



Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • November 2021



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**November Program: *Saving Land: Our Future***

## Depends on It

**Our November 2 meeting takes place via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. Watch your email for a Zoom link from Colin a day or so before the meeting.**

Guest speaker Terri Lane is executive director and CEO of the [Northwest Arkansas Land Trust](#). As the population of our region continues to expand exponentially, land is being consumed at a staggering rate. Rapid urban development exacerbates the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, and along the way, we risk losing the scenic, cultural, and natural values that make our region such a great place to live. How do we strike a balance and protect our quality of life as we grow? Land conservation is an important part of the answer. Hear about the work of the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust including, what is a land trust, how do they work, and why landscape-scale land protection is so important to our future.



Terri Lane grew up in Fayetteville and graduated from the University of Arkansas with a degree in environmental soil and water science. She has worked in the conservation field for over twenty years, including nine years as director of the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust. During that time, the land trust has protected over 5,000 acres of critical natural areas, restored native habitats, and invited the community to engage in its important mission to *preserve and enhance quality of life for all people in Northwest Arkansas through the permanent protection of land.*

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## Taking Care of Business

We will vote on the following at our November 2 business meeting:

October 2021 Meeting  
Minutes

September 2021 Treasurer's  
Report

September 2021 Annual  
Meeting Minutes

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## From Your President

## KATHRYN BIRKHEAD

Dear friends,

For almost two years, you've endured me complaining about the weather: it's too hot, or it's too cold, or it's too humid. You'll be pleased to know that the weather is finally to my liking. I love these cool mornings and sunny afternoons. And with all the rain we had last week (I'm writing this on Oct. 17), there's no need to worry about watering for a while. Life is good.



Master Gardeners are all about getting the right plant in the right place, right? Well, I've got a lot of work to do there. For reasons that escape me now, a couple of years ago, I decided it was a good idea to plant goldenrod in the bed right by my front door. It's the tall goldenrod that flops when it doesn't get enough sun, and since it didn't get enough sun where it was, it flopped all over the place. It also multiplied beyond my wildest imaginings. What started out as a couple of plants multiplied to about 20. I'm not making that up. Today I spent several hours digging it out (it's got some roots!) and looking for a sunny place in the back yard where it can thrive. There will be something less overwhelming but just as pollinator friendly, I hope, to greet visitors to my front door next year.

In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kemmerer talked about being struck by the beauty of the combination of goldenrod and asters, and it was fun to hear Corrin Troutman share some folklore about those plants in her presentation. Aren't we lucky to get to learn what we do?

May you have a lovely November,  
Kathryn

### ***Goldenrod, Late Fall*** **by Mary Oliver**

This morning the goldenrod are all wearing  
their golden shirts  
fresh from heaven's soft wash in the chill night.  
So it must be a celebration.  
And here comes the wind, so many swinging wings!  
Has he been invited, or is he the intruder?  
Invited, whisper the golden pebbles of the weeds,  
as they begin to fall  
over the ground. Well, you would think the little murmurs  
of the broken blossoms would have said  
otherwise, but no. So I sit down among them to  
think about it while all around me the crumbling  
goes on. The weeds let down their seedy faces

cheerfully, which is the part I like best, and certainly it is as good as a book for learning from. You would think they were just going for a small sleep. You would think they couldn't wait, it was going to be that snug and even, as all their lives were, full of excitement. You would think it was a voyage just beginning, and no darkness anywhere, but tinged with all necessary instruction, and light, and all were shriven, as all the round world is, and so it wasn't anything but easy to fall, to whisper  
*Good Night.*

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## Awards Time is Just Around the Corner

**JOYCE MENDENHALL AND JAN LEFLAR**

WCMG volunteers have the opportunity to give special recognition each year to outstanding Washington County Master Gardeners, first-year WCMGs ("rookies"), sanctioned projects, local organizations or businesses, and individuals in the community with annual Washington County award nominations.

**Nomination forms are located in your WCMG Member Resource Guide or in the "Members Only" section of the [WCMG website](#). Please provide JPEG photos along with your nominations.**

Prior WCMG award winners for all categories are listed in the WCMG Member Resource Guide in the Forms section, pages 3–5.

These awards nominations are at the county and state level:

- **Excellence in Education** – An outstanding WCMG project that demonstrates significant learning of a targeted audience.
- **Friend of Master Gardeners** – An individual (non-Master Gardener) who has shown outstanding support of the WCMG program. (Excludes Extension Service staff).
- **Friend of Master Gardeners** – A business or organization who has shown outstanding support of the WCMG program.
- **Master Gardener** – A WCMG member who has made an outstanding contribution to the WCMG program, Extension Service and county. (Excludes previous winners).
- **Project of the Year** – The most outstanding WCMG project for the year. Total effort is judged as well as the scope of the project and its impact to the WCMG program, Extension Service and county. (Projects that have won the award during the previous four years are ineligible. Renomination requires significant changes in the project to warrant a new nomination.)
- **Rookie of the Year** – A first-year WCMG who has provided outstanding volunteer service to the WCMG program and/or Extension Service and the community.



Eligible trainees are those who finished their MG classroom training and completed their first-year membership certification within the designated time frame.

These awards nominations are exclusive to Washington County:

- **Mentor of the Year** – A mentor who has made outstanding mentoring efforts helping their assigned first-year WCMG, MG transfer, or reinstated WCMG member through their first year.
- **“Yes, I Can” Award** – WCMG members and first-year WCMGs who clearly demonstrate a “can do” attitude in all things they do. They go beyond assigned tasks to help fellow WCMG members and to ensure the success of the organization and its projects.

**Please submit a digital copy along with digital photos in JPEG format to Washington County Extension Office, Attention: Awards Committee at [cmassey@uada.edu](mailto:cmassey@uada.edu) no later than November 15, 2021.**

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## Dues Are Due

It is time to pay your 2022 WCMG dues. Please make your check for \$20 out to WCMG and mail to UA Cooperative Extension Service, 2536 North McConnell, Fayetteville, AR 72704

**Dues will be considered past due on December 2 and increase to \$25.** Save yourself \$5 and pay your dues today!

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## Tick Tock



As a reminder, we are asked to contribute 20 volunteer work hours and 20 continuing education hours in 2021. **The deadline for members to complete and turn in volunteer hours is December 15.**

If you have any questions or trouble logging in to the online hours recording system, please contact Annette Pinalto at [annettepialto@gmail.com](mailto:annettepialto@gmail.com) or 479-409-7874.

Photo by [Mishaal Zahed](#) on [Unsplash](#)

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## Sow Intentionally

DIANA OLIVER



**Beginning some fall garden clean up, making room for brassicas, onions, and garlic.**

*Photo courtesy Diana Oliver*

The crisp October air has wooed and carried us into fall. For some of us it is time to let the garden rest until spring, and for others the summer garden has been pulled out and the fall and winter garden have gone in. Usually by now your gardening style comes out. Are you the gardener that cleans your garden space right away, putting it to sleep for the winter, or do you let the winter take it, and wait until the warm spring sun warms the earth again and awakens our urge to get our hands back in the soil?



**We are planting our garlic in these trellis beds to sleep until next June.**

*Photo courtesy Diana Oliver*

Regardless of the answer, it is not too late to put a last little bit of energy in the garden and reap big harvests in the early spring and summer. If you have not done so already, November is the last chance to get some garlic in the ground in time for a June harvest. It may be too late to order seed garlic, but you can pick up organic bulbs from local markets and it will work just the same. Onions are another easy vegetable that you can tuck into the soil with very little work and harvest in the spring and summer. Starters can be found at local hardware stores or can be ordered from several onion farms online.





*Photo courtesy Diana Oliver*

Remember to space out your planting and succession plant garlic and onions so you can continue to harvest and not be overwhelmed with one big harvest in June. Provide a nice covering of straw or pine shavings to keep the warmth and moisture in throughout the winter. Also note that both of these vegetables, although easy enough to get in the ground, are heavy feeders and will need some regular fertilizing—especially the onions—in order for them to bulb.

My family fell in love with planting onions and garlic a few years back. I hope you will give them a try in your garden this year.

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## We're So Close!

WCMGs are close to our \$25,000 endowment goal. [Here is the form](#) to help get us there.

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## Meet the Trainees

**OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL**

### **Diane Back**

I was born and raised in Fayetteville and have lived here most of my life. I am married, have two wonderful children, and am fortunate to be a grandmother of three-and-one-half (fourth one due in March).

After my youngest child started kindergarten, I went back to school and completed my degree in nursing. I worked ICU, surgery, and school nursing throughout my career. I retired in 2020.



I have always been interested in flowers and houseplants. I cannot remember a time when I didn't have at least some plants around the house. It was a miracle if any of them survived very long, though, because I just didn't have the skills or knowledge to support them, and no one in my family has a green thumb either—it's been hit or miss most of my life. My nursing supervisor, Kathy Launder, is also a Master Gardener. She suggested I do the training and volunteered to serve as my mentor. I am so, so glad I did! It has been interesting and challenging, and my deck looks so much better with some pretty and interesting plants and flowers!

My house is on 2.5 acres with tons of trees. As a result, not a lot of sun gets through, so it has been great to discover which flowers and plants do well in shade. Last year, a wonderful friend who is also a professional landscaper helped me build a new flower bed in front of our house that includes a rock wall. It has been educational finding out which



plants will work in this very shady area, as well as how to deal with the hordes of deer that frequent the yards in our neighborhood.

I am looking forward to going back to in-person meetings and education, as I have missed meeting my fellow trainees!

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## October Photo of the Month

### *Texture in the Garden*



**FIRST PLACE**

**"Extravagent Nectar" by Mary McCully**

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## Natural State Natives

**MEL ZABECKI**



**Arkansas lands produce a dizzying array of acorns and nuts. Photo courtesy Mel Zabecki**

*Quercus* is the oak genus, and while oak wood is and has been used in a variety of ways throughout history, many folks are surprised to learn that acorns were an important part of the original indigenous diet. While wildlife can eat acorns right off the ground, some processing is required for human consumption. Acorn nutmeats are bitter because of tannic acid and, depending on the nut, not only tastes terrible, but can make you sick. The tannic acid needs to be leached out through a series of water baths, and then the nutmeats can be eaten whole, or crushed down to flour/powder and made into gruels and breads. I have worked at acorn processing, getting a lot of information from [Hank Shaw](#), and while I've never found an acorn I like to eat, it's good knowledge to have and makes for great conversation.

There are two oak groups: white (generally with rounded leaf lobes) and red (generally with pointy leaf lobes). Because acorns from red oaks take two seasons to mature, the tannic acid is higher in them and no amount of processing will make them palatable. Most folks collect acorns from trees in the white oak family, claiming that some of the raw nutmeats can even be sweet—though I have not discovered any of those yet.



**Burr oaks produce huge acorns (left).** *Photo courtesy Mel Zabecki*

Burr oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) acorns are most efficient to collect because of their size—larger nut = more meat = less work. After the nutmeat is separated from the shell, I typically throw the nuts into the blender with water and transfer it all to large jars that I keep in the fridge, changing out the water every day until the water is clear or cloudy, but not brown (brown meaning filled with tannic acid). The acid, by the way, can be used for tanning hides or mordanting fabric before dyeing. Once the nutmeats are leached of tannic acid they can be dried and ground further for bread or used right away for porridges.



**Leaching the tannins out of acorn meal.** *Photo courtesy Mel Zabecki*

One thing you might see is people boiling the nuts or ground nutmeats for leaching but I have found this makes the nuts sort of rubbery/sticky, so I like cold-water leaching the best.

If you don't want to go through all the processing troubles, just order some acorn flour on Amazon! I've tried it and it tastes the same as home-processed—like dirt, but nutritious dirt!

Here's a bread recipe I've made for years:

### **Acorn Bread**

2 cups acorn flour

2 cups cattail, amaranth, or just white flour

3 teaspoons baking powder (past peoples would have used lye water)

1/3 cup maple syrup or sugar (not easy to get back then, I've also used persimmon paste)

1 egg

1/2 cup milk or water

3 tablespoons oil

Bake in pan for 30 minutes or until done at 400 degrees. Comes out like a brick but fun to try anyway.

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## **Gardening and Community Events**

**PAM BUTLER**

**November 2, 12:00–1:00 p.m. TAKING CARE OF TREES.** Faulkner County Extension Agent Krista Quinn will teach you how to take care of your trees and ensure they thrive for many years. Proper methods for planting, irrigating, fertilizing, pruning, and mulching will be discussed. Free. [Registration information](#)

**November 4, 12:00–1:00 p.m. GROW YOUR OWN GROCERIES: BRUSSELS SPROUTS.** Zoom program with UADA extension agents. Free. [Registration information](#)

**November 4, 6:00 p.m. NATIVE EDIBLE AND MEDICINAL PLANTS FOR YOUR OZARK GARDEN.** Botanical Garden of the Ozarks (BGO) Zoom program with Eric Fuselier, president of the [Arkansas Native Plant Society](#). \$10 BGO member/\$15 non-member. [Registration information](#)

**November 11, 6:00–7:30 p.m. WINTER WILDLIFE: HOW TO ATTRACT AND SUPPORT WILDLIFE IN THE OFF-SEASON.** BGO Zoom program. \$10 BGO member/\$15 non-member. [Registration information](#)



**November 15, 12:00–1:00 p.m. MASTER GARDENER MONDAY.** Zoom program. Free. Registration information will be sent out November 15.

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## Contact Information

The *Garden Thyme* email address is [wcmgnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto: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 Member Resource Guide.

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WCMG Facebook Group (private)



WCMG Facebook Page (public)



WCMG Website



UA Cooperative Extension Service Website

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