

Welcome to our premiere edition!

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

During the past week (since we decided to give it a go), we have been busy trying to define ourselves as a newsletter. Because this is our first issue and we are still in the germination stage, this is a golden opportunity for you to help shape future issues.

What would you like to see in the newsletter? What feature articles would be interesting? Would you like to contribute, write a column, do illustrations? How about a poem on gardening or your best gardening anecdote? How about a letter to the editor (watch out, Tom!)?

Here are some of the ideas we've been tossing around: a Question and Answer column, a Master Gardener Events Calendar (covering gardening events statewide), a Cochise County Monthly Planting Calendar, a Master Gardeners' Help Wanted column, a Plant- or Pest-of-the-Month column, and a Special Features article covering a different subject each month.

If any of these sound interesting, or if you'd like to make an occasional contribution, write or call us at the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office (458-1104).

The Cochise County Master Gardener Program is coordinated by county ACES agent, Dr. Deborah Young. The program includes classes on soil science, irrigation, pest control, plant disease, landscaping, vegetable, fruit and nut crops, native plants, with each class lecture slanted toward the specific needs of Cochise county.

Master Gardeners pay a \$25 fee for class materials, must pass a final exam, and must contribute at least 40 hours of volunteer time to the program. In return, they gain valuable information for use in their own gardening, an opportunity to learn from other gardeners, and to make a contribution to their community.

There are currently 33 active Master Gardeners in Cochise County (1200 across the U.S.) who are willing and

able to give advice and information to anyone who asks. If you're not a Master Gardener but would like to be one, classes are offered on a regular basis through the ACES office and Cochise County Extension Agent Deborah Young.

Cooperative Extension Office
News

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If you're interested in gardening, landscaping, or growing vegetables; if you have questions on what to plant, when to plant it, how much to water it, fertilize it, or prune it; if you want to know why all the leaves fell off your olive tree, or what that bug is that keeps eating your tomatoes and what to do about it, call the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office at 458-1104. If we don't have the answer, we'll try to find someone who does. The office is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to noon.

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Articles to be published in next month's newsletter must be received at the Extension Office no later than the 15th of December.

Calendar of Events

Merrienne Lange
Staff Writer

Superior: Boyce Thompson Southwest Arboretum (tel 689-2811), located three miles west of Superior on US Hwy 60, open daily for self-guided tours. Hours are 8 - 5; Admission \$3 adults, \$1.50 ages 5 - 12.

Phoenix: Desert Botanical Garden (tel 941-1225), located at 1201 N. Galvin Parkway in Papago Park. Garden hours are 9 - sunset; Admission \$3.50 adults, \$3 age 60+, \$1 ages 5 - 12.

> November 18 & 19: Desert Harvest Festival includes demonstrations of spinning cotton, grinding corn, and using gourds, as well as samples of wild and cultivated desert foods like mesquite cookies, tepary bean dip, blue corn bread, and prickly pear punch. Hours are 11 - 4.

> November 18 & 19: Valley of the Sun Men's Garden Club, Phoenix Chrysanthemum Society's 18th annual Flower and Garden Show. Held at Maryvale Mall, 5220 W. Indian School Rd. Free admission.

Tucson: Pima County Cooperative Extension (tel 628-5628) located at 4040 N. Campbell.

> November 22: "Compost - How to Eat Your Harvest", 9:00 am.

> November 29: "Idea For Christmas - Give a Friend a Planting Hole 5X5X5", 9 am, free admission.

Tucson Botanical Gardens (tel 326,9255), located at 2150 N. Alvernon Way. Garden hours 8 - 4:30 daily; Admission \$2, \$2.50 62+, under age 12 free.

> November 22: Guided tour of gardens, 10 am.

> November 29: Guided tour of gardens, 10 am.

Arizona Sonora Desert Museum (tel 883-2701), located 14 miles west of Tucson in the Tucson Mountain Park (2021 N. Kinney Road). Hours are 8:30 - 5 daily (allow at least 2 hours for self-guided tour). There are 300 species of plants and 200 species of animals on display. Admission \$6, \$1 ages 6 - 12, free under 6.

> November 18 & 19: Plant and mineral sale, free admission to sales area. Hours 9 - 4.

Tohonol Chul Park (tel 742-6455), located at 7366 Paseo Del Norte. Hours 7 - sunset. Exhibit 9:30 - 5.

> November 15: "Prehistoric Use of Agave" lecture 2 pm at Lomaki Meeting House (RSVP).

> December 2: Pruning clinic at Demonstration Garden, 10 am.

Cycle of Seasons Photography Exhibit - professional and amateur may enter. Deadline Dec. 1.

Green Valley: Green Valley Baptist Church, located at 1111 N. La Canada Drive, sponsored by Men's Garden Club of Green Valley and Pima County Extension Office.

> November 21: Water conservation, drip systems.

> November 28: Tunnel gardening.

Bisbee: Arizona Cactus and Succulent Research, Inc (tel 432-7040), located at 8 Mulberry Lane. Offers new ideas in arid landscape. Tours of garden from sunrise to sunset daily, free admission.

Notes From a Transplanted Midwesterner

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

When I arrived in Arizona a year ago, I arrived with a lot of preconceptions. I expected Arizona to be dry, dusty, barren, and very brown. Arriving as I did in the middle of winter, I was not disappointed. But, when spring arrived, the old gardening spirit stirred and I headed out to my all gravel backyard to plant my garden. Full of green thoughts, I hoed, fertilized, sowed, watered, and sat back to watch my garden grow.

It didn't! At least not very well.

Lettuce I planted in April died in the early June sun, pollen died unfulfilled on my tomato blossoms and I quickly weaned of watering the container plants on my patio every morning only to watch them wilt by midday. Gardening methods that had never failed me in Illinois, failed me in Arizona. So, I retreated into my swamp-cooled house, convinced that nothing could grow in the desert but cactus and scrub brush.

Failure was hard to accept. So, I began reading books on desert landscaping and gardening in an arid climate, while I glared out at my desiccated garden. From the books I learned that Arizona has two growing seasons (I had tried to straddle them), that the soil is generally alkaline, not acidic, that it is extremely low in organic matter and high in minerals, and that it is possible to grow commercial crops of cotton, alfalfa, corn, pistachios, and even lettuce (at which I had failed so horribly). The trick was understanding the problems unique to desert

gardening and taking full advantage of all of the benefits. After all, the same warm sunny climate that does such wonders for people is equally wonderful for gardens.

It seemed like an awful lot to learn. What had been second nature to me now had to be looked up in books, and I was always reading in September about what I should have been doing in August. That's when I saw Debbie Young's article in THE NEWSPAPER about the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Service Master Gardener Program (quite a mouthful!).

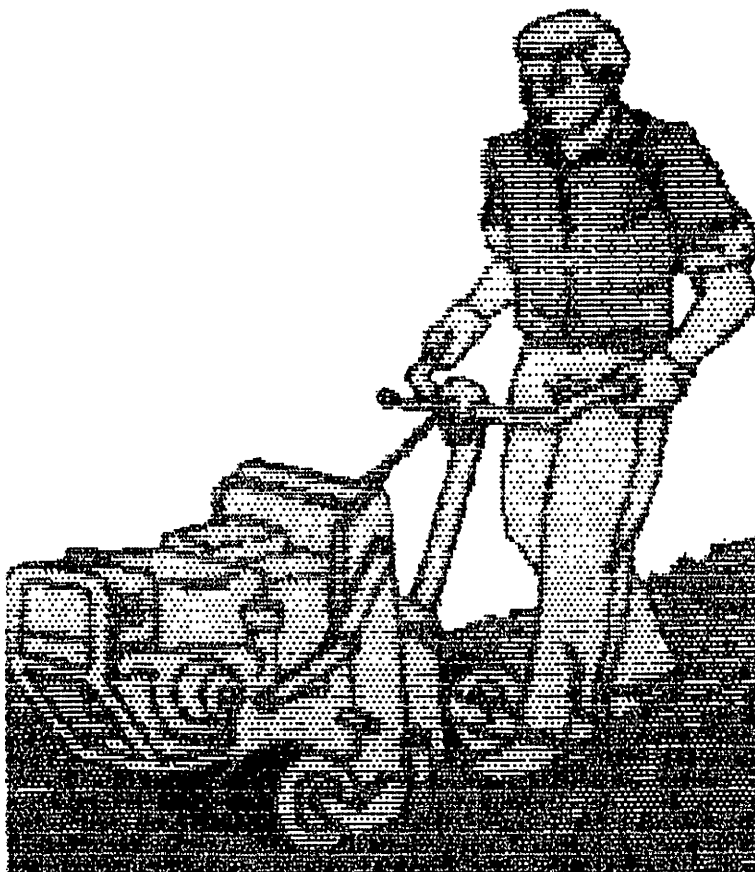
Deb (Dr. Deborah Young) is the Cochise County Extension Agent, Agriculture, and regularly offers Master Gardener classes to train interested gardeners in what their gardens need to survive. Although my garden had already expired for the year, I applied for the program and found myself in a class with twenty four other frustrated gardeners. I discovered there were a lot of gardeners besides myself that had transferred from greener parts of the country. I also discovered how much I could learn from sharing and that we had a lot to offer one another. This is really what the Master Gardener program is all about: gardeners helping gardeners.

Well, a few weeks ago the instruction part of the program ended and we had a final exam. Now the volunteer work begins. I didn't feel like a "master" gardener. There is a lot to learn from other gardeners all through the program, but I feel much better equipped to deal with my next year's garden. And, I've learned something that is essential to desert gardening survival - know your environment, share with other gardeners, and keep an open mind.

Las Vegas, NV: Caesar's Palace Hotel and Casino, 1989 Desert Turfgrass and Landscape Conference and Show, December 13, 14, & 15. Registration deadline is Dec. 7. Call 458-1104 Monday - Friday, 9am - noon for more information.

Sierra Vista: Master Gardener potluck (see invitation in this newsletter).

power sod cutter



Gardener's Christmas Wish List

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

Here are some gift ideas for that hard-to-buy-for gardener on your Christmas list:

Teflon-coated pruning shears
Heavy duty trowel
New spade or shovel
Hulahoie
Garden weazel
Sturdy garden gloves
Gardening hat with wide brim
Plant light with Gro-light bulb
Instructions for a cold frame
Offer to build that cold frame
Garden starter kits (great for kids)
Set of stainless steel plant stakes with plastic labels
Garden stool or scooter
Gardening kneepads (gardening is a contact sport!)
Soil Test Kit (for the soil scientist in all of us)

Gardeners toolbelt/apron (so we don't keep misplacing trowels)

Nursery gift certificates (check mail order nurseries, too)

Memberships in gardening oriented organizations (consider the Arizona Native Plant Society, Tucson Botanical Gardens, the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, Arizona Cactus and Succulents Inc)

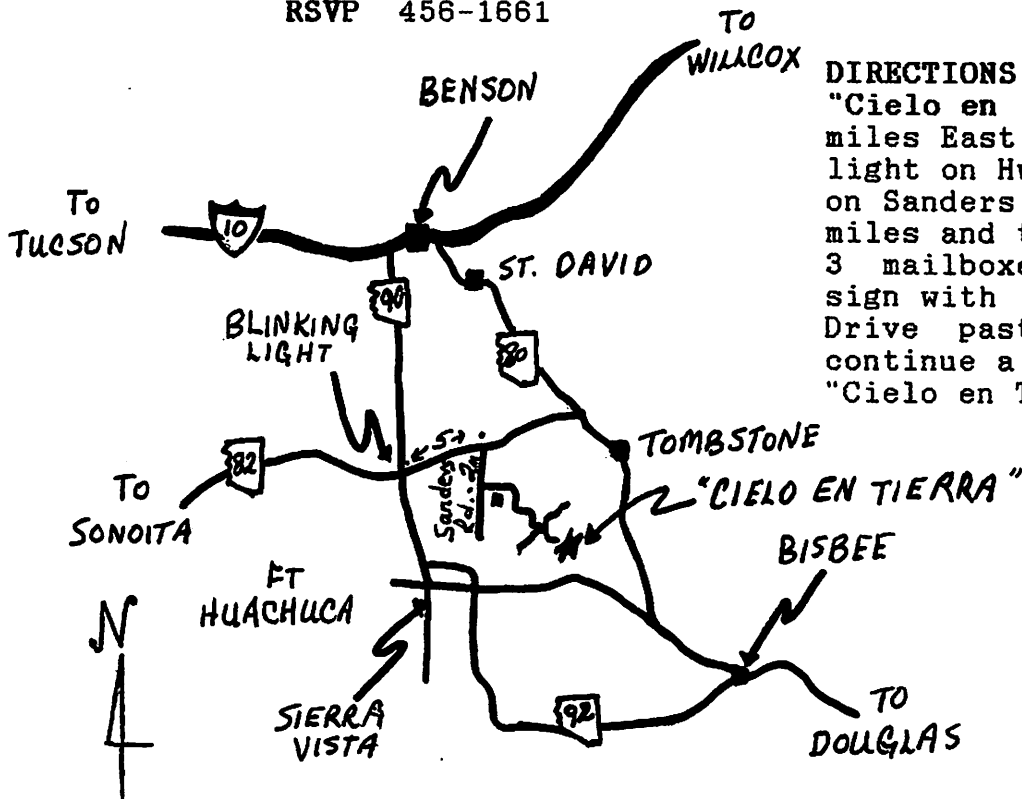
Gardening Books for cold winter afternoons (consider SUNSET WESTERN GARDEN BOOK, PLANTS FOR A DRY CLIMATE, SOUTHWESTERN LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS, THE HEALTHY GARDEN, RODALE'S GARDEN INSECT, DISEASE, AND WEED IDENTIFICATION GUIDE)

Garden planner or diary (consider SUNSET WESTERN GARDEN CALENDAR)

LET'S GET ACQUAINTED

All Cochise County Master Gardeners (and spouse) are invited to Mary Diamond's "Cielo en Tierra" for a potluck lunch on Saturday, Nov. 18, 1989. Plan to arrive between 11:00 am and noon. Please bring a potluck dish to share (casserole, salad, or dessert) and table service. Coffee and herb tea will be furnished. Seeds, cuttings, plants, or what-have-you to share would be welcome!

RSVP 456-1661



DIRECTIONS:

"Cielo en Tierra" is five miles East of the blinking light on Hwy. 82, turn South on Sanders Road. Travel 2 miles and turn Left past the 3 mailboxes and the large sign with "DIAMOND" on it. Drive past one house and continue a little farther to "Cielo en Tierra".