

**SCW AGRICULTURE CLUB
NEWSLETTER
SEPTEMBER 2016**



Message from the President!!

I look forward to welcoming back all our seasonal members and hope everyone had a great summer.

As we ready our gardens for the fall planting season, we pray that the daily highs stay below 100 and the night temperatures reach 70. The weeds are growing again and it is a wonder with such little rain. Please keep the weeds under control within and around your plot.

We will be having a number of vacancies on the Board that will need to be filled. Everyone has heard the comments "**without volunteers to sit on the Board, there will be no club next year.**"

We need volunteers for 2017. Anyone, seasonal or year round residents, can hold any position on the Board. Speak to Sally Polk, who is handling nominations this year. You can also contact any Board member to discuss duties/responsibilities of the positions. We will be having our 3rd quarter general meeting on September 17. I hope everyone can attend.

Happy Gardening!!

SAVE THE DATE

September 17 General Meeting

10:00 am Shuffleboard Room

Topic/ Speaker: Preparing Your Garden for Planting

October 8 Welcome Back Coffee

9:30 am Garden Patio

**December 16 General Membership Meeting &
Election of 2017 Officers**

Location & Time to be announced

December 17 Holiday Luncheon

11:00 am Briarwood Dining

Members-at-Large represent the club membership on the Club Board.

The Members-at-Large are Sandy Morford, Lee Rhenish and Conrad Graff.

Should you have suggestions, questions, concerns or complaints to be brought before the Board, please contact any one of these members. The Board meets the second Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am at Basha's Community Room. The meetings are open to members, should you wish to bring an issue before the Board.



T. Greco

Terri Schmidt

Kathy Church

Randy Dowd

Reita Dorssom

Fred and Sheryl Rohlfner

John and Sarah Burbank

Julie and Bob Fanciullacci

Keep Growing

Feed your soil! "Soil is the soul of your garden". Enrich it with homegrown fertilizer like crushed egg shells. Tomatoes eat up the shells and use the Calcium!

Plant Strategically! Legumes are "self-fertilizing" meaning they produce nitrogen, boosting their growth. So if you plant, say, a bush bean next to lettuce, it will "feed" the lettuce for you!

An Editorial by Lee Rhenish- Member-at-Large

In 2011 the EPA launched a food recovery program to encourage agencies and hospitality businesses to reduce food waste. Wasted food harms our neighbors, our planet and our wallets. Consider that 21% of waste in our landfills is food where it produces methane, a greenhouse gas with 20% times the potential climate change impact of CO₂. All the green waste we place in the dumpster contributes to this. In view of this, also consider that 48 million Americans including 16 million children, live in food insecure households, with inadequate access to affordable food. A family of 4 wastes approximately \$1500 a year on food that ends up in the trash.

We, in this club, can participate in the EPA program by composting the green waste from our plots. Furthermore, we can make an extra effort to harvest our crops in a more timely way and contribute what we cannot consume to the Food Bank that we support. Please keep in mind that 1 in 7 people are food insecure and lack access to adequate food. We can further help by planting, in your garden plot, this fall, an extra row or two for the Food Bank and help those who are in need.



Know your Onions

In addition to good planting, you need to know when to harvest onions for the best flavor. Harvest tops for green onions as soon as they reach 6 inches in height. The longer you wait to harvest the green tops, the stronger their flavor will become.

Any bulbs that have bolted, or formed flower stalks, should be pulled and used right away; they are not good for storage.

Bulb-onion harvest time can begin when onion tops naturally fall over and turn brown. This is usually 100 to 120 days after planting, depending on the variety. Onion harvest time should be early in the morning when temperatures are not too hot.

How to Harvest Onions

Knowing how to harvest onions is also important, as you don't want to damage the plants or onion bulbs. Carefully pull or dig onions up from the ground with the tops intact. Gently shake the soil from around the bulbs.



Drying and Storing Onion Bulbs

Once harvested, storing onion bulbs becomes necessary. Onions must first be dried before they can be stored. To dry onions, spread them out on a clean and dry surface in a well-ventilated location, such as a garage or a shed.

Onions should be cured for at least two to three weeks or until the tops and necks are completely dry and the outer skin on the onion becomes slightly crisp. Cut tops off to within one inch after drying is complete.



Store dried onions in a wire basket, crate or nylon bag in a place where the temperature is between 32 to 40 degrees F. (0 to 4 degrees C.). Humidity levels should be between 65 and 70 percent for best results. If the location is too damp, rotting may occur. Most onions can keep for up to three months, if dried and stored properly.

<http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/onion/harvesting-onions.htm>

3 Easy Water Wise Garden Tips

Applying a layer of well-made compost will provide nutrients and life to the soil. Soil microbes then act to build micro pores creating a more porous structure that allows water to be absorbed and held better by the soil. The added nutrients continue to feed the microbes and plants.

Adding a thick layer of mulch helps protect the enriched soil from the drying effect of wind and sun. Mulch channels water into the soil more effectively.

Fertilize with care and use organic fertilizers. Organic fertilizers feed the soil microbes helping the plants to stay healthy and disease/ pest resistant. Caution: over fertilizing can stimulate excessive growth and increase the need for more irrigation.

Follow these 3 easy tips for a healthy, beautiful garden while significantly reducing the need for water.

www.lyngsogarden.com

These little guys have been spotted roaming the AG club area since March 11. It was a bit early for them. Please be cognizant, they eat our bugs. Thank you Ed Churray for the pictures.



Desert Spiny Lizard



Desert Iguana

Natural Hot Pepper Garden Spray Recipe

What You Need:

- 2-4 Cloves of Garlic
- At least 4 hot cayenne (or hotter) peppers
- 2 Tablespoons of vegetable or other oil
- 1 Tablespoon Liquid Castile Soap like Dr. Bonners
- 2-3 cups hot water
- Blender
- Towel, strainer, or cheesecloth



What to do:

- Put garlic, peppers, oil, soap and water in a blender and blend on high for several minutes.
- Leave in a bowl or pitcher overnight or for at least 12 hours to intensify the effects of the garlic and peppers.
- Strain through towel, cheesecloth or strainer and store in a glass jar.
- To use, pour about 2 TBSP of the mixture into a 16 ounce spray bottle (or 3 TBSP in a 24 ounce bottle) and shake well.
- Spray directly on plants as needed... I recommend wearing gloves!
- Can be used as often as needed for its preventative and pest controlling effects.



Welcome Autumn and Happy Planting!!