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Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • June 2023



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Having said all that, the *Garden Thyme* may be 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 your newsletter committee as we work so hard to provide you with a newsletter lovely to behold. So, to view the *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."

Taking Care of Business

We will vote on the following items at our June 6 meeting.

May 2023 Minutes

April 2023 Treasurer's Report

JUNE MEETING

Annual Potluck Picnic



Actual photo of a WCMG picnic from days gone by. Ok not really. It's a circa 1890 photo of picnic group in Maine. *Joseph John Kirkbride, photographer.* [Courtesy Library of Congress](#)

Our June 6 meeting is a potluck picnic at Agri Park, located in Fayetteville at the corner of Garland Avenue and W. Knapp Drive, just a stone's throw east of the Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Center. (The physical address of Agri Park is 1167 W. Knapp Drive, Fayetteville. [Here's a Google Map showing the location.](#))

Parallel parking is allowed around the park perimeter only. DO NOT park on the grass or the access road inside the park. This road must be kept free for emergency vehicles. Additional parking is available at the Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Center and an under-road pedestrian tunnel is available for safe passage under Garland Ave.

Jim Sposato is grilling hamburgers, hot dogs, and brats. He will bring his signature BBQ sauce, and asks others to bring additional condiments and add-ons (mustard, onions, etc.)

We will be following the City of Fayetteville composting regulations to minimize our footprint. WCMGs are to bring their own utensils, plates, napkins, and non-alcoholic beverages.

We also ask each WCMG to bring a dish or two to share, as well as all necessary serving utensils. A folding chair is a good idea, as there may not be enough folding chairs to go

around.

We must have everything cleaned up, packed up, and put up by 8:00 p.m.

During the picnic, we will have a Master Gardener Swag Swap (shirts, jackets, aprons, coffee mugs, etc.) led by Karen Hanna-Towne. Karen offers the following info about the Swap:

Please think about bringing something that has Washington County Master Gardeners printed on it. It should be gently used and freshly washed and it could be a tee shirt, denim shirt, jacket, apron, mug or even a bright, new water bottle.

Here's the schedule. The picnic starts at 6:30 but we'll be set up and ready to receive your items anytime between 6:15 and 6:45. (No worries—late items will be accepted.) Trainees are not expected to donate anything but they will have first choice. Then, at 7:15 the members will have their turn to select items. We ask that you only take one item in the first round, but if there's still stuff left at the end we'll encourage you to take home some more!

Wearing WCMG apparel lets others know who you are, especially when working on a sanctioned project. It might not be as flashy as the band uniform you wore in high school but it's still really cool!

Just a reminder in reference to the Swag Swap: our policies state that only MGs may wear MG gear. So please don't snag some swag and gift it to someone who is not an MG.

July Meeting—Note the Date Change



Our July meeting is on July 11 due to the July 4 holiday. Our guest speaker is Zeb Gattis, senior horticulture major at the University of Arkansas. Zeb will discuss "Blackberry Selections Trial Research Highlights," the subject of his honors project.

A resident of Fort Smith, Zeb is spending his summer vacation as Colin Massey's intern. Zeb appreciates the many outreach programs provided by the Extension Service and is interested in extension work as a career.

From Your President

JOANNE OLSZEWSKI

For the first time ever, I went on vacation and nature watered my garden. Yes, the grass was tall but the garden was lush. Potato plants grew a foot. Peas, spinach, and broccoli

complemented many meals and all the greens too numerous to name stayed sweet. There's nothing better in the spring than new potatoes covered with butter. The garlic and onions are filling out and about ready to harvest.

Now is the time to plant tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant and hope for warm weather.

Our latest photo contest theme was "what makes me happy in the garden." As usual there was much going on and I did not enter the contest but if I did, what makes me happy in the garden is picking a meal. It is also the awe of watching plants grow. But it is not that large ground hog walking around.



June 18 is Father's Day, so I will include a story about my father. He was a farmer who moved to the city to find work, so he gardened a small plot beside our home. Although we didn't call it organic at the time that is how he grew vegetables. My cousins lived 52 miles away on a farm with chickens and cows and each spring we would all pile into our 1954 Mercury station wagon to visit and pick up chicken manure. Dad would load the manure in a burlap bag and put it in the back of the car.

My brothers, older than me, would get in the back seat and each claim a window, making me crawl over one of them where I'd be stuck in the middle. A 52-mile drive home on two-lane roads took several hours and I would smell that chicken manure the whole way trying hard not to gag.

Even so, to this day I garden like my Dad. I don't pick up chicken manure but I do let the chickens visit the fall garden to leave their waste and eat the bugs. To all of you, Happy May Mother's Day and Happy June Father's Day.

June will be a busy month for us. Don't forget to get tickets for the Garden Gate Tour on Saturday June 3. Our monthly meeting in June will be the picnic at Agri Park. Bring your own plates and cutlery and a dish or two to share. We will be giving out pins and nametags for years of service. And there will be a swag booth. Both our state and international Master Gardener conferences are also in June.

The feedback I have been given regarding the water bottles has been great. We still have a few left so if you want one, bring \$5.00 to our July meeting.

A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in. – GREEK PROVERB

Save the Date and Buy Your Ticket!

JUDY SMITH

Our second annual Garden Gate Tour is just around the corner on Saturday, June 3. The tour includes seven local gardens—including three owned by WCMGs—focusing on native plants, water features, pollinator gardens, vegetable gardening, rock work and composting at our own Compost Demonstration Garden at the Extension Office. [View a Google Map of the garden locations.](#)

Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased on the [WCMG website](#) and at each garden with cash or check the day of the tour.

Looking ahead, Gail Pianalto and her garden search group are looking for gardens in Springdale to feature in the 2024 tour. If you are interested in having your garden on the tour or know of gardens that should be considered, please call or text Gail at 479-466-8100 or email gailp1031@aol.com.

The tour will not be on June 1 next year due to the date of the state conference.



Our Garden Gate Tour logo, created by WCMG Diane Standefer!

Help Plan(t) the Future

NICHOLAS SAMMER

Ad Hoc Committee for Strengthening Project Participation



Photo by [Sandie Clarke](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Are you interested in shaping the future of WCMG? If so, a new ad hoc committee opportunity has your name on it.

Earlier this year, we conducted a survey to understand how we can strengthen member participation and engagement and where we should direct our resources and energy to deliver on our mission. We shared the findings with our Executive Committee and Randy Forst, our State Coordinator. Randy shared several learnings on how other counties run projects and coordinate volunteers with exceptional engagement and success.

The Executive Committee has established a new Ad Hoc Committee to further study the learnings that Randy shared with us and make a recommendation on things WCMG should either adopt or adapt to make them special to WCMG.

If you are curious and open-minded about how other MG programs run, and you'd like to be a part of shaping the future for WCMG, you should apply to be a committee member. We will likely take a day in July to visit some projects and teams in Pulaski County. If you are interested, shoot me a note at nsammer@gmail.com, and let me know why you would like to contribute to this work. We'll select five members to participate.

Thank you!

Congratulations Are In Order

JAN LEFLER

WCMG Awards Committee



Photo by [Kevin Davison](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Congratulations to the 2023 Washington County Master Gardeners for their valuable years of service as MG volunteers. They will be recognized at the upcoming June 6 WCMG annual potluck picnic. WCMGs who do not attend the picnic may pick up their pins and/or nametags at the Washington County Extension Service Office.

5 Years Length of Service

Kaleb Allee, Doris Cassidy, Camille Gollon, Wanda Gore, Ruthanne Hill, Debbi Mohler, Michael Mohler, Brandy Molloy, Lisa Owen, Glen Robillard, Sara Teague

10 Years Length of Service

Tamara Burnett, Beverly Didier, Susan Gardner, Carole Jackson, Elaine Mills, Judi Sartwell, Ken Sartwell, Jim Sposato, Joyce Veasey

15 Years Length of Service – Lifetime

Jan Lefler, Gail Pianalto, Phyllis Wilkins, Elizabeth Woods

20 Years Length of Service – Lifetime Plus

None

25 Years Length of Service – Lifetime Plus

Delcina Cunico

Years of Service recognition honors active Master Gardeners with pins or name badges at 5, 10, and 15 years. Additional forms of recognition may be managed at the county level to honor active Lifetime Plus members for 20, 25, and 30 years of service.

Years of Service Award recipients are active WCMG members who have completed Master Gardener training, fulfilled the annual requirements for volunteer work on sanctioned projects/committees and education hours, and paid their dues as a Master Gardener. Award recipients are recognized with a special 5-Year and then 10-Year service pin. Length of service time is not counted when members are on leave of absence or sustainer status.

Lifetime Service Award recipients are active WCMG members who have recorded their annual work and education requirements for 15 years. Master Gardeners who achieve 15 years of service are awarded special gold-colored Lifetime Member name badges. Annual dues are waived. Work and education hours are not required but are encouraged. Length of service time is not counted when members are on leave of absence or sustainer status.

Lifetime Plus Service Award recipients are active Lifetime WCMG members who have recorded a minimum of 10 hours annually on a sanctioned project/committee. Annual dues are waived. Work hours are required to qualify for progressing through the 5-year intervals of Lifetime Plus Service. Qualified award recipients are recognized at 20, 25, and 30 years of service. Length of service time is not counted when members are on leave of absence or sustainer status.

Natives Naturally

LINDA BENNETT-SMITH



Rose vervain. Photo by Linda Bennett-Smith

I recently moved back to Arkansas from Missouri in late 2021, so I was not able to start my flower beds until spring of 2022. The first item was to remove two huge hedges that covered

the front windows. I pulled several large tree branches out of the area around my front yard. I have always loved the idea of perennials in a flower bed, for the simple fact that the plants return the next year and you don't have to replant.

Glandularia canadensis (rose vervain)—also known as *Verbena canadensis* (rose verbena)—was the perfect plant for the front of my garden. I used a mixture of one-third topsoil, one-third cow manure, and one-third potting soil. My rose vervain receives four hours of morning sun and two hours in the afternoon. Last year this plant was six inches tall and one foot wide. In the late fall I was not sure if I should cut the plant back to the ground, so I only put some mulch down to cover. This spring the plant has grown to 18 inches tall and the spread is 36 inches x 48 inches wide.

Rose vervain is a clumping, sprawling annual or perennial with flat-topped clusters of rose-pink to rose-purple flowers, blooming spring through summer. It will spread quickly when stems rooting at the nodes touch the ground so it forms a pretty aromatic ground cover.

Rose vervain is hardy in Zones 5-9 and grows 6–18 inches tall, spreading 12–24 inches wide. It can take full sun to part shade and average, dry to medium well-drained soils. Its water needs are low to average, making it an easy plant to grow and maintain. It can be used in borders, rock gardens and as a groundcover.

Like most of our blooming native plants, rose vervain attracts butterflies and other pollinating insects. It is resilient to most pests and diseases but can be susceptible to powdery mildew. Botrytis blight and root rot may occur in wet soils. Look out for spider mites in dry conditions.

Rose vervain is a low maintenance, long-blooming Arkansas native that I highly recommend.

RESOURCES

[Gardenia](#)

[Missouri Botanical Garden](#)

Wanted: MGs Who Like to Write About Vegetables

JUDY SMITH



There's a story here. Will you write it? Photo by Judy Smith

The *Garden Thyme* is looking for vegetable garden columnists. If you have a vegetable garden or work in one of our WCMG sanctioned project vegetable gardens, please consider writing an article about your experiences for one of the fall issues of the newsletter. Articles should be 300 to 500 words. Photos and articles should be submitted as attachments to an email message. We take care of editing and proofreading so no worries there.



More veggie tales waiting to be told. *Photo by Judy Smith*

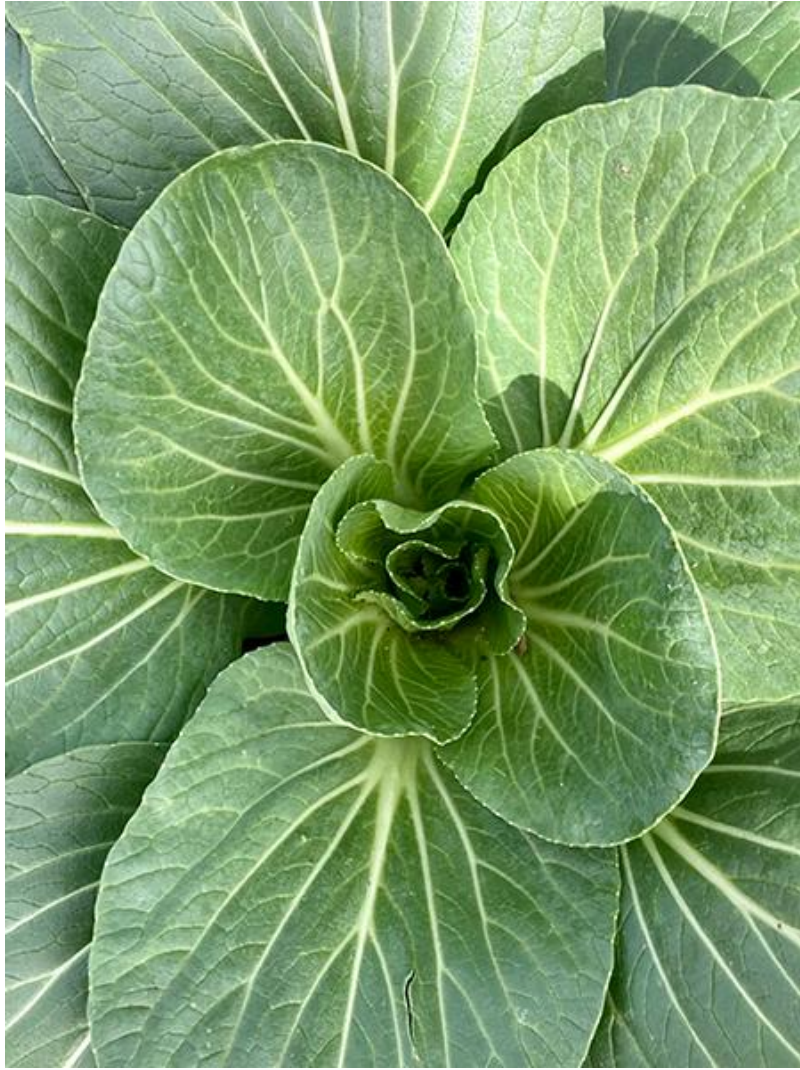
The photos accompanying this article are from the newly renovated vegetable garden at the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, a WCMG sanctioned project. That garden is managed by Berni Kurz, our former county agent, and Susan Esch, a Benton County Master Gardener. If you volunteer there, you could interview them about the makeover and future plans and submit your interview for publication in the newsletter!

May Photo of the Month **"Something in the Garden That Makes Me Smile"**



FIRST PLACE

"Keeping Company on My Crocosmia" by Sarah Teague



SECOND PLACE
"Oh Boy . . . Bok Choy!" by Roxanne Gallup



THIRD PLACE TIE

"Garden in early morning spring sun" by Georgia Ross



THIRD PLACE TIE
"Their Smiles Make Me Smile" by Nancy Sloan

Meet the Trainees

OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL

Bob Callier

Desert top soil is brown stuff with no rocks. When I lived in northwest New Mexico, I wondered if I could grow vegetables other than the "three sisters." With the healthy addition of aged dairy farm compost to the brown stuff, a drip irrigation system, and gallons of sweat equity, we were able to enjoy the usual home-grown table vegetables. Nothing fancier than snow peas, but I was hooked.



Three employment-dictated moves over fifteen years eventually brought us to Springdale in 1996, where my vegetable gardening pastime became an addiction. People ask me what I grow. My answer, "What Walmart or Harp's doesn't sell." Two years ago, I decided my trial-and-error approach to gardening should end, as too much information available on the internet was conflicting or useless, and gardening magazines publish repetitive articles designed to sell magazines. I researched Washington County's

Master Gardener program and decided its self-paced, self-directed education and community service programs were just what I needed.

Jacob Campbell

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of WCMG. I have been fascinated by plants and nature since childhood, and I have fond memories picking tomatoes, shelling beans, and shucking corn with my grandmothers growing up. I started growing in containers eight years ago and am now in the process of turning my suburban plain grass backyard into a permaculture forest garden/food forest. I have so far installed five raised beds and planted six fruit trees, with much more to come!



I'm primarily interested in growing food, but I also plan to incorporate many, MANY more native plants in the ornamental parts of my small property. I want to strike the perfect balance between feeding myself and feeding the wildlife! I'm also keen to learn about composting, vermiculture, and soil ecology, as well as so many other aspects of gardening. My main purpose in joining this organization is to benefit from the knowledge and experience of all the other gardeners, and to hopefully be able to give back by serving the community.

A little about me: I grew up in Scott County, AR, but I have lived in Fayetteville since 2011, when I came to study at the U of A. I graduated with my bachelor's in 2016, triple majoring in music, English literature, and psychology. Throughout college and since I've graduated, music has been my entire life. I made my living as a musician (with more than a few odd jobs thrown in as well!) from 2015 until COVID struck, and I've been fortunate enough to play all over the US and a little bit in Europe. I never lost my love of gardening though, and thanks to water timers I was usually able to raise enough peppers and tomatoes to make salsa even at my busiest times.

The pandemic slowed life down for me, though, as it did for many. I still play a lot of music but I'm not on the road nearly as much. I have what we in the entertainment industry call a "day job" at a marketing company in Rogers. Previously I've worked as a middle school teacher, in alcohol sales, and most recently as a retail associate at Westwood Gardens on Wedington in Fayetteville, where I'm sure I saw many of you over the last two years. I now own a home in west Fayetteville and I'm working to make my garden dreams come true!

Jess Friedel

You could say I've been digging around in the garden since I was in diapers. My dad, who is in the MG program with me, always grew a garden to provide food for our family. I have always shared his love of tomatoes—so much so that he would plant a cherry tomato plant just for me to eat on while playing outside. I love getting to bond with my dad over things we both love, gardening and helping others. The Master Gardener program seemed like the perfect opportunity to combine some of my favorite things.

It is hard to pick a favorite part of gardening. I love growing my own food and fresh cut florals, but I also love the lessons of persistence, hard work, and patience that gardening teaches you. I'd love to grow my knowledge in all forms of gardening, but especially being able to grow and preserve foods to feed my family and others.

I am extremely excited for this garden season because my daughter, Bindi James, is old enough to be crawling around the garden just like I did.



Look Who's Already Completed Their Hours



Photo by [Laura Pratt](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Congratulations! As of May 18, trainees **Carole Ball, Bob Callier, and Roxanne Gallup** have logged more than 40 hours of work on sanctioned projects, and others of you are very (VERY!) close. Well done! We appreciate everything you are doing to make our projects shine.

Gardening and Community Events

PAM BUTLER

JUNE 3, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. GARDEN GATE TOUR. Fayetteville. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 7, 6:00–7:30 p.m. CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS ON THE BUFFALO RIVER. Fayetteville Public Library, Ziegler Reception Room. No registration required.

JUNE 8–10. ARKANSAS STATE MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE. Russellville.

JUNE 10, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. EUREKA SPRINGS NATIVE PLANT GARDEN PROJECT. Eureka Springs Community Center. No registration required.

JUNE 10, 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. PRAIRIE RESTORATION AT THE PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK. Hosted by Wild Ones Ozark Chapter. Free. No registration required.

JUNE 11, 1:00 p.m. BEAVER WATERSHED LANDOWNER DISCUSSION. White River Nursery, 5635 E Huntsville Road, Fayetteville. Free. [Reservation information.](#)

JUNE 13, 2:00–4:00 p.m. SUMMER PRUNING CLASS. Botanical Garden of the Ozarks. \$15 members/\$25 non-members. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 15, 12:00–1:00 p.m. GROW YOUR OWN GROCERIES: CUCUMBERS. Zoom program with UADA extension agents. Free. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 18–22. INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE. Overland Park, KS.

JUNE 19, 12:00–1:00 p.m. MASTER GARDENER MONDAY. Zoom program with Randy Forst, UADA consumer horticulture/Master Gardener coordinator. Free. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 25, 2:00–3:00 p.m. MAINTAINING A FOOD FOREST. White River Nursery. Free. [Registration information.](#)

Contact Information

The *Garden Thyme* email address is wcmgnewsletter@gmail.com. Please use this address for submissions and for questions and comments specific to the newsletter. For other needs, please contact the appropriate officer or chairperson listed in your WCMG Member Resource Guide.

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Banner photo of thyme courtesy [Lucy Meskill/Flickr.com](#).



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