A NEW BEGINNING... At the close of the June 2010 Idaho State Convention, Garden Clubs of Idaho, Inc. was still under development. The plan is for the Policy and Procedures Blue Book to be completed for approval at the June State Convention in Idaho Falls, June 22-24, 2011. In the meantime, our club activities proceed. Our National President, Renee Blaschke, encourages us to again “Beautify Blight” with the joint effort of Garden Clubs and community organizations of adults and youth to promote the development of community vegetable gardens.

I hope most of you have planted your bulbs by the time this letter reaches you. If not, you will find a helpful article in this issue on forcing bulbs. Take lots of photos this time with the results of your labors to be entered in a statewide contest. We are calling it “Most Beautiful Bulb Display” contest. All you have to do is take photos of your daffodils blooming in beds, pots, or naturalized. Send your photos to our State Awards Chairman, Maxine Smolowitz by June 10th, 2011. The entered photos will be displayed on a poster and numbered with the member’s name and club information on the back of the photo. Attendees at the convention will vote on the “Most Beautiful Bulb Display”. Winner of each category will receive a prize. You need not be present to win.

AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE... At the October Fall Board Meeting, the nominating committee reported that they had not been able to complete a slate of officers for 2011-2013. I will recycle as president, but we have no one for 1st Vice President or 2nd Vice President. Maxine Smolowitz and Inez Thomas are running for Treasurer, and Recording Secretary Joyce Parr has offered again to serve. It would be futile to continue in 2011 without 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents. Both these officers should be in training for stepping up in 2013 and they have duties necessary for GCII to function. I fear, if we do not have a 1st and 2nd Vice President to volunteer to serve GCII before March 1, 2011 we will plan to dissolve because we cannot continue with out them.

It has been a great privilege to represent Idaho as our State President these past fourteen months. I’ve learned a great deal in meeting the challenges and enjoyed the travels and meeting with members around our state. I believe as many members as possible should experience being a state officer. Being an active member of NGC enlightens one to continue the efforts of this truly great force. The opportunity to participate in the Regional and National Conventions and National Board Meetings are fantastic adventures. I truly wish more members would take advantage of these experiences.

Many of you have the capabilities to lead GCII. To serve as a state officer a willing attitude is of first importance. GCII needs you to volunteer to serve as 1st or 2nd Vice President in order that our organization can continue. Please contact Nominating Committee Chair Darlene Adams phone 208-375-1809 if you are willing to consider these positions.

Oh, the Joy!

Robyn
GARDEN CLUBS OF IDAHO, INC. OFFICERS

President: Robyn McCarthy, Idaho Falls, 208-522-8230
1st Vice President: Constance Blyth, Idaho Falls, 208-529-2388
2nd Vice President: Rosalyn McCandless, Idaho Falls, 208-523-8706
Treasurer: Maxine Smolowitz, Idaho Falls, 208-523-0373
Advisor: Dotty Hurd, Boise, 208-343-3273
Historian: Jeanne Lundell, Boise, 208-343-6052
Recording Secretary: Joyce Parr, Moscow, 208-883-3051
Corresponding Secretary: Jodene Caldwell, Moscow, 208-882-0412
Parliamentarian: Louisa Cone, Caldwell, 208-459-2209

Pacific Region Director: Sandra Ford, Boise, 208-484-3844
NGC President: Renee Blaschke, Smithville, TX 512-360-2738

Meconopsis x sheldonii
This Himalayan blue poppy is native to eastern Tibet, Nepal, India and Butan. It was first hybridized in Kew Gardens in England in 1936. It produces true blue flowers in early summer 4-5 inches across. Requiring moderately rich, peaty, well-drained soil it is reputedly hardy in zones 4-9. It will not tolerate hot humid summers and it is best not to let it flower the first year. I grow it on the north side of my house where it gets morning sun and afternoon shade. It should be divided every three years to maintain vigor.

Patty Huston, Garden Talk Garden Club

Rita Jackshaw (l) and Gail Hofstrand (r) were honored with a corsage and acknowledgement at the GCII Clearwater District Fall Meeting. They have been in the Moscow Garden Club since 1974 (36 years!).

Rita has held the offices of Secretary and Historian. She has always been there to help with designs and bouquets for Latah County's historic McConnell Mansion as well as providing bouquets to the University of Idaho's Summer Theatre. An active participant in the Latah County Fair, garden club work projects as well as our annual plant sale, Rita still has a garden and fruit trees and continues to can her produce. Her love of gardening was passed down from her mother and Rita enjoys growing flowers—roses being her favorite. She said she has learned so much over the years from all of the "good gardeners" of the Moscow Garden Club.

Gail and her family moved to Moscow Mountain to their home 'Hofstrand Haven' more than 35 years ago and grew both produce and flowers. She was noted for her Glads and remembers bringing a large number of them to the Latah County Fair Horticulture exhibit one year to share the wonderful colors with the community. After her husband retired, Gail took her flowers and perennials to sell at the weekly Farmer's Market. She has held several Moscow Garden Club offices and has enjoyed sharing her knowledge with other club members.

Gail received her love of gardening at an early age as well. As a child, she and her siblings were "assigned" a plant to take care of—strawberries were her responsibility and she remembers making channels in the beds to water the plants. She now plants and enjoys her lovely container plants.

Diane Holick, President Moscow Garden Club

Announcements and Upcoming Events

- Awards applications due to Maxine Smolowitz, Awards Chairman, by December 1, 2010
- Clearwater District Spring Mtg in Lewiston, WA, March 17, 2011
- Pacific Region Convention is April 14-16, 2011 in Scottsdale, AZ
- Flower Show School, Course 1, April 25-27, 2011, in Clarkston, WA
- GCII State Convention, Hilton Inn, Idaho Falls, ID, June 22-24, 2011
- "Plant it Pink" Awards application due to Maxine Smolowitz by October 1, 2011

Keep your Christmas-heart open all the year round—J. Archmint, author
Moscow Garden Club
SOUTHEAST DISTRICT OCTOBER 2010 REPORT

Daffodils planted last fall began to pop up this past spring in Southeast Idaho. The three clubs in the Southeast District, Idaho Falls Garden Club, Garden Talk Garden Club and Roberts Town and Country, planted about 400 bulbs.

Bulbs in Idaho Falls were planted at The Haven, a family homeless shelter, Idaho Falls Downtown Historical Area and at the Museum of Idaho. In Roberts bulbs were planted along a new walk way around The Mustang Community Center. Plus many yards had a yellow hue due to the planting of many bulbs in home gardens.

Idaho Falls and Garden Talk Garden Club members organized the planting of over 2000 plants in the permanent flower beds in the downtown area of Idaho Falls. Home Depot donated about 1800 of the plants along with the Town and Country Nursery. There were over 50 workers solicited by the Garden Clubs to help with the planting.

Garden Talk donated a $100 to the Idaho Food bank and awarded three Good Neighbor Awards. The club purchased new signs to place in yards of the recipients. Members also tended to the Blue Star Memorial Garden. During the summer about 15 garden tours were taken by the members plus guests from Idaho Falls and Roberts Garden Clubs.

Idaho Falls Garden Club helped clean the flower beds of a member, Sarah Murdoch, who because of ill health was unable to work in her yard. They also learned about weed management, how to care for your lawn and trees and how to take pictures of flowers both up close and in the landscapes.

Idaho Falls lost two long-time gardening friends and charter members of their club, June Wilson and Louise Henderson.

Roberts Town and Country did not meet this summer but plan to plant Daffodils at the Senior Citizens Building this fall.

Constance Blythe, President Garden Talk Garden Club

CLEARWATER DISTRICT OCTOBER 2010 REPORT

Clearwater District is composed of five clubs, each one gaining in membership and growing in strength as they carry on the missions of Garden Clubs of Idaho Inc. and of the National Garden Clubs.

All of the District clubs participated as we hosted the 58th annual Convention of Garden Clubs of Idaho Inc, June 16-18th with 53 registered members and 12 guests. Ways and Means from the convention netted the state treasury $238.00. The clubs have participated in supporting “Golden Days” GCII Daffodil project.

Last Spring the District gave each of it’s member clubs a $100.00 grant to spend on a community project. We are awaiting reports to hear how the money was used.

The District has voted to sponsor and finance a series of Flower Show Schools during 2011 and 2012. Instructors have been hired and plans are underway for Course 1 to be held at Clarkston, WA April 25-27, 2011 and Course 11 at Moscow October 26-28, 2011.

The clubs participated in individual and group summer garden tours. Hill and Valley and All Season’s club toured gardens in the Moscow area including a stop at University of Idaho Greenhouses. The Moscow Garden Club’s summer tour included the University of Idaho Research Nursery, as well as Organic, Shade and Hosta Gardens, and a Victorian Garden.

Hill and Valley Club members care for various parks in the Kendrick and Juliaetta area including Wallace Park, and Butterfly Park. That club has taken on a huge and very valuable project to save the deteriorating Kendrick Grange Hall where they had rented a section of the building for their meeting place for forty years. The Grange membership had dwindled to two members and the huge building that was erected in 1904 was about to be lost. Club members decided to join the Grange to save the building. The renovations started immediately. It will now house the Grange, the Kendrick-Juliaetta Heritage Society, the 4H and the Hill and Valley Garden Club. Club members have spent a lot of time cleaning, painting, repairing etc. Their meetings will now be held on the main floor while keeping the upstairs apartment for special occasions and storage.

Moscow Garden Club is educating it’s members to the' science of propagation' and has invited several other district clubs to participate on "propagation days" in October and November in a room at the U of I arboretum. In preparation for the workshop, Moscow club members have been asked to identify special container plants that can be saved from the frost and they will be taken to the clubs greenhouse space and will be propagated using techniques such as leaf, tip, cuttings and crown divisions. A large number of succulents will be propagated. Activities of this ongoing propagation group will result in plants to sell at annual plant sale fund raisers in the spring. Participants from other clubs are asked to
bring cuttings of plants that they would like to propagate.

We are looking forward to attending Clearwater District Fall Meeting on October 21st at Kooskia. Valley Club as hostess has chosen the theme “THANKS AND GIVING” and have made great plans to “live” the theme with clubs honoring their “special’ club member”. Each person attending the meeting is asked to bring a donation for the local Food Bank.

We anticipate an interesting year with educational programs as we follow the guidelines set forth by GCII and NGC.

Edith Cole, Clearwater District Director

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT OCTOBER 2010 REPORT

The Southwest District will be erecting a Blue Star marker at the entrance of the Boise Airport. District funds are being used for this project. We continue to collect spare change for the “Penny A Day To Educate” and awarded a $500 scholarship to a student enrolled in the college of Western Idaho’s horticulture program. Our district is sponsoring an “Adopt a Highway” program and members are being asked to pick up trash along a one-mile stretch of Highway 55 near Eagle. A sign will be erected along the highway recognizing the efforts of Southwest District Garden Clubs of Idaho. We had a well attended district wide workshop on planting containers to attract butterflies. Southwest District also had an information booth at the Spring Flower and Garden Show in Boise where we gave out information about garden clubs.

The following are highlights from clubs in our District:

Nampa Garden Club has had some very interesting programs including preparing the soil, propagating plants, and a tour of the Camille Beckman factory. They presented a Good Neighbor Award in August.

Owyhee Gardeners has been having fun taking care of the many gardens they created for their communities. They have many new members who enjoy getting together and learning more about plants and gardening by taking care of these gardens. Owyhee Gardeners also helped Early Morning Gardeners with the Canyon County Fair and learned a little more about improving the Owyhee County Fair. In September, they put on the Southwest District meeting, which was a great success.

The Payette Valley Gardeners Garden Club has been maintaining the memorial rose garden at the Payette City library along with a number of flowerbeds at the same park. They have a few members who have been working very hard at the Portia Club outside to get it ready for its grand reopening which will be coming up soon.

Idaho Horticulture Society sponsored a Spring Horticulture Symposium, Fall flower Show, plant sale and a Community Landscape and Garden Contest for Residents of Boise. Members worked with The World Center for Birds of Prey to landscape the new California condor exhibit. Some of the funds used for this project came from GCII and were used to purchase native plants, wildflowers and signage.

Early Morning Gardeners has been caring for the demonstration garden in West Park, which was started by the Master Gardeners in Nampa. They have one box that the club planted with grasses and help weed and water all the boxes. The club also has an annual project of making gift bags for Meals on Wheels at Christmas and made 70 bags last Christmas.

Ada Gardeners plant and maintain the landscape at the entrance of Zoo Boise. In August, they had an annual tomato tasting. During the summer they had a couple of work parties to help one of their elderly members with weeding and maintenance in her garden; they also had a ‘spring cleaning’ work party at the home of one of our members who died last winter. Ada Gardeners fund two $500 scholarships for second year horticulture students at the College of Western Idaho.

Golden Garden Club planted new flowerbeds at Valley View Retirement Community in Boise. They installed a native plant landscape at Zoo Boise and continued maintenance of the plaza at Capitol Park.

Merry Tillers continues to support our community, donating to BUGS (Boise Urban Garden School) to cover the cost of a scholarship for one child. Spring found the “Tillers” at Ronald McDonald House where club president Jan Haneke and her husband David gave instruction to club members on how to properly prune roses. Members learned a lot, had fun and made a difference at the house.

Allen Dietz, Sandy ford, Harriet Calverley and Pat Baker gave Floral Design Workshops to the general public once a month from December to May. They were very well attended and required two sessions each time they were offered.

Pat Baker, Southwest District Director
FACEBOOK REPORT

“facebook” is a social communication tool of our time. It can also be used for advertising or informational sharing of individuals with the same interest (for example: the Garden Clubs of Idaho, Inc.) Of course, to work with facebook, one must have a computer, an Email address, the Internet, and the knowledge of how to use them. When all of this is in place the opportunity is present to connect through facebook with like minded people.

First, go to your computer and access the Internet. Second, go to your Internet browser (usually Microsoft’s Internet Explorer). In the Search window, type “Garden Clubs of Idaho Inc.” or simply click on www.gcii.org. This will take you to the club’s website. Next click on the GCII (Idaho) logo on the lower right. It will take you to our Facebook page. Follow the instructions to sign on as a Fan. Once you are a Fan of the GCII facebook page, you can connect with other friends who are also Fans. You can check out all the information there and also write your own comments.

The facebook page has the potential of reaching 500,000 million people. Since the new facebook page “Garden Clubs of Idaho, Inc.” has been established in June, we have had 345 visits to the page and more than 25 Fans. Although this represents only a tiny fraction of the potential number of visitors, it is a good beginning. The more club members who participate on facebook, the more all club members, and also the wider community, benefit.

Juergen Schrattenholzer, Garden Club for All Seasons, Facebook Master

CLEARWATER DISTRICT FALL MEETING PROGRAM

“Thanks & Giving” - Each Club President introduced and thanked their honored members: All Seasons (President Barbara Hepler) - Juergen Schrattenhozer; Hill & Valley (President Raina Weyen) - RoseAnn Holt; Moscow GC (President Diane Holick) - Gail Hofstrand and Rita Jacksha; Nezperce GC (President LeeAnn McMaster) - Lorna Inglet; Valley GC (President Lorraine Smith) - Elaine Landry and Joan Thomas. Lorraine presented Jean Carroll with her Master Judges pin. Joyce Frazier, who was unable to attend, received her Master Judges pin at a recent Valley GC meeting.

PICTURES FROM THE CLEARWATER DISTRICT FALL MEETING

Juergen Schrattenholzer, Facebook Master receives a new GCII polo shirt.

Table Centerpiece for auction.

“Grandmothers Aprons Display”

Jeannie Ensley of Hill and Valley Garden Club auctions a pumpkin centerpiece.

Clearwater District Officers (L-R): Treasurer Lorraine Smith, District Director Edith Cole, 1st Vice Director Jodene Caldwell, , Secretary Joyce Parr

Edith Cole, Clearwater District Director, models the new GCII cap.
WORLD WIDE WEB REPORT

Our new website, www.gcii.org, was developed and produced by myself in consultation with Robyn McCarthy, our State President. The website is hosted by Hostgator.com and went live on 1st August 2010 after detailed research of host companies and website design. Hostgator.com provides an excellent service at a very reasonable cost to IGCI.

The new site has over 40 pages and includes contact details of all three of the Idaho Districts and the 17 individual Clubs. In addition there are pages dedicated to fundraising, awards, events and general information about IGCI. Photo galleries are gradually being introduced as photos from members are submitted. The new site also gives members access to various articles of Club documentation, including By-Laws, Order Forms, Award Applications and Minutes of Club meetings.

An interesting statistic is that a large number of visitors are either coming from or going on to our new page on Facebook - an indicator of how popular these social networking sites are becoming. What is pleasing is that the website is gaining over 120 new visitors each month, it is hoped the word will continue to spread and that we can maintain this excellent level of growth.

Finally a couple of requests from your Webmaster,

1. Can all current Club committee members please check their personal details on their Club page and email me with any amendments.

2. We are also trying to put photos of committee members next to their personal details, email me your photo. Any size or format will do, as long as it contains a headshot/portrait that can be extracted.

We have a few photo galleries already but would like more. Send Robyn (copied to me) your Club event photos!

There is a golden rule concerning Computers “garbage in, garbage out”, I can only keep the Website interesting, entertaining and informative with input from our members. So please visit it regularly and do submit your ideas and suggestions on how we can continue to help it grow.

Phil Martin, Idaho Falls Garden Club, Webmaster

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR IGCI OFFICERS

Phil Martin is the GCII Webmaster. He was born in the city of Birmingham, England in March 1953. He joined the British Army in 1970 as a Communications Technician in the Royal Corps of Signals. It was early in his Army Career that he met his wife Carol and they have been happily married for over 32 Years. They have a son Steven (31) who is currently serving in the British Army and a daughter Susan (29) who lives with their three Grandchildren in Shelley, Idaho.

After receiving a direct commission as an officer during the 1989/90 Gulf War, Phil retired from the Army as a Captain in 1993 and commenced teaching Computers and Information Technology both commercially and at his local college in Birmingham. After a surprise heart attack in 2003, he decided to take life a little easier and retired from full time teaching. He still enjoys an active life and is a member of a local IF Bowling league.

He and Carol emigrated to the USA in 2009 to be nearer their Grandchildren and have a property on 5 acres to the north of Idaho Falls. They currently have 4 Shetland Ponies, 2 Horses, a Dog and Cat. Carol is the active Gardener and also works part-time as a Medical Receptionist. Phil is the “House Husband” but still enjoys his “Computers” and they are both thoroughly enjoying their new lives here in the wonderful State of Idaho.

It is not the presence of animals and plants that makes conservation necessary, but the presence of people. — Maurice Strong, Executive Director, United Nations Environmental Programme 1972 - 1975.
**2011 PACIFIC REGION of NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS CONVENTION**

**SIXTY SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION -- APRIL 14, 15 & 16, 2011**

**“Desert Splendor”**

Scottsdale Hilton Resort and Villas  
6333 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85250  
Telephone (480)948-7750 Reservations (800)445-8667 E-mail - www.scottsdaleresort.hilton.com

Room reservations must be made under NGC Pacific Region Convention to receive convention rate of $129.00.

Each person attending the convention must fill out a separate form. No group checks.

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**BADGE INFORMATION** - Please check all that apply:

- ___ NGC President  
- ___ NGC Chairman from Pac. Reg.  
- ___ Flower Show Judge  
- ___ Pacific Region Director  
- ___ Delegate  
- ___ Gardening Consultant  
- ___ Past Pacific Region Director  
- ___ Alternate Delegate  
- ___ Landscape Design Consultant  
- ___ Pacific Region Officer  
- ___ NGC Life Member  
- ___ Spouse or Guest  
- ___ Pac. Region State President  
- ___ Pacific Region Life Member  
- ___ First Time Attendee  
- ___ Pacific Region Chairman  
- ___ Environmental Consultant  
- ___ Garden Club Member

**TOURS** – Tour cost not included in Package Plan or Part-time registration.

- Thursday: 9:30 am – Pre-convention tour – Cosanti – Solari Windbells  
- Friday: 2:00 pm – Desert Botanical Garden/Butterfly Pavilion  
- Saturday: 2:00 pm – Guided Tour – Old Town Scottsdale

**PACKAGE PLAN REGISTRATION** Includes: Registration - $35.00, 2 Lunches and 3 Banquets

| Full-time (received by April 1) | $245.00 |
| Full-time Spouse (received by April 1) | $225.00 |
| Full-time (received after April 1) | $255.00 |

**PART-TIME REGISTRATION OPTION** Events:

| Thursday: April 14th | Banquet – Fun Night (Part-time registration fee included) | $58.00 |
| Friday: April 15th  | Lunch (Part-time registration fee included) | $38.00 |
|                     | Banquet - Design Program (Part-time registration fee included) | $58.00 |
| Saturday: April 16th | Lunch (Part-time registration fee included) | $38.00 |
|                     | Banquet - Installation (Part-time registration fee included) | $58.00 |

Diet Restrictions | PACIFIC REGION CONVENTION TOTAL $ |

Make check payable to: *2011 Arizona Pacific Region Convention*  
NO REFUNDS AFTER April 1, 2011

Mail to: Leta Searcy, Registrar, 13405 S. 40th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85044-4503  
E-mail: Leta16@aol.com  Phone: (480)759-0521

No shuttle service available at hotel. Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport is the nearest airport. Taxi, limo and shuttle services are available at Sky Harbor at guest expense. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport serving Allegiant Airlines is 45 min. away. Check for taxi service.
**Holiday Tea, Vintage Fashion Show, Decorating for the Holidays**

We invite you to step back in time to the Victorian era and enjoy a unique, elegant tea party. You will be served tea, sweets and savories steeped in tradition.

**WHERE:**
Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy
516 S. 9th Street
Boise, ID  83702

**WHEN:**
Sunday, December 5, 2010
Doors open at 1:30 pm
Holiday Decorating 2pm
Afternoon Tea 3pm
Vintage Fashion Show 4pm

**WHAT:**
- Holiday floral design demonstration by award winning designer Georgia White, owner of Boise At Its Best
- Vintage Fashion Show presented by Kathy Stubby
- Silent Auction, Jewelry, Baskets, Plants, 50/50 Raffle and more

**HOW:**
$25 Reservations Required—space is limited!
Check to: Idaho Horticultural Society
5247 N. Backwater Ave.
Boise, ID  83714

Support Idaho Horticultural Society’s community service projects.
Idaho Horticultural Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

**QUESTIONS? Call Pat Baker  208-870-1299**

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**PUMPKIN CHIFFON PIE**

Combine slightly beaten egg yolks, 1/2 cup sugar, pumpkin, milk, sherry, salt and spices in double boiler; cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Soften gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes. Add to pumpkin mixture; stir until dissolved. Chill until thickened. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form; beat until stiff, adding remaining sugar gradually. Fold into pumpkin mixture. Pour into pie shell; chill until firm. Top with whipped cream. Yield: 6 servings

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**Revisiting Memorial Gardens**

Just a year ago Pat Baker showed me a memorial garden created by the citizen of Hidden Springs a community in north Ada County. This hidden treasure is in full view if only you knew it was a memorial garden. Surrounded by a wrought iron fence meandering pathways wind around perennial beds. On the whimsical side are a couple of birdfeeders and a bird house. There is also a metal bench for rest or maybe meditation. When I revisited the garden this summer I noticed some changes. While the beds were still well maintained there were few annuals maybe because of our late spring or maybe the person who did the annuals last year wasn’t able to this year.

In contrast how beautiful the State of Idaho plantings around public building have been this year especially the rose garden and fountain in front of the Idaho Commission for Libraries in Boise. The roses are in memory of Gretchen Smith a Pacific Region director from Twin Falls. This year the Capitol grounds keepers have added colorful annuals to the roses. The riot of color is just spectacular! What a wonderful place to enjoy a lunch or read a book.

This summer was the centennial of the 1910 wildfire that on August 20 and 21st blew up to destroyed three million acres of forest, more than a half dozen towns and killed 87 people in Idaho and Montana. While reading Pulitzer Prize winning author Timothy Egan’s book *The Big Burn* I couldn’t help but think about the three full sized statues of firefighters at the Wildlands Firefighters Monument located within the Interagency Fire Center near the Boise Airport. Lining the paths throughout the monument are flat markers to the fallen along with mementos from family members and friends. It is very moving to stroll through this monument thinking about the sacrifices of these firefighters.

It is important for us to create, maintain and revisit our memorial gardens which enhance not only ourselves but also our communities.

**Wishing You the Joy of the Christmas Season,**
Jerry and Robyn McCarthy
Government-developed honeybees are equipped with a keen sniffing ability to root out a deadly parasite. In an effort to stem a massive bee die-off, government specialists have developed a population of honeybees that can root out the main culprit in the epidemic - a parasite that feeds on pupae nests and spreads viruses within hives.

USDA scientists hope Varroa mite-detecting honeybees could potentially improve the health of the overall honeybee population. During the winter of 2007, the disorder wiped out about 1 million colonies in North America.

Varroa is considered the number one pest of honeybees worldwide according to the USDA Agricultural Research Service. For more than 20 years Varroa mites have decimated millions of honeybee colonies and grown resistant to pesticides. The tiny parasites invade a colony and feed off the hemolymph, a mixture of blood and fluids inside the insect’s body. The mites target immature pupae in covered hive cells, stunting their growth and causing wing and leg deformities. Within two years, Varroa mites can destroy an entire colony.

Some bees have a low-frequency genetic trait termed Varroa-sensitive hygiene (VSH) that enables them to locate and remove Varroa mites from hives. The bees team up to open the covered brood cells and remove the mite-damaged pupae and any accompanying Varroa mites from the hive. It is believed that the bees are better at smelling the odors associated with Varroa-infected cells. After identifying and isolating that genetic trait USDA entomologists have developed a population of honeybees with a high expression of the VSH.

It is agreed that the VSH honeybees aren’t meant for mass production as a pure stock as that would result in excessive inbreeding. The VSH trait expresses infrequently in the wild. It is important to weigh the pros and cons of selectively breeding for traits versus promoting “hybrid vigor” by allowing queens to mate of their own accord. VSH bees have so far met the USDA’s expectations of thwarting Varroa mite infestations and fulfilling their crucial roles as pollinators.

Considering the reproductive and hygienic success with the VSH colonies, there is optimism that the honeybee industry is on the right track toward recovery from the Varroa pest and Colony Collapse Disorder.

Rosalyn McCandless, Pacific Region and GCII Bee Chairman

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**A WINTER GARDENING ACTIVITY**

Shears, lawn mowers, clippers and loppers all have blades that can dull over time, rendering them ineffective. To fix this problem, you need to know how to sharpen garden tools to keep them at their best.

**Step 1** Check the pivot nuts that hold the blade or blades to the garden tool. These nuts can loosen and cause the blade to function improperly. Tighten the pivot nut if it is loose. If the pivot nut is tight and the blade still seems dull, proceed to the next step.

**Step 2** Check to see if a blade is bent. Lay a section of wood as long as the blade alongside the blade. If the blade veers away from the wood, it is bent. Place the blade in a vice so the bend is to one side of the vice. Tap the blade in the direction you want the blade to bend. If the blade is not bent, move to the next step to sharpen it.

**Step 3** Use the mill file to sharpen small blades and shears. Use the scissor sharpeners for grass clippers; these will work just as the mill file does.

**Step 4** Use long, broad strokes to file the blades of garden tools. Sharpen the blade by using strokes that move away from you. Adjust the angle to file the edge of the blade evenly. Examine the exposed edge when shiny steel starts to show. For larger blades, proceed to the next step.

**Step 5** Place the larger blade on plywood. File the blade with 300-grit wet/dry sandpaper. Keep the blade flat and sand using a circular motion. Move in a pattern away from you as you did in the previous step.

**Step 6** Check for burrs and smooth these out when you find one. Sharpen only to the factory-cut bevel of the blade so you don’t cause the blade to become brittle. Oil the blade lightly with the 3-in-1 oil so it operates smoothly and is protected from rust.

From GardenGuide.Com
At the Fall Board Meeting at Cascade, ID, Pat Peutz of Payette Valley Gardeners Garden Club gave a presentation on Forcing Bulbs. Here are some of her tips:

IDEAS FOR THE PROCRASTINATOR
Bulbs can be planted as long as the ground can be dug. Debbie Hinchevy of Anchorage, Alaska admits to even digging up inches of frozen ground to plant bulbs – results? She says they bloomed just fine! If you have also procrastinated your bulb planting here are some ideas to make those spring blooms happen:

LAYERING BULBS
Planning is the key to layering your bulbs. Choose your bulbs. Bulbs bloom at different times. Research the time of bloom for each bulb type. You may need to add bulbs at different times if you want everything to boom at the same time. Plan your color combination and design.
- Choose a clean sterile pot with a drainage hole.
- Place a layer of hay or twigs in the bottom of the container.
- Add a layer of sand or gravel.
- Add a layer of soil. Determine the depth that each bulb should be planted. This information is usually found on the package.
- Plant bulbs layer by layer according to the depth requirements
- Place in a cool place: 35 - 48 degrees for a minimum of 12 – 13 weeks.
- Bulbs must not be allowed to freeze and should be kept damp (not wet).
- Mark your calendar to show the date you want to bring them out. If planted by December 1st, they should be ready bring out in the light by March 1st. After blooming plant the bulbs outside.

FORCING BULBS
Bulbs can be forced to bloom at your will. They need to be chilled at temperatures between 30 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit for 10 - 14 weeks. Hyacinths, crocuses, and narcissus can be forced in water or gravel.

IN WATER:
- Choose a clean sterile container.
- Fill container with water, place bulb in water (nose up) so the water is only one half way up the bulb.
- Add 1 ounce vodka to water to prevent bacterial growth.
- Chill.

IN GRAVEL:
- Choose a clean sterile container
- Put a layer of gravel in the bottom of the container.
- Place bulbs in gravel (noses up).
- Add gravel so the bulbs are secure.
- Add enough water so the bottom or basal plate is covered. they will swell and force themselves up as they grow. Consider this when placing the bulbs in the container.
- Do not cover the bulbs with either water or gravel.
- Cover loosely with a piece of pierced plastic and place in a cool dark place.

Chilling is called vernalization. Keep bulbs in a cool place for 4-5 weeks. A garage, cellar or refrigerator will suffice. Check the water level weekly.

When you see the first green appear move the container to a warm sunny spot and wait for the bloom to appear. Move the container gradually to a bright, warm and sunny place or the plants will become "leggy". You may plant the bulbs outside when they are finished blooming. If you have trouble with animals digging up or eating your bulbs, try using Gold Bond Foot Powder around the bulbs when planting them. The odor is supposedly repulsive to animals.
MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The number of members in Garden Clubs of Idaho, Inc. has grown since our annual convention last June. In the last four months we have added ten new members. At the beginning of summer we had 459. We now have 469. Recognized clubs with new members since June 2010 are Nezperce Garden Club, Garden Talk Garden Club, Golden Garden Club, Idaho Horticulture Society, and Owyhee Gardeners.

Club membership growth competes with so many different activities. We need to be creative to attract new members and to keep our present members interested. Try different ways to present programs. Expand member knowledge through tours that give members a chance to see the creativity and knowledge of other gardeners. Members doing their own research to present a program or finding a knowledgeable speaker draw other members to meetings. Try having board meetings separately from club meetings to take care of business.

Constance Blyth, GCII 1st Vice President and Membership Chair

TAX INFORMATION

Tax information about potential tax benefits for GCII donors and volunteers is available for viewing and printing from our website. To access it:

- Open our website at www.gcii.org
- Click on ‘Useful Links’ on the header
- Click on ‘All Club Documentation’ on lower right corner
- Look under ‘Tax Information’ in the middle of the page

CHRISTMAS GIFTS!

We still have beautiful Idaho rainbow trout ornaments for sale at $15 each. They make wonderful Christmas gifts. To order, contact Louisa Cone at 208-459-2209
The Garden in Winter

Frosty-white and cold it lies
Underneath the fretful skies;
Snowflakes flutter where the red
Banners of the poppies spread,
And the drifts are wide and deep
Where the lilies fell asleep.

But the sunsets o'er it throw
Flame-like splendor, lucent glow,
And the moonshine makes it gleam
Like a wonderland of dream,
And the sharp winds all the day
Pipe and whistle shrilly gay.

Safe beneath the snowdrifts lie
Rainbow buds of by-and-by;
In the long, sweet days of spring
Music of bluebells shall ring,
And its faintly golden cup
Many a primrose will hold up.

Though the winds are keen and chill
Roses' hearts are beating still,
And the garden tranquilly
Dreams of happy hours to be­
In the summer days of blue
All its dreamings will come true.

Lucy Maud Montgomery—Canadian
Novelist (Anne of Green Gables)