



Events & Activities

MG Assoc. Meeting, April 19, Wednesday, 6:30pm, Cottonwood. See address page. Speaker will be Andy Grosetta.

Yavapai Rose Society - April 17, 2:00 PM
First Christian Church, 1230 Willow Creek Rd, Prescott. Speaker Jeff Schalaus, \Noxious Weeds. Consulting Rosarians will answer questions. No charge, guests are welcome. For information call 771-9300.

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.

Pond Club -an informal group that meets every couple of months, Email aquaticgardens@esedona.net for information.

Organic Gardening Club meets the 2nd Saturday of the month, 10845 Cornville, Call 649-6099 for informaion.

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

Prescott Iris Society-see page 7

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University of Arizona Yavapai County Cooperative Extension

Yavapai Gardens

Master Gardener Newsletter

April 2006

Unexpected Moments

Nora Graf



There are unexpected moments and events that seem to burn a patch of brain cells. Something like burning a cd, so you replay the moment during your life. Visions that struck you so hard that you've carried the image for years even though, on the whole, it's insignificant, but you can remember the moment like it was yesterday.

The first time I saw echinacea in bloom was at the Chicago Botanical Garden about 1994. It was a gloomy, occasionally rainy, day but the purple flowers leapt out like bright stars in the distance. It took a few minutes to get around to where they were and to figure out what they were, but, as I stood there looking at the mass of blooms, I knew one day I would try to grow them. It was one of the few times in my life that I wished gardening in the desert wasn't so difficult, because I was sure those beauties would have problems here. Today I have two echinacea, somewhat scraggly yet, but one bloomed for the first time last summer. I'm sure they will fill out with time, but even one bloom brings back that day in Chicago.

The date eludes me, it was just one of many trips to Cholla Bay, Mexico, I made with my family. In a land of an inch or two of rain, there had been downpours and the sand turned green with vegetation. Every few feet Ajo lilies were in bloom. There were acres of them. Tall gray-green stalks with long strappy leaves and waxy white flowers were everywhere. I never saw them bloom again in that magnitude, even though we traveled back and forth to Mexico many times for over 20 years. While the blooms aren't the spectacular lilies sold in the catalogs, the quantity and size of them was astounding. They much prefer hotter, dryer, sandier conditions than we have here, but the vision is in my mind forever.

Many years ago, in the 70's, I made a trip to Yosemite, back before it was so crowded. It was spring and raining with small low drifts of fog and all of the sudden to my right large white blooms leapt out at



me. Since this was a time when you didn't have to worry about getting run over by the line of cars behind you, I slammed on the brakes to see what they were. I'd never seen dogwoods before but I knew that's what these were and my heart lusted after them. It was long before I really thought about having a yard and garden. In fact, I was pretty footloose at the time and rarely even kept houseplants because I was moving so much. I never even considered growing them, but I can still see those dogwoods in my head, glowing in the mist. I was sure I'd never be able to grow them in Arizona, but Jane Davies tells me she has one in her yard. Maybe I should give it a try.

For a brief time I lived in Montana. It was a crazy thing, being a desert rat, but I had never lived in the snow so what the heck. For awhile I lived in Red Lodge, Montana. It was a small town at the base of the Beartooth Mountains. I used to go up to the airport to walk the dogs. It was generally deserted and the dogs could run free without any problems. One morning I walked up there and the ground was covered with pasqueflowers (spring crocus) in bloom. It was a case of thousands of them. I'd seen one or two before, but this time the ground was covered with them. They were beautiful and the sun was perfect, highlighting the blooms like little purple paper lanterns. A few weeks later the seeds had formed and they were as delightful as the flowers. They were very similar to the seeds of the Apache plume, feathery and silver snowballs. I think of them every time when I see the Apache plume here in Arizona.

I was truly awestruck the first time I saw a Mariposa lily in bloom. I was hiking, here in Arizona when I was in college. There, along the trail, was one, only one blaze of color. A light in a dark forest. The orange color was a brilliant natural stop sign. When I got close, the satiny blooms were a revelation. Smooth and shiny, perfectly proportioned. I still have the picture I took (somewhere.) I always wanted to have them in my garden but they are difficult to grow. I didn't see another until I moved to Camp Verde and one spring, when I was taking my cat for a walk, (yes, she was trained to walk on a leash) behind my apartment there was a hillside of the white ones. (There are several species ranging in color



from orange to violets to creamy whites.) I was stunned. I had a hard time tearing myself away, in fact I went out there many times before the blooms died back. Civilization is tough on native plants, though, and the hillside was eventually bulldozed. I like to imagine there are still a few that survived and are still out there blooming.

There is one last moment I remember. In fact, though, it's an ongoing memory because it's something I've seen since I was a baby, but each year I try to renew the moment because it still strikes me with its beauty. Every spring I try to make a trip south to see the paloverde trees bloom. Now, I grew up in Tucson with two paloverde trees in the back yard, so it's part of a lifetime of waiting for spring. These trees still amaze me. Yes, the bark is colorful and, as a kid, it was fun to take the long leaves and strip the leaflets off, but when the tree turned gold



in the spring it was magic. They glow in the evening light. They are candles of the day, bright enough to compete with the sun. They turned shrubby trees into golden mounds

and light up the desert. Up close the blooms don't lose their beauty. Yellow with orange highlights. When they fall from the tree the ground gains a yellow carpet. So each spring for many years I try to spend a day down south to see the paloverdes in bloom. I didn't think they would grow this far north, but one day while driving to Sedona on 89A I did a doubletake—there was a fairly large paloverde on the side of the road, blooming! Now I had been up and down that road a million times but had never noticed it before. I went back several times to check on the seed development but because of various commitments, I missed them and by the time I was able to get back the seeds had disappeared. I even talked to someone about taking cuttings the next spring but fate had different plans. The tree was torn out for the widening of 89A before spring. But it gave me hope that I could grow my own, so today I have a blue paloverde growing in my front yard. It grows slowly but two years ago it bloomed. Well, not very many blooms but last year was better, so as with most gardeners hope springs eternal and next year will be better. One of these days the tree will be covered in yellow and I won't have to go south to see them bloom. My own paloverde—but I can still see those childhood trees bloom in my mind.

Meet a Master Gardener

by Pam Bowman Photo by Lynn Hazelwood

Soon after retiring as a court reporter for a local judge, Kathy Grant-Lilley enrolled in the 2003 Master Gardener program. After many years of wanting to garden, she finally has time to fulfill her dream. Now, a busy member of the Master Gardener Association, Kathy serves as vice-president, co-chairs the membership committee (you know, those folks who review applications and recommend candidates for the classes AND present awards at monthly meetings and the annual picnic) and helps staff the MG information desk in Prescott.

Born in Denver, Kathy moved with her family to Yuma when she was 15. In her early 20's she moved to Tempe where she worked as a legal secretary and enrolled in court reporting classes. Classes completed, Kathy became her own boss as a freelance court reporter. She did leave the Valley of the Sun to work as a court reporter in Honolulu only to return within 2 1/2 years. After many years in the Phoenix area, Kathy secured a job in Prescott in 1995. Because her husband Tom (whom she met while hot air ballooning) was unable to leave his business in telecommunications, they commuted between Phoenix and Prescott until 1998 when Tom retired for the first time.

When asked, Kathy cannot pinpoint exactly when the gardening "bug" hit her. She remembers that her mother could always be found putting in the garden. And when she first moved to Tempe, she took gardening classes offered by the local Parks and Recreation Department. Because she generally worked 50 – 60 hours as a court reporter, tending houseplants was the only activity devoted to her passion—gardening.

Today, Kathy and Tom have time to work on 1 1/2 acres and spend most of their time and energy nurturing the native grasses, shrubs and trees. They are currently working on a steep area of the property where level beds will evolve when the stacked rock walls are completed. Even then, Kathy plans to plant natives or drought tolerant

species. In her words, "Plants in my garden must survive with little water." Fascinated by local native plants, Kathy says her favorite master gardener activity is staffing the information desk where, on each shift, she learns at least one new fact about local gardening and meets other interesting gardeners.

Kathy remains active in retirement even though spinal problems keep her on the ground and she no longer pilots hot air balloons. As a member of the Alta Vista Garden Club she writes a column for the club's newsletter and is currently involved in the annual garden tour. The club anticipates selling 750 tickets that will open a wide variety of gardens: xeric, sculpture, French country, etc., to the public. Kathy also enjoys reading and walking

her dog Sassafras, a Boykin spaniel from South Carolina. Sassy, her first pet and a surprise gift from Tom, is a small waterfowl retriever, often referred to as the "Don't rock the boat dog." Hiking is Kathy's favorite activity. She has hiked in the Grand Canyon more than 1/2 dozen times and admits to taking it slow on the climb out. But no matter how long it takes or how difficult the trail Kathy finds the Canyon addictive.

Kathy pursues any activity with open enthusiasm. Always ready to give a little extra, she has been a great addition to the Master Gardener Association. We thank Kathy for approaching every task with a rare and admirable vitality.



Anise

Pimpinella anisum

by Nora Graf

I love licorice. I'm not sure why, I just do. Those old fashioned ropes of black licorice, the red isn't quite the same and the candies with the licorice center and black jelly beans were favorite treats as a kid. Today that flavor seems to be less popular, but anise is still a favorite spice in many cuisines. But, just so you know, anise is the flavor of licorice but the name comes from the licorice plant of Europe. It is a native of the eastern Mediterranean, Crete, Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt. The Arabic name *anysum* was derived from the Greek *anison* and Latin *anisum*. Like most herbs, the history of its use goes way back in human history and it is actually one of the oldest known spice plants. Pythagoras, 6th century BC, believed that simply holding the herb could prevent epileptic seizures. Hippocrates used it to treat coughs. The Roman, Pliny, used it as a mouth deodorizer, still a good use today. For the youth-obsessed it was supposed to maintain a youthful appearance. It was also used to prevent bad dreams if you kept it near the bed, you didn't even have to eat it. Nice cure for nightmares!

Romans cultivated the herb for its fragrance, flavor and medicinal uses. Seeds were used in cooking. It was mixed with other seeds and mixed with a meal to make a cake called *mustaceum*. This flavorful desert may be the first wedding cake.

Anise was used to pay taxes as well. Many spices were costly to buy and their use was sometimes limited to the well-to-do. King Edward I levied an import tax on the herb in 1305, to help pay for repairs on the London Bridge, although oddly enough it wasn't cultivated in England until the 1500's.

The plant seems to be best known as a digestive aid. Hippocrates suggested taking it for coughs and it is still used for that today. Some believe the plant contains antibacterial properties as well. It is sometimes used to mask the taste of bitter medicines.

It is still used as a culinary herb today. Dogs

like it too, and it's sometimes used in dog food. It is also a good bait for mice. The seed can be ground or used whole. It goes well with eggs, fruit, cheese, spinach and carrots. Cuisines as different as Scandinavian, Greek, East Indian, Moroccan, Hispanic and Arabic all use anise. Other spices like cinnamon and bay leaf complement anise. The leaves of the plant can also be used. They can be chopped and added to salads or they can be dried for tea. One of the more common uses today is in liqueurs, among them anisette, pastis, ojen, tres castillos and ouzo. In the garden, oil of anise has been used as a pesticide when mixed with oil of saffron and carbolic oil.

Today most anise comes from Spain, but Turkey and Egypt both produce large quantities, also. The Spanish variety is considered the best, but it's a matter of personal preference.

The plant is a member of the Umbelliferae or carrot family and looks much like a carrot plant, if you let it go to seed. Grow the plant from seeds. Since they have a long taproot, it's best to put them in place directly in the garden as they don't transplant well. Sow seeds in rows that

are 2 1/2 to 3 feet apart. Thin plants to 1 1/2 feet. It doesn't take much care, but consider putting it someplace that is protected from the wind as the plant is a bit spindly but likes sun. Keep them free of weeds. Gather the seeds by cutting the heads after they have ripened and before they open. Place them in a bag or container to contain the seeds as the heads open. Dry the seed first and then place in a tightly sealed container.

Star anise is different but has a similar flavor as does the herb fennel. Star anise (*Illicium anisatum*) is a small tree from China. The oil from the seeds is identical to anise but congeals at lower temperatures.



Cat Cora's Celery and Orzo Soup with Anise Seed

Makes 6 servings.

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

2 tablespoons butter or oil

1 tablespoon Anise Seed

2 medium leeks (white only) thinly sliced

5 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 bunch celery (including leaves,) cut into 1/2-inch slices

2/3 cup orzo, uncooked

1/2 cup crème fraiche

1. Melt butter in 4-quart saucepot on medium heat. Cook and stir anise seed 10 seconds. Add leeks; cook and stir 2 minutes. Stir in broth, celery and orzo. Cover.
2. Simmer on medium-high heat 15 to 20 minutes or until celery and orzo are tender, stirring occasionally.
3. Spoon 1/3 of the celery mixture into blender container; cover. With center part of cover removed to let steam escape, blend until smooth. Return to saucepot. Reheat if needed.
4. Spoon into serving bowls. Garnish each with a spoonful of creme fraiche. Serve immediately.

Recipe courtesy of Cat Cora & the McCormick Spice Co. website

Chocolate Dipped Almond Anise Biscotti

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Chill: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 45 minutes

2 1/2 cups flour

1 cup sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

2 teaspoons anise Seed

1 cup sliced almonds

1/4 teaspoon salt

3 large eggs

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

6 ounces (squares) bittersweet or semisweet chocolate

2 teaspoons vegetable oil

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease large cookie sheet. Blend first 6 ingredients in a large bowl, using an electric mixer on low speed. Whisk together eggs and vanilla extract in a separate bowl. With mixer running, slowly pour egg

mixture into bowl. Mix just until the dough comes together. Do not overmix.

2. Divide dough in half and shape each half into a 12 x 2-inch log. Place logs onto cookie sheet. Bake 30 minutes or until slightly risen and firm to touch.

3. Remove cookie sheet from oven. Cool logs on

wire rack 15 minutes. Transfer to cutting board. Cut logs diagonally into 1/4-inch slices with a sharp, serrated knife. Place slices in single layer on ungreased cookie sheet.

4. Bake at 350°F 10 to 13 minutes or until crisp and golden. Cool on cookie sheet.

5. Place chocolate and oil in a small microwave-safe bowl, and microwave on high for one minute. Stir and microwave again for 30 seconds. Microwave for an additional 30 seconds, if needed. The chocolate will retain some of its original shape. Remove from microwave and stir until completely melted.

6. Dip cooled biscotti into chocolate mixture. Place on plate covered with wax paper and refrigerate until chocolate hardens (about 10 minutes). Store in a covered container.



Various Announcements & Activities!

Well Water Testing

Yavapai County Master Watershed Stewards and the Yavapai County Cooperative Extension are once again providing cost-recovery test kits for private well owners to test their water during National Drinking Water Week, May 1st thru the 7th, 2006.

This is an annual program provided as a public service for private well owners to check their water for drinking safety. Kits are only ordered and prepared for those participants who request and reserve their kits prior to April 14th. Kits may be reserved by sending a check (made payable to the University of Arizona) to our Prescott or Cottonwood Offices. The cost for the basic 5 parameter kit is \$8.00 and the Basic PLUS Kit (the 5 parameter kit AND Arsenic Test) is \$24.

If you need additional information contact me at 928-445-6590 X227

Participants outside of Yavapai County are welcome.

Bill Cart and John Paustian are going to give a six-week 'High Desert Gardening' class at Yavapai College for OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute for seniors - 55+). Class starts week of April 10, and is on a Monday afternoon, 1 - 3 pm. in Building 31. You need to make reservations by calling 717-7634. There is a fee.

Native Plant Workshop

sponsored by Keep Sedona Beautiful.

Saturday, April 1st, 8:45am – 2:00pm

360 Brewer Rd, Pushmataha Building, Sedona

Theme is landscaping in the high desert. Speakers include: Jeff Schalau – Managing Seeds, Soils, Flowers and Native plants in a Drought, Lainie Kligman – Native Grasses for Sedona's Elevation, Roger Eastman – Sedona's New Native Tree Preservation, Protection and Planting Ordinance, John Neville – Infrastructure and Water Harvesting: How to Keep the Water on Your Lot, Barnabus Kane – Gorgeous Landscape Design Makes the Difference

Cost: \$15

Reservations needed: contact Jan, 282-4938

Phone Volunteers

We are in need of phone volunteers in both the Cottonwood and Prescott offices. Cottonwood needs a full time volunteer for Monday mornings, Monday afternoons, and Thursday afternoons. Prescott needs a full time volunteer for Wednesday mornings. Both offices can always use substitutes.

Note: "Full time" means working a 3-4 hour shift once a week on a regularly scheduled day. Substitute means you will be contacted to substitute when a full time person will be unavailable. If you would like to "job share" a full time position, that may be arranged.

Contacts:

Cottonwood – Rosh Preuss, roshpreuss@yahoo.com

Prescott – Mary Barnes, mcbarn1@cableone.net

Volunteer work at Prescott Ext Office

Gene Twaronit (Firewise person at the Prescott Ext Ofc) is doing research on mulch flammability behind the ext office. He is in need of assistance with periodic weed maintenance on the research beds. Please contact Gene if you are interested: twaronit@cals.arizona.edu

Prescott Farmers' Market

More volunteers are needed to staff the MG table at the Prescott Farmers' Market (Saturdays from May to Sept). Contact Karen Wagley, wedance@peoplepc.com or Diane Nault, our_bettyjane@yahoo.com

Highlands Center Plant Sale

Volunteers are needed to help at the Highlands Center plant sale. The sale is on April 29th, and the plants will be delivered sometime that week. Help is needed on sale day and on delivery day. Contact: Lynn Hazelwood, klwoodz@cableone.net



Calendar of Events

- *April 19, 6:30 (Cottonwood) MGA Meeting,
April 29, 9-5:00, First Annual Native Plant Sale at the Highland Center for Natural History, Call (928-776-9550) or email (highlands@cableone.net) the Highland Center for more information. Their website is: highlandcenter.org.
April 29, Wildfire Expo at the Prescott Rodeo Grounds, Call the Prescott Extension office for more info
May 13, Sedona Garden Tour
May 13, Home and Garden Show at the Gateway Mall in Prescott
*May 17, 6:30 (Prescott) MGA Meeting, "Landscape Designing with Native Plants" by Steve Morgan **This meeting will take place at the Highland Center for Natural History
June 10, Alta Vista Garden Tour, Contact Kathy Grant-Lilley for more information (445-7196)
June 17, Annual Arboretum Field Trip, Sign up by contacting Patti Conrad (in the evening) at 778-4810
*June 21, 6:30 (Cottonwood) MGA Meeting,
July, (Saturday) Field Trip to Prescott Veteran's Hospital to see their greenhouse and grounds and hear about their occupational therapy program.
*August 16, 6:30, (Cottonwood) MGA Meeting,
August 26, V Bar V Ranch, Call Cottonwood office for more information
***For Yavapai Master Gardeners Only**

The Prescott Area Iris Society is gearing up for a very busy May. Our Spring Iris Exhibit will be held May 13 at Mortimer Nursery. We encourage all iris growers to enter a bloom or two of their prettiest iris in order to give the public a stupendous Iris Exhibit. Kathy Chilton from the Tucson Area Iris Society will demonstrate how to select, groom and enter iris at our April 15 meeting. We invite you to attend. Kathy's enthusiasm is contagious. Saturday, April 15 at 2 p.m., Yavapai College, Building 3, room 269. For more information call 776-7217 or email jbook@cableone.net.



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

Jeff Schalau
County Director, Yavapai County Extension Agent,
Agriculture & Natural Resources
email: jschalau@ag.arizona.edu

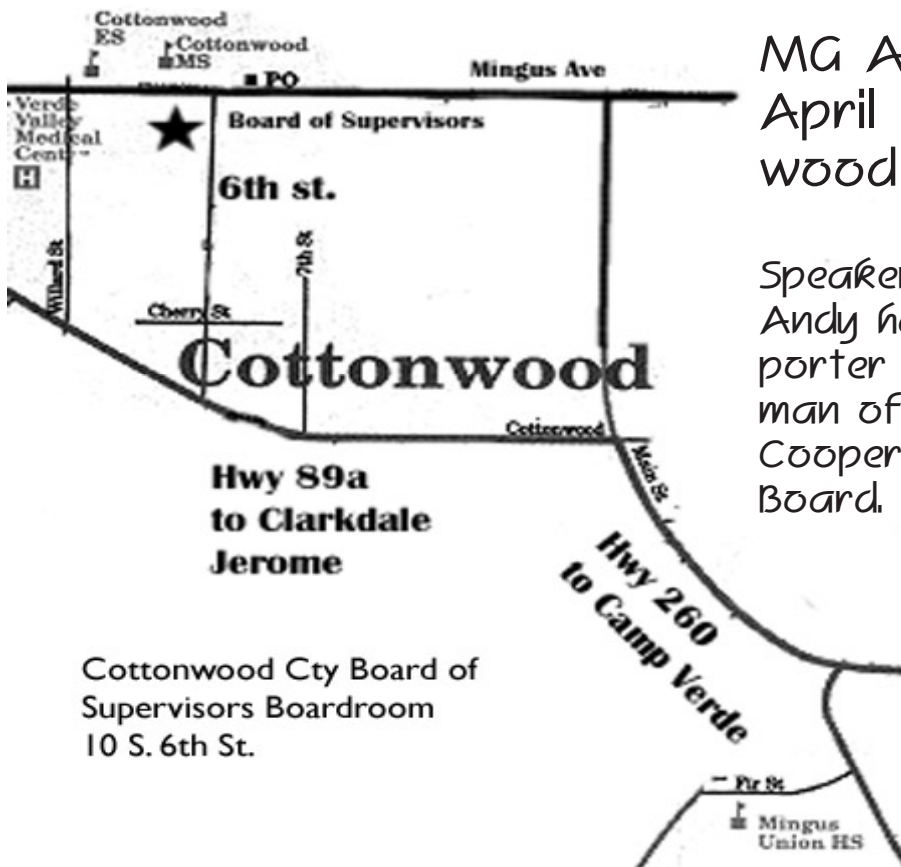
Prescott
840 Rodeo Dr.
Building C
Prescott, AZ 86305
(928) 445-6590
FAX: (928) 445-6593

Cottonwood
2657 Village Dr.
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
(928) 646-9113

Arizona Cooperative Extension
Yavapai County
840 Rodeo Dr. Building C
Prescott, AZ 86305



MG NEWSLETTER



MG Association Meeting,
April 19, 6:30pm, Cotton-
wood

Speaker: Andy Grosetta
Andy has been a long time sup-
porter of Extension and is chair-
man of the Yavapai County
Cooperative Extension Advisory
Board.

Cottonwood Cty Board of
Supervisors Boardroom
10 S. 6th St.