

Dirty your hands and feed your brain

Kris LaMar and Barb Cary live at opposite ends of state and have never met, but they've got a lot in common. Both women are up to their trowels as Master Gardeners.

A shade under 3,000 Oregonians join the two women who went through the intensive two- to three-month course that covers everything from soils to disease diagnosis. In return, they agreed to volunteer to advise gardeners and potential gardeners with the research-based information they learned in class. The program — part of Oregon State University Extension Service — reached 106,000 people in 2016.

"Becoming a Master Gardener is a fantastic way to increase your knowledge of sustainable gardening, to meet like-minded gardeners and to give back to your community," said Gail Langelotto, statewide coordinator of Oregon State University Extension Service's Master Gardener program. "People are excited about growing their own food and gardening for wildlife. Master Gardeners help people understand how to meet their goals in a way that protects and conserves natural resources."

LaMar, who has been a Master Gardener for five years, knew nothing about the program until she saw something about it in the newspaper. At the same time she was qualifying to be a Master Recycler. Once she got her hands into compost and saw the overlap, she was hooked. She took both



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

courses and has become one of the most active Master Gardener volunteers, teaching classes, monitoring the Clackamas County speakers bureau and, most of all, answering hundreds of questions — 2,200 since she started a little over a year ago — in Ask an Expert, an online question and answer service through Extension.

"I can stay home in my jammies," she said. "I don't have to drive. I can answer questions from all over the world. It's wonderful because I get to learn all this, too. Like an insect that lives in Mozambique or India or Norway. I've found my niche. I can't think of a better way to spend my time."

LaMar makes a good point. Master Gardeners don't stop learning after finishing the course. When they can't immediately diagnose and solve a problem, they turn to the wealth of research from OSU, other universities and reputable sources.

The breadth of activities Master Gardeners do for volunteer hours is wide. Some answer questions via email or phone hotlines, Langelotto said. Others spend time teaching in learning gardens, community gardens, even correctional institutions. Cary, a Master Gar-



<https://flic.kr/p/Z4xM73>
Barb Cary fulfills her volunteer hours as an OSU Extension Master Gardener by teaching preschool children about gardening.

deners since 2013, works in a preschool that's next door to a food bank where she volunteered. "They jumped on it," she said.

For an hour a week for 18 weeks, Cary spends time with 3 and 4 year olds, reading books, germinating seeds, planting, watering and harvesting. A tomato taste test is always a winner.

"It's fun, so fun," she said. "The little kids are really engaged and we get positive feedback from the parents. We use it as a carrot for good behavior and it works."

You don't have to be an experienced gardener to sign up for the classes. In fact, many people join to learn more about their own garden. LaMar, who was a judge in Portland for 25 years, grew houseplants and container plants. Cary was too busy during her career days to garden, but once she retired

and moved from Orange County, Calif., to Brookings she got busy. Both said being a Master Gardener has helped enormously.

While Cary took the class in person, LaMar took the online course — a new option — and recommends it to people who can't make it to classes.

"Master Gardeners tend to be retired," she said. "I'd like to see more young people get involved, and the online course offers that flexibility."

The in-person course, which is given in most counties, commits participants to 40 to 70 volunteer hours after completing the series. Call your local Extension office to see if one is offered near you. Each county has a different price scale and schedule. Registration is taking place now in most areas for classes held this winter. The online class can be taken any time.

MI TOWN

It's that time of year when grapes are ripening, and tomatoes and squash are just about at the end of their life cycles. We're busily cleaning up the garden beds and preparing for the end of the growing season, while coping with those sometimes not-so-gentle autumn breezes that bring yet another crop of fir and pinecones onto lawns and driveways and sidewalks.

October brings us the Soup and Pie Sale at the Monmouth Senior Center, which is scheduled for Oct. 19, from 11 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Here's your opportunity to enjoy a bowl of fresh, homemade soup for \$3.50 and a slice of pie for \$2.50, and share in what's been a community tradition for several years. A hardworking team of dedicated vol-



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

unteers, including my friends Phyllis Harriman and Angie Amos, have made sure this wonderful event runs smoothly for many years. This year's soups include vegetable beef, chicken noodle, clam chowder, salmon chowder and split pea. Full disclosure: Over the years, I've tasted every one of these delicious soups and chowders, and they are awesome. Considering the soups and pies come from the kitchens of some of the best cooks in MI Town, that should be no surprise. Pie

selections are equally tasty and are made with love and expertise. Some pies are made from backyard apples, peaches and other fruits that have been home-grown, and all are delicious.

Senior Center Director Sue Teal will be retiring in a few months, so this sale is as nostalgic and bittersweet as can be. Let's all mark Oct. 19 on our calendars in big, red letters. This year, nobody wants to be the one to forget and miss out on all the good things offered right in our community, and to get together with friends and family.

Our Western Oregon University Wolves host the Central Washington University Wildcats Saturday at 1 p.m. Let's all keep our fingers crossed for a cool and crisp

day of winning football. See you there.

Since Halloween is happening during October, we've all been busy with decorations, new recipes and tempting treats for those little (and big) ghosts and goblins who will soon be coming to our doors for goodies. There will be kid-oriented programs at both Independence and Monmouth libraries, where everyone can count on having lots of fun and treats galore. Special thanks to the library workers and volunteers who take the time and energy to be sure these activities are the best they can be. Funding for many of these special events is made possible by contributions from the Friends of the Independence and Friends of the Monmouth libraries.

PEDEE NEWS

After the Pedee Women's Club monthly potluck on Sept. 29, June Clark took a motorcycle ride to get a motorcycle club checkpoint at the Lincoln Store on Wallace Road before joining some friends for dinner in Albany. Then on Thursday she took off to get two more checkpoints in Manzanita and Skamokawa, Wash., before enjoying the evening with friends in Battleground. Friday was a bit less fun as there were some rain showers on her way home.

Steve and Audrey



ARLENE KOVASH
Columnist

Cameron spent last weekend in Astoria, where they attended Audrey's 60th class reunion at Astoria High School. While there they visited Audrey's brother, Bill Moberg and family, who live in their childhood home, a beautifully remodeled older home full of memories for

the whole family. Highlights of the weekend were going to a tea party at daughter-in-law Xiao Hong's home, staying with son Chris, and going to the Fisherman's Memorial in Astoria.

Steve and Audrey also went to church with her sister Georgia Marincovich and husband Jack, then visited with older sister Elizabeth Moberg in Seaside. They want to say a special thanks to daughter Stephanie Barth and neighbor Linda Smith for feeding the animals while they were

gone, no easy task.

Several little girls in the neighborhood had birthdays in the last two weeks. Mercy Heller turned 1 on Sept. 30. Mother Cassandra baked her a sugar-free cake and they invited family and family friends over for a party. Nothing huge, but for a first birthday it was big. Kalina Brotherton celebrated her birthday with a slumber party, which included a scavenger hunt. Kailey Traglia turned 8 on Oct. 2, but didn't tell me what she did to celebrate.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

These Polk County groups would welcome individuals who have time or expertise to volunteer. Organizations that would like to be added to this list should call 503-623-2373 or email 10news@polkio.com.

- AARP Foundation Tax-Aide — 503-930-7636
- After DARC — 503-623-9501
- American Cancer Society Road to Recovery — 1-800-227-2345
- Arc of Polk County — 541-223-3261
- Ash Creek Arts Center — 971-599-3301
- Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Polk County Inc. — 503-623-8473
- Central School District — 503-838-0030
- City of Dallas — 503-831-3502
- City of Independence — 503-838-1212
- City of Monmouth — 503-751-0145
- Crime Victims Assistance Program — 503-623-9268
- Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce — 503-623-2564
- Dallas Fire Department — 503-831-3532
- Dallas Food Bank — 503-623-3578
- Dallas Kids, Inc. — 503-623-6419
- Dallas Police Department — 503-831-3582
- Dallas Public Library — 503-623-2633
- Dallas Retirement Village — 503-623-5581
- Dallas School District — 503-623-5594
- Delbert Hunter Arboretum — 503-623-7359
- Ella Curran Food Bank — 503-838-1276
- Falls City Arts Center — 503-559-6291
- Falls City School District — 503-787-3531
- Family Building Blocks — 503-566-2132, ext. 308.
- Friends of the Dallas Library — 503-559-3830
- Gentle House Gardens, Monmouth — 503-838-2995
- Girl Scouts of Southwest Washington and Oregon — 1-800-338-5248
- H-2-O — 503-831-4736
- HART (Horses Adaptive Riding and Therapy) — 971-301-4278
- HandsOn Mid-Willamette Valley — 503-363-1651
- Heron Pointe Assisted Living — 503-838-6850
- Independence Health and Rehabilitation — 503-838-0001
- Independence Public Library — 503-838-1811
- Kings Valley Charter School — 541-929-2134
- Luckiamute Watershed Council — 503-837-0237
- Luckiamute Valley Charter School — 503-623-4837
- Meals on Wheels — 503-838-2084
- Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce — 503-838-4268
- Monmouth-Independence YMCA — 503-838-4042
- Monmouth Public Library — 503-838-1932
- Northwest Human Services — 503-588-5828
- Oregon Child Development Coalition — 503-838-2745
- OSU Extension Service - Polk County — 503-623-8395
- Perrydale School District — 503-623-2040
- Polk Community Development Corporation — 503-831-3173
- Polk County Community Emergency Response Team — 503-623-9396
- Polk County Museum — 503-623-6251
- Polk County Public Health — 503-623-8175
- Polk County Resource Center — 503-623-8429
- Polk Soil and Water Conservation District — 503-623-9680
- Relief Nursery Classroom — 503-566-2132
- SABLE House — 503-623-6703
- SALT (Sheriff's Auxiliary & Law Enforcement Together) — 503-851-9366
- Salvation Army — 503-798-4783
- SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) — 503-391-8423
- Salem Health West Valley Hospital — 503-623-8301
- Victim Assistance Program-Polk Co. District Attorney's Office — 503-623-9268 x1444
- Willamette Valley Hospice — 503-588-3600
- WIMPEG Community Access Television — 503-837-0163

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Continued from page 6A

TUESDAY, OCT. 17

- **James2 Community Kitchen Meal** — 4:30 to 6 p.m., St. Philip Catholic Church, 825 SW Mill St., Dallas. Free; everyone welcome. 503-623-8429.
- **James2 Community Kitchen Meal** — 4:30 to 6 p.m., United Methodist Church located at 242 N Main St., Falls City. Free; everyone welcome. 503-623-8429.
- **Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) Club** — 6 to 7 p.m. weigh-in, 7 to 8 p.m. meeting, First Christian Church basement, 1079 SE Jefferson St., Dallas. Meetings offer programs and activities aimed at losing weight. Open to anyone. First meeting is free.
- **Dallas Wingdingers RC Flying Club** — 7 p.m., Whitworth Elementary School library, 1151 SE Miller Ave., Dallas. 503-623-7288.
- **Polk County Coin Club** — 7 p.m., Monmouth Senior Center, 180 Warren St. S., Monmouth. 503-362-9123.
- **Overeaters Anonymous** — Noon to 1 p.m., Salem Health West Valley, 525 SE Washington St., Dallas. Support group meets in the quiet room/chapel immediately inside the emergency entrance on Clay Street. Dee Ann White, 971-718-6444.
- **Dallas Rotary** — Noon, Dallas Civic Center, 945 SE Jefferson St., Dallas. Lunch and speaker. Public is welcome.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 18

- **Willamette Valley Food Assistance Program Food Bank** — 1:30 to 6:30 p.m., 888 Monmouth Cutoff Road, Building E, Dallas. Weekly distribution for eligible community members. 503-831-5634.
- **Day-2-Day Diabetes Support Group** — 3 to 4 p.m., Salem Health West Valley (main conference room inside main entrance), 525 SE Washington St., Dallas. 503-623-7323.
- **Pickleball** — 9 a.m. to noon, Roger Jordan Community Park. Meets on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon. Karen Freeman, 503-871-4172.

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