

Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • December 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."**

December Zoom Meeting

Mark your calendars for our meeting on **December 1 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.

It's A Holiday Party!

STEVE BRIZZI

Vice President/Program Chair

Yes! Our December 1 WCMG Zoom meeting will be a holiday celebration. Here's what we have planned.

- We'll conduct a VERY short business session at 6:30 p.m.
- We will recognize and celebrate our 2019 class of Master Gardener trainee graduates. They will have satisfied the requirements of volunteer work hours and continuing education hours and so become full members of the Master Gardener program. We will gladly welcome them into the WCMG fellowship of volunteer workers and continual learners.
- We will give a report of the progress we are making on the Holiday Recipes Project. Since we cannot meet as a group this year, we will not be able to share with our MG friends our favorite holiday dishes via the holiday potluck. So we're asking you to submit one or two of your favorite holiday recipes to our recipe coordinator Susan Gardner. She will organize and publish them for us through the WCMG website. Please send your recipe(s) to mgrecipessusangardner@gmail.com. **The deadline is November 30.**
- Since we can't meet together this year for a normal holiday party, we are asking that you figure the cost of your potluck contribution and make a cash or in-kind donation to a local feeding program. If you don't have a preferred program to which to donate, we recommend you consider taking canned goods, personal hygiene items or paper goods to one of the thirty-six Little Free Pantry locations in Washington County. There are seventeen in the Springdale area, sixteen in the Fayetteville area, and locations in Goshen, Siloam Springs, and Prairie Grove. You can visit their website at littlefreepantry.org. Go to the Home page and click on Locations to get locations in Washington County. If you do participate in this food donation project, please let me know at steve.brizzi@att.net. We won't mention your name, only that you participated.
- Favorite Personal Holiday Stories. We will set aside ten minutes to hear three-minute personal stories about Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hannakuh, or New Year's. If there is an event that occurred in your life during the holiday season that you would like to share with the WCMG community, please contact me at steve.brizzi@att.net or Karen Hanna-Towne at 21wqsa@earthlink.net, **by 6:00 p.m. on Friday, November 27.**



Image courtesy [New York Public Library](#).

Taking Care of Business

We will vote on the following at our December 1 Zoom meeting.

November 2020 Meeting
Minutes

October 2020 Treasurer's
Report

From Your President

KATHRYN BIRKHEAD

Gratitude is at the top of my mind as I write to you this month, because it's the week before Thanksgiving, and as you read this, we'll be firmly entrenched in the holiday season. Among the things I'm most thankful for are Master Gardeners, both for the organization and for you, the people who are its members.



I'm grateful for an organization that has brought us programs on how to respect nature and be responsible for our planet. Without Master Gardeners, I wouldn't have fully appreciated the importance of native plants in our landscapes, nor would I have realized the significant difference every one of us can make through what we choose to plant (or, just as important, not to plant!). I'm cutting down on the size of my lawn in both front and back yards, bit by bit.

Without Master Gardeners, I wouldn't have known about butterflies and bees, or the importance of insects for the well-being of birds. I wouldn't have met people who are now my friends or deepened the friendships with people I've known for a while. I don't believe I'd spend the quality time outside that I spend now or be able to share my love of nature with my grandchildren. I consider myself very fortunate indeed to be a part of this organization.

That means that I'm fortunate because of you. You look for ways to put your passion and knowledge to work. You share your ideas. You share your love of beauty. You say "yes." Yes, you will continue to serve on a committee. Yes, you will take on a leadership role. Yes, you'll work with someone who is developing a project. For all the ways you enrich us, thank you.

In closing, something I was reading recently contained this fragment of a poem that King George VI quoted in his Christmas broadcast in 1939. Written by Minnie Louise Haskins, it seems appropriate as this tumultuous year draws to a close:

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied:*

*“Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”*

May you have a peaceful holiday season filled with blessings.
Kathryn

A Note from Betty



Photo by [Courtney Hedger](#) on [Unsplash](#)

My Fellow Master Gardeners,

I knew Joyce had planned to have a Birthday Party for me when I reached 90. However, with the virus, I knew that would not happen.

But—leave it to our innovative Joyce Mendenhall—she came up with a very nice alternative.

I received so many lovely cards and thoughts that made my day very special. Thank you, every one of you, for helping make 90 a special number.

Betty J. Swope

Have You?



HAVE YOU RECORDED YOUR HOURS AND PAID YOUR 2021 DUES?

Currently we have over eighty members who have zero hours this year. As you know, due to Covid, we are only required to have twenty education hours this year in order to maintain membership. We have had so many wonderful opportunities to gain education

hours from the safety and comfort of our homes this year, so gaining education hours has been easier than ever! Please login to your account today and record your education hours and any work hours you have completed. The state office will shut down the website at midnight on December 15, so make sure all of your hours are entered before then!

Annual dues for 2021 are due by December 1, 2020. We currently have over 100 members who have not paid dues. Please 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.

***Dues will increase to \$25 on December 2!**

If you have any questions about recording your hours please contact: Annette Pianalto at annettepianalto@gmail.com or 361-2007.

Please, do not wait until the last minute to record your hours and don't forget to pay your dues!

Congratulations, Grads and Long-Timers!



Photo by [Joseph Chan](#) on [Unsplash](#)

The following 2020 trainees have completed their Master Gardener training:

Leslie Bailey, Keith Blowers, Randy Butler, Elizabeth Hale, Audley Hall, Terry Hedden, Kimberly Hosey, Katherine Jones, Kevin Manning, Phyllis McGinty, Annie Moore, Michelle Mounce, Brad Neidecker, Janine Parry, Kimberly Plavcan, Kayla Schoonover, Jennifer Siedschlag, Lynette Terrell, Teresa Youngblood

Years of Service pins (which will be given out when we can meet again in person) have been awarded in 2020 to:

FIVE YEARS: Geri Alvis, Chris Bell, Janet Brown, Dawn Didier, Floy Griggs, Judy Hyden, Jim MacLean, Linda MacLean, Martha McBride, Mary McCully, Linda Morrow,

Mary Oxford, Donilyn Rutherford, Carolyn Woodruff, Mike Wulf

TEN YEARS: Marquerite Abowitz, Jane Bryant, Ruth Cohoon, Ellen Jones, Jill King, Betty Nichols, Becky Witte

LIFETIME: Jane Scroggs

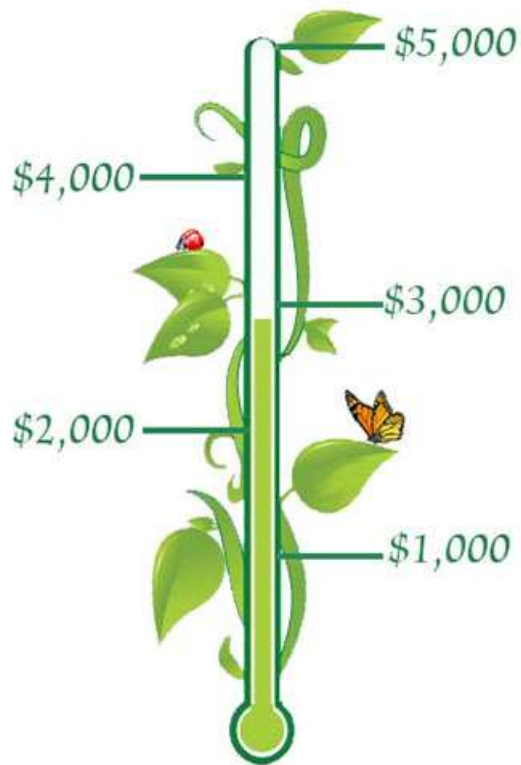
LIFETIME + TWENTY: Kim Hughes

Endowment Campaign Update

Watch for a special email update from Endowment Committee member Ruthanne Hill on our campaign drive. Meanwhile, take a look at the green thermometer, which reflects Endowment Committee chair Dolores Stamps' latest count: we're up to \$2854!

The Endowment Fund 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!

Getting to Know Our Neighbors

LYNETTE TERRELL

Our guest speaker for November's meeting was Ms. Lucy Capelle. She gave a wonderful presentation about her work in local gardens and the vegetables grown and shared with the elderly in the Marshallese community. Lucy was quick to agree that donating seeds would help sustain future garden projects. Colin suggested a seed swap or seed donation in the spring. I think this is an effort we will all be happy to support.

Lucy's presentation generated an interest to know more about her involvement in the Diabetes Prevention Project and local gardens (Lucy is an incubator farmer in the Woolsey

Incubator Farm), as well as more about the Marshallese community in Northwest Arkansas in general. Lucy very generously took the time to explain a little more.

Also, two of my former Marshallese students, Dreko Tatios and Samson Heckerz, who are now seniors at Springdale High School, each shared their thoughts about what they want others to learn about the Marshallese community.

Lucy, Dreko, and Samson are wonderful models of the spirit of the Marshallese community in Northwest Arkansas.



Photo by [Derick McKinney](#) on [Unsplash](#)

LUCY CAPELLE

When I was with ACOM (Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese) I was the program coordinator of the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). I was interested in this program because I was personally diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. I was hoping that getting involved with this program would help me get better and help me change my lifestyle to eat healthier. This program did help me get better, and now I no longer have diabetes. My family is having a healthy diet, and we exercise regularly.

The Woolsey Incubator Farm Project trains and supports incubator farmers as they start and grow their farm businesses. They train farmers and prospective farmers on sustainable agriculture practices. I heard about this project from a good friend whom I worked with at Springdale Community Garden. She told whom I needed to contact to ask for the proposal application. Then I reached out and applied for it. I taught my church youth how to plant. Friends and families stop by the farm and help me plant the seeds. There are so many people that have been involved at my incubator farm and have learned how to plant seeds and other good stuff. I am not involved with the Springdale Community Garden since I started being so busy with my incubator farm. I am not sure if there are Marshallese involved with the Springdale Community Farm, however ACOM has a garden. This is exciting because most of their DPP participants will have the chance to learn how to plant and cook what they are growing.

We are fast learners and we always give our heart into what we do. Teach us how to garden and we will feed the whole world.

DREKO TATIO

Our Marshallese community cherishes our traditions and having COVID-19 doesn't really match up with it. Our traditions can be similar to what other people do, but I believe that we add our own spunk. It is obvious that our Marshallese community loves to party and spend time together, whether it's from "little" gatherings to Christmas parties. Christmas is the biggest celebration for the Marshallese community because it is Jesus Christ's birthday, and we love to celebrate it by dancing, singing, and eating. My church would be in groups named after your family's home island. My group is the "Kwajalein," and we would create or recreate dances and songs to perform at our church for everyone. There will be a big party after church service and that party would usually be packed with friends and family. Sometimes other people from a different church would come and perform for us and we would provide them food. There are times that our parties would last until midnight (more or less) but with COVID I don't think we'll be able to do it, and I honestly don't like that idea. Although if it means keeping my friends and my family safe from the virus then I'll be willing to not do it this year, but I would still like to celebrate Christmas in a safe way with my whole family.

There are other times and ways we celebrate, but overall we pray and thank God for that day and everything he has provided for us. We give thanks or congratulations by handing out necklaces made of money, candy, and sometimes just our normal traditional necklaces. We celebrate our "graduates" in our church. Usually, it would be whoever is going into 1st, 6th, 8th, 10th, and who are seniors graduating from high school, We hand them necklaces mostly made of candy and money (1s , 5s ,10s, depending on the person who made it) telling them "Congratulations," "Bless you," "Keep working hard," and other encouraging things. Considering the fact Samson and I are seniors, we will be a part of that from his church and my church (if it happens).

SAMSON HECKERZ

I personally want others to learn about how we've adapted into the American society and culture. Although we still have kept our culture and traditions here in America, we've adopted many more from the American culture. I also want people to know that the Marshallese community consists of hardworking, very religious individuals, and younger evolving generations that will soon better the future not only for their families and the Marshallese community but for Northwest Arkansas. Also, if they haven't already heard, the Marshallese community was heavily affected and still is in terms of COVID-19. About half of the deaths reported in the Northwest Arkansas region were Marshallese folks, however, statistics show that the Marshallese community makes up only 3% of the entire population for this region. I want to bring awareness of these devastating numbers.

**October Photo of the Month:
"Critters in the Garden"**



FIRST PLACE

"Klss Me in the Rain" by Neta Winston



SECOND PLACE
"Hangin' Out" by Kitty Sanders



THIRD PLACE
"Take Time to Smell the Flowers" by Joyce Mendenhall

December's Photo of the Month theme is "Holiday in the Garden." This can be any holiday, any time of year. 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 December 15.**

Natural State Natives

MEL ZABECKI



Dogbane

Apocynum cannabinum is dogbane or Indian hemp. I don't see it very often in the wild, but did catch a glimpse of it this summer blooming on a roadside, so maybe I just haven't been looking hard enough. I know it well from the teaching gardens at Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park and at the Arkansas Archeological Survey Research Station at Winthrop Rockefeller Institute on Petit Jean Mountain. I have witnessed large stands of dogbane at both of these gardens completely covered in pollinators—it's a sight to behold.

Unlike most of the other plants I have talked about this year, archeologists don't find the seeds of dogbane as evidence that the American Indians were eating this plant. Instead, it was an important fiber plant for the indigenous people of the Southeast. Dried dogbane stalks (like you would find this time of year) were scraped of the thin bark, cracked open, and the fibers were peeled out and processed into string by twisting and splicing. Bags, rope, clothing fiber, and fish nets have been found but all of these items are rare and only found in bluff shelters in the Ozarks. These organic fibers would not survive in the ground, so we are lucky to have the bluff shelters to preserve some of the more delicate artifacts—otherwise we wouldn't have evidence of historical use.



Dogbane seeds and fluff

Dogbane has been used as a medicinal ingredient for heart ailments and other problems, but the entire plant is poisonous to people (and animals like dogs, which is where the name came from), so I wouldn't bother messing with it for medicine. The seedpods are similar to its milkweed relatives and have lots of fluff in them that could be used as tinder to make fires.

I have added dogbane to my front yard landscaping and it spreads like wildfire through underground rhizomes, so don't put it anywhere that you don't want it everywhere. It is, however, a very pretty plant that is easy to propagate. I can pull some up next year if you want any! If you want some better pictures of it than what I have included here, see: https://www.primitiveways.com/hemp_dogbane.html and for some great, albeit old-ish, videos on how to process it down to fiber see here: https://www.primitiveways.com/cordage_video.html. Enjoy!

Photos courtesy Mel Zabecki

Just Us

JUDY SMITH

Poems by Carter Carrigan

Remedy

Give some thought to the thistle,
the hedge and the daffodil.
Give some thought to the wisteria,
and the morning glory vines and the gourds.
And think of the wildlife
and the bugs and the bees

and think of the prairie grasses
and don't forget the trees.
Think on these
and others with needs,
plant a few more seeds
and softly to sleep.

Dawn

Brooks that wander
rocks that falter
perched upon a cliff.
Trees that bend
eternal wind
upon the mountains crest.
Fields of green
a rolling scene
turns a misty grey.
These are things I've felt
on cold and wintry mornings,
waiting for the sun.

Book Review

Dolores Stamps

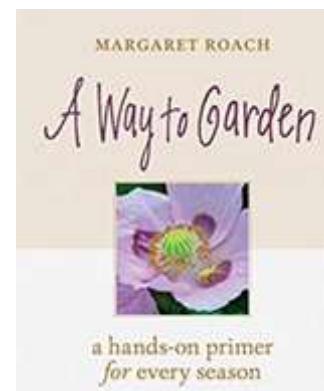
A WAY TO GARDEN: A Hands-On Primer for Every Season

by Margaret Roach, published by Timber Press, 2019

Just as in our lifetime we move from conception through birth, youth, adulthood, and death, Ms. Roach indicates that a garden follows the same life path. Month by month, even day by day, we can find joy, mystery, and celebration in the gardens of our life.

The bottom line of building a garden is that we are forming a habitat. It should be personal, thought out, interesting and comforting in each season. Repeat the mantra: early, middle, late. That is the real secret. When you are passionate about a certain plant, you name it, you study its characteristics, and you bring home three or seven or eleven. Select some that bloom early, some middle season, some late.

Planning begins on paper, or with a notebook or the back of a tablet. Rough sketches become the rule! Try to get real and filter everything down to “what is doable.” Start your own garden journal. It can be as complete as a three-ring binder with sleeves for plants



tags or as simple as a yellow pad with "hopes" in one column and "if I had the money wishes" in the other column.

If you only try one new plant in 2021, Ms. Roach recommends you add a hellebore or three. The foliage is wonderful for eleven months in the Ozark yards and gardens. The floral color can be off-white to ivory to soft rose to deep purple. Hellebores grow close to the ground, but are delightful to those who will hesitate long enough to enjoy their simple beauty.

Try getting your education reading hours done in the coming winter months and plan for your coming seasons of joy.

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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Send all newsletter submissions to Judy Smith or Mary McCully.

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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.

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