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(Home & Garden news, plus sidebars)

Yes Virginia, Spring *is* coming!

Seed catalogs not doing it for you anymore? Need even more of a promise of Spring shot in the arm? Mark your calendars for the Clatsop County Master Gardeners “Spring into Gardening” seminar at the Clatsop Co. fairgrounds, Saturday, April 16 from 9am to 4pm.

The day focuses on the topic of coastal gardening, and features keynote speaker Sean Hogan. “Amazing Plants for the Northwest” is Hogan’s topic; this Portland born, world-traveling, and mega-knowledgeable horticulturalist owns Cistus Nursery on Sauvie Island. Hogan has lectured extensively in North American and Europe about his explorations of South America, South Africa and the western regions of the United States and northern Mexico. His writing and photos can be found in a wide range of horticultural and botanical literature and magazines. In addition he has edited approximately 20,000 entries of *Flora* (2003) and *Trees for All Seasons* (2008) both published by the Timber Press.

Seminar hi-jinks include a plant sale, vendor area, classes, advice (the Dr. is in!) and a raffle. Local land-girl extraordinaire Teresa Retzlaff, co-owner of 46 North Farm and Development Director for the North Coast Land Conservancy will advise on coast-loving edible plants. Beating back the bugs organically will be addressed by OSU Extension agent Chip Bubl, and Joy Jones, also of OSU Extension service, will be on hand to sow encouraging words, tips, and practical information about soil amendment.

Register before April 11 for \$15, or ante up \$18 at the door; Seniors \$12 and students are free with a valid ID. Contact the OSU Extension office to register: 2001 Marine Dr., Astoria; 503-325-8573. www.extension.oregonstate.edu/clatsop/gardening/master-gardeners

Clatsop Co. Master Gardeners are greening up more than your thumb and your garden. The group also offers a scholarship for graduating seniors interested in horticulture. Awards go to one or two county graduates, and range from \$500 to \$1000. Candidates can pick up an application from their high school counselor or OSU Extension. Applications due April 15, 2011.

Grow, Grow, Grow Your Own

Mention hydroponics, grow lights, and reflective surfaces in the context of indoor gardening and many minds will travel in one direction. While plenty of folks garden inside for recreation, even more are looking at the food security and self-sufficiency factor. In challenging climates or urban settings, or for those without other access to

community gardens or land, setting aside that spare bedroom for a bit o' lettuce, peas, and beans makes economic sense.

Of course, indoor gardening, with its dependence on electrically powered lights, hydroponic/aeroponic systems, and ventilation, isn't the logical method for the post-tsunami getting-back-to-nature scenarios. But in the interim, in the interests of perking up our long gray winters (and summers!), tomatoes beckoning from the walk-in closet don't sound half bad.

Astoria Indoor Gardening is the bright idea of Oscar Nelson and Gary Reynolds. The two North coasters, strangers until being introduced by a mutual acquaintance last summer, each had the idea to start an indoor garden shop. Nelson found the backing, and together he and Reynolds performed a kamikaze remodel of their location. "Seventeen very adventurous working days" turned the storefront from raw concrete and junk into the bright colorful space that now greets the customer's eye.

Nelson and Reynolds are excited about indoor gardening, whether it's houseplants, veggies, or flowers. And they've got big plans.

"We want a greenhouse on the roof, a community indoor garden, get a whole room for starts planted for the Sunday market. Oscar and I are going a different route than almost any indoor shop around. We are actually showing people that you can do this," states Reynolds.

Some starts are at the shop now, and gardeners can find all the equipment they need to begin growing indoors, from simple ebb and flow systems to more complex set-ups. Seeds, fertilizer, bulbs—Astoria Indoor has all you need to get up and growing.

Look for their booth at the Master Gardener's seminar on April 16. Astoria Indoor Garden Supply is open 7 days a week, from 10-6. Oscar and Gary are sincere, friendly, and willing to help with all your indoor gardening needs and questions. Tel: 503.468.0606 web: www.astoriaIndoor.com email: AstoriaIndoor@gmail.com

Give that bug the stink-eye!

O—the new locust has arrived and is busy massing in households and sucking fruit dry in the Mid-Atlantic region of the East coast. Why should we care—aside from our sympathetic natures? Because the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug has made its way to Oregon too, and was visibly pesky in homes last summer. This non-native buggo hails from China, Korea, and other parts Asian. Invasive and with no natural predator (here), this hungry critter affects tree fruit, small fruit, grapes, vegetables and ornamentals. Peach, apple and grape growers have been especially affected on the East coast, and of course this means potential losses for Oregon growers as well. Long-term biological solutions may include isolating fungal pathogens that kill the bug, or traveling to Asia to source the natural biological controls of it there. Short term—squish em!