

THE GARDEN PATCH



December 2008

Salt Lake Master Gardener Association

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Reflections from a Sprout

By Sara Anderson

"Amazing," I thought, standing in my garden in front of the tallest sunflower I had ever seen. Now all that is left to do is climb up and get that golden goose. Well, okay, it definitely wasn't tall enough to get me to the giant's castle, but surely it would have to win in the Utah State Fair.

Being a newcomer to the state fair, I really didn't know what to expect. After a long season of rewarding work, warm summer sun, and one unfortunate "watering incident," I decided to enter several specimens into the competition. As there are so many of you amazing gardeners out there, I didn't expect to win. But with the great advice, lasting friendships, and a chance to see my daughters make "vegetable people," I surely couldn't lose.

When I first arrived the day after entering our produce, I was pleasantly surprised to see I had won a "third place" ribbon for my peaches. And then I literally jumped for joy to discover three blue ribbons for my winter spaghetti squash, yellow gypsy peppers, and the largest tomato. Once my daughters placed second and third for their veggie people, I completely forgot about my extraordinary sunflower that seemingly turned out to be extra "ordinary."

I was very proud to have done so well at my first state fair. But, if none of that happened, just meeting all you other gardeners and asking questions, was worth the work. Special thanks to Val, Bart, Golden and John for inspiring me to enter. You will surely see me there next year and I encourage everyone to participate in the state and county fairs.



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Stephen LeCheminant

Here it is almost the end of 2008, and with the closing of the year comes the end of my term of being the president of the Salt Lake Master Gardener Association. The two years have really gone by much quicker than I realized it would. This last year, especially, has flown by.

I have enjoyed the company and association of so many of you over the last two years. Actually, I have enjoyed the company of so many over the last twelve years since taking the Master Gardener class. That was way back when Larry Sagers was still County agent and teaching the class.

As I leave the office of president, I would be remiss if I did not thank the Association's board for the great job and all the work they have done. First, Sandy Burgess, our vice-president, who graciously stepped in when our vice president, Marcia Sherry, moved to Mongolia, or maybe it was Oregon, aren't they one and the same? Also, thanks to Lisa Chin, our secretary; to Teresa Rivera, our treasurer; and Karen Crook, our historian. These five positions are all elected to the board. There are two other positions that are not elected, but are appointed by the president, one being volunteer coordinator which has been done very admirably by Barbara Larsen. I have had this job before so I know it can be a real challenge to find master gardeners to fill all the talks or lectures and other requests that are asked of us throughout the year. I can assure you there are some strange requests. The other position that is appointed by the president is the program coordinator, which has been filled by Cheri Schulzke. Here is a job I would not want to have. It is a lot of worry and work finding someone or something to fill all our meetings every month. She has also done a great job in seeing that our summer and graduation/holiday socials are taken care of and turn out so well.

I really am appreciative of all the work the Board has done over the past two years. Not only the Board, for I know there are many others that have contributed a great deal over the two years and more. There are those who have put in many hours as project managers, those who have worked the projects, those who have worked the booths at the Fairs, the Home and Garden Shows, and other things that have happened over the years.

Although my term is over, it doesn't mean I plan on disappearing. There are too many great people in this organization that I look forward to associating with and learning from. That's one of the greatest benefits of being a Master Gardener, learning from others and maybe helping someone else learn from your experience. Besides that I'm already looking forward to the plant exchange in April. What else do you have to look forward to in the middle of winter?

One last thing -- I think the new Board is going to do a great job. New people will bring new ideas, new experiences, and new learning opportunities for us all. So good luck to the new Board.

A GARDEN OF HOPE

Press Release

Hope is a word not often associated with a jail or prison, but at the Salt Lake County Jail, there is a three-acre garden that offers hope for those living in the correctional facility.

The Salt Lake County Jail Horticulture Program began in the fall of 2006. Maggie Shao, Utah State University Extension horticulture agent in Salt Lake County, was asked for her help in starting a garden adjacent to the jail as part of the jail's ongoing commitment to rehabilitate inmates.

"Sgt. Raelene Eppard of the Salt Lake County Metropolitan Jail Programs contacted me about Extension being a co-sponsor of the program," said Shao. "We received permission and then began work on the vacant lot previously earmarked for jail expansion.

"We began by taking soil samples and sending them to the Utah State University Analytical Laboratories. The pH and salinity looked fine, but we needed to remove the existing weeds and improve the soil texture. The plan was to grow crops naturally, without chemicals, to serve the growing desire for organic produce at farmers markets."

Over the winter of 2006, Master Gardener Kathy Dennis, Eppard and Shao selected the variety of seeds and starts for the garden and planned the rows. When it was time for class, USU Extension in Salt Lake County provided training using the Master Gardener curriculum. Shao taught 40 hours of horticulture curriculum to the prisoners who were interviewed and chosen for the program by Eppard. Master Gardener volunteers worked with the prisoners in the garden, helping them apply what they learned in the classroom. Upon completion and a passing grade on the final exam, student inmates were awarded a Utah Gardener Certificate. To date, there have been three training programs, and 28 inmates have successfully graduated from the program.

Eppard said the program works because of the trust and attention the inmates receive.

"Inside, they're just a prisoner with a number," she said. "There is no trust inside. Out here, they take pride in their work and find out who they are."

In 2007, the three-acre garden yielded 17,000 pounds of produce, and in 2008, over 19,000 pounds of vegetables were harvested. Shao said the majority of the produce was sold at the Pioneer Park Farmers Market in Salt Lake City, and 10 percent of it was donated to local missions and food pantries. In 2008, sales at the Farmers Market generated over \$16,000 in income that will be returned to the garden and also used to offset the initial investment.

Shao said both Extension and jail staff members look forward to another productive garden year. This year, 150 thornless blackberry plants were planted and will be harvested in 2009.

"But even more important than productive gardens, this program has provided the inmates with an opportunity to be productive themselves," said Shao. "We hope the things they learn here can benefit them long-term and help them turn their lives around."



By Maggie Shao

It's taking place a week earlier than normal, but I'm hoping you all come to our Annual Master Gardener Holiday and Awards Dinner. It will be on Thursday December 4th starting at 6:00pm at Wheeler Farm Barn. We have another bumper crop of folks who have met certification and 45 apprentices will graduate as Master Gardeners that evening. We'll also honor all those project leaders, board officers, and exceptional volunteers who really embody the spirit of Master Gardeners who are vital, dynamic and generous spirits who provide community service and education to their community and to other Master Gardener.

Surprisingly with the warm weather, our office has been getting a lot of phone calls. It's a little challenging since we are having our reception area redone. There are a few reasons for the office redo; we'd like to have a stronger identity so folks coming into our office have a better idea of who we are and what we do (we have folks coming in all the time asking us where they can register to vote – that's the next office down the hall). We also want to accommodate a better working space for our reception area, for the main reception area as well as for Karl Hauptfleisch and the Master Gardener Phone Help Line and counter. So hopefully, we'll only be inconvenienced for a little over a week, to have our new "identity wall" installed, desks and counter reconfigured, and displays reinstalled to better serve clients who come into our office.

Back to phone calls, I've been a bit disturbed that I've gotten a few calls asking "how do I get rid of earthworms". My gosh, since when were earthworms undesirable if you are a gardener! Many of the questions about earthworms come from folks who want a perfect lawn and most likely are probably overwatering and drowning the earthworms. The worms are only coming up for air and drying out on the driveway. These folks usually follow up with how much fertilizer do I need to add, and don't understand that healthy soil is essential for a good lawn and earthworms, millions of microbes, organic matter, soil texture are all part of healthy soil. Core aeration followed with a couple inches of compost raked into the core holes can do wonders. I always refer them back to a soil test to know where their baseline nutrient levels are, so they know what to add.

I can't emphasize enough that fertilizer is not a soil amendment. Fertilizer does not increase organic matter, it

does not improve drainage, it often increases the salinity of the soil and often includes things we don't need like extra herbicide and pesticides that will be a drain on your pocketbook.

We are finally interviewing for the vacant Horticulture Agent position. I'm hoping we will have a good candidate and someone who can start shortly after the beginning of the year. I'm sending out the acceptance letters for the 2009 Master Gardener Volunteer Training and if everyone decides to attend, we'll have 62 new Apprentices. Looking forward to seeing you all on December 4th.

Thanks!

By Barbara Larsen

I just wanted to thank all those who volunteered for lectures the last two years. I had people call me back just to let me know the Master Gardener who came to speak to them was very good and they wouldn't hesitate to call again. Some Master Gardeners just kept getting called by the same people every few months because they liked them so well. It was great to get to know so many Master Gardeners whom I never would have met if I weren't the volunteer coordinator. Thanks so much and keep up the good work.

Celebrating Another Year

By Jo Turpin

Once again I am taking advantage of the beautiful fall weather to sit in my pergola and review the year. It's hard to believe it is November 21st. The cherry tree has hardly lost a leaf, the carrots were just harvested and the parsnips mulched over for the winter, if winter ever arrives, and the honeysuckles are in full bloom. Perhaps the mums are holding winter at bay with their brilliant display of yellows and reds?

The year has presented so many learning opportunities and so many fun things to do. I attended a demonstration on grafting with Bart Anderson and Golden Reeves. Everyone got to try a graft or two and to take a variety of apple scions home to try some grafting on their own. Bart gave us instructions on how to do a bud graft on peach trees and I tried that out this August. My fingers are crossed that the buds will take hold and enable me to 'keep' a much loved, but worn out, tree in the yard.

The annual People Helping People Garden Tour in the Avenues was a great success. After my shift was over I took the tour myself and saw some amazing gardens, water features and landscapes. I also had a great time learning more about the herbs in the garden at Wheeler Farm. Lawana Kosel was our fearless leader again this year. We planted new herbs and added a few pages to the Herb Book.

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It's mid-November and I was able to harvest a batch of spinach that was planted in early spring. The weather has cooperated this year and it has given me enough time to finish getting ready for winter. I have a lot of plants in gallon containers that I bury in the garden up to the top of the pot so the plants can make it through the winter. I have been doing that for the last few years and it works great with no loss.

Thanks to the fine people of Taylorsville I was able to sort through many bags of leaves left at the ball park and in two loads I had enough to finish putting the garden to bed for the winter. Most of the time I have hunted the neighborhoods in Midvale to find enough leaves to complete the job. That process takes a few weeks so I was happy to get it completed in a very short time. After placing the leaves in the walkways I was able to till the tops of the beds and keep the soil in place. By spring the walkways will be indented and the beds will be ready to plant.

I waited until the first of November to pick the 'Granny Smith' apples and I was able to get them off before the snow came. If I had not taken the apples off the tree I would have had a tree with many broken branches. A discovery I made with the 'Granny Smith' apple tree this year explains why it has never not produced in a season. I discovered that it has the ability to produce an apple and grow a new spur for next year from the same spur. My other trees and grafts will produce one year and not the next. The 'Arkansas Black' graft had no apples on it last year but produced 5 apples this year. It takes one year for a spur to form that will produce an apple the following year. In late October after turning the water off for the season I found the apples beginning to crack. I watered the tree again and by the next day I had lost a limb that had broken because of the extra weight. In the early summer I took off two five gallon buckets full of small green apples in trying to thin it out but I did not take enough from the tree.

I cleaned up the leaves from my cousin's place and had 8 large bags of wet leaves. I have found that if you keep the wet leaves in a bag by the spring you have one soggy mess. I used them to put around the base of the rose hedge for mulch to protect them for the winter. What is funny come next spring the robins will pull all of the mulch from the base of the plants looking for food. It looks really weird but they will be good for the plants this winter and I will not need to figure out what to do with that many soggy bags of leaves next spring.

I trimmed the rose hedge back a little bit to keep from having snow damage. Some years the snow is heavy enough to break some of the stems or bend them to the ground. I have been using a cable system on the inside of the lot to keep them from being damaged. The chain link fence does a good job on the other side of the hedge.



By Wm. Golden Reeves

Of the cuttings I took a month ago, only the verbena and some coleus rooted. The Pelargonium all rotted before they had a chance to root. In checking the **Encyclopedia of Gardening** I found I was taking care of them all wrong, so I have started another batch to see if following their directions will work this time. I am also trying to start some cuttings of New Guinea impatiens which is a soft stem plant. Wish me luck on that one.

The tomato that performed very well for me this year was the 'Cluster Grande.' I had early tomatoes and had an abundance of fruit all year long, even until frost. The 'Early Goliath' was great also. These I will plant again along with the 'Sun Sugar' Even the mice preferred them over the other tomatoes.

The fence I put up to keep the dogs out of my garden and in their own yard space worked very well. When I pulled the plants from the containers it left open soil and Willie rediscovered a great place to dig. What a mess he made on the patio, so I have had to stack my planters up and cover the others to keep him out. When I complain about the damage they are doing in that part of the yard the wife reminds me that it is the dog's yard.

The outside gardening season has come to an end. I have received my first seed catalog and it is only the 20th of November. Be on alert though. There are weeds that still want to grow, and they will produce seeds before next spring.

Celebrating Another Year, continued from Page 3

Sandy Burgess did a fabulous job tending the home gardens and I was able to meet many of the new, and very enthusiastic, apprentices.

The annual Summer Party at Murray Park was a great way to catch up with some of the Master Gardeners whom I don't see very often. Everyone received a small trowel for digging and cutting and endless other chores – a very handy item to have, thanks! If you did not attend then ask around for info on where to get this useful tool. And if you did not attend the meeting at Engh Floral out in Sandy you missed the chance to see some fun new flowers and to stroll through the colorful rows of plants and garden decor. I got some great information on climbing roses from Cheri Schulzke and a new rose bush to go with her helpful tidbits; a win-win for me!

Looking ahead to next year I purchased Mel Bartholomew's book on square foot gardening and then attended the November meeting to learn more. This is an exciting gardening approach and I hope to make good use of the idea in the spring. Everyone who attended was inspired and tempted to use the great fall weather to give this concept a try.

Hopefully I can also make good use of the small greenhouse (think large cold frame) we put up this summer to prepare starts for the vegetable garden and the flowerbeds. I have all winter to make my plans.

So, it was another wonderful year with the Master Gardener program. I enjoy the people I meet and their passion for gardening, I am always learning more and my gardens have never been healthier or my flowers prettier *and* I can give something back to the community in a way that I truly enjoy. Gardening enhances my life in so many ways – *and that is something to celebrate!*

Val's View

By Val Chatwin

The hens are hardly laying any eggs so Ray strung up the light bulb and timer in the coop. It is not for heat. One of the funny things about nature is hens need to have about 14 hours of light to lay. It is good to have the light out there anyway, so if you hear something happening you can go out quickly instead of hunting up a flashlight.

I let them into the yard for an hour on Monday. They always, when you open the gat, run out and start grazing on the lawn. Then they spread out all over the yard. They quickly congregated in the garden. I saw Della, the Delaware hen, dancing after a cabbage moth and Goldy, the Buff Orpington, chase down a hopping grasshopper. After about an hour I wanted them in again. The garden was not quite harvested yet. I think they are smart, and if they know what you want them to do they will do it. I called them. They raised their heads and looked at me. Hens always look at the ground and roosters look up - one of nature's tricks to keep them safe. Then I started at the bottom on the garden saying, "Shoooo, shoo, shoo!" My daughter was standing at the gate so they wouldn't go that way, and they all went right into the pen. She said that is the easiest we have ever got them in. They'd had an hour out and a lot of eating and scratching.

The last time they escaped when the gate stuck on some old corncobs that got under it and didn't close. I thought, 'Can they stay out for awhile?' No, I had small vegetable plants that they would gobble down in one bite! I got my daughter to help me, she was in the house and it took considerable running and yelling.

Tuesday I went out and picked all the ripe tomatoes. The chickens don't eat the green ones. I picked them later and put them in the garage. We eat them till December. Then I opened the gate wide. The chickens still stopped to eat the lawn grass but didn't go anywhere else before hitting the garden.

When it came time for them to go to bed (it was getting dark) they were still out there. They are usually on the roost early. Finally Rosie, the Bantam Rosecomb Splash, ran over and flew right up to the top board. The big hens can't do that. There are three roosts, 2 x 4's so their feet are comfort because it is wide enough and the poop falls to the ground. Another of nature's trick to keep them healthy. The others just stayed out eating stuff. It got darker. Finally Segwick, the Sebright rooster, went in, flew to the first board, second board, and up to the top board. He pecked Rosie, she jumped down, and he hunkered down comfortably. Finally when all were on the roost and the top board was filled, she flew up and got so close under Fritz's wing, that none could peck her, they scooted over and settled down.

It used to be that the roosters would station themselves close and mate with a few of the hens before bed but they must be getting old. Only Charles, the white crested Polish, and Fritz, the frizzle Cochon, were up to paying a social call to one hen each, then hopped up to their roosting place.

Finally the big hens came and ate some lawn.

Clara Bell the Rhode Island Red, and Sophy the Aracuna, positioned themselves on the second board comfortably, Charles joined them and you could tell that is where they were used to sleeping. There has been leavings (manure) in the nests, which means some have been sleeping in there. That is the only time you get mess in the nests. Another of nature's tricks if you are going to hatch chicks in a clean environment. I blocked it so none could get in. That meant one or two chickens had made a habit of sleeping in there and I can't have poop in the nests. .

Dora and Saddy, the bantam Sebright hens, would fly up to get a place on that top board but would get pecked down. They were probably the nest sleepers. Finally Dora flew up and crowded under a wing and they couldn't peck her. Saddy gave up on the top and got up under Charles' wing. I thought the youngest, last year's Aracuna, Feeby had integrated but they pecked her away and finally settled on the second board away from the others. All the jostling around for position on the highest



board was ridiculous; there are three perfectly comfortable boards. They all lay in the same nest too, one month it's the left one and one month it is the right one and they will sit two together to get into the favorite nest. Ridiculous!

In other chicken news, we had a death in the neighborhood. We were driving home the other day we saw a bunch of feathers and a body on our neighbor's parking strip. We stopped. I jumped out and ran over to see if it was one of ours. We could tell it was a chicken, but the feathers were white. I have Della who is a Delaware and is white with a black ruff and tail, but these were white white. I picked her up and it was Mimi, the white leghorn that lives in the house that faces us but is across a busy street. They were arriving home too, so I walked over and the man came to meet me. She was already stiff, had been dead all night. You could see another feather area up on another neighbor's lawn too

They got 2 tiny yellow chicks when a boy invited their daughter to a dance. You know how it is now with the high school kids -- they have to think up clever ways of inviting and accepting dance invitations. Chicks are not a good idea. However the daughter likes things like that and the parents were okay with it. They have a dog but it is old and small. They built a coop for them to roost and sleep in and sought out my advice on things. And they liked them. They kept them in eggs. White Leghorns are the best layers. They are what the eggs growers mostly have mostly. Three years have passed. Occasionally these chickens would walk along the top of the fence from their back yard and get into the front yard and investigate the flower beds and gutters in the street. Then they would lean against the front storm door. Since no

SPOTLIGHT

On Allison Topham

"I'm a fanatic," says Allison Topham, "I don't have one weed in my yard." No easy task for someone who avoids chemicals.

Her father, a landscaper, helped Allison plot out 50% of her West Jordan yard. "But I put everything in myself," she says. "It took lots of time but it's worth it." In keeping with a natural look, she added a stone walk, picket fence and twenty-five rose bushes. Although the lawn is large, it stays *green* by carefully monitoring water usage. The lot bursts with color from blooms like cosmos and "any flowering vines I could find to climb fences."

Born in Utah, Allison earned a U of U business degree before moving to California. While in Pasadena she attended the Art Center College, graduating in graphic design and packaging. "My family is all here," Allison says. "They brought me back again." She's been a graphic designer at O.C. Tanner for thirteen years now. "It's something different every day," she says about working on accounts ranging from Hard Rock Cafe to Mercedes-Benz. Her creativity doesn't stop. She also does freelance work on her own time.

Allison loves animals. Her in-house pets include two cats and two dogs. She unabashedly favors her true love, Jacques, a Jack Russell terrier mix. Her concern for creatures extends to a pet adoption agency, found at Best Friends Org. She does home checks for them, screening to find suitable homes for pets. She also assists the creature rehab center at Kanab where the most notable refugees are Michael Vick's dogs, but also include many birds, rabbits and horses.

A first year Master Gardener, Allison continues to spend time at Tracy Aviary where she earned most of her volunteer hours. Somehow she also squeezes in 12-15 hours a week at St. Mark's gift shop. Luckily, Utah gardeners have some down time. Allison is an avid Jazz fan with season tickets.

Allison is also our new SLMGA Board secretary for 2009-2010.

UTAH DAHLIA SOCIETY

We made note of the creation of the new Utah Dahlia Society in last month's issue. We inadvertently left out the following:

"Also, if you have tubers to share, would be interested in becoming an officer or a trustee of the Utah Dahlia Society, or could help with a website, please let them know."

Mark Hurst is the contact person for this.
Sorry for the error.



Val's View, continued from page 5

one was home during the day, I was surprised the chickens had lasted this long, since all our neighbors have dogs. Dogs kill chickens. Cats don't even go after tiny chicks. The silly things make it so fun for a dog, cackling and flapping away, which triggers the dog's latent hunting drive. They think it is a game. They corner it and try to get it in their mouth, and it stops moving. We used to have to get new chicks every spring because of the dogs.

APPLE PROBLEMS

Val Chatwin

I have no apples.

I do have two large and one dwarf apple trees. I've known since May that there would not be any fruit this year. There were a few blossoms, but the trees are usually so covered they look like snow with the bees having a feast. Bart Anderson told me it was the spring frost in 2007 that got the spurs for this year's apples that did it. I have never had no apples. To be honest, there were 5 very holey ones that dropped off the 'Red Delicious' a month ago. The birds were grateful.

I was wondering if I would like not having 25 bushels to pick up as they drop off thinning themselves. The chickens get them when they get big enough for there to be enough meat for them to eat. They are so hard I use a machete to cut them in half. Actually I didn't notice the time and labor saved, with all the other garden work there is around here. The chickens filled up on an abundance of pears.

But I really miss that first bite and more of a tree ripened, crispy, sweet, that is not like anything else, apple. And I really miss the apple crisp, grated apple cake that is my favorite cake, the apple cinnamon rolls, the apple/celery/walnut salad and taking bushels to our grandkids.

Well, I miss it so much that I am appealing to you, begging on bended knee, if any one of you has any extra and wouldn't miss a bucket full; I would love to have some. I will come and get them. Or we will be at the party December 4. I don't care what kind you have. Email me if you want to share with me. valray@netutah.net



Calendar

Thursday, December 4
Graduation/Holiday Party
Wheeler Farm Barn
6351 South 900 East

Be sure to come and bring a partner
Socializing at 6 p.m.
Dinner at 7 p.m. followed by awards
Bring a salad or side dish
of your choice.

Thursday, January 15
General Meeting
Horticulture Intern Heidi Wayman
will give a presentation on
Indoor/House Plants
7 p.m.
in the classroom

THE GARDEN PATCH
is ON THE WEB at
www.slmg.org

Check out the USU Extension Web Site
<http://extension.usu.edu/saltlake>
Follow the Master Gardener links

Bulletin Board



You can read our past issues
on the web at:

[http://www.slmg.org/
gardenPatchTOC.html](http://www.slmg.org/gardenPatchTOC.html)

Please note that the current year is the
first column, not the third column.
Issues from previous years are



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PROJECTS

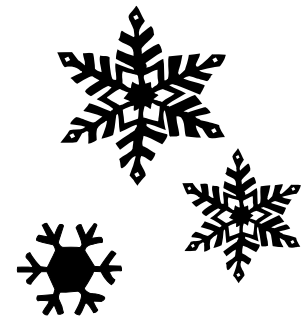
These projects are done year-round. Please volunteer if you are interested.

Christmas Box House
Peggy Call

Email: pcall@xmission.com

Community Talks
Barbara Larsen

Email: endlesspromos1@msn.com



The SLMGA Board recently voted to lower the annual dues from \$20 to \$15. It is the same for two Master Gardeners at the same address, as the primary cost is sending the newsletter. Renewal forms are in the mail. Please return them to our incoming treasurer, Cathy Miller, as soon as you can.

We hope you have enjoyed being a part of the Salt Lake Master Gardener Association this year. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this a great year.

If You Are Interested . . .

Would you like to “save a tree” and just receive an email each month with the link to the newest issue of The Garden Patch? If so, please let us know at gardenpatch2@juno.com. Please say whether you still want the paper copy sent to you or not. We also had good luck with e-mailing the file to some of our MGs instead of waiting a few days for the web copy to be posted.. If you have Microsoft Office on your computer, you probably have the Publisher program and could view it that way. Let us know what you would like.