

# *Yavapai Gardens*

Master Gardener Newsletter

March 2004



## Events & Activities

MG Association Meeting, Wednesday, Mar 17, 6:30pm, Prescott. See address page for map.

Hines Color tour, March 26, at 10AM. Confirm your intention to attend by March 19th with the Prescott or Cottenwood office. See address page for more information

Yavapai Rose Society - March, 7:00 PM at the First Congregational Church on E. Gurley & Alarcon, Prescott. This months program is on vermiculture. For more information call Bob or Nancy at 771-9300,

Prescott Area Gourd Society, usually the third Wed of the month, 7pm, At the Prescott Library on Marina St.

Pond Club -an informal group that meets every couple of months, usually the 3rd week. Email [aquaticgardens@esedona.net](mailto:aquaticgardens@esedona.net) for more information.

Organic Gardening Club meets the 3rd Saturday of the month, 3pm, 2215 E. Aspen St, Cottonwood. For directions call 928-649-3451.

## Table of Contents

Planning Community Garden . . .	pg 1
Spring . . .	pg 3
MG Association News . . .	pg 6
Turnips . . .	pg 6
Educational Opportunities . . .	pg 7

## Planning and Planting a Healthy Community Garden

*or How to Design and Build a Better Phone Volunteer Area in the New Prescott Office*

by Pam Bowman

The move of The University of Arizona—Yavapai County Extension Office to a remodeled building at the Prescott Rodeo Grounds gave local Master Gardeners the opportunity to improve service to the community. Moving the office involved a process similar to that used when establishing a community garden. The best site is selected and prepared. Available healthy seeds and plants are inventoried. Laborers are recruited and assigned planting tasks. Seeds and plants are packed and transported to the site. The garden is laid out and planted and, as in all healthy gardens, work continues. Soon the community reaps the benefits.



### Site Selection and Preparation:

After soliciting and receiving input from office staff and Master Gardeners, County Extension Agent Jeff Schalaus selected an area close to the front door, providing visitors with easy access to Master Gardener phone volunteers. The area is large enough to accommodate two work areas, a computer, reference books, the University of Arizona (U of A) Bulletins and the all-important telephone. Illuminated by an overhead light and two windows, the inviting area was painted and carpeted.

### Seed and Plant Inventory:

In September, 2003, Mary Barnes laid out a plan for cataloguing all materials used by the phone volunteers. Then Mary, Marti Dodd, Kathy Grant-Lilley, Carol McNealy, Missy San-

deen, and Bev Turnbull began inventorying U of A Bulletins, Master Gardener reference books, miscellaneous reference materials, and administrative information. Mary developed spreadsheets that contain pertinent information on U of A Bulletins, pamphlets, and reference books. The spreadsheets include title, author, date, topic, where filed, and number of copies. The team has devoted more than 200 hours to this on-going project and volunteers will soon build a database to facilitate keeping the inventory current.



## **Before**

### **Bulletins:**

Under the leadership of Carol, team members located 528 bulletins in wall bins for visitors, in binders and boxes for phone volunteers, and on the U of A website. Older versions were culled and current versions were filed and inventoried. At the same time, Missy inventoried the Yavapai County Notes.

### **Reference Books:**

Working before and after the move, Marti completed the reference book inventory in early February. Marti will also inventory Jeff's reference books.

### **Miscellaneous Reference Materials:**

Mary collected all miscellaneous information and placed it in the Easy Reference Manual. The manual includes seed and plant sources, local slash dump locations and other information not covered in U of A Bulletins.

### **Administrative Information:**

Bev is consolidating all administrative information and direction into one Administrative Binder for phone volunteers.

### **Seed and Plant Packing and Transport:**

Bev Turnbull recruited volunteers and coordinated the move. Bev, Phil Young, Missy Sandeen, Bill Cart, Larry Combs, Kathy Grant-Lilley, Sal Sorrentino, Carol McNealy, Mary Barrens, Art Filipino and Marti Dodd carefully packed boxes for the move to the new site. Anita Flemming and others moved the more sensitive items, such as computers, the afternoon before the boxes, files and furniture were moved.

### **Seed and Plant Locations and Planting:**

When the move was complete, Beverly Emerson, Anita and Bev Bostrom helped a number of phone volunteers set up the area now occupied by the Master Gardener phone volunteers. Volunteers unpacked boxes and were soon ready for business.

### **The Garden:**

Thanks to the efforts of Jeff and his staff and the numerous volunteers, the Prescott office now has an effective and efficient phone volunteer area. The phone volunteers have a well-organized area that simplifies finding information and providing that information to the community.

## **After**



# Spring

by Nora Graf



Did you notice it's early spring? I'd like to imagine it's warmer or at least by the time this comes out, it will be. Is it just me or was this winter colder than the last few? You should be gearing up your gardening efforts by now.

Life has been a bit tough for me lately, so haven't accomplished much. Didn't get my seed orders out, nor did I order the raspberries I wanted. Have a few cool-weather crops growing in the greenhouse but not as many as I should. It's probably not going to be one of my best springs. The good part is there is still time to do summer stuff. There's tomatoes, squash, peppers and corn. There is still time to build a couple more raised beds and there is still time to throw out marigold and zinnia seeds to brighten the yard.

When I talk to new residents of the Valley, I sometimes tell them that gardening here is a mixed blessing. Read on.

## Seasonal Gardening

The Verde Valley has been blessed by a wonderful climate for gardening. This is a good/bad situation. The good news is you can garden year round; the bad news is you can garden year round. If you have moved from a place where late September means you are cleaning up your garden, anticipating the first frost, and then by November have "tucked" the garden away for the winter, you might not appreciate having to weed in January. But, if you feel that life isn't complete if something isn't growing, this is the place to be. We have two major gardening seasons. One is less intensive—the cool season. The other is full-blown, full-out throttle of gardening mania—the warm season. Both flowers and vegetables have their favorite season and some live through both.

## Cool-season gardening

Cool-season vegetables are grown for their roots, leaves and stems and sometimes for immature flowers. Plants

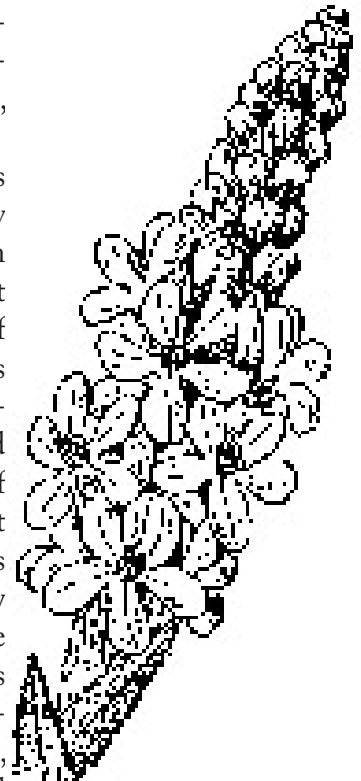
like garlic, cabbage, lettuce, broccoli and cauliflower are examples of cool-season plants. Peas are one of the exceptions to these; they can be planted in the fall and over-wintered or planted in the early spring. Some cool season plants can be planted twice a year, early spring and late summer, so you can squeeze in two or more crops. They will grow more slowly in the cooler parts of the year but they will grow.

Flowers that elsewhere grow all summer long may prefer our early spring and fall climates. Pansies, daffodils, tulips and snapdragons are examples. Pansies especially prefer cool weather—when it gets hot they succumb quickly. Snapdragons will continue to grow year round but usually just bloom in the early spring. Snapdragons, which most people grow as an annual, may grow as a perennial here. Many bulbs, like daffodils and tulips, need to be planted in the fall and then are some of the first blooms of the year. Geraniums quit blooming when it reaches 80°F. A few herbs do better in cooler temperatures. For example, dill is pretty much finished by June, as is coriander. Fennel will grow year round but seems to look its best early in the season.

## Warm-season gardening

These sun-lovers need the heat to bear fruit. They need warm soil and short days to germinate but need long days and high temperatures to set and ripen fruit. The tomato is a prime example of a warm-season vegetable. Other vegetables would be peppers, eggplant, beans, squash and melons.

Spring flowers have been a mainstay of poetry, art, even garden planning, but there are plenty of hot-weather plants that just love the summers. Zinnias and marigolds are two of the most familiar, but cosmos, sunflowers and calendulas grow well throughout the summer. Most herbs prefer summer temperatures, also. Sage, thyme, oregano and



mints are summer growers, although they will overwinter.

### **Switch-hitters**

There is no hard and fast line between some warm- and cool season-vegetables and flowers, some overlap, the seasons depending on variety. Lettuce can be grown year-round. Generally, they prefer cooler weather but there are varieties available that will grow during the warmer months. Some onions prefer the winter; other varieties will grow through the summer.

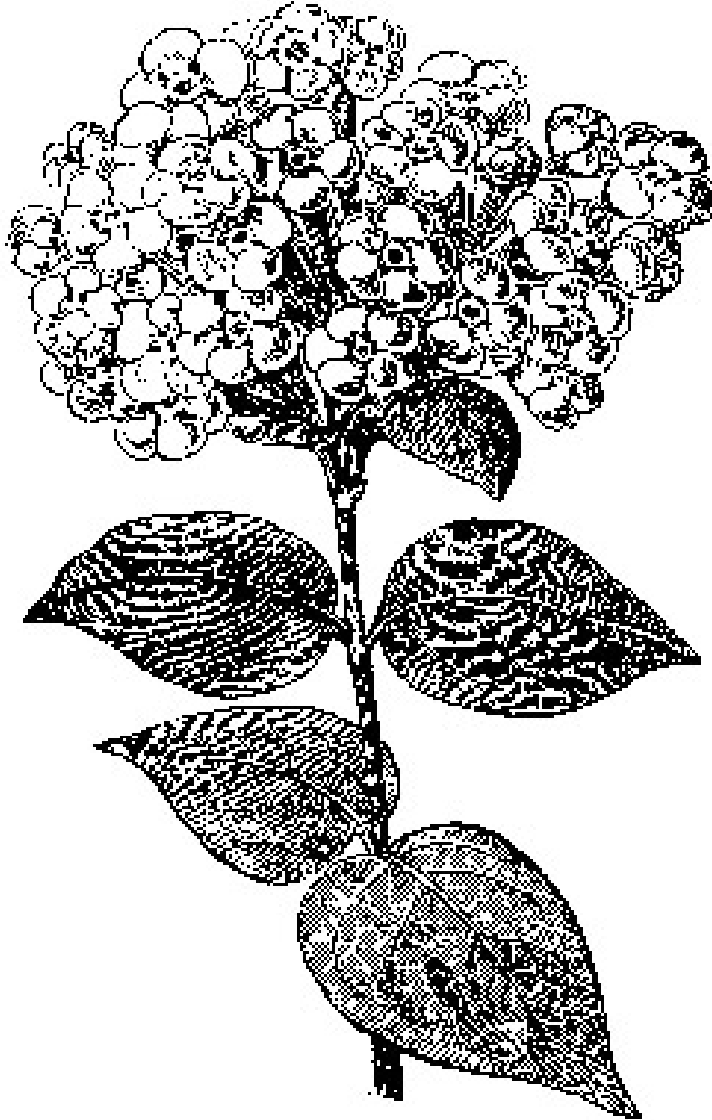
### **Verde Valley Gardening**

In the Verde Valley, warm weather plants shouldn't really go in until after the first of May. You can circumvent the weather by using wall-a-waters or cover plants. Just remember, the cooler the temperatures, the slower the plant will grow, so planting early may be of no real benefit over waiting a couple of weeks. Plant seeds only after the soil is warm enough to promote germination. Squash, corn, melons, gourds and pumpkins really need warm weather for them to take off. If temperatures are too cool, the seeds may rot before they germinate.

Cool-season plants can go in as early as April. Seeds can sprout in cooler temperatures and young plants can tolerate freezing weather. By the time the temperatures start going up, they are ready to pick or simply be tossed into the compost pile if they bolt. The great thing is that another crop can be planted in August, so the plant is maturing during the cooler fall weather. They will grow through the fall and even through the winter, providing you with nearly year round leafy greens and carrots.

Garlic, some onions, even peas and varieties

of vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower will overwinter. They don't need any protection and water use is low until the weather starts to warm. For example, garlic can be planted anytime between September and November. It will send up a few leaves while the temperatures are still warm but when it turns cold, it will appear to be doing nothing. As temperatures warm however, the plant will actively start to grow again and is ready for harvest in May or June.



Some varieties will “bolt” in warm weather. Bolting is the process where something we grow for leaves or roots, for example lettuce and turnips, under the right conditions will send up a flowering stalk. The appearance of the flowering stalk is really the end of growing that plant to eat. The plant is expending nearly all its energies to produce the flowers and it will sometimes cause flavor changes. The leaves or roots also start to die back or become tough and unpalatable. Bolting is generally initiated by warming temperatures. Descriptions of some varieties will have information on it being slow to bolt, that they tolerate warm weather. These are varieties that could be grown longer in warm weather. This means that, as the weather warms, the lettuce you planted a bit late may last longer.

Warm-season types include tomatoes, peppers, sweet potatoes, okra, tomatillos, squash, melons, corn, beans, gourds, pumpkins, cucumbers, sunflowers, zinnias, most herbs, marigolds, petunias, salvia, nicotianas, calendalas, cosmos.

Cool season types include lettuce, turnips, beets, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, garlic, kohlrabi, chard, leeks, greens of various types, peas, spinach, rutabagas, radishes, kale, cabbages, dill, pansies, snapdragons, nasturtiums, poppies, sweet peas.



### **What to look for on a package of seeds or in catalog descriptions:**

**Seed packets** should have all of the following information on them, although they may not. If the packet says “plant after danger of frost is past,” it means the seed will not

germinate unless the soil has reached approximately 70°F. This plant is susceptible to freezing so if you are transplanting young plants, they might not survive a late frost.

**When Planting seeds** a general rule of thumb is to plant the seed to a depth 4 times the thickness of the seed. For the seed to germinate, soil temperatures should be 50-70°F for cool season plants. You can plant outside in early spring two to three weeks before last frost. If soil temperature needs to be 70°F it is a warm season plant. It may also say plant two to three weeks after last frost.

Seed packets should also say how long it takes for seed to germinate and how long it takes the plant to mature. 40-60 days is a very short-lived plant, 100+ days will need lots of warm weather.

The packet may also include information on the water and sun needs of the plant, or other tips.

### **Look for phrases like**

Grows well in spring or fall (cool-season plant.)

Heat resistant (a cool-season plant that will tolerate warmer temperatures.)

Plant 2 to 3 weeks before last frost (cool-season plant.)

Plant 2 to 3 weeks after last frost (warm-season plant.)

### **Catalogs**

Catalogs are often less informative than the seed packets. The business of the catalog is to convince you that they have the best seeds, the best varieties and they are the ones you should buy from. They generally focus on a description of the plant. In catalogs, all plants yield fabulous, perfect fruits and vegetables but they might not be the best variety for our area. Experiment until you find something you like and that grows well.

### **Terms to look out for:**

**Hardy**—generally indicates the plant can grow in a variety of conditions.

**Head holds for long period**—in lettuces and cabbages means the plant doesn’t bolt with the first hint of warm weather.

**Uniform**—with some varieties you may get a variety of shapes and sizes of fruit. If the word “uniform” is used the fruit will generally all be the same shape and size.

**Heirloom**—normally applied to varieties that are older than 50 years. You can save the seed and get the same thing year after year as long as the plant isn’t cross-pollinated by another variety. You might also see the term “open-pollinated” which frequently means a heirloom variety but not always.

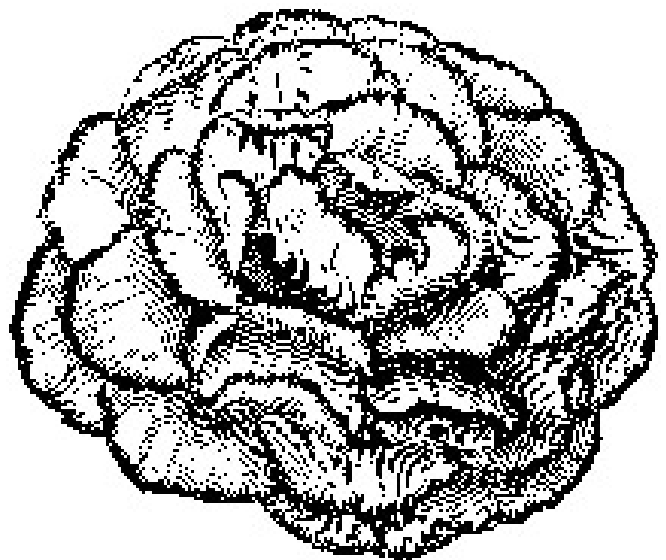
**Hybrid**—a cross between two varieties. Saved seeds will not necessarily produce the same characteristics of the original.

**Improved variety**—this is a hybrid that is crossed with another variety to improve some characteristic of the original variety.

**Storage variety or slicing type**—these descriptions are applied to vegetables. Storage variety indicates that they will hold up in storage for a long time, like cabbages and carrots (if stored in optimum conditions.) Slicing-type is best used immediately.

**Indeterminate**—used to describe tomatoes. It means that the plant continues to grow throughout the season, produce longer vines, flowers and fruits.

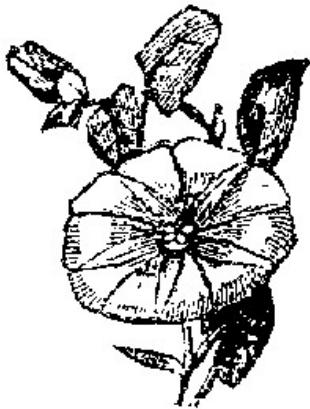
**Determinate**—these tomatoes generally stop growing at some point and produce a single large crop of tomatoes at once.



# MG Association News

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## Thank-you!!



The Camp Verde Wine and Pecan Festival is over and I would like to thank everyone who helped. It was a great success!

Thank-yous go to Connie Loving, Rosh Pruess, Kitty Schleuter, Brenda Pakay, Lisa Spear, Judy Bennett, Mary Barnes, Carol McNealy, Orville Gilmore, Marti Dodd,

Susan Moody, Jeanette Teets, Jane Davie, Ralph Young, Ginger Smith, Bob Burke, Jule "Butch" Weisenbeck, Lindsay Schramm, Paul Schnur, De-lores Johnson, Bev Emerson, Jeff Schalau and Dr. Mike Kilby. It was a great weekend and I hope everyone had fun.

**Nora Graf**

## Hines Color Tour

The second tour of Hines Color will be on March 26th, at 10AM. Please confirm your intention to attend by March 19th with the Prescott and/or Cottonwood office. Hines Color is located in Chino Valley. Take Highway 89 north to Perkinsville Road. Turn east on Perkinsville Rd. Approximately one (1) mile out of town on the left side of the road. For additional information call Sal (928) 717-2558.



## Educational Opportunities

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### Watters Nursery

1815 Iron Springs Road  
Prescott 928-445-4159

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March 6-Getting Ready for Spring

March 13-Newcomers Clinic

March 20-Vendor Clinics

March 27-Growing Plants in High Altitudes

April 3-Using Herbs in the Landscape

April 10-Garden Visitors, Friend or Foe

### Master Gardener Meeting

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April-Elin Doehne-Wildflowers

### Garden Tours

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May 22-Sedona Garden Tour

### Desert Botanical Garden

Galvin Parkway

Phoenix 480-941-1225

[www.dbg.org](http://www.dbg.org)

Fee charged

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March 6-Anything But Yellow

March 9-Maguey, or Spanish for Agave

March 15-The Edible Landscape

March 22-The Basics of Hardscape

April 1- Butterfly Gardens

April 7-Contain Your Herbs

# Turnips

Consider the lowly turnip; ignored, forgotten and maligned, it isn't often seen in gardens anymore. It might be something to try as a change from the potato.

Turnips are descended from *Brassica rapa*, the oil seed turnip-rape. It is the same ancestor of Chinese cabbage. It is also related to ordinary cabbage, chinese mustard and radishes. A wild turnip still grows in Europe and Asia. It is a weedy annual or biennial. In North America, it was likely introduced as early as 1609 and since has become a common weed. The modern turnip is a fleshy round or oval taproot, although the Japanese have a carrotlike variety. The colors of the taproot flesh may be yellow, white, green or white topped with purple. Turnip greens are edible and in Europe they are a common spring green.

Growing turnips in our area is easy. Sow seeds in the garden in early spring. Keep seeds moist but not wet. After germination, thin four to five inches apart and keep the soil moist. From sowing to harvesting takes around 70 days. A second crop can be sown in August and September. These will be good for storage over the winter or overwinter directly in the garden. Harvest on the small side; they can get woody as they get bigger.

The most common variety is the Purple-top White Globe and Gilfeather, both heirloom varieties. But look for other varieties like Golden Ball, Snowball and Purple-Top Melon.

As with most members of the cabbage family there are pests, including flea beetles, but I have found few problems in growing them.

Rutabagas and turnips are sometimes confused but are unrelated. Rutabagas came from Scandinavia around the 1700's. Their flesh is golden colored and are sweeter than turnips.

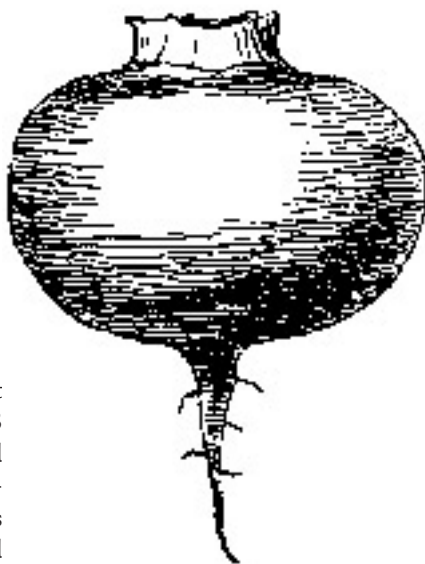
## **Dilled Gratin of Turnip and Carrot**

2 cups grated turnips  
salt  
7 Tb. butter  
3/4 cup fresh bread crumbs  
2 cups grated carrot  
1/2 tsp. sugar  
1 Tb. chopped fresh dill  
Freshly ground pepper  
3/4 cup heavy cream

Sprinkle the grated turnip with salt and set aside for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, melt 3 tablespoons butter, saute bread crumbs and set aside. Squeeze water from turnip; combine with grated carrot. Melt 4 tablespoons butter in a saute pan add turnip, carrot and sugar. Turn heat to low; cover and cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover, stir in dill and salt and pepper to taste. Put turnip-carrot mixture in a buttered 1-quart oven proof dish. Pour on cream and top with the buttered bread crumbs. Bake in a preheated oven at 350°F for 30 minutes or until brown and bubbly. Top with grated cheese, if you would like.

Serves 4-6

From *The Victory Garden Cookbook* by Marian Morash



**FROM THE EDITOR: Please send or email articles and announcements to the address below. Long articles will go in as soon as possible, announcements must be in by the 15th of the month to be included.**

**Nora Graf  
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(928) 567-6703**

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jeff Schalauska". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeff Schalauska  
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Agriculture & Natural Resources  
email: jschalau@ag.arizona.edu

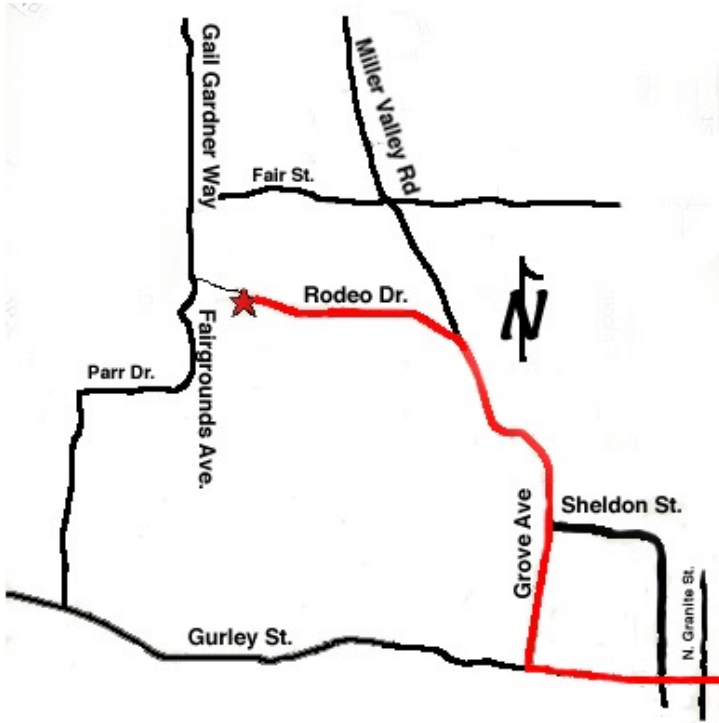
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FAX: (928) 646-9108**

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MG Association Meeting,  
March 17, 6:30pm  
The talk is going to be  
on Rose culture.

**840 Rodeo Dr.**



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