



Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • May 2021



Please note! Your email provider may show an abbreviated version of this newsletter, so if you see the words "[Message clipped] View entire message" or something similar at the end of this email, **be sure to click on "View entire message"** so you don't miss important news!

However, *Garden Thyme* is best viewed in your browser (instead of viewing it within your email). Formatting within an email often gets messed up (sorry for the technical jargon there), which is a frustration for you and for your newsletter committee that works so hard to provide you with a newsletter lovely to behold. **So, to view *Garden Thyme* in its full glory, just click on the link at the top of this page that says "View this email in your browser."**

May Program: Healing Gardens

KAREN HANNA-TOWNE

WCMG Vice President

The guest speaker for our May 4 meeting is Dr. Joanne Westphal, professor emeritus of landscape architecture at Michigan State University and a practicing licensed physician in Michigan. Dr. Westphal has an impressive record of research, teaching, practice and publication in the areas of landscape architecture, post-occupancy assessment, and medicine. With five academic degrees, including two Masters and two PhDs, she is well prepared to address issues at the intersection of health and the environment. Dr. Westphal has 45 years of teaching at the university level, the last 28 of these at Michigan State University. Among other topics, her research has focused on design of outdoor spaces for the



purpose of improving health, as well as the scientific assessment of these environments to document health outcomes. She has been recognized with many awards and honors; her publications appear in both peer-reviewed and popular venues and she is often invited to engage with design professionals in providing advice for healing gardens for several types of patients. She has served as an officer in several professional organizations and is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects and a Fellow of the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture.

Dr. Westphal will share with us the approach she takes in designing healing gardens. Her topics will include the history of healing gardens, how medicine slowly became scientific and how science influenced the design of outdoor spaces designed specifically for patients, how patients with different health issues have varying garden needs, and a review a handful of case studies. **It will be a stimulating evening, so "Zoom in" on May 4 at 6:30 p.m. for a close look at ways that you can make your own garden more amenable to better health!**

Colin will send out the Zoom link a day or so in advance of the meeting.

Taking Care of Business

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

March 2021 Treasurer's
Report

April 2021 Meeting Minutes

From Your President

KATHRYN BIRKHEAD

Dear Friends,

In March, I drove to North Carolina to celebrate my youngest granddaughter's first birthday. I forgot to pack a hat but needed one, and the new cap I found almost made me glad I'd failed to bring one with me. It says "Save the Bees." Can there be a better hat for a gardener? And if you're a Master Gardener who has been around for a while, I'll bet you thought of the same person I did when you read "Save the Bees." (For the new Master Gardeners: Steve Brizzi is our local bee guru who is dedicated to helping our native bee population.) That cap has quickly become my favorite.



When I went out to mow for the first time this year, I was wearing it, and it struck me that it would be awfully hypocritical of me to mow down the henbit and purple dead nettle that the bees were enjoying, so I mowed around it. My back yard is not a showplace under the best of circumstances, and it is even less so now, with the tall clumps of clover and the winter weeds that I left standing. I figure it's a small price to pay, though, to give our bees a fighting chance. Now that more things are coming out and the bees have other sources for food, I figure I can get rid of the uneven patches. I'm grateful to Steve for creating an awareness of the bees' needs.

Unrelated to bees and my new hat, it has been fun to go back to our projects in these last few weeks. Even though we've had some cold and rainy workdays, it's a joy to work alongside old friends and make new ones.

On another unrelated note, Karen read us a Billy Collins' poem in February, and it reminded me of how much I appreciate his work. Since May is the month of Mother's Day, here's a link to him reading another of his poems in which he talks about a gift he made for his mother. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pvEXP5xl1A>. I hope you enjoy it.

May you have a good month,
Kathryn

2021 Arkansas Master Gardener Conference



June 10-11, 2021

Hosted by Craighead County Master Gardeners

Virtual from the comfort of your home!

Wonderful speakers and beautiful virtual garden tours from the Jonesboro area.

Join us for the 2021 Master Gardener State Conference via Zoom. This two-day virtual conference has a wonderful lineup of speakers plus virtual garden tours. Master Gardeners and County Agents can register to attend. Master Gardeners can also invite a guest to register.

Keynote Speakers Janet Carson and Joe Lamp'l

Cost: \$50.00 (for two day conference)

Registration deadline: May 17

Registration is on the password-protected MG ONLY portion of the [MG website](#). You will be asked to enter the username and password to enter the MG ONLY section:

- username: mgonly (one word, no space)
- password: Compost2 (no space and capital "C")

Uncle Mike's Veggie Garden Tips

MIKE STANDROD

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself." This certainly applies to home gardening.

Example: **Pay attention to spacing when you plant**, especially when sowing seeds like carrots and radishes. The seeds are so tiny, it is VERY easy to overplant. This results in tiny, underdeveloped, misshapen scrawny fruits at harvest. The remedy is to spend lots of time thinning your plants early after they emerge. This is a mistake I seem to repeat regularly, especially last fall. I started to photo my puny carrots but was too embarrassed. Again, pay attention to the seed packet instructions on spacing. **Learn from MY mistakes.**



As I write this (April 20) it is snowing wildly in Fayetteville and the forecast tonight is a hard freeze of 23 degrees. Today my friend (the guy who planted his whole hot-season garden in mid-March) was asking how to save his tomatoes tonight. My reply was to just re-plant and to learn. **Learn from HIS mistake.** If you happened to do the same, don't feel badly. Many, many folks planted everything a week or so ago. Last year that worked. This year, no. **April 15 is an average frost date.** Bonnie Plants and the plant stores will

be overjoyed to sell more plants.

Fortunately for me, I still have 2/3 of my tomato, eggplant and pepper plants sitting in my indoor mini-greenhouse and basement. So come tomorrow, April 21, I'll have only lost 1/3 of my garden to this late freeze.

If you read last month's column, my suggestion of **planting in thirds, two or three weeks apart** does double-duty: it minimizes losses and levels and extends the harvest. If anyone heeded that after reading this column, then it was worth sharing. My guess is that many people will learn this year from their own experience. The toughest way to learn, but then the most likely to be remembered.

SIMPLE TIPS for growing plants in May and June

- **Mulch tomato plants and water from the bottom.** Drip irrigation or soaker hoses are best. Watering from above and mud splashing on plant stems promote disease. Unlike lawns, water often and not too deeply. Moisture variation creates splitting and "cat-facing".
- **Thin onions** by pulling every other one as green onions, giving others space to mature to bulbs. Same with radishes. Pull the most developed radishes, giving others more room.
- **Have replacement plants to fill in as you harvest.** Maximize your space and extend harvest.
- **Walk your garden daily.** You'll catch insect or disease problems early. Insect populations multiply in a geometric progression. Stopping the first couple of generations can make a big difference later.



Left: Carrots planted too closely. Right: Carrots that were properly thinned.

Meet the Trainees

OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL

Marion Bonds Stevens

You could probably say I had no choice in the matter when it comes to my affection for gardening, which started when I asked, “Grandmother, did you get that apple out of the ground?” No doubt I had been helping her tend to her potatoes. Rest assured, I know the difference now. Both sets of my grandparents were life-long gardeners, which meant most of my summers were spent helping to shell peas, snap beans, shuck corn, and all the rest! My mom, Wilma Bonds, who many of you know as a Master Gardener, has an affinity for flowers and plants of all types. Because of her influence, gardening became second nature to me. Routinely, I would go in tow to garden club meetings or to the woods searching for wild azaleas in bloom. And as many of you can attest to now, I can’t walk past a flower bed without the urge to stop and pull weeds.



My favorite plants are those that have been passed along via family members and friends, or simply ones that remind me of a yard I’ve admired—usually because of the person, not necessarily the flower. I continue to try my hand at vegetable gardening as well, and in successful seasons I’m fortunate enough to have a husband who enjoys canning.

I am an Arkansas native. I grew up in Benton and have enjoyed Northwest Arkansas for over twenty years. I graduated from the University of Texas-Tyler with a bachelor’s degree in human resources management and later pursued a Master of Arts degree in the field from Webster University. Most of my professional career was spent with Southwestern Energy Company as director of human resources. It was an exciting and educating experience and one that I will always value. Currently, I consult and am a lecturer at the University of Arkansas in the Walton College of Business with a focus in . . . you guessed it, HR-related courses. My parents are thrilled that I finally followed in their footsteps and am now a part of the UA system (both are UA graduates).

My husband, Charlie, and I enjoy all Razorback sports and attend many of their events. We have four dogs that keep us in line and keep a few chickens—another thing I do because my grandmother did.

I look forward to learning so much from all of you!

Susan Shelton

Hi! I’ve called Fayetteville home since 1959 when I was five years old, and the changes around here have been enormous! When I bought my house in 1977, friends referred to “going out yonder to Susan’s house.” Now, I’m in Uptown, and Fayetteville has come to

me!

I didn't grow up around plants and gardening, but I had aunts and uncles who grew up during the Depression—that means my uncles knew how to garden and my aunts knew how to garden AND can, just to survive! I guess I come by these interests naturally, you might say.



I've had odd house plants here and there from my UA days until the present. About 30 years ago, a friend told me about a BEEP class on growing herbs. (BEEP was what it was called before Northwest Arkansas Community College.) This class was held in Larue, Arkansas (War Eagle to those who don't know the area well) and Diane Clement was the teacher. I fell in love with her herb garden and her! She became my (culinary) herb mentor. I've only had a 6' x 6' bed ever since. I could go on and on and on about Diane and how much she taught me, helped me, and meant to me. Now, she's gone from this earth, but I'll never forget her.

The challenges of my precious herb bed (complete with fairies) vary from year to year. Being successful at growing lovage and cutting celery (parcel) are this year's goals. Not letting my basil get the dreaded powdery mildew is also a goal. Pursuing my "parsley cage" invention to keep the butterflies from laying eggs on my parsley is also an objective. I'm only successful at growing jalapeños in my back yard in giant pots and canning them, but that's something! Growing tomatoes is an annual challenge for me!

Having taught elementary school music for 37 years and being retired for seven years means that one way I'd love to contribute to the Master Gardeners program is by working with kids somehow! I've been a musician since I was ten, but never a willing performer. I have many instruments (except for brass, Mike Stanrod!) and lots of kinds of music interest me! My favorite instruments are pipe organ (Bach and Buxtehude), acoustic piano, mountain dulcimer, and percussion. My favorite music includes classic rock, bluegrass, multicultural, pre-60s jazz, baroque/classical pipe organ, kids' songs, folk songs, and more. I'm also an educated fool when it comes to cooking and food. I enjoy reading cookbooks (especially multicultural ones) even though I haven't cooked from a lot of them.

My motto is "Variety is the spice of life." I enjoy lots of OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) classes, growing and using herbs, being a UA student for ten semesters now, Newcomers Club activities, craft fairs and other festivals, Arkansas Winds Community Band, drawing and watercolor, reading, playing music and singing (for myself), and, *most of all, hangin' with my three girls (canines)!*

March Photo of the Month: "Wooden Structures in the Garden"



FIRST PLACE
"Wooden Bridge over Pond" by Ruth Cohoon



Lincoln Community Garden

JIM SPOSATO



Spreading mulch at the Lincoln Community Garden, June 2020.

Lincoln Community Garden was started in 2015 when the City of Lincoln donated the garden site and appointed a community garden committee made up of city officials, business owners, volunteers and local Master Gardeners.

PURPOSE

The Lincoln Community Garden (LCG) site provides produce, which is given free of charge to the community.

MISSION

The purpose of the LCG is to provide garden space, to develop community spirit and a sense of place, and to create a project that encourages service clubs, church and school groups and individuals young and old to see the value of gardening.

The different organizations that have helped with the garden are

Tyson Foods

American Legion

Coach's Bar-B-Que

Bonnie Plants

Farmers Co-op

Dixondale Farms

City of Lincoln (unlimited water and 4 acres of land)

Washington County Community Service

Washington County Work Crew
Lincoln Middle School EAST Lab
Lincoln Elementary School 4th Grade
Washington County Master Gardeners
St. Thomas Community Service
Washington County MG Saturday Crew
Lincoln FFA
Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds
Sleepy Hollow Convenience Store (seeds)
Bonny Plants
Ministerial Alliance
Preferred Poultry

AWARDS FOR THE GARDEN

2016 Washington County MG Project of the Year
Tyson Foods: Friend of Washington County Master Gardeners

TOTAL HARVESTS, 2015–2020

Natural State Natives

MEL ZABECKI



Wild ginger.

Asarum canadense is wild ginger and I'd like to take this time to explain something that most people don't think about: there are tons of plants that were used by native people that

don't preserve in the archeological record. So, sometimes there are plants that archeologists can't answer about when you ask: did the Native Americans use/eat this plant? Wild ginger is one of these plants. We know it's native and it's pretty distinct on the landscape, making for easy identification. There are two large and rounded leaves and there is a small flower UNDER the leaves in the spring. This is not Asian ginger—it doesn't have a plump rhizome like Asian ginger, though it is of the same genus. The root, however, does have a slight gingery flavor.

Here is the reason it doesn't show up in the archeological record: we don't eat/use the parts of wild ginger that could char hard. Remember from months back I explained that the only plant parts that preserve in the archeological record at all are seeds and nut shells? The rest either rots or burns up to ash. So, if the ancient Native Americans were using this plant, they would have used the rhizomes (underground stems), which would not preserve in the archeological record because there are no hard parts of the rhizome to burn! The flowers/seeds would not have necessarily been harvested with the roots and brought back to the village, so the only possibly preservable parts were probably left in the woods. Get it?!



Look under the leaves of wild ginger to find its flower.

While this is not a plant that we see in the archeological record, we can assume that the indigenous people in this area used it due to historic accounts of settlers using it and, even more convincingly, wild ginger is featured in various tribal remedies as poultices for wounds. Oftentimes when we hear about herbal remedies we are quick to think that these simple plants could not have actually made a difference in past people's health. However, in the case of wild ginger, compounds similar to antibiotics have been identified, so maybe not all of the herbal remedies are placebos! Warning: some of the compounds have also

been found to be poisonous, so please don't go eating these roots to see what they taste like! I took these pictures this year on the Razorback Greenway near Johnson on the mall spur, but there were tons of colonies all along that section of trail. Go check it out!

Just Us

JUDY SMITH

Our Master Gardener colleague Terry Evers, who lives in southeast Springdale, has some limitations currently that keep him from being able to make his yard look the way he would normally keep it. If you can help Terry with some weeding and pruning, please get in touch with him at terryevers@sbcglobal.net or call him at 479-790-8542. Please note that this is a "help one another" task and is not eligible for project hours. And while your efforts will not count toward project hours, you will be getting stars in your crown!

Gardening and Community Events

PAM BUTLER

May 1, 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. 2021 ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE. Free event sponsored by The Learning Fields at Chaffee Crossing, Hwy 22 and Mahogany Ave. in Fort Smith. Contact them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Learning-Fields-at-Chaffee-Crossing-118964358188282>, to let them know you're coming or if you have questions. The Demonstration Gardens and Children's Garden will be open to visitors.

May 1, 1:00 p.m. BENEVOLENT TREES: NATIVE WOODY PLANTS IN AMERICAN HERBAL TRADITIONS WITH STEVEN FOSTER. Online with Facebook Live. Free event by Arkansas Native Plant Society Ozark Chapter and Arkansas Native Plant Society. To register: ANPS.President@gmail.com.

May 4–6. HERITAGE GARDEN RENEWAL SPRING GARDEN TOURS. Peel Mansion Museum and Heritage Gardens, Bentonville. Tours are provided at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. Limit 10 people per group. Reserve your space for the 30-minute online tour of the newly renovated gardens at Peel Garden
Tours: <https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/PeelGardenTours@peelcompton.org/bookings/>

May 5, 6:00 p.m. CONTAINER GARDENING WITH JANET CARSON. Zoom program. Botanical Garden of the Ozarks (BGO). Cost: \$15 for BGO members/\$25 for nonmembers. To register: <https://www.bgozarks.org/container-gardening-with-janet-carson/>

May 5, 11:00 a.m. RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT FOR LANDOWNERS WITH NATE WESTON. Online with Facebook Live. Free event by Wild Ones Ozark Chapter. To register: <https://ozark.wildones.org/events/riparian-management-for-landowners/>

May 11, 6:00 p.m. GARDEN INSECT ID. In person at BGO, Cost: \$10 for members/ \$20 for nonmembers, To register: <https://www.bgozarks.org/garden-insect-id-class/>

May 12, 2:00 p.m. HERE COME THE INVASIVORES! FORAGING INVASIVE SPECIES TO HELP OUR NATIVES WITH BO BROWN. Online with Facebook Live. Free event by Arkansas Native Plant Society Ozark Chapter and Arkansas Native Plant Society. To register: ANPS.President@gmail.com

May 15, 2:00 p.m. THE LOVE LIFE OF FERNS WITH ERIC SUNDELL. Online with Facebook Live. Free event by Arkansas Native Plant Society Ozark Chapter and Arkansas Native Plant Society. To register: ANPS.President@gmail.com

June 2. MASTER NATURALISTS PLANT SALE. Details with an order form will be available in May.

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.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

[Judy Smith](#), managing editor/submissions; [Mary McCully](#), editor/submissions and videos; [Pam Butler](#), reporter; [Olivia Harrington](#), reporter; [Lynette Terrell](#), reporter; [Susan Young](#), production assistant; [Mel Zabecki](#), reporter.

Send all newsletter submissions to Judy Smith or Mary McCully.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

[Kathryn Birkhead](#), president; [Karen Hanna-Towne](#), vice president; [Kim Hughes](#), secretary; [Wanda Gore](#), treasurer; [Jill King](#), assistant treasurer; [Randy Butler](#), parliamentarian; [Susan Young](#), past president. Members at large: [Randy Butler](#), [LaDeana Mullinix](#), [Jim Sposato](#).



WCMG Facebook Group (private)



WCMG Facebook Page (public)



WCMG Website



UA Extension Service Website

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information or any other legally protected status and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

Copyright © 2021 Washington County Master Gardeners. All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#). **Please note that if you unsubscribe from this list, you will no longer receive the *Garden Thyme* newsletter and WCMG email announcements.**

