Events & Activities

MG Association Meeting, Wednesday, June 15, Camp Verde, 6:30pm. See back page for program description.

Alta Vista Gardening Club, Prescott, fourth Tuesday of the month, 12:30pm. Call 928-443-0464 for location and information.

Prescott Area Gourd Society, third Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm, at the Smoki Museum.

Prescott Orchid Society, meets 3rd Sunday of the month, 2pm at the Prescott Library, call Cynthia for information. (928) 717-0623

Prescott Area Iris Society call 928-445-8132 for date and place information.

Verde Valley Iris Society call Janet Regner at 602-370-4836 or email her at jkregner@aol.com

Table of Contents

Picture Perfect . . . 1
Meet a MG-Betty Loos . . . 4
Chervil . . . 5
Zinnias . . . 6
MG Announcements . . . 7

My iris put on a spectacular display this spring. I would wander out to the yard several times a day just to see if anything new had opened up. For the most part my memory of the blooms will have to suffice but you can capture bits of your blooming experience with your camera. Just because you have beautiful flowers, though, it isn’t a slam dunk that the pictures you take will do the scene justice. In fact most people, even with the great cameras we have today, produce pictures that aren’t very good. It isn’t rocket science, though. Learn a few simple techniques and your photographs will improve by leaps and bounds. You will no longer have to say, “Well, it was a lot better in person.”

Number one rule! Learn how to use your camera! Even the simplest point and shoot has some settings. Learn what they do and play with them. The beauty of digital cameras is you don’t have to pay for film and wait a week to see your pictures! Especially learn about any close-up setting on your camera.

It’s the light! This may seem obvious but shoot when the light is right. Less obvious to most people is that full sun is not the right light! Shoot early morning or late afternoon. Cloudy, stormy days are also good times.

Sometimes you just shoot because you know that it’s now or never, but if you are shooting in your own garden, don’t do it in full sun. Full sun increases the contrast between shade and sunlit areas. Your photos will have areas that are way too dark and way too light. Flowers can get a little crazy in bright light. The colors will be washed out and there will be too much contrast between the highlights and shadows.

Use a tripod! Your hand isn’t as steady as you might think. A tripod holds the camera steady even with a long exposure.

Check out the new MG blog. More garden information, events and pictures.
http://yavapaigardener.blogspot.com
I miss using real film, the digital has solved a lot of problems but one thing has stayed the same, if you jiggle the camera when the shutter is open your photos will be out of focus and blurry. Tripods are especially important for close-up photography.

**Be adventurous!** Look at the flowers/garden from all angles. You can create interesting images if you shoot from ultra low or high positions. Don’t be afraid to hug the ground or get something to stand on. Move in close, look for patterns, interesting elements.

**It isn’t just the foreground!**

One of the biggest mistakes people make is they pay no attention to the background. You may have the most gorgeous flower in the world, but if it’s hard to see because of clutter in the background it’s not going to impress anyone. Blur out the background or move around to a place where the impact is lessened. If you are taking a picture of a large area, make it interesting! (See the section on composition.) Sometimes the background can be interesting, a single flower against a wall or in an odd place. Just watch out for the clutter. Take a spray bottle of water with you. (It doesn’t rain here enough to wait for that special moment.) The water droplets will add interesting element.

**Think About Composition.** This is the art of deciding what to include and what not to include and the position of elements within the photograph. These are guidelines and not rules:

**Simplicity.** What is the interesting thing you are trying to show? Is it the flower or the tree trunk next to it? Is it one flower or the entire yard. The more you focus on the interesting element, the more interesting your photograph.

**The Rule of Thirds.** If you have taken some sort of painting or drawing class you have probably come across this rule. Divide your picture into thirds horizontally and vertically. Your center of interest should be placed at the intersections of the lines. Not the center of the picture and not at the far edges. This is especially true if you have people in the picture. You want to give them room to walk; don’t make their next step out of the frame.

**Leading Lines.** Don’t put a telephone pole in the middle of your picture, especially if it isn’t what you want to focus on. If you do, everyone will focus on the telephone pole and not the most beautiful flower in the world. Don’t let straight lines dominate the image. Diagonals and curves are more interesting. Your eye tends to follow any lines in the pictures. It’s much more interesting if your eye travels across the photo rather than being sucked into that telephone pole in the middle.

**Balance.** Using the rule of thirds you don’t want to have the main feature centered, you want it off-center. But there also need to be balance in the photo.

**Framing.** Your photos will be more interesting if you have
framing elements. The tree at the edge, perhaps a portion of the wall. Good framing will naturally draw your eye to the main interest of the photo.

Don’t have people walking out of the frame. Give them some room to roam.

I can’t count the amount of time I’ve spent looking at endless bad photos. (Slide shows were big in my family.)

Walk around your subject, look and look again, wait for the right light and then shoot your picture.

There is no reason, especially with today’s easy-to-use camera, why you can’t have beautiful and interesting photos that people will actually enjoy looking at.
In late 2004, my husband and I moved from the Midwest to Arizona and I immediately became fascinated with desert vegetation. Although I was a modest gardener in Illinois, I was amazed at the plant variety and plant colors that abound in Arizona. Furthermore, recognizing the significance of water shortages in the arid desert, I also was drawn to understanding the importance of xeriscape landscaping practices.

When I enrolled in 2007 in a class titled “Gardening in the Verde Valley”, I met Jeannette Teets (Master Gardener), who is, in her own right, an active person in regional gardening. During the course, Jeannette discussed the Master Gardener program planned to be held in Cottonwood the coming year. Later that same year, at a social gathering, Janet Mansoldo (also a Master Gardener) added to my enthusiasm for the Master Gardener program. So I applied and was accepted into the 2008 class.

For me, the Master Gardener program feeds my fascination with desert landscape plants. Additionally, it never entered my mind to have a vegetable garden in Arizona. Arizona is a desert! You can imagine my surprise to find that a majority of the Master Gardener class were vegetable growers. Having grown up on a farm in Southern Illinois, I am not a novice to vegetable gardens. From our huge garden, we harvested and canned many vegetables, and consequently had produce for the entire year. I also participated in the Community Gardens program in the Chicago area where I lived during my professional life.

Gardening is easy in the Midwest! Just plant the seeds, wait for rain, keep the weeds under control and the vegetables abound. Here in Arizona, however, it is quite different. Major challenges include the intense sun, which must be shielded during the summer heat; the near freezing cold which requires a cold frame in the winter; the incessant little creatures (squirrels, chipmunks, pack rats, mice, bird,) and large creatures (deer and javelina) that so quickly find each little sprout. Never one to shrink from the challenge, I now have a small vegetable garden. Lettuce is my favorite vegetable. With a cold frame in the winter and a sun shade in the summer I can enjoy lettuce most of the year. I like knowing that my vegetables are pesticide-free.

I admit that I was surprised by the amount of science that was a part of the Master Gardener class. My background is in History/Social Sciences and Guidance and Counseling, and I had not taken science courses for many years. During the course, I found myself studying a lot, refreshing knowledge long left dormant in my brain. A very pleasant discovery in the Master Gardener class was to find a former student of. I enjoyed being reacquainted with Donna O’Rourke.

As a result of the Master Gardener program, my interest in landscape plants has only grown, and it remains strong. I am very grateful each day for the astounding beauty of the native vegetation. I especially enjoy creating an environment that attracts butterflies, hummingbirds and my favorite, the very beautiful and shy orioles. We have added plants that are adapted to the Arizona climate, especially low water usage plants.

One of the most appealing elements of the Master Gardener program is the opportunity to interact with and learn from other people with similar interests. One opportunity I enjoy is staffing the Master Gardener table at the Farmer’s Market, where interaction with the public expands my learning contacts. I also really enjoyed being a class coordinator for the Master Gardener 2010 class. Currently I am a mentoring two members of the 2010 Master Gardener class.

Attracted by the Master Gardener Garden Tour in the Verde Valley, in 2009 I became a member of the Planning Committee and in 2010 was recruited to be the Chair of the Committee. My own interaction with the gardeners met on these Tours has allowed me to employ many of their techniques in my own gardening practices (vermiculture, growing artichokes and composting).

Gardeners’ enthusiasm is infectious. At the present time, I am Chair of the Steering Committee for the 2011 Highlands Garden Conference.

The Master Gardener program has broadened my knowledge in many ways, while providing an opportunity to interact with the public and to establish new friendships. Through this interaction I am enriching my life by sharing with and learning from others.
Never heard of it? Not surprising. It isn’t something you can find in most nurseries or even much in Arizona as it prefers a damper and cooler environment than most of us have. With the belief that learning something new (not necessarily useful) is always a good thing, let me introduce chervil.

Chervil is related to parsley and is sometimes called garden chervil. It is a member of the carrot family. The plant has hairy stems with pale green, lacy leaves and small, white flowers in the spring. There are three varieties, plain and curly and turnip-rooted chervil. Turnip-rooted chervil has very thick roots. It was a popular vegetable in the 19th century but fell out of favor and has been nearly forgotten except in France where it is still used.

The plant is native to the Caucasus (The Caucasus is a geopolitical region at the border of Europe and Asia) but thanks to the Romans it was spread through most of Europe where it has become naturalized.

The French use garden chervil as one of the essential ingredients of “Fines Herbs” (chives, tarragon, parsley and chervil) and bouquets garnis. The plant has a faint scent of anise. It isn’t sold as a dry herb because the flavor is so delicate. It should be used fresh. The flavor is described as a cross between anise and parsley but does not stand up to drying or high heat. If you decide to cook with it, try it in eggs, cream cheese and herb sandwiches, salads, salmon, young spring vegetables and mashed potatoes. The famous Bernaise sauce is flavored with chervil.

Chervil has been used for medicinal purposes since the beginning. (Never use botanicals for medicinal purposes without consulting your doctor. Just because it’s natural doesn’t mean it’s safe!) In the Middle Ages it was used as a diuretic and for cleaning the liver and kidneys, for jaundice, colic and dissolving blood clots. Other ailments it was used to treat include skin complaints, painful joints and inflamed eyes. Apparently it has even been used in gardens to repel slugs. Legend says that it can make you merry, sharpen your wits and bestow youth upon the aged and it symbolizes sincerity.

While I don’t expect anyone to find chervil growing wild in Arizona, if you do pick a wild plant you think is chervil be very careful. There are some look-alike poisonous plants, among them young hemlock.

If you want to give it a try in your garden I would find a shady place and direct seed. It has a long taproot so it is difficult to transplant. Since hot weather will cause it to go to seed quickly you might try planting in the fall. I also read that it does well in containers. Another source recommends pinching back the tops to cause it to bush out more.

You can find Chervil seeds:

The Cooks Garden
www.cooksgarden.com
1-888-457-9703
PO Box C5030
Warminster, PA 18974-0574

Swallowtail Garden Seeds
www.swallowtailgardenseeds.com
1-855-726-7333
122 Calistoga Road #178
Santa Rosa, CA 95409

Green Mayonnaise
Gourmet | November 2001

yield: Makes about 1 cup
Active time: 15 min., start to finish: 2 1/4 hr
In addition to being a great complement to the poached salmon, this mayonnaise is a good pair with shrimp, veal, or poached chicken breasts.

Ingredients
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon
3 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1 tablespoon chopped fresh chervil
2 teaspoons chopped fresh dill
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 cup mayonnaise
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Preparation
Pulse herbs in a blender with lemon juice and 1/2 cup mayonnaise until pureéd. Add remaining 1/2 cup mayonnaise, salt and pepper and blend well. Transfer to a bowl and chill covered at least 2 hours to allow flavors to blend.

Green mayonnaise can be chilled up to 1 day.
Zinnias are one of my favorite flowers. They are reliable summer bloomers that add bright green and brilliant colors even in July and August. Fashions come and go and it seems like zinnias may be coming back. I’m a bit late but the National Garden Bureau declared 2011 the year of the Zinnia. They never left my garden. In the language of flowers the zinnia represents “thoughts of absent friends” which is almost depressing when you think about it. I think they should mean something else because their bright colors really do brighten the day.

Zinnias originally came from Mexico. Most of the modern zinnias come from two wildflowers, Zinnia elegans (common zinnia) and Zinnia augustifolia (narrowleaf zinnia.) Along with dahlias, sunflowers and morning glories, zinnias were cultivated by the Aztecs. Not surprisingly the Spanish took them to Europe, introducing them in 1796. From there they made the trip back across the Atlantic to North America where colonial settlers planted them. The name zinnia comes from Johann Gottfried Zinn, an 18th century botanist and physician. Zinn was director of the The botanical gardens at the University of Gottigen. His claim to fame, though, is the work he did on the anatomy of the eye.

Zinnias are a small genus with 20 species of annuals and perennials. Over the years zinnias have been thoroughly hybridized, giving us a wide range of colors and shapes. The first zinnias had small flowers and weren’t a big garden flower until the mid-19th century. That was when the first double flower was introduced in France, although it probably came from the West Indies. In the 1920’s the zinnia became a garden flower when the first dahlia-like flowers were introduced. It was a natural mutation that a grower found in his fields. Another big step in creating new varieties came about when, in a Burpee field, a flower was found that had only female flowers. This plant allowed the creation of new hybrids.

Colors reflect the rainbow except for blue. Size of the blooms can range from dinner plate to quarter-sized. The blooms can be singles or multi-petaled. You can create an entire bed of zinnias and have as much variety as if you had used twenty different flowers. There is a bonus to planting zinnias—they attract butterflies.

This is an easy plant to grow. You rarely see them as bedding plants so seeds is the way to go. Toss seeds out once all frost is passed. They need full sun, or mid-day shade in the hottest areas. Cover the seeds with a thin layer of soil or compost. Water. That’s pretty much it. Zinnias hate wet leaves! Water at the soil level. Don’t use a sprinkler or a hose on them. Once in a great while won’t hurt them, but they really need soil-level watering. Most zinnias have strong stems so they likely won’t need staking. Try them in containers also. The flowers are great for cutting. Remove the leaves before putting the stems in water as they won’t hold up and will create a decaying mess quickly.

There are plenty of hybrids available but modern versions of the original species can be a part of your garden also.

Zinnia peruviana has tiny flowers in soft colors. These are great compliments to a number of other flowers like yarrow, coneflower and salvias. The flowers dry on the stem perfectly making them useful for dried arrangements.

Zinnia augustifolia has short stems which aren’t good for cutting but the short size of the plants make them great in borders or for the front of beds. They will bloom all summer long until frost, a real bonus in our climate. These types seem to be resistant to powdery mildew.
**MG Announcements**

**Fiscal Year Hours**
June 30th ends the fiscal year. Please be sure all your hours from January through June are submitted by July 5th.

**Monsoon Madness**
Help Needed (Thursday, July 7th to Saturday, July 9th) - We need two more cashiers for first shift Saturday (7-10:30), two more people to take apart/put together tools first shift (7-10:30) Saturday and Thursday, (8-12:00), more general volunteers for first shift (6-10:30) Saturday, three more volunteers for pricing (Thursday, 12-5:00), four more volunteers for set-up Friday, 1-3:00, and 2 more volunteers to help with MG information table—one per shift Saturday (7-10:30 and 10:30-2). Contact Missy Sandeen, msandeen@bullerinetworks.com, 771-9856.

Reminder – let Cathy Michener know what you plan to donate, ccaam@cableone.net, 541-9341.

Empty pots are available in the Camp Verde Extension Office. If you need pots in the Prescott area contact Mary Barnes, mcbarn1@cableone.net, 583-0889.

**Verde Valley Farmers’ Market**
Where : Ramada next to Ft. Verde State Park, On Hollamon Street, off of Main Street, Camp Verde, AZ.

When : June 11 - October 1, 2011, Saturdays, 8:00 am - 12:00 noon

For more information call Jane Davie, Market Manger, 928-634-7077

Buy Local/ Eat Fresh

Photo by Joan Tyler

FROM THE EDITOR: Please send or email articles and announcements to the address below. All articles must be in my hands by the 10th of the month. Short announcements (no more than 2 or 3 lines) will be accepted until the 25th.

Nora Graf
PO Box 3652
Camp Verde, AZ  86322
mesquite2@hotmail.com
(928) 567-6703

Prescott
840 Rodeo Dr.
Building C
Prescott, AZ  86305
(928) 445-6590
FAX: (928) 445-6593

Camp Verde
2830 N. Commonwealth Dr
Camp Verde, AZ  86322
(928) 554-8999
MG Desk (928) 554-8992

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914 in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, James A. Christenson, Director, Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, The University of Arizona and Arizona Counties cooperating. The University of Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. The information given herein is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied. Any products, services, or organizations that are mentioned, shown, or indirectly implied in this publication do not imply endorsement by the University of Arizona.
Next Meeting

June 15, 6:30pm
Camp Verde

Our speaker for June is Barbara Predmore, owner of Alcantara Winery in the Verde Valley. Barbara will be talking about her wine making process, some of the challenges in growing grapes in this area, the various challenges all gardeners face - weather, critters, diseases, pests, and what makes certain locations in Arizona favorable for viticulture, growing table grapes in your garden, and information about her winery.