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Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • August 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."**

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## AUGUST MEETING

### "Daffodils Have Class!" by GCMG Kay Shearer

**Hope to see everyone at our monthly meeting on August 1.** We'll meet as usual at the Extension Office and plan to also offer a Zoom option for attending the meeting.

Kay Shearer has been a hobby gardener most of her life. She helped her mother and grandmother with family flower and vegetable gardens growing up and got her start with daffodils that were given to her by her mother.

Kay has gradually added to her daffodil collection over the years and now grows over 500 different daffodil cultivars. Her collection of daffodils includes standards, miniatures, and historics (many of those are rescues). Among her many show awards are Best in Show for both standard and historic daffodils in several daffodil shows, as well as the Director's Choice Award at the Mid-South Regional Show in 2019 and 2023. Her daffodil gardens were featured at the 2014 American Daffodil National Convention in Little Rock.

She has been a Garland County Master Gardener (GCMG) for 22 years.



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## Taking Care of Business

**We will vote on the following items at our August 1 meeting.**

July 2023 Meeting Minutes

June 2023 Treasurer's Report

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## From Your President

**JOANNE OLSZEWSKI**

My first time writing for the *Garden Thyme* was February 2023. My focus for the year has been on sustainability. Of the 100 stainless steel bottles with our logo, we only have eleven left. The last time to buy one is before our August 1 meeting. Bring a check or cash.

This is another surprising yet challenging season to garden. My green beans are abundant. I have canned, frozen, or eaten them fresh in salads or steamed. So delicious. This year the peppers won't grow. Perhaps it is the amount of water that we have had. The heat, however, has brought us the eggplant. Realizing how our garden seasons are changing, I now try to put up food for two years or more.



One of the most amazing speakers at the International Master Gardeners Conference was Jessica Walliser. Many of us WCMGs bought her book, *Plant Partners: Science-Based Companion Planting Strategies for the Vegetable Garden*.

I had an old package of cherry bell radish seeds I didn't want to keep any longer so I cast them in the bed we cleared of salad greens. I bought four Arkansas Traveler tomato plants and decided to plant them among the radishes. The radishes would be eaten and gone by the time

the tomatoes got big. Only we didn't eat the radishes and they just grew wild and leggy. As the tomatoes grew, I noticed that the Travelers had very few aphids, unlike the other tomatoes I had planted. This was one of the examples in her book that Walliser talked about in her keynote address. Some plant combinations decrease pest damage.

Although I have yet to read Walliser's entire book , here is some information from a review of her book that I want to share with you:

*"Companion planting has a long history of use by gardeners, but the explanation of why it works has been filled with folklore and conjecture. Plant Partners delivers a research-based rationale for this ever-popular growing technique. This guide suggests specific plant combinations that improve soil health and weed control, decrease pest damage, and increase biodiversity, resulting in real and measurable impacts in the garden."*

I hope all of you are staying cool during these hot humid days.

Joanne

*Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.*  
—WARREN BUFFET

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## New Policies: Work on Non-Sanctioned Projects and Unfinished Trainees

**KATHRYN BIRKHEAD**

Washington County has been asked by the state to bring our policies into compliance with state standards. We have long had a policy that did not count work on non-sanctioned projects in the total hours' volunteer commitment, and we have not had any standard policy on trainees who did not complete their hours, instead dealing with each person on an ad hoc basis. The board has now voted to allow up to 50% of volunteer hours to be done on non-sanctioned projects and to standardize a policy on unfinished trainees.

As a reminder, the board alone votes on policies and then informs the membership; the membership does not vote on policies.

It's important to look at what work on non-sanctioned projects, called individual projects in the state description, is allowable, since not everything is. One thing that has not changed: Work in your own yard is still NOT eligible to count as work on a non-sanctioned project.

Here are some things that do count: Individual projects could consist of work on the landscaping at a church or other public area which is not an official Master Gardener project; providing horticultural advice, expertise, or information to individuals or groups requesting assistance; etc. As always, please keep careful records of all your work.

The full version of the Arkansas Master Gardener Program Management Guide is available

online [here](#).

Sections of the policies that have been amended are in [this pdf document](#), with text that has been changed or added in red. These changes have been incorporated into the entire body of policies that is available on the Member Portal of our [WCMG website](#).

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## Proposed Bylaws Changes: Transfer of Out-of-State Master Gardeners

KATHRYN BIRKHEAD

In 2019, Washington County Master Gardeners were asked to approve a change in the bylaws regarding the acceptance of Master Gardeners from out of state. Even though the change was approved at that time, it was found that our procedures for amending the bylaws had not been followed, so the approval was rescinded, and the issue was not brought forth again that year.

The issue has arisen again now, for the same reason that the policy changes described above have been implemented. The state wants us to comply with the procedure that other counties follow.

With that in mind, the board has approved the language in the attachment regarding Master Gardener transfers from out of state. (Click on the green button below to read the attachment.) While the bylaw the board has approved is more lenient than the one held by the state, the board believes that it is a fairer practice and that it will be more acceptable to state officials than a more restrictive procedure.

**This change in the bylaws is presented to you now, and you will be asked to vote on it at our September 5 annual meeting.**

Proposed Bylaws Changes

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## 2024 Slate of Officers

**We will vote on the following slate of officers at our September 5 annual meeting.**

President: Elizabeth Hale

Vice-President: Alfi Anderson

Secretary: Kathy Launder

Treasurer: Glenda Patterson

Assistant Treasurer: Marilyn Misenhimer

Members at Large: Carole Ball, Marty Powers, Mariette Spidel

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# 2023 Traditional Haiku Contest

LIZ HALE



## TRADITIONAL HAIKU CONTEST

Japanese unrhymed poetry format, usually concerning nature or the seasons.

**Titles** – Most are untitled, so the 1<sup>st</sup> line identifies the poem.

**Subjects** – Contrast, creating a shift that divides the poem in two via a cutting word, kireji in Japanese.

**Lines** – Three.

**Syllables** – Utilize a 5 – 7 – 5 syllable pattern, for a total of 17.

**Due September 15** to Liz Hale. Top 3 entries presented at the October 3 meeting.

Poetry has long been a part of the Washington County Master Gardener program. In 2021, DeLee Holbert suggested we initiate a haiku writing contest in honor of the September meeting topic, native plants. Twenty-two haiku were submitted by 15 Master Gardeners. The 2022 Haiku Contest theme was “Willow Trees, Honey Bees, and Leaves of Three,” the title of Susan Young’s October meeting presentation of a gardener’s guide to tombstone art. For 2023, we honor the traditional Japanese themes of nature or the seasons.

Entries will be reviewed by Judy Hyden, Judy Smith, and Karen Takemoto, the 2022 Haiku Contest winners. The top three winners will be announced at our October 3 meeting, then published in the November *Garden Thyme*.

Please submit your entries by September 15 to Liz Hale at [LizHaleARMG@gmail.com](mailto:LizHaleARMG@gmail.com) or by regular post at 309 McGee Street or P.O. Box 1269, West Fork, AR 72774.

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## SANCTIONED PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### Shiloh Museum Gardens

MARIETTE SPIDEL



**Shiloh Museum's Heritage Garden, which is flanked by a monarch butterfly waystation and native and pollinator plantings. *Photo courtesy Mariette Spidel.***

Have you ever wished that you could step back in time? Well, you can do just that on two city blocks at the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History in Springdale. The museum features historical buildings including an 1850s log cabin, 1870s general store, 1870s doctor's office, 1870s town home, 1930s barn, and a 1930s outhouse. The structures at the museum are ideally placed taking advantage of the unique property elevation. You can visit the current or temporary exhibits inside the museum, and the grounds offer the perfect location for a relaxing stroll.

The development of the grounds and garden design began with employee input on native and period plantings. Bob Besom, director of the museum from 1980–2005, saw the gardens as a way to honor Lockwood and Annabel Searcy, whose family lived in the town home until it was bequeathed to the museum in 1981.

Today you can see an Ozark two-seat outhouse, a monarch butterfly waystation, pollinator gardens, and period gardens around the Searcy House. Take the back trail behind the general store to circle through native pawpaw, buckeye, and other native trees of Northwest Arkansas. Just past the outhouse adorned with hollyhocks, you will catch a glimpse of the pioneer Ritter-McDonald cabin in the distance. Stay to the left of the cabin and along the creek, where you can take in the flower garden that hugs the creek, featuring native shrubs and plantings like rough-leaf dogwood and arrowwood viburnum.

In the past seven years (less our Covid break), the keepers of the Heritage Garden next

to the cabin have planned and planted crops to correspond with the educational programs offered by the museum. Each year we grow heritage varieties of okra, cotton, flax, broom corn, and in alternate years, gourds or pumpkins. The first potatoes go in on St. Patrick's Day, and the last crops are turnips and greens at summer's end.

During school field trips, children visit the Heritage Garden to learn Ozark ways of the past. You can hear the excitement in their voices as they come towards the garden. The education director will ask, "Where do potato chips and French fries come from?" They stop to think, and all at once, a few children will blurt out the correct answer, while the others are astonished that potatoes come from the ground.

When there are veggies, we donate food to a nearby food pantry. During the summer season the garden has both furry and two-legged visitors that help themselves. Our crops are not plentiful, but bring a bounty of learning and connection.

Gardens provide food for our bodies, but as a gardener, I believe that gardens are "schoolin'." Gardens provide us with a calm place to quiet our minds. Gardens teach patience and acceptance of what we cannot control. The Shiloh Heritage Garden provides a place for learning and connecting. We are there to connect to the soil and nature. We learn and grow with fellow Master Gardeners.

If you would like to learn more about Ozark history, the Shiloh Museum experience and grounds are awaiting you. We invite you to attend one of the Master Gardener Wednesday workdays. We hope to see you at the garden soon.

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## June Photo of the Month

### "Container Gardening"





**FIRST PLACE**

**"Miscellaneous" by Ruth Cohoon**

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**SECOND PLACE**

**"Bright and Beautiful" by Pam Butler**

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#### THIRD PLACE

"Serious Succulent" by Mariette Spidel

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*Scroll down further to feast your eyes on July's photo contest winners!*

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## Endowment Reminder

### DOLORES STAMPS

Over the past four or five months many of my friends and clients are talking about leaving their IRAs and other retirement plans to charities. It likely has to do with a lot of buzz about Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs), **which now allow those who have reached age 70½ to direct up to \$100,000 annually to qualified charities**, thereby avoiding a need for an RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) and the income tax hit. Ask your tax advisor if this could be a solution for you.

As you plan your charitable giving, please consider donating to the Washington County Master Gardener Endowment Fund managed by the Agricultural Development Council, UA Foundation. You could achieve an extremely tax-efficient result.

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## These Trainees Can Kick Up Their Heels!



Photo by [Jonathan Mabey](#) on [Unsplash](#).

The following trainees have recorded 40 hours or more in 2023: Carole Ball, Patricia Brown, Robert Callier, Matt Cooper, Roxanne Gallup, Carrie Gamble, Stacy Lake, Bob Pate, Jennifer Stewart, and Laura Underwood. Congratulations!

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## Natives Naturally

**TALYA BOERNER**





**Common buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*).**

I've been enamored with the Common Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) since I first noticed it growing wild along the shoreline of Lake Norfolk. Even when I knew nothing about this plant, its fragrant pom-pom flowers fascinated me. Now that I understand its importance to wildlife, I'm an even greater fan.

One thing that makes buttonbush unique is its love of water. This particular plant thrives in marshes, bogs, along shorelines and streams, and other low-lying wet areas. But even without wet conditions, the buttonbush will adapt in a variety of habitats within growing zones 5-9. My neighbor planted one on the south side of her house (next to our driveway in average soil). Even with partial sun and only weekly watering, it is flourishing.

### **Ten Fun Facts about the Buttonbush**

1. This shrub's spherical, pincushion-like flowers bloom creamy white and fragrant throughout early spring into late summer, making it a nectar favorite for bees and butterflies.
2. Buttonbush is the host plant for the showy hydrangea sphinx and titan sphinx moths.
3. This shrub provides shelter for frogs and salamanders and nesting habitat for some of our favorite songbirds.
4. Nicknamed buttonwillow, honey balls, and honey bells, buttonbush is not riddled with pests or diseases.
5. In autumn, buttonbush seed heads turn a glorious combination of scarlet, green, and gold, before eventually drying to russet.
6. In winter, buttonbush seeds provide a healthy food source for migrating birds, wood ducks, shorebirds, and other waterfowl.
7. The roots of the buttonbush prevent or stop erosion.
8. This shrub will grow in up to 36 feet of water, making it a favorite for use in wetland conservation.

9. Native Americans used buttonbush bark to treat a variety of digestive ailments, (but like many medicinal plants, parts of the plant may be poisonous so consume only under the guidance of a professional herbalist or physician).
10. Both dried and fresh buttonbush stems enhance any floral arrangement.

The next time you visit the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, be sure to visit the buttonbush growing in the butterfly garden near the cottage. It's one of the most stunning specimens I've seen in northwest Arkansas. The common (yet uncommon) buttonbush might very well be just what your pollinator garden needs.

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## Meet the Trainees

**OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL**

### **JR Capps**

I moved from California to Arkansas about three years ago, looking for a complete change of lifestyle. I found it near Canehill, where I purchased a 63-acre piece of property called Skylight Ranch. I had three goals in mind, all of which would form a cohesive whole: a peaceful environment where individuals could find a quiet spot to get recentered, a small teaching garden to introduce folks to good growing practices for vegetables and flowers, and a nature preserve with picnic areas and hiking trails for day use, weekend trips, or even longer sojourns. I graduated from the Master Naturalist program, then spent a year learning sustainable farming practices through the Center for Arkansas Farms and Food at the University in Fayetteville. I enrolled to become a Master Gardener, topping off my preliminary education, and I am now in the initial stages of developing the preserve. Visitors are welcome to come check on the project's progress; volunteers are more than welcome, too! Contact me by either email or phone.



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### **Luanne Diffin**

When my family moved to Fayetteville in 1956, I helped my mother plant beautiful flowers, shrubs, and trees on our property. It was such a joy to see how she knew just the right plant that would energetically bloom and change our yard into a spectacle of dynamic color. As a thinker, I was in awe of how a tiny seed could burst forth to produce such an array of texture and add beauty with vibrant shades of color.

My interest in gardening remained strong as I got older, but my occupation took almost all of my time. It left me no time to add beauty to my yard. Luckily, that did not stop my mother from coming to my house and planting seeds and bulbs that once again produced beautiful and spectacular colors, shades, and aromas.



In 2020, after living for 12 years in other areas of the world, I came home to the same house in Farmington. What a pleasure it was to start preparing, planting, and envisioning a garden

that I know my mother and I would be proud of. Although my mother has passed away, my love for yard beauty has gotten much stronger. Now I'm eager to help others learn and change their space into a cornucopia of colors, shades, and aromas, just like my mother inspired me. I am blessed to be chosen as a Master Gardener trainee. I deeply enjoy working with the Mock Park team to plant and maintain the established flora. As a trainee, it's wonderful to have such knowledgeable and passionate gardeners who openly share their expertise.

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### **Fredy Garibay**

Gardening has been a huge part of my life for about ten years. It all started when I took a job at a local nursery. I was barely 18, fresh out of high school, and needing a job. I saw an ad for a greenhouse job and thought, "What the heck, I'll try that." Little did I know that plants were about to be a passion of mine for the next decade on. I knew nothing about plants other than they need water and that flowers looked pretty. Nevertheless, I got the job and as the years came and went, I slowly started to become more interested in the world of horticulture.



I became most interested in growing edible plants such as fruits, vegetables, and herbs. I found myself starting my first garden not even a year after I took the job. I remember being so excited to do it all on my own, since we weren't historically a family of green thumbs. The first time I ate one of my vine-ripened tomatoes, I was hooked. It tasted like nothing I'd ever had from the local grocery store. I started to become even more interested in vegetables, specifically those that my family uses in traditional Mexican cuisine. I found myself growing tomatoes, a ton of different varieties of peppers, cucumbers, squash, and cilantro. For a while I was known as the pepper guy at work because I would bring in many varieties to share, since I always had a surplus in the summer. I grew everything from sweet bell peppers all the way to the hottest peppers in the world at the time.

Currently, I find myself trying to expand my knowledge of plants by finding new and unique varieties of edible plants. I also have an interest in houseplants, with over 70 plants in my two-bedroom apartment. I've also recently learned about natives and heirlooms, and I place a huge emphasis on sustainability and organic gardening.

I've learned a lot over the years and I'm still learning. I continue to be passionate about gardening, and I am excited to move forward with the Master Gardener program. I am hoping to meet new like-minded people and have fun while serving the community in Washington County. I also hope to transfer some of the knowledge and importance of growing your own food to my family someday.

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## **July Photo of the Month**

### **"Critters (Garden Creatures)"**





**FIRST PLACE**

**"Wonder What's in Here" by Kitty Sanders**

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**SECOND PLACE – TIE**

**"Weeding 'Helpers' at Headquarters House" by Danna Grear**

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**SECOND PLACE – TIE**  
**"Hidden Blue Surprise" by Mary McCully**

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## Just Us

**A compendium of news curated by JUDY SMITH**

Here's what's happening with some of our projects and members:

### **GARDEN GATE TOUR 2023**

We sold 354 tickets and raised \$5195, a big increase from 2022. Thanks to all WCMGs who volunteered to help with the tour! Proceeds from the tour will help fund our next public education event, which will feature an introduction to vermicomposting led by WCMGs Geri Alvis and Mariette Spidel and a make-and-take rain barrel workshop led by Extension Service staff members Kristen Crawley, Jane Maginot, and Katie Teague.

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### **BOTANICAL GARDEN OF THE OZARKS (BGO) 2022 ANNUAL AWARDS**

Butterfly House Newcomer – Kathy Launder

Horticulture Newcomer – Nicholas Sammer



Special Events Volunteer of the Year – Mike Wulf  
Special Events Newcomer – Pat Brown  
Special Staff Recognition – Darielle James

WCMGs with 100 hours or more at BGO: Chris Bell, Audley Hall, Gayle Howard, Kathy Launder, Mary Beth Lohr, Marilyn Misenhimer, Mike Mohler, Martha Ward, and Mike Wulf.

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**"Maggie America's Garden," created by WCMGs at Bunch Park in Elkins.**

## **IN ELKINS**

WCMG's sanctioned project at Elkins includes beds at the Community Center, Library, Senior Center, and the Bunch Park flagpole. Recently, WCMGs added a small garden honoring veterans at the park. Potlucks are held in the off-season to keep volunteers involved and to build a sense of camaraderie. In addition to plant labels and a site map, WCMGs are looking for ways to add more educational value to the Elkins gardens.

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## **IN WEST FORK**

From a report by KUAF news producer Jacqueline Froelich:

*A committee of seven women in rural West Fork in southern Washington County drafted an ordinance to amend the town's property maintenance code to allow for increased cultivation of wildflower meadows, pollinator gardens, and even small orchards on private yards and properties—possibly the first municipal ordinance of its kind approved in*

WCMGs Jane Bryant and Liz Hale served on the committee, while WCMG Aileen Wilson conducted hours of research to compile a reading list for West Fork City Council members. The work of Jane, Liz, and Aileen was done with the full support of their fellow WCMGs who live in the West Fork area.

[Listen to the KUAF news story.](#)

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## WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIR

The judging training registration deadline has been extended to July 27. Check the Constant Contact email message you received last Friday for the registration form.

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## Gardening and Community Events

PAM BUTLER

**AUGUST 3, 12:00–1:00 p.m. GROW YOUR OWN GROCERIES: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING.** Zoom program with UADA extension agents. Free. [Registration information.](#)

**AUGUST 9, 6:00–7:00 p.m. FALL GARDENING WITH THE BOTANICAL GARDEN OF THE OZARKS.** Fayetteville Public Library. Free. No registration. [More information.](#)

**AUGUST 12, 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. PRAIRIE RESTORATION AT PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK.** Field trip hosted by the Wild Ones Ozark Chapter. Pea Ridge National Military Park, Garfield. Free. No registration. [More information.](#)

**AUGUST 21, 12:00–1:00 p.m. MASTER GARDENER MONDAY.** Zoom program with Randy Forst, UADA consumer horticulture/Master Gardener coordinator. Free. [Registration information.](#)

**AUGUST 27, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. FOREST THERAPY WALK.** Botanical Garden of the Ozarks. \$20 members/\$30 non-members. [Registration information.](#)

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## Contact Information

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

### 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.

Send all newsletter submissions to Judy Smith or Mary McCully.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

[Joanne Olszewski](#), president; [Liz Hale](#), vice president; [Kathy Launder](#), secretary, [Darielle James](#), treasurer; [Glenda Patterson](#), assistant treasurer. Members at large: [Nicholas Sammer](#), [Linda Smith](#), [Dale Thomas](#). Ex officio: [Karen Hanna-Towne](#), past president; [Colin Massey](#), Washington County extension agent for agriculture and horticulture.

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



**WCMG Facebook Page (public)**



**WCMG Facebook Group (private)**



**WCMG website**



**Washington County Extension Service website**

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