

Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • November 2020



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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."**

November Zoom Meeting

Mark your calendars for our meeting on **November 3 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 Lucy Capelle, who will discuss the culture and challenges of the Marshallese community in Northwest Arkansas, especially as it pertains to health and diet. She will tell us about the Marshallese Garden Project, which offers fresh produce to their community, as a means of promoting healthy eating.



Lucy sends this introduction: "I'm married with four beautiful children. My family moved to Springdale in 2014. In 2017, I was introduced to Catherine and Nena with [Feed Communities](#) organization who were in charge of Springdale community garden. I started to volunteer at the farm and was eager to learn more about components of soil, concepts of plant botany, and variety of plants. Most importantly I learned how to cook and eat veggies that we had never grown in the Marshall Islands. Earlier this year, I received the [Woolsey Incubator Farm](#) project. I am very happy to be part of this project. Now I am able to share all the crops that I planted and harvest with many elderly Marshallese folks."

Taking Care of Business

We will vote on the following at our November 3 Zoom meeting.

October 2020 Meeting
Minutes

September 2020 Treasurer's
Report

2021 Proposed Budget

From Your President

KATHRYN BIRKHEAD

Dear Friends,

Students taking the on-line class always have the challenge of working independently without getting to meet their colleagues, but studying on-line in the time of COVID presents some particular difficulties. January's on-line students, like on-line students before them, could come to in-person meetings and go to sanctioned projects soon after completing their coursework, so they could start meeting folks and working within weeks of finishing the class. That's not true this year. On-line students are currently isolated, and it will be next March before sanctioned projects start back up and they can regularly be with other folks.



Luckily for our students this fall, Jane Bryant and Elizabeth Hale from West Fork had some ideas on how to help our trainees, starting with opportunities for them to meet each other, their mentors and other Master Gardeners. Jane is an experienced Master Gardener mentor, and Elizabeth was a Master Gardener in Texas and completed the on-line course here in January, with Jane as her mentor. Between them, they have come up with great suggestions on how to build a sense of community among those who are doing the lessons at home alone and the Master Gardeners who would like to get to know them. In planning activities, we had to be mindful of guidance from the Extension Service on how many people could be together and other concerns; but where there is a will, there is a way.

We invited trainees and their mentors to projects to the north, south, east, west and center of Washington County so they could meet each other in an outdoor setting, ask questions about Master Gardening in general and about the course in particular, and see some of our sanctioned projects. One Saturday, we met at Elkins in the morning and at Mock Park in the afternoon, at Headquarters House the following Tuesday afternoon, at Shiloh Museum that Thursday afternoon, and at West Fork on the next Saturday morning. About half of our trainees were able to come to the gatherings, and I think that the mentors and Master Gardeners who went to the projects to meet with them enjoyed the get-togethers as much as the trainees did. I am profoundly grateful for the project directors and other Master Gardeners who took the time to introduce themselves and their work to our trainees.

We're not done. We still have a lot more work to do to help our new trainees AND to keep our longer-time members engaged. Do you have ideas on activities we can do or actions we can take? These get-togethers took place because Jane shared an idea and invited Elizabeth to come to a meeting, too. Your contributions matter. Please let us know what ideas you have.

To close, I love autumn. Now with our growing season winding down, I hope you enjoy these reflections on the season from Rainer Maria Rilke.

"Day in Autumn" by Rainer Maria Rilke

After the summer's yield, Lord, it is time
to let your shadow lengthen on the sundials

and in the pastures let the rough winds fly.

As for the final fruits, coax them to roundness.

Direct on them two days of warmer light
to hale them golden toward their term, and harry
the last few drops of sweetness through the wine.

Whoever's homeless now, will build no shelter;
who lives alone will live indefinitely so,
waking up to read a little, draft long letters,
and, along the city's avenues,
fitfully wander, when the wild leaves loosen.

Enjoy this gorgeous fall weather,
Kathryn

Mentor-Trainee Meetups

Since this year's trainees have had few opportunities to get to know their mentors and colleagues, there have been meet and greets for trainees and mentors at several sanctioned projects around the county. There are still opportunities on the next two Saturdays to meet folks. **Please note that these meet-ups are for current trainees and mentors only.** If you don't fall in one of those two categories, please don't crash the party. :)

Please sign up using the links below so we'll know whom to expect, and keep in mind that our guidance from the Extension Service requires that we use masks and be in groups of ten people or fewer outdoors.

- **Extension Office (October 31, 10:00-11:00 a.m.)**
<https://forms.gle/43HQbtsNG4kkLQTf8>
 - **Botanical Garden of the Ozarks (November 7, 10:00-11:00 a.m.)**
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScR9BLimzqaZLNcQLviKHjcNmVCwnhoDzu011qz01clkU-e2g/viewform>
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It's Time



Due to the COVID pandemic this year there will be no volunteer work requirement for 2020. However, **all active members and trainees are still required to record at least 20 education hours and pay their 2021 dues in order to retain membership for next year.** If you have done some work hours this year, please make sure to record them. Every single hour counts, especially this year!

The deadline for trainees to complete and record their hours is November 1; for all other members it is December 15. Please do not wait until the last minute—start recording your hours today! If you have any questions or need help resetting your password contact Annette Pianalto at annettepianalto@gmail.com or 479-361-2007.

Mel Zabecki has even gone so far as to create a handy dandy video tutorial on entering your hours: <https://youtu.be/dIYirzmEpXk>

Any member who needs to request a leave of absence for 2020 can contact Annette Pianalto for more information. **The deadline to request a leave is November 1.**

Please pay your 2021 dues before December 1. Make your check for \$20 out to WCMG and mail it to WCMG treasurer Chris Bell, c/o Washington County Extension Office, 2536 N. McConnell Avenue, Fayetteville, AR 72704-5521. Dues go up to \$25 after December 1.

Photo by [Jonathan Francisca](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Endowment Campaign in Full Swing

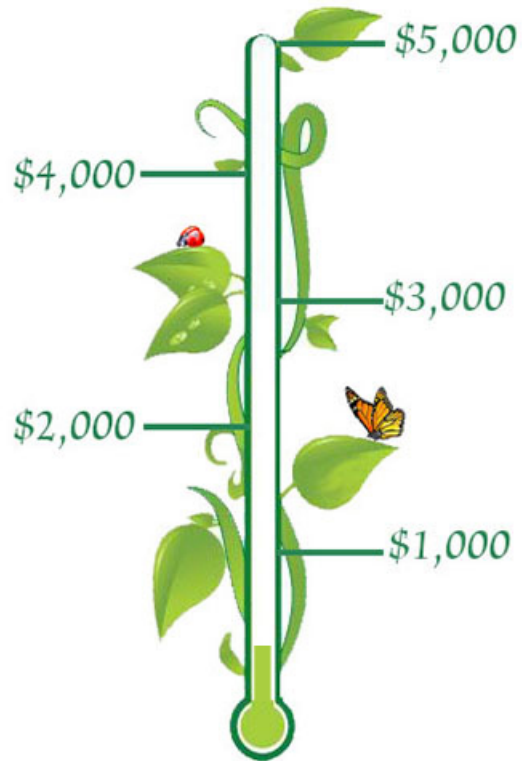
RUTHANNE HILL

Endowment Committee

The Match Challenge for the Endowment Campaign is up and running and gifts started coming in right away. Thank you, Master Gardeners! We appreciate how you're responding to this opportunity and how much you obviously love a challenge!

If you're still considering making a gift, let me give you three great reasons to pull out your checkbook. **First, you'll help bright young horticulture students and future horticulture professionals complete their education.** Who knows?

One of our UA graduates could be the future consumer horticulture specialist for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service (the position currently held by our own Berni Kurz) and we'd know that we helped him or her reach their educational goals. **Second, higher education has become all but unaffordable except to the most affluent families.** College costs have increased over 1200% since most of us were in school. With the cost of tuition, fees, books, and living even the most frugal students can struggle financially while in school. Our scholarship could literally keep a student in school who might otherwise have to drop out for lack of funds.



That's two great reasons you should support the Endowment Campaign and you already know the **third one—because by giving right now your donation will be DOUBLED!** The Match Challenge runs through December 15 and all gifts received by that date will be doubled by our amazing and anonymous fellow Washington County Master Gardener.

Checks should be made out to ADC Endowment #30011384. Print and fill out this form which must accompany any donation to the endowment: [ENDOWMENT DONATION FORM](#). Mail your check and completed form to the Washington County Extension Office, 2536 N. McConnell Avenue, Fayetteville, AR 72704-5521.

Please help with whatever amount you can give and, together, we'll complete the challenge, secure the match, and reach the \$10,000 mark on our endowment!

Garden Explorers for the Win!



WCMG's Garden Explorers Junior Master Gardeners sanctioned project recently received the Arkansas Master Gardener program's annual Excellence in Education Award. Congratulations and thanks to the following Master Gardener leaders of the Garden Explorers: co-chairs Gail Pianalto and Joyce Mendenhall (Joyce is pictured above proudly showing off the award), Trudy Carrigan, Linda MacLean, Kitty Sanders, Betty Swope, and Elizabeth Woods.



Garden Explorers Junior Master Gardeners is a 4-H club dedicated to teaching kids about gardening and nature. Today's kids do not get outdoors and play like they used to. Children who learn about nature and experience it for themselves will grow up to be better stewards of the Earth. The target audience is 4-H'ers ages 5 through 18, but entire families attend and learn. Many parents have told us they learn so much and the preschool children become involved and learn as well. Meetings are held once a month at the Washington County Extension Office unless a field trip is planned. The Perennial Garden

Club of Fayetteville and anonymous donors have given us hundreds of dollars over the past few years. For this reason we do not have to charge our families for anything and we are able to provide bee houses, craft items, notebooks for each child, baseball caps and the pins they earn to wear on the hats.



Children who were very shy and hardly said a word are now giving talks about birds, insects, metamorphosis, trees, water quality, and more. One of the requirements to earn a pin is to tell the rest of the group something they learned about their subject and we have never been disappointed. These kids learn hands on skills as they learn how to weave a basket or create a terrarium. The adults tell us they have learned from our programs and many are more conscious of recycling and have started composting and made gardens at home where they never did before.

Meet Our Trainees

ANNIE MOORE

Hello! I was born in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. I moved to Eureka Springs, Arkansas, in 1979 with my amazing father who owned a hotel. After graduating from Eureka Springs High School in 1983, I joined the Navy and was stationed in Pensacola Beach with the Blue Angels. After two years of service I transferred to the Army and became a psychological operations specialist as well as a photo layout specialist. After serving ten years, including serving in Desert Storm, I concluded my service after the birth of my second child. This leads me to tell you I have one girl and one boy with three grandchildren and one on the way.



After completing my military service, I came home to Eureka Springs full-time and

worked as the special events coordinator with the chamber of commerce for eleven years, worked at the Ozark Mountain Hoe-Down Music Theatre for twenty years, and opened a restaurant which I had for five years. I then moved to Fayetteville in 2010 to be closer to the VA Hospital.

My therapist at the VA got me interested in the therapy garden at the VA, which let me just say has been the best thing that has happened to me. I have been working in the garden for six years, and I am at the garden everyday—sometimes three times a day—as I live next to the garden. I grew my first square watermelon this summer! I find rare fruits, veggies, and flowers to be the coolest part about learning. I must say my mentor, Glendann Hardy Robillard, is the ABSOLUTE BEST! Without the garden and my mentors, I do not know where I would be now.

KATHERINE JONES

I've lived in rural Elkins for twenty-one years with my husband, and we've raised three children, ages 30, 18, and 13. We have donkeys, chickens, dogs, and one female starling that we raised from a furry chick. I am a self-taught gardener. My husband and I have planted trees and shrubs and grasses for twenty-one years. We took advice from anyone who would give it. We love the country and are never bored. I learned about the Master Gardener program from a dear nurse friend, Mary Loftus, fifteen years ago. I remember her bringing her book to work and talking about the program. She was such a wonderful teacher and mentor! I work at Washington Regional and have since 1999. I love my job. I have always worked nights as a nurse.

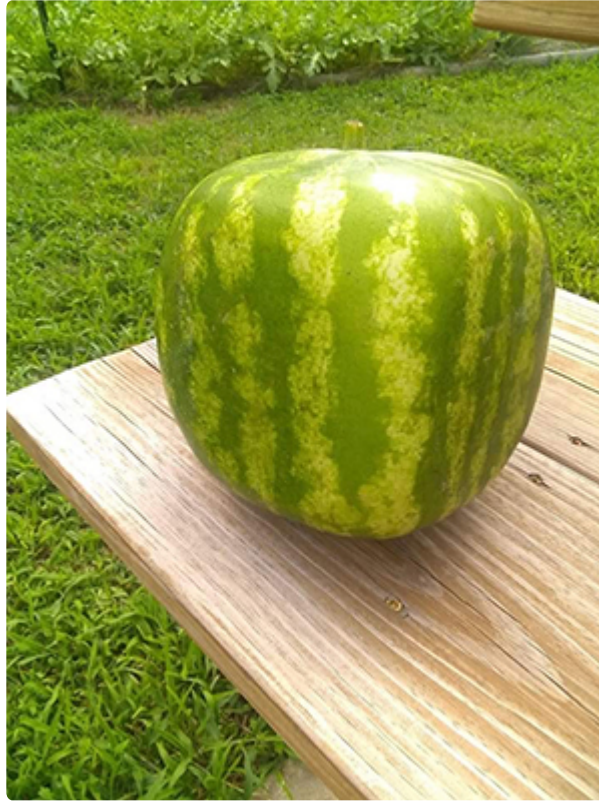


I am so impressed with what the Master Gardener program has to offer with knowledge and the friendships that people have made over common interests. That being said, I am always faced with the chance of having COVID-positive patients at work, so I have stayed away from the Master Gardener group volunteer days. I miss it very much. I was just learning to start vegetables with the West Fork sanctioned project when the closings began due to COVID. Only a few in my group knew of my reasons for staying away, and they thought it best also. We keep in touch.

I am so excited to start next season again. In a lot of ways I did not really feel part of a complete group since I have been staying away not wanting to put anyone in harm's way. So I have a lot to look forward to when all this COVID has calmed down. I am also a member of the upholstery group that used to meet at the Extension Office. I love to sew, cook, crochet, garden, and can. I am a master of none but always enjoy trying to improve! Plus, I am still a full-time mom and nurse at work. I am so blessed to have so much going on in my life. I do not want to take any of it for granted!

September Photo of the Month:

"Garden Bounty"



FIRST PLACE

"Watermelon²" by Annie Moore

November's Photo of the Month theme is "Water in the Garden." This can include water features. Instructions for entering the photo contest can be found in your workbook in the Calendars section, page 5. Please contact wcmgphotos@gmail.com with any questions. **Deadline for submission is November 15.**

Natural State Natives

MEL ZABECKI



A persimmon hangs on.

Diospyros virginiana is the delicious persimmon. It is less elusive than last month's pawpaw, but it is still not as omnipresent as I would like. Many people's first experiences with this fruit have been traumatic—a mischievous sibling or relative convinced them to bite into an unripe fruit and never again would they open up their minds to the possibility that this fruit could taste good. Before persimmons ripen, their skin and flesh are filled with tannins that make them one of the most astringent things you could eat and the effect is very memorable. Everyone will tell you that you have to wait for the first frost for the fruits to be edible, but I have not found that to be true. Trees that bear enough persimmons to warrant gathering are usually quite big, which prohibits picking the fruit off the trees. So, here's what I do: watch persimmon trees all season long. When the fruit starts hitting the ground, sometimes as early as early October, wait a few more days and then visit the tree and pick up each fruit off the ground and inspect. If it is at all firm, throw it as far as you can. If it's squishy, smell it. If it has a hint of a rotten smell, throw it as far as you can. If it is covered in bugs or dirt, throw it as far as you can. Squishy, no bad smell, no bugs, no dirt? Keep it! The pulp tastes like candy, but the fruit is filled with large seeds, so I process the fruits through a cone strainer and freeze the pulp until I'm ready to add it to bread or cookies. I've also made fruit leather with the pulp in the dehydrator. It's wonderful.



Persimmons in a pumpkin.

Persimmon was a very important food source for people throughout history in Arkansas. Prehistoric archeological sites commonly feature persimmon seeds in abundance. Dried persimmons and loaves of dried persimmon pulp were mentioned by the members of the Hernando deSoto expedition, the French trappers who moved through the state wrote about them, and the early settlers depended on them as well.

I am always on the lookout for persimmon trees. I have found quite a few in Washington County, even a young one on the south side of the Composting Demonstration Site. I mourned when I realized that three big ones were cut down at Lake Fayetteville when a new sidewalk was installed by the racing sculls. Something to celebrate though, is that we have the [state's Champion Persimmon](#) right here in our county, on the south side of Wilson Park!



Stay tuned for news about WCMG's 30th birthday bash, happening in Spring 2021!

Photo by [Phinehas Adams](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Just Us

JUDY SMITH

Poems by Carter Carrigan

Gardeners Remember

Be kind to the worms and the bugs.
Be kind to the ants and the slugs.

We all must respect every aspect of nature.
After all, we are just another creature.

We are so blessed in so many ways.
We need to consider so much these days.

Please be good to all you encounter,
be they fungi or yeast or flies on the counter.

We depend on every aspect of nature,
the flowers, the sun, and even the weather.

Perhaps Tomorrow

Perhaps tomorrow
I'll write something special,
Something worth repeating,
Something of value.

Perhaps tomorrow
I'll fulfill a lifelong dream of
creating, growing, teaching.
Perhaps tomorrow, I'll do some good.

Perhaps tomorrow
I'll wrestle with the monsters, the doubts,
the critics, and the media.
Perhaps tomorrow, I'll wait another day,
and say, perhaps tomorrow!

There Are Places

I can go when I need to get away, just get away from it all,
the pressure, the intensity, the nonsense, and foolishness
and general relentless character of modern life.

I've learned to find solace in music,
pleasure in wondrous ideas,
laughter in ingenuity and quick-witted minds
and immense warmth with my fellow creatures.

I love the beach, the howling high country winds,
glaciated peaks, creeks and branches of every sort,
lakes, ponds, pools, swamps, waterfalls, and rivers upon rivers,
rapids and bubbles and green mosses, rocks
and great expanses of forests, mist and clouds and wind-swept cliffs,
coastal evergreens weeping with fog and surrounded by the mystery
of shape-shifting clouds.

Book Review

Dolores Stamps

Here's an easy way to acquire your education hours next weekend! Call your nearby library and ask for this book: *Gardening with Foliage First* by Karen Chapman and Christine Salwitz, published by Timber Press.

When discussing texture in plants the writers consider two elements: surface texture and what the “feel” is. Is it bumpy, smooth, rough, or velvety? Consider using leaves, bark, flowers and berries to diversify the textures in your garden or container.

Most of the many planting suggestions begin with a trio of textures: foliage framework, then a brightness, and finish with a colorful touch. One exciting ever-changing combination around an established red maple tree was done by using four perennials: a royal purple smoke bush, a hellebore which is deep green eleven months of the year in Northwest Arkansas, then a heather-like “County Wicklow” for a lovely pale pink bloom spike from mid-June to late fall. Finally, the vignette features a hardy geranium such as “Ann Folkhard” with smashing chartreuse foliage and bright magenta flowers! Then when we reach December into January the



hellebore splashes in more color with deep pink to burgundy flowers. Color for every season!

The authors offer more than sixty captivating combinations of leafy and floral elements, even adding lettuces to several groupings (see page 114 for a smart use of lettuces and vegetables). *Gardening with Foliage First* is a quick read and an easy way to earn hours for your education requirements, before the 2020 tallying closes!

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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WCMG Website



UA Extension Service Website

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