. I won't go into all the accomplishments but you must come to the Ogden to see for yourself. Let me provide you a short list of what we are doing for 2016:

- 2016 onion sales: Close to 2,000 onions were planted in November. Harvest date will be early May with sales beginning April 1st. Watch for onion information at all of our seminars.
- Completion of our 2015 project with grant funds. Purchase of much needed hand tools.
- Purchase additional sling type chairs.
- Purchase of a cabinet for the Imagination center

The onion sale is a fundraising project that benefits the entire club, so your participation, whether it's a buyer or a volunteer will be greatly appreciated. Areas for you to volunteer include:

- sales
- H
- harvesting
- prep-work
- advertising

Be sure to renew your membership as soon as you get it. Thanks for gardening with us.

OGDEN GARDEN, GARDEN GIRLS - Girl Scout Troop 471 – Brandi McAnnally

A new year is upon us and as we look forward to 2016, we can't help but look back on all the amazing things we have done in 2015. As a troop, we earned our first aid certificates and made first aid kits for families in need, hiked in Madera Canyon and found letterboxes hidden along the trail, learned about fire safety and how to cook over a campfire. The girls went to camp for 3 days and learned all about water and its amazing power and how important it is to our world. This sparked the interest in planning our 2017 trip to the Grand Canyon! We also joined in 2 local parades, the White

Elephant Parade and the Sahuarita Light Parade, in which the Troop won Brightest Twinkle! The girls were so excited to be a part of such great traditions within our community.

But most of all, we have learned so much through gardening over this last year. There was excitement when the carrots and radishes first started to pop out of the ground. I was not sure any of them were going to make it to harvest time as the girls keep eating them while we tried to thin them. We harvested lettuce and brought it to camp with us. There was amazement when we harvested our potatoes. The girls had so much fun digging through the dirt to find all the little potatoes and the bounty of tomatoes and basil that we had kept us stocked on tomato sauce all summer long. We even managed to get a couple of very sweet watermelons which were eaten before we even left the garden!

As we start this New Year we are planning on many more projects and planning to have regular meetings in the Ogden Garden throughout the year and all summer long. Of course, none of this is possible without our annual cookie sale, which starts January 16th. If you would like to stop by and say HI, the girls will be in the Ogden garden Wednesday, January 27th from 4:00-6:00 pm. We will have cookies available for purchase that evening to help support the girls and their adventures. We also make deliveries. If you would like us to deliver cookies, feel free to submit your order to me (Brandi McAnnally) or Denise, our cookie mom, by e-mailing brandimcanally@gmail.com or call/texting at 520-820-2592 or 520-609-5117. Our cookie lineup this year is: Thin Mint (Chocolate/Mint), Samoa (Coconut/Carmel), Tag-a-long (Chocolate/Peanut Butter), Do-Si-Dos (Peanut Butter Sandwich), Trefoil (shortbread), Savannah Smiles (Powder Sugar Lemon), and our Gluten Free Toffee Tastics will be back again this year. All cookies are \$4 except the Gluten Free which is \$5. We hope to see you around the garden.



DESERT MEADOWS PARK - Chuck Parsons

Two years under the garden club stewardship.

As we complete two years at Desert Meadows Park, we revel in the compliments we receive from park visitors. A lot has been accomplished in this time, resulting in a fully functional park.

We have spent over \$31,000 of garden club funds on this project, plus our members have contributed thousands of volunteer hours. In addition, the community has contributed to the effort. We have received generous grants and \$20,000+ in contributions from the public. To date \$150,000+ has been invested. An impressive monetary number, but the time volunteered to make this happen, wow! More than 9000 volunteer hours have been donated to the project.

We established three goals for the park:

1. Produce healthy, fresh produce. We have 44 garden plots in our community garden, each producing both cool season and warm season produce. Over 3000 pounds of fresh produce have been donated to our local food banks.
2. Provide a place for residents of our community to get exercise. We have created multiple walking paths that are in continual use. The trail along the east side is officially a segment of the Anza Trail and connects the park by walking path to other neighborhoods. We have lined this trail with native plants providing bird habitat.
3. Create places for social interaction. We created a picnic pavilion nestled within a butterfly/hummingbird garden. Then we established a second picnic area nestled among mesquite trees in the character of a barrio garden. Both are of these areas as well as a gazebo, a swing settee and well placed benches promote gathering spaces for park visitors. We are receiving requests to reserve the picnic areas for group gatherings – even a wedding has taken place.

The last of three Boy Scout Eagle community service projects was completed in December. Max Schmidt completed the storage bins that will be used to store gravel and mulch that we will use to maintain the park over time.



Max Schmidt building material storage bins as his community service project to earn his Eagle Scout award. Max is a member of the Sahuarita Boy Scout Troop 301.

Green Valley Gardeners received \$5000 from the Country Fair White Elephant in December. These funds will be used to refurbish and landscape the picnic Ramada near the parking lot.

PLOT HOLDERS FORUM

IN YOUR PLOT – JANUARY 2016 – Lorna Mitchell

COLD is the word on everyone's lips and our plants are not any happier than we are. Most of our cool season vegetable plants are alive but seem to be in suspended animation, not growing much over the last month. They should revive when the temperatures pick up a little. Irrigation plumbing has been particularly challenging with freezing water breaking pipes and connections. (Last month's article details how to protect your lines.) Visit your plot often to check for leaks and correct them to avoid flooding and unnecessary mud in walkways.

To be a gardener is to be an optimist. We have a new year before us and we dream of thriving plants and better harvests. Soil is the foundation of gardening and if you have bare ground, now is a good time to ensure nutrients for our plants later by digging in composted steer manure, peat moss, "veggie slurry" from our kitchen scraps, and balanced granular fertilizer. Keep the ground moist but not heavy wet.

January is a great time for searching seed catalogs to discover a new variety of vegetable you want to try. Choose varieties that do well in desert heat to avoid disappointment. Having those seeds in hand by the end of the month allows you to grow summer transplants (tomato, peppers, and eggplant) which are very economical and you have the exact kind of plant to suit your needs. Start seeds soon indoors; in small pots, yogurt cups, or egg cartons; just keep them warm. Make holes to allow for drainage and use fine textured potting soil or peat which is moistened well before planting. Transplant those babies into bigger pots as they grow, so they are strong by early April to go into the garden.

Not all seed sources provide the same quality seeds. One company I have found very consistent and helpful is Johnny's Selected Seeds at Johnnyseeds.com. Even though they are located in Maine, everything I have tried from them has done very well and they have a good selection. Check out the many educational videos on their website and be sure to get a catalog because it details growing information for every kind of plant which is a good resource. Keep enjoying the kale, turnips, collards, carrots, and beets as they seem to be doing fine. We'll all have cabbage soon!

Those are my plot thoughts for now, Happy gardening,

THE IOWA FARMER BOB AND, THE FARMER'S WIFE, LYNN SWAN

RAIN!!!

As I write this, it is raining hard (for Green Valley anyway); this week, we could get an inch or more. The springtime desert flower blooms should look good.

We are just starting to harvest winter greens from our raised bed. So far a little arugula and kale have made it into our salads. There is a bit of mixed lettuce plants that are about ready to join the mix. The only thing that I have noticed negatively is our spinach seems to look a little wimpy with some yellowing of leaves. Does anyone have any thoughts on this? The numbers of cold nights that have occurred, so far this winter, certainly haven't helped. I have two little tomato plants that I bring in every night and they are starting to look promising (a couple of tomatoes are set) I'm sure that they will continue to make the trip inside and out for a few more weeks. I doubt if we are done with frost yet.

Have you been doing your planning for spring and summer? It's not too soon to get started on that. Lynn and I vacate the desert and head back home in mid-April. For that garden, I already have my seeds in hand. I'll probably start some cabbage plants plus a few other things, before we leave for Iowa. Our car looks a little like a traveling greenhouse. We had one cold night last year that we had to take three flats into the motel to avoid the chance of freezing plants. We did that one night in Santa Fe years ago when I froze a couple of tomato plants.

Seminars are starting this week so get to them if you can. The first one is about plant propagation which should be interesting. We can always pick up a tidbit or two that can help us with our gardening efforts.

Enjoy the rest of this chilly weather; it should start to warm up soon.

EDITORIALS

SAD NEWS – Robbie, the gentleman, from Prestige who visited the park multiple times a day on his mechanized wheelchair, died of an apparent heart attack yesterday (12/17/2015).

The Prestige staff told me his outings to the park and conversations with our volunteers were the highlight of his day. We invited Robbie to join our BBQ this year – the invitation had been special to him, I am told. - Chuck

Words From the Editor: Just a few words to say thank you for allowing me to be your Editor for something like five out of the last 6 years. I joined GVG in the fall of 2009 and shortly thereafter took over editing the Sand n Seeds newsletter. I believe it is time to relinquish the editing to someone who has new, creative ideas and time to continue evolving our presentation. This will also give me time, to quickly complete my Treasurer duties and my responsibilities on the Historic Canoa Ranch project. It's been fun but it's time to move on with some of my other interests.
THANK YOU – Raydine



PETALS OF GIVING

Carnation is the more popular January flower but the other January flower is the **snowdrop**. The snowdrop, used to be considered bad luck due to the fact that it seemed to always grow in graveyards. Nowadays, it signifies hope and beauty.

DONATIONS RECEIVED IN DECEMBER: Chuck and Dana Parsons, \$100, DMP; Charles & Karen Lamb, patio pavers, DMP and John Hurst, patio columns, DMP.

CIRCLE YOUR CALENDAR

January 14th – Seminar, Care of Roses, Les Hayt, Desert Hills Rec. Ctr., 9:30 am to 10:30 am.

January 21st - Seminar, Caring for Cactus & Succulents, Mark Sitter, CPAC, 9:30 am to 10:30 am
Members only garden tour following seminar

January 28th - Seminar, Pruning: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly, Jack Kelly,
Desert Hills Rec. Ctr., 9:30 am to 10:30 am.

Demo at Desert Meadows Park after Seminar

February 4th – Seminar, Care of Stone Fruit Trees, Glenn Wright,
Desert Hills Rec. Ctr., 9:30 am to 10:30 am.

February 11th – Seminar, Rainwater Harvesting, an Introduction, Kendel Kroesen,
Desert Hills Rec. Ctr., 9:30 am to 10:30 am

February 18th – Members only tour: Tucson Botanical Gardens

Contact us: Green Valley Gardeners, P.O. Box 86, Green Valley, AZ 85622-0086 or, to send an email use the contact section on our website: <http://greenvalleygardeners.com>