

# The Express

## Our Mission

The mission of the Olympus Garden Club is to promote and support the love of gardening, floral arranging, landscape design, horticulture, plant research and environmental improvement by providing education, resources, networking and leadership opportunities to our members and the community.

## Inside This Issue

President's Message, Awards, Word Scramble	2
Edible Perennials, Tip Time	3
Ecological Footprinting, Meeting Calendar, Word Scramble Answer	4

## LAST BUT NOT LEAST-AN ARBOR

Early morning, quite a view thru my garden door, a peaceful way to start the day. A squirrel sitting on the raised bed, looking too comfortable in my eyes causes me to rush out in my pajamas. It runs for its life up a tree in the next yard. My vacation is almost over; I will not be able to scare the squirrels away any time one decides to pay my garden a visit. Soon I will be back to weekend gardening. Squeezing in time before and after work when I can. Oh, I will find the time. I will turn on the garden lights when I am out in the evening, after sundown. This has been a productive summer. After the back door was installed, I was able to get

As the days get shorter and the nights get longer, nature starts its journey to slumber. The clocks change time. The birds fly south. And the animals begin to find places to hibernate and sleep the winter away. It is sleep that re-generates our mind, body and soul. But what happens if your mind, body and soul just can't get to sleep? Well, there are lots of things you can do to help you relax like reading a book, counting to 100, corralling sheep, or drinking a cup of soothing herbal tea. It is known that certain herbal concoctions can help you relax or just plain knock you out. Put you to sleep, that is.

Of all the herbs, chamomile is one of the best known. **Matricaria chamomilla**, German Chamomile, has been known to be the favorite bedtime beverage of choice for centuries. It soothes the nerves and helps to induce sleep. It is a mild sedative. However, if you are allergic to ragweed or have a history of allergies, stay away! It could compound the problem. Then maybe you should try hops. NO! I don't mean beer, but enough of those would make you pass out for sure. Though it is a main ingredient in beer, I do mean **Humulus lupulus**, otherwise known as hops. It is proven to ease anxiety, help insomnia and control restlessness. It has a sedating effect on the central nervous system. But do not take if you are depressed or pregnant. It also has a bitter taste, so adding

started on the backyard garden. Someone who was working on a neighbor's garden gave me a helping hand by using the recycled wood from the old steps to make the raised beds. I attempted the so-called "Lasagna" gardening but as a new gardener, scheduling pickup of vegetable scraps from the store along with the other gardening duties became overwhelming so I left that for another season. The



Boulders in place



Arbor

small boulders have found their resting place under the tree. They will form a teardrop to hold the 'play-sand' for the little ones with a rock garden on the outside that the children can help care for.

The last big thing to happen in my garden was the installation of an Arbor, with a little swinging gate. It sits in the middle of the yard. On either side of the Arbor potted plants stand guard along the rows of Willow twigs,

another herb to it might please the palate.

How about **Lavandula officinalis/Lavandula 'Vera'** or **Lavandula angustifolia. English Lavender?** It has a more pleasant taste and it helps to reduce irritability. The tea should be brewed from the flower petals in mild or moderate strength and used sparingly. It can cause stomach cramps if it is too strong. However, do not use **Spanish Lavender, Lavandula stoechas**, as it has a stimulating effect and you will never get to sleep.

But if sleep is still eluding you, a healthy dose of valerian root should do the trick. **Valeriana officinalis** or **Valerian** helps the most severe insomniac and those who cannot sleep due to pain, anxiety or hypertension.

(Continued on page 2)

the start of a Willow wall, and plants hanging from it also help divide the area.

I have learned much this summer. I attended the NOFA

Conference in Massachusetts with other OGC members. At the conference, I took a Weed Walk, and learned the medicinal properties of some of the unwanted plants that I try to keep out of the plant beds.

(Continued on page 2)

# President's Message

It's always invigorating to come together with people of similar interests and goals. It was such a gathering that brought OGC members Roberta Raysor and Solita Stephens, along with my wife Ada and I to the 33rd annual Northeast Organic Farmers' Association (NOFA) summer conference. The conference was held at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts and was crammed full of workshops and activities (films, a fair, farm visits, etc.) for adults, teens and children. Two evenings were highlighted by keynote addresses relating to the environment and sustainable development.

The overall theme of the event was a celebration of sustainability, although lighter and more practical topics were offered as well. The various workshops could be divided into three basic categories: farm and garden related, craft oriented and various issues that are of con-

cern to society. With 215 different classes, farm tours and films available, it was a daunting task for any of us to choose a particular class when there were one or two other favorites scheduled at the same time. We each came out of the classrooms buzzing with new information and experiences. We sometimes had meals with people from different regions and walks of life as well as with instructors of classes we had just attended. Food provided at the cafeteria was mainly organic and locally grown. Most of the meals were quite good and costs for both food and housing were reasonable.

In September, we spent another beautiful Sunday at the David Foulke Memorial community garden, fundraising and leading workshops. Our Johanna Willins taught the kids how to make her famous paper hats and our Amelia Estrada

spent the day working on our body parts (our feet). She has magical hands and is our reflexology massage therapist. Irene van Slyke, a garden member, shared her delicious paw paw fruit with us from her trees, which bore fruit for the first time after almost ten years. We should all have paw paw trees in our gardens. They are native. You need to have at least two varieties for pollination and three would be better.

I believe I can speak for OGC participants at the conference and the community garden when I say that while each of us has our own distinct interests, there was easily enough stimulation and inspiration to satisfy all.



**Robert Florin, President**

## Awards

Olympus Garden Club won prizes for displaying outstanding vegetable and floral selections at the annual Federated Garden Clubs of New York State, District II flower show at Hofstra University.

### Olympus Word Scramble - Plant Parts

Bark	V C S N V V S X T Y T X P R N N M N H C
Blade	C D Z N N R L L Y L L X R R R R W H V T
Bud	C C X X X N S W S L L L L C W W B R N T
Bulb	G G R C G V K J W L Z P R X S K R R J J
Cane	H Z P X N B N M S H I E Y P C L N T M C
Flower	P Z X D T L L F R U I T V P M K H G S Z
Fruit	P P R R F A E L Z D C A K X E C N S H U
Leaf	Z Z N R S D H O J J E L O I T E P P N Q
Petal	S S C A N E N W L R T T Q W S L L L J J
Petiole	Z Z N L L C C E J R R T D D D E X V T K
Roots	N T T S T O O R B Z C K X D D C E D N D
Seed	N B B B U C C V V B W T T P J L V D F S
Stem	F B U L B D D D D R B Q G P I K R U L P
Tuber	P Q Q S E Z Z L D L I Q S D T K L B F Z
	P R N K R A B L L K B Q S K K G P P Q Z
	T F T R H D B B K K B Z L M R Z P P G G
	T K L F H R F V V T B B L M B H G D D D
	X Z L H P H R B Z V N N Z Z T J X X L V
	X L B R T C Q H X P V P L R T J X W G G
	J D Z Z Q K J J H P N N T R L H H D H P

Ans. on pg. 4



R. Murray

*(Last - Continued from page 1)*

There are so many plants in my mini garden; there is no room for the so-called weeds. Oh, I forgot to put the Clematis seeds in the ground, that is why they did not come up, I will do better next year. The wise gardeners have told me that each year your garden gets better and better.

R. Raysor

*(Lullaby - Continued from pg. 1)*

It is a muscle relaxant and helps calm the nerves. This herb will help achieve the necessary stages of deep sleep plus it has the added benefit of not having any side effects such as morning grogginess. Like every other herb, it should not be taken in excess. Consistent use in high doses can cause paralysis and heart disturbances.

*(Cont'd on page 3)*

## Edible Perennials

What if someone told you that you could grow and eat fresh vegetables each year without sowing seed or planting transplants? Additionally you could improve the soil and provide eco-system benefits by capturing atmospheric carbon from CO<sub>2</sub>, storing it as humus and plant parts. That's not all. These fresh vegetables extend the harvest season, some crops being available right after the snow melts. What kind of magical perennials are these? Some you might already know about: asparagus of course and rhubarb, but there are many others less common.

Ever tried lovage soup? Lovage is a gigantic perennial celery, the greens being ready very early in the season. The seeds are used like dill seeds and the roots are edible. Anyone for skirret? Skirret roots look like a cluster of pencil thick white carrots. Cooked they taste like a blend of parsnip and potato. Small white flowers are attractive to beneficial insects; they're highly ornamental and have a long bloom time. An aster family relative of the sunflower, sunchokes or Jerusalem Arichoke is

a Native American treasure. They have small attractive sunflower-like flowers and produce enormous yields of tubers, many more than potatoes. They are crisp and sweet, vary in size and are good to eat raw. When baked they become even sweeter. They are aggressive in the garden however and must be kept in check.

The vegetables I've described are all hardy and perennial in our climate. There are many more of them and others, which grow in warmer regions. To learn about a hundred more of these versatile edibles, get a copy of "Perennial Vegetables" by Eric Toensmeier, it will be a uniquely savory treat.

R. Florin

*(Lullaby—Continued from page 2)*

Now if all these tea warnings are putting you off, here's a tea that is said to be safe enough for a baby. **Roobos, Aspalathus linearis.** One of this author's favorite teas. The name roobos is Afrikaans for "red bush." It has a sweet nutty flavor. It has been proven to calm the nerves, relax the mind and ensures a good night's sleep.

If any of these herbs don't work, you can always try black cohosh, catnip (not just for cats), gotu kola, jujube, lemon balm, passion flower (now I like that one), kava kava (hubba hubba), clary sage, St. John's Wort, thyme, skullcap (that's putting your brain to sleep), and marshmallow root (yum). Just to name a few.

Now here's a personal recipe that I hope will help you drift off and dream. Take a healthy teaspoon of loose roobos and add half a teaspoon of lemon balm as well as a quarter teaspoon of lavender flower petals. Put into an infuser and steep for a little over five minutes in a cup of water.

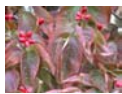


Remove infuser. Add a slice of tangerine and two anise stars. Steep an extra minute or two. Add sweetener if you

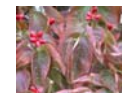
like. Then sip, enjoy, and remember, it is that miracle of sleep that restores our spirit and renews us into a new spring.

\*Disclaimer – no herbs were hurt in the writing of this article.

E. Cornier



## Tip Time



Now is the time to plant hardneck garlic, the garlic with the stiff flower stalk called a scape/scathe. Plant in full sun with well drained soil and remember to cut back the flower stalk if you want bulbs to form.

Hybrid seeds do not grow to be the same type of plant, so unless you want to experiment, don't save them. Remember to store the seeds you collected in a cool dark place, in a jar or tin container. Adding moisture absorbing packets to the containers will control the moisture. Placing them in the refrigerator will keep them at a constant temperature.

I know that we have had a warmer than usual fall, but your houseplants should have been back indoors already.

Stop watering your Amaryllis now and

allow it to go dormant for 2-3 months.

Do not compost the infected leaves from your fruit trees or any other diseased plants. Throw them in the garbage.

Keep watering all your plants until the ground is frozen as this helps them to better survive the winter.

Did you grow any gourds over the summer? If you want to dry them to make containers or birdhouses, wash and towel dry them, set them out in a well ventilated area and out of the sun. Exterior drying takes about a week. Interior drying can take several months depending on the type of gourd you grew. Hang the larger gourds, check and turn them every few days. If when you shake them, you hear seeds rattling, then they are dry and ready for you to carve.

I still have lots of peppers and tomatoes on my plants, I am building a PVC frame that I will cover with plastic so that I can extend the growing season. You can do something similar to allow your veggies to mature.

Basil dries well. Instead of allowing the frost to kill the plants, cut them, tie in bunches using a rubber band and hang upside down to dry. In about 2 weeks, when crisp to the touch, save them in a dark jar to use over the winter in tea, or in your recipes.

You can also dry many of your flowers. Hydrangea can be dried in the same manner as basil and last a long time in dried arrangements.

If you did not plant cover crops to control erosion spread a layer of compost to protect and amend the soil.

**'Exterior  
drying takes  
about a week'**



# Ecological Footprinting?

Hmmm! So what is that.....

Whether you drink coffee or tea, need gasoline for your car, eat meat, fish or only vegetables, wear clothing, buy furniture or use any of the myriad of things we need to exist on a daily basis, we use resources that have been quantified as an Ecological Footprint (EF). EF, a value expressed in acres, is the total of the earth's ecologically productive water and land areas required to produce the product and services that we use and the total area required to process the resultant waste. We could also say it is a measure of the impact we have on this earth that we live on both individually and collectively and it raises the question of sustainability. Add to the sustainability equation, global warming, climate change, or carbon reduction and then it becomes even more important that we address these environmental concerns.

Based on calculations the EF of the average US citi-

zen is around 24 acres. These 24 acres are in use around the world year round to support one person. In comparison to the productive acres that exist on earth only 4.7 acres are available for each of the worlds citizens to use and that is without making allowances for wilderness preservation. WOW! Did you make note of that comparison? 4.7 acres are available for us to use and each of us is using on average 24 acres. Needless to say, we need to redirect our efforts toward bringing these numbers into balance or if not, maybe we have some mad scientists out there to create several additional planets for us to contaminate.

So how do we calculate our individual footprint?

A Footprint Factor\* (ff) has been assigned to every product or service we use. Scientists working at the University of British Columbia calculated these numbers. Our total EF is the

multiplication of two numbers. Multiply the number of pounds or gallons of each item you use monthly by the footprint factor assigned to each item you use to get your total Ecological Footprint for that item or  $EF = ff \times lbs \text{ or } \text{gall/month}$  of each item used. If you are experiencing brain freeze looking at this formula, have no fear. To make this easier to digest, Redefining Progress has updated information on their website and they have created a footprint quiz. All you have to do is answer the questions and your results will be calculated for you. Go to <http://www.myfootprint.org/> to calculate your individual footprint.

After you know your EF, a few questions might come to mind.

1. How do I reduce this number? What to do? Do you fly less, eat organic or more locally grown food, car pool, walk more, or use public transportation. Whichever adjustment you choose to make, please remember that it should be enjoyable. Why? If you don't enjoy it, it will ultimately not be sustainable.

2. How does reducing our EF relate to global warming, climate change, or carbon reduction? Almost everything that we do has a carbon footprint and our carbon usage is directly proportional to global warming and the climate crisis. So, yes, reducing our ecological footprint will directly affect

our carbon emissions and aid in our climate crisis.

To learn more on this subject read *Radical Simplicity: Small Footprints on a Finite Earth* by Jim Merkel, *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth* by Williams E. Rees, Mathis Wackernagel, Phil Testemale or go to the Redefining Progress website <http://www.rprogress.org/>

S. Stephens

\* A table of Footprint Factor values is included in the book *Radical Simplicity*.

## Our 2007 Monthly Meeting Schedule

**October 22** - Arts & Craft Activity w/Johanna Willins

**November 26** - Lasagna Gardening w/Roberta Raysor

**December 10, 2007**  
Winter Activities: birds/gardening/crafts

**Please check our website for last minute changes or cancellations.**

Olympus Garden Club  
Federated Garden Club of NYS, District II  
P.O. Box 21808  
Brooklyn, NY 11202-1808

Website: <http://www.olympusgardendclub.org>  
Contact us: [info@olympusgardendclub.org](mailto:info@olympusgardendclub.org)

Editor: S. Stephens

### Word Scramble Answer

V C S N V V S X T Y T X P R N N M N H C  
C D Z N N R L L Y L L L X R R R R W H V T  
C C X X N S W S L L L L C W W B R R N T  
G G R C G V K J W L Z P E R X S K R R J J  
H Z P X N T B N M S H I P E Y P C L N T M S C  
P Z X D T L L F R U I E V P M K H G S Z  
P P R R F A E L Z D U C E A K X E C N S H U  
Z Z N R S D H O L J J E L O I S E L P P N J  
S S C A N E W L R T T Q W L S L L V J J  
Z Z N L L C C E J R R T D D D D E X L V T K  
N T T S T O O R B Z C K X D D C E D D S  
N B B B C C V V B W T T P J L V D N F S  
F B U L B D D D D R B Q G P I K R U B L P  
P Q Q S F E Z Z L D L I Q Q S D T K L P F Z  
P R N K R A B L L K B J Q S K K G P P Q Z  
T F T R H D B B K K B Z L M R Z P P G G  
T K L F H R F V V T B B L M B H G D D D  
X Z L H P H R B Z V N N Z Z T J X X L V  
X L B R T C Q H X P V P L R T J X W G G  
J D Z Z Q K J J H P N N T R L H H D H P