



Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • August 2020



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August Zoom Meeting

Our August 4 monthly meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m via Zoom. A link inviting you to participate will be sent out through Mail Chimp and through Colin's listserv.



Our guest speaker is Hobbs State Park interpreter Steve Chyrchel, who will present "The Chinquapin Tree: An Ozark Treasure."

We don't want anyone to be left out of our monthly meetings! If you're not comfortable using Zoom, please contact Colin for help: cmassey@uaex.edu.

Taking Care of Business

We will vote on the following at our August 4 Zoom meeting.

[July 2020 Meeting Minutes](#)

[June 2020 Treasurer's Report](#)

From Your President

KATHRYN BIRKHEAD

We all have a favorite season, I suspect. As a corollary, I imagine that we all have a *least* favorite season. Since early childhood, my least favorite season has been summer, for one simple reason: I hate heat, and when you compound it with humidity, I'm really out of there. When it's 92° and feels like 110°, I have to come to terms with the fact that I am a fair-weather gardener. I'd like to think of myself as a hardy soul, but these hot days show me that that's just not true. Worse still, we're at the stage of the summer when buying plants, which is one of my very favorite activities, is not possible on the scale it is in the spring and even in the fall. Most of the work in my yard becomes a matter of keeping things watered and dead-headed. Complain, complain, complain. (By the way, in her interview last month, Janine Parry made me realize how many plastic pots I'm buying and throwing away with my plant



acquisition habits. I need to do better.)

As I sit in my air-conditioned living room avoiding the heat and humidity outdoors, I'm reminded of my grandmother, who lived in her un-air-conditioned home until she was 90. We didn't have air conditioning until I was in my early teens (yes, I'm that old), but she never had it. She might have complained, but I don't remember that at all. I mostly remember her just doing the work. If the yard needed to be mowed, she mowed it. She knew all about living simply and taking things as they came. Grandmother also knew about gratitude, and she appreciated the beauty of flowers that grew in the heat. She loved dahlias and zinnias, cosmos and gladiolus, and she took particular joy in the coleus that she grew in the shade. One of my favorite things now is to fill the planter in front of my house with coleus. I think she'd really enjoy the colors and sizes and leaf shapes that are available to us, and every spring when I buy them and then watch them flourish through the summer, I feel her with me. These are the days that I remind myself that nothing lasts forever, that the heat will eventually yield to cool, crisp nights and fall color. I just have to be patient. I pray for patience for all of us as we make our way through hot, humid days. I also pray for patience as we find the path into our new "normal" that is still revealing itself. Take extra good care of yourselves!

"Patience" by Mary Oliver

What is the good life now? Why,
look here, consider
the moon's white crescent

rounding, slowly, over the half month to
still another
perfect circle —

the shining eye
that lightens the hills,
that lays down the shadows

of the branches of the trees,
the summons the flowers
to open their sleepy faces and look up

into the heavens.
I used to hurry everywhere,
and leaped over the running creeks.

There wasn't
time enough for all the wonderful things
I could think of to do

in a single day. Patience
comes to the bones
before it takes root in the heart

as another good idea.
I say this
as I stand in the woods

and study the patterns
of the moon shadows,
or stroll down into the waters

that now, late summer, have also
caught the fever, and hardly move
from one eternity to another.

Washington County Fair Update

DORIS CASSIDY

Washington County Fair Project Chair

Hard times call for hard decisions and COVID-19 has created this reality for the 2020 Washington County Fair. The decision has been made to suspend all adult exhibits. The horticultural and the adult exhibit halls will be closed. Master Gardner's will not be working this sanctioned project this year.

If you are working on a project for the fair that we discussed last year, please continue. We look forward to a 2021 Fair. Jayne Laster has graciously agreed to store items for our sale in her vacant storage building. If you can store until Extension is open again for people traffic, that would be great. If not, I will meet you at the Extension Office and take the items to Jayne's. I appreciate all the work Master Gardner's have contributed toward the 2020 fair and your willingness to make this a successful project. I look forward to working with you in 2021.

Busy Bees at BGO



Botanical Garden of the Ozarks project volunteers Judy Smith (from left), Myra Jane Biggers, and Jayne Laster work in the sensory garden recently. Masks were donned as the situation called for it.

15 Colorful, Long-Blooming Perennials

DOLORES STAMPS

Perennials in italics are natives or cultivars of natives for our area.

'Autumn Joy' sedum (*Hylotelephium herbstsfreude*)

Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta)

Blanket flower (Gaillardia)

Bleeding heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*)

Butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*)

Coral bells (*Heuchera*)

Daylilies (Hemerocallis)
Hellebore (Helleborus)
Garden phlox (Phlox paniculata)
Lavender (Lavandula augustifolia)
Moonbeam tickseed (Coreopsis 'moonbeam')
Purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea)
Rosanne cranesbill (Geranium rosanne)
Russian sage (Perovskia atriplicifolia)
Shasta daisy (Leycanthemum x superbum)

June Photo of the Month: "Container Gardens"



FIRST PLACE
"Container Potted Plants" by Ruth Cohoon



SECOND PLACE
"Just A Little Buggy" by Neta Winston



THIRD PLACE
"Who's Bloomin'" by Judy Smith

Meet Our Trainees

LYNETTE TERRELL

Michelle Mounce

I really got into gardening about four years ago. My father-in-law helped me start an in-ground garden and taught me many things along the way. We did have lots of success, but the weeds got out of control! Later that year, I heard someone I follow on YouTube mention the "square-foot gardening" method. I was intrigued so I bought the book and did lots of research. The next year with the help of my husband and father-in-law, we built six garden beds and a fence around them. This gardening method has changed everything for me, and I love it! The weeds are much more manageable. I grow tomatoes, squash, peas, green beans, cucumbers, peppers, lettuce, onions, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, and lots of herbs and flowers. This year, I focused on planting lots of flowers that attract pollinators. I love watching bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. I am a huge animal lover. I have eight chickens which are my pets and each one has a name. I enjoy watching them free-range all over our property. I also have a golden retriever, three guinea pigs, a bearded dragon, and a crested gecko. However, the guinea pigs, bearded dragon, and crested gecko belong to my two boys, ages 15 and 20. I have been married for 24 years.



Phyllis McGinty

I first became interested in gardening when I was a little girl. My grandparents had a huge garden and we learned a lot when we helped them. My grandmother added flowers in the garden as well as all around her house and taught us all about her flowers. The garden was very important to them, and they loved working together in the garden and teaching us about gardening techniques.



My parents both worked so my brother and I did lots of work in our garden at home. We learned a lot about gardening, and my mother taught us how to preserve everything. We also had a grape orchard and learned how to pick grapes and make grape juice and jelly.

My first garden was created while I was working in Prairie Grove. My husband, Jim, and I created our garden. We had the best time planning what to plant and trying to execute the plan. It was so much fun working with our children helping them learn how to garden.

We moved to Fayetteville where we developed a garden in the backyard. Our boys worked so hard to create their garden and were excited about their produce. They counted every tomato, every pepper, every cucumber, and every green bean. Both of our boys loved gardening and have gardens today.

Now we have one large flower bed and a small container garden for flowers, herbs, tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers. Gardening has become a great tradition to pass on to my grandchildren just like my grandparents did for me.

Natural State Natives

MEL ZABECKI



Passionflower, or maypop, bloom and fruit.

Maypop, passionflower, or *Passiflora incarnata* is a native vine that is both strange and beautiful. The flowers are among the showiest in our region but most people ignore the plant after the bloom. They're missing out, however, because the fruit they produce is delicious. The vine emerges from the ground in early summer, so if you plant one year and then cry all spring because you thought you killed your maypop, wait a little longer! The short-lived blooms occur in July and will make you veer off your path just to marvel in their beauty. The fruits come on soon after but it is not until September/October that they are ready to eat. The fruits start off as little key lime-like fruits, then grow to full lime size. Don't eat those! They're gross! As the fruits mature, they start to get yellowish and deflate a little bit, with unpleasant looking wrinkles. That's when they're ready. Pick them and squeeze and that's where the "POP" comes in their name. Nothing flies out, though, so don't worry. Inside there are seeds like a pomegranate, but not as packed. They are surrounded by capsules of the most tropical tasting juice to be found in Arkansas. It's so much fun for kids to try, so make sure you share with them—they are so amazed that something so ugly could taste so good. I'd love to get a whole mess of them and get enough juice for a few cups full—that would be a dream.

Maypop seeds have been found in archeological deposits all over the South. The American Indians used different parts of the plant to treat various ailments. Roots and crushed leaves were made into a poultice for boils, cuts, earaches, and inflammation. Surely they enjoyed the fruits as well. Maypop is also known to soothe nerves and act almost as a depressant, which has made it useful as a non-addictive relief for insomnia and

restlessness. For more information about maypop in the archaeological record, and for the sweetest close-up picture of the seeds, go to

<http://pages.wustl.edu/peblabguide/articles/1172>.

Sources

Hutchens, Alma R. 1991. *Indian Herbology of North America*. Boston: Shambhala.

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin website:

<http://www.wildflower.org/plants/>

Tomato Talk

JIM SPOSATO



Costoluto Genovese tomatoes at the Lincoln Community Garden project: Left: A very good producer! Right: From this year's harvest.

The Lincoln Community Garden has been growing different kinds of tomatoes all the years that the project has been in existence. The tomato plants are donated by the Farmer's Co-op in Lincoln and the tomatoes have also been started by Lincoln High School Agri Department. However, because of the school shutting down in mid-March, I decided to start this year's crop in my greenhouse. I had a packet of Costoluto Genovese tomato seeds, a variety grown by Thomas Jefferson at Monticello. When the students come back to school, I'm going to take them to the garden and tell them the history of the tomato. Here's some information about Costoluto Genovese tomatoes from the Monticello website, <https://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/costoluto-genovese-tomato> and from the Harvest to Table website, <https://harvesttotable.com/>.

Scientific Name: *Lycopersicon cv*

Common Name: Costoluto Genovese tomato

Description: Tender garden vegetable; flattened, deeply lobed and scalloped, bright rich red fruits; soft in texture, juicy and slightly tart

Size: Indeterminate vines; space caged plants 24 to 36 inches apart

Cultural Information: Prefers rich, sweet garden loam and full sun

The Costoluto Genovese tomato is an Italian heirloom tomato variety. Its heavily lobed and often convoluted shape is indicative of early nineteenth century tomato varieties, making it an oddity in today's vegetable garden. In profile this tomato appears flattened and fluted to the point of convoluted. Costoluto Genovese slices nicely at its scallops and is perfect for adding to fresh vegetable plates. Of course, like any other beefsteak this tomato is very meaty and can be sliced across to make a tasty tomato and basil sandwich.

The Costoluto Genovese's stellar flavor is intense and acidic. In Italy Costoluto Genovese is a favorite for pasta sauces and pastes; for these, remove the medium-thick skin. The skin makes Costoluto Genovese a good choice for broiling and grilling. And if this prolific, indeterminate producer delivers more than you can keep up with, juicing is an excellent alternative. This tomato is a good choice to grow for cooking or preserving because the flavor intensity will only increase with heat.

Just Us

JUDY SMITH

From Dolores Stamps: Truman Stamps gardens almost daily. He likes working alone. He has a great butterfly host and nectar bed that hardly anyone sees. It is in Springdale along the Razorback Regional Greenway north of Huntsville Avenue off Shiloh Street, almost opposite the entrance to Bluff Cemetery. It was an overgrown triangle of land when he, Jack Bardwell, and Marty Powers decided to clean it and plant butterfly attractors. He can tell you the name of each plant: at least four butterfly weeds, one or two Buddleias, coneflowers, Monarda, and more. Three years in a row the city weedeating team has taken it down to the ground. BUT IT COMES BACK! He also has more than 108 hybrid daylilies (Hemerocallis) in five different yards which require deadheading two/three times a week. You should request a tour next June 15, best day for a flower garden walk for daylilies! For more than 13 years he has spent most Tuesday mornings with the MGs at Headquarters House and Wednesdays with the Shiloh Museum MGs. Thursdays he attends Springdale Kiwanis. Every other Friday we have an Aktion Club, sponsored by the local Kiwanis at Elizabeth Richardson Center on 265. Aktion Club is for adults with developmental disabilities.

From Doris Cassidy: Summer blooms. I'm doing fine staying at home except for grocery shopping at 6:30 a.m. I've worked at Elkins Community Center MG project but there is only one other person and he works more than six feet away. Jan Judy is not able to work and since I'm close and it is isolated, I've tried to help. I've spread five yards of mulch on my beds and got another five yards Saturday. I need to downsize. I miss seeing all of you. Stay cool and safe.

From Joyce Mendenhall: I am working on "My Story" for the Healing Gardens social media sites to go along with our virtual fundraiser. If I get it done in time they would

appreciate it going in as much media as possible. I don't have much new in the way of updates yet since I am still waiting on insurance to approve the next step of embolization so it can be scheduled. I also I have to have another endoscopy and colonoscopy, which is how I found out I had cancer coming upon a year in August. I can hardly believe it has been that long. I still have chemo.

About Jan Judy: She is out of rehab and living with her daughter. She's learning how to get it and out of a car and has even mowed the lawn! She loves hearing from us. Her address is 320 South Pleasant Street, Springdale. AR 72764

From Carter Carrigan: A few poems to lighten your day:

No Weeds, No Bees

No weeds, no bees,
No crops, no seeds,
No people to be.
No you, no me,
So grow a weed
for the bee, please.
Grow a weed
for the bee
and you and me.

Simple Stuff

Things seem so simple sometimes
and sometimes things are hard
like dealing with quantum physics
or opening jelly jars.

Life's Modern Mysteries

What happens to those darn socks?
What happens to Tupperware lids?
What happens to fingernail clippers
and dozens of scissors,
And Honey,
What have you done with the kids?

Book Review

Dolores Stamps

While stay at home is not mandatory, I have done plenty of stay at home. My public library is closed, YIKES! They do have a call-in line so I can call to ask for the "latest garden book" and they bag it, set it outside on a table, and I drive over to pick it up. The problem has been that I don't know what garden books they have recently added to the New Books shelf that I haven't already read. So this week I tried a new tactic, asking the phone person to pick five new garden books with a Dewey Decimal System call number 635.01 and took my chances! Surprise! One out of five books was right on the money.

Garden Alchemy by Stephanie Rose captured my reading time for most of Saturday. Several topics were of interest and should be helpful to both new and seasoned gardeners. I especially wanted more information on composting for a novice gardener who had called me the day before with multiple questions and arguments about why “she couldn’t do that.” When I made a house call, she showed me a clear plastic “composting bin” she bought online. It might have held 1 ½ quarts of leaves, grass, and vegetable trimmings. I explained she might want to try something “a little bigger” for good results. She didn’t want it in the house due to gnats. She couldn’t leave it outside because there might be mice, she . . . you get the drift. When I explained that if this “thing” ever resulted in compost she might fill one coffee cup with her rewards, she began to listen. I have recommended *Garden Alchemy* to help move her forward.

A full chapter of *Garden Alchemy* is devoted to mulches and soils. The author includes recipes for thirteen different soil mixes, including a defined mix for cacti, for woody plants, for orchids, and for frugal gardeners. I learned a lot from her varied blends. When we get to mulches, she offers the why and how of at least 12 possible mulches for your garden. You might think the book is a list of lists but I was impressed with the depth of her studies and the results she touts.

Purchased new, *Garden Alchemy* from Cool Springs Press is \$22.95, but worth adding to your gardening shelf. Or use the public library near you!

September Meeting Preview

September 1 Business Meeting: Be sure to attend by Zoom so we will have a quorum to vote for our 2021 Executive Board positions:

President – Kathryn Birkhead (bless her heart)
Vice President/Programs – Karen Hanna-Towne
Secretary – Kim Hughes
Treasurer – Wanda Gore
Assistant Treasurer – Jill King
At Large – Randy Butler
At Large – LaDeana Mullinix
At Large – Jim Sposato

The Bylaws Committee and the Executive Committee have determined we don’t need to update or change bylaws this year.

We’ll also have a slide show program presented by nature photographer Mike Martin on “Flora and Fauna of the Ozarks.”

A native Arkansan, Mike Martin has been an avid nature and wildlife photographer for over 30 years. His photos have been published by state parks departments in Arkansas, California, Florida, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, Chicago's

Field Museum, and the Mississippi Wildlife Federation. A number of Martin's photos have also been included on Cornell University's "All About Birds" website, <https://www.allaboutbirds.org>



Contact Information

The *Garden Thyme* email address is wcmgnewsletter@gmail.com. You may use this address for submissions and for questions and comments that are specific to the newsletter. For other needs, please contact the appropriate officer or chairperson as listed in your WCMG workbook.

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