

# Your Garden, 2010: It's Time

by Susan Urhausen



The winter of 2009-2010 was so mild; most of us barely noticed that it was really here at all. In February and March, when all of us in northern Stevens County would normally still be looking out over a frozen snowy landscape, it was more like spring had already come. There has been any number of days available for our local gardeners to get a head start on preparing their garden beds for seeds and starts of various vegetables and flowers, too.

In order to get good reliable information for gardeners as to what vegetables to begin growing indoors; when to transplant; and when to start seeds outdoors, I enlisted some local help. I talked to Eldon Roush and Melody Huntley, both of whom are avid gardeners. Roush has a large organic garden, and is enthusiastic about sharing his knowledge with others. He is a member of the Kettle Falls Horizons Board of Directors. Huntley is a Master Gardener who has a garden in raised beds and is equally enthusiastic about getting more people to do home gardens. She serves on the Kettle Falls Food Bank Board of

Directors. Both see home gardens as a way to save money, reduce hunger, and create a healthier way of eating and living for any family. Either Roush or Huntley are available upon request to answer questions about gardening. They are particularly excited about the prospect of assisting newcomers to gardening, or helping to solve a gardening problem. Contact information for both will be listed at the end of this article.

### A Beginning Guide

By the time this edition of the Focus is printed, it will be time to get the following vegetable seeds started indoors: tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. These can be safely transplanted to the garden in mid-May. The following plants can also be started indoors for early to mid-May transplant: broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower. In the lower elevations, it is possible to sow the following vegetable seeds directly into a prepared bed: leaf lettuce, spinach, peas, collards, chard, radish and onions, to name a few. As a general guide, here are minimum ground temperatures necessary for germination:

#### MINIMUM GERMINATION TEMPERATURE

35 degrees F:

leaf lettuce, onions (green, seed and sets), and parsnips.

#### MINIMUM GERMINATION TEMPERATURE

40 degrees F:

beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, kohlrabi, leeks, peas, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard and turnips.

Starting seeds indoors can be as simple or fancy as you like. Yard and garden centers have ample supplies of various set-ups for germinating seeds. For

cost-cutting, plastic cups, broken old coffee cups, egg cartons; just about anything that can hold dirt will work for getting your vegetables started. A south-facing window indoors is ideal, but not necessary. There are grow-lights available at garden centers (or check out Craig's List!), for homes with less than sunny conditions. Get creative, ask for help, talk to a neighbor who has a great garden, look up information on the Internet, or go visit the library.

While waiting for those seeds to become plants, there is still plenty of time to get that area in the yard ready for planting. For the industrious, using a spade and a pitchfork can get an area turned over and tilled in time for planting in May. For those who are not so inclined, check out a rental place and use a rototiller for a day or a few hours, they work wonders in no time at all. Be sure to choose your space wisely. Sun and access to water are a must. If you are starting from scratch, you can turn the soil and leave the weeds and roots exposed for three weeks, then come back and turn the soil again; the space should be free of growth at this time. Be sure also to make sure about the existence of underground utility lines and wires before digging or tilling.

Once the seeds become plants, and the weather becomes consistently nice, it's ok to take them outside during the day to let them acclimate. Let the plants get accustomed to the weather they are going to live in before they get into the ground permanently. Shortly before time to plant, it will be fine to leave them out day and night, just make sure they have some shelter from the cold at night. (Greenhouses and cold frames remove this need if you have them.)

Even those in apartments with no yard access can do some gardening. Consider putting a few containers on your patio or sidewalk (if allowed) to grow some vegetables. One container could easily

hold one tomato plant with other smaller plants at the base, maybe some herbs. Again, discuss your limitations or needs with either of our available gardeners, or at a local garden supply center.

Get excited, create a chance to play in the dirt again and grow your own vegetables. There may be free seeds available as early as this year for those who are having financial challenges and can't afford to buy the seeds. Once again this year, there will be canning and preserving classes held for anyone interested in processing local fruit and vegetables; another great way of cutting food costs and having healthier diets. Check in at the KF Food Bank for both of these.

Last but not least, both of the gardeners that contributed to this article have one other thing in common besides their love of gardening. Both have a disability that limits their movements and how they garden. For Eldon Roush, it meant modifying every tool for gardening to prevent him from having to lean over. His garden is typical in that it is all at ground level. It is far from typical in the fact that it holds many fruits and vegetables and is quite beautiful to see. Melody Huntley, on the other hand, gardens in raised beds. Her husband came up with the idea after a back surgery prevented her from gardening the way she used to. These beds are raised to a height that enables her to sit in a chair alongside and tend her plants, also avoiding bending. Both Roush and Huntley will be glad to share their expertise in this area as well.

Eldon Roush can be contacted at 684-6912. Both he and Huntley can be contacted via email c/o The Kettle Falls Focus, [kffocus@kettlefallsfocus.com](mailto:kffocus@kettlefallsfocus.com). Master gardeners are usually available at various plant clinics through the summer. For further information contact WSU/ Stevens County Extension at 684-2588.

## Finding Funding When Money Seems Scarce

On Friday, April 2nd from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Horizons and Washington State University Extension are hosting a Grantwriting and Fundraising Workshop. This is a free event. All non-profits and community groups are encouraged to attend. The speaker, Susan Howlett, has been helping organizations raise money joyfully for the past 35 years, using practical, no cost strategies that fit into busy lives, and tight budgets. Teacher, trainer, speaker and author, Susan has consulted with over 1,000 organizations throughout the U.S. and she'll share what she's had to learn the hard way.

Some organizations are raising all the money they need this year while others are not. Find out what distinguishes the thriving organizations from the struggling ones and figure out how to apply those characteristics to YOUR group, without spending more time or money than you already are. This workshop will offer practical solutions to your thorniest problems, using stories, hands-on examples and fun interactive exercises. This is not a workshop on finding money for private, for-profit business ideas. For those ideas, please contact our local SCORE business counselor: Scott Douglas at 684-4571.

The workshop will take place at the Chewelah Peak Learning Center at 3215 Flowery Trail Road in Chewelah. Lunch will be provided, \$5.00 donation will be appreciated. Please R.S.V.P. to Krisan LeHew by March 29th at (509) 690-8400 or [Krisan@wsu.edu](mailto:Krisan@wsu.edu).

### MEYERS FALLS MARKET WANTS YOU TO TURN YOUR TRASH INTO TREASURE!!!

Recycled Art Show is April 18th - 24th. The deadline for your entry is April 17, 2010 at closing. Judging will be done openly by the community.

All entries must be made from recycled materials, i.e. something that would otherwise be destined for trash or the recycling bin. You may not use purchased items except for glue and fasteners.

FIRST PRIZE: A canvas Meyers Falls Market bag filled with goodies from the store. The grand prize winner will also receive an additional \$25 gift certificate.

For more information and entry forms stop by Meyers Falls Market or call 738-2727.

**HAVE FUN AND BE CREATIVE!!!**

**The PEOPLE PLACE**

Located in Orient, WA

Food, Hardware, Propane, Gifts  
General Merchandise  
Laundromat & Showers

Monday - Friday 9am - 7pm  
Saturday and Sunday 10am - 6pm

**(509) 684 - 5644**

**FREE SOUP KITCHEN**

THURSDAYS  
11:30AM TO 1:00PM  
AT THE  
KF SENIOR CENTER  
(6TH & NARCISSUS)

PROVIDED BY  
NEW BEGINNINGS FELLOWSHIP

"THE FRIENDLY CHURCH  
WITH A MESSAGE"

**The Old Apple Warehouse**

Antiques . Primitives  
Collectible Glassware & Pottery  
Beading & Quilting Supplies  
Gifts

Located at the stoplight in Kettle Falls  
Corner of Hwy 395 & Meyers

**dash wireless**

P.O. Box 43  
Kettle Falls, WA 99141  
Phone: 509-680-2203  
Email: [john@dashwireless.net](mailto:john@dashwireless.net)

**John Tyra**  
Owner & Network Administrator

[www.dashwireless.net](http://www.dashwireless.net)

**NINJA-FAST ACCESS TO THE INTERNET AT A PRICE YOU CAN AFFORD.**