

SANCTIONED PROJECTS **Washington County Master Gardeners**

ARKANSAS AIR MUSEUM (*Sanctioned 2008*)

Project Leaders: Luanne Diffin and Peggy Konert

The Arkansas Air Museum is located at Drake Field between Fayetteville and Greenland. The project includes establishing and maintaining landscaping in front of the museum using perennial plantings and colorful annuals that are as maintenance free as possible. This project was requested by the Museum staff and board. Volunteer work schedules are flexible, but are usually scheduled on Saturday mornings.

ASK A MASTER (*Sanctioned 1992*)

Project Leader: Laura Wilkins

The Ask a Master project is responsible for answering the Washington County Master Gardener's phone extension at the Washington County Extension Office every weekday from March 1 through October 31. WCMG members answer the questions of callers and possible drop-ins. A record of all calls and answers shall be kept for a period of two (2) years.

BOTANICAL GARDEN OF THE OZARKS (BGO) (*Sanctioned 2005*)

Project Leaders: Patsy Louk and Kitty Sanders

The Botanical Garden of the Ozarks is a very special place for Washington County Master Gardeners. Here WCMG volunteers supported the creation of the Sensory Garden and continue to volunteer. WCMG volunteers can work in other horticulture areas under the supervision of one of the BGO gardeners throughout the gardening seasons. Not only do WCMG volunteers help outside in the garden, they can also help in the BGO office, assist with educational programs, work in the butterfly program, lead garden tours, be a garden ambassador at outreach events in the community, or assist with garden events and festivals.

COMPOST DEMONSTRATION SITE (*Sanctioned 1999*)

Project Leaders: Geri Alvis and Mariette Spidel

The project is dedicated to the promotion of composting as a means of waste management for the backyard gardener and homeowner. WCMG volunteers help maintain the site located on the Extension Office grounds, learn troubleshooting techniques, and have hands-on experience in all aspects of the composting process. Other activities may include providing composting mini-classes for the public, lecture/demonstrations for schools, civic groups, etc., and promoting awareness and education about composting through participation in public events and festivals.

ELKINS COMMUNITY CENTER (*Sanctioned 2014*)

Project Leaders: Doris Cassidy, Jim Maclean, Carole Ball, and Jan Judy

WCMG volunteers plant and maintain gardens surrounding the Elkins Community Center building. The project includes the flag pole garden located in the community park, gardens surrounding the Elkins Library, and the Elkins Senior Center. The Library and the Senior Center sites also have rain gardens. The library's butterfly garden provides education opportunities for children. WCMGs are garden consultants to the community in various ways. Since the community center is a site for elections, monthly food distribution and numerous community meetings, WCMG volunteers have opportunities to field a variety of gardening questions.

WCMG SANCTIONED PROJECTS

GARDEN EXPLORERS – Junior MGs (*Sanctioned 2015*)

Project Leaders: Gail Pianalto and Elizabeth Woods

Garden Explorers is sponsored by WCMG volunteers who are certified 4-H leaders. WCMG volunteers provide hands-on gardening activities and field trips for participants. Children learn about nature and experience it for themselves. The target audience is 4-H participants, ages 5 through 12 and entire families may attend and learn.

GARDEN GATE TOUR (*Sanctioned 2020*)

Project Leaders: Diane Standefer and Susan Young

Held annually in June, the Garden Gate Tour features several Washington County gardens, at least one WCMG sanctioned project, and occasionally, a garden in nearby Madison County. The purpose of the tour is to promote WCMG and service to the community, encourage beautification of the area, and showcase the work and knowledge of local gardeners. Proceeds from the tour go to support educational gardening programs and workshops for the public.

HEADQUARTERS HOUSE HISTORIC GARDENS (*Sanctioned 1997*)

Project Leaders: Geri Alvis, Kristi Campbell, Jan Lefler, Terry Smyers, Janice Walker

Headquarters House was built in 1853 by Jonas and Matilda Tebbetts. The house is one of the best examples of Greek Revival architecture still standing in Arkansas, containing fluted columns on the front porch and dentil trim on the eaves around the house. The original four-acre property held numerous other buildings and an apple orchard behind the house. It was used alternately as a Civil War headquarters by both Union and Confederate armies. In 1967, the house was turned over to the Washington County Historical Society (WCHS) by Paris Green to operate as a historic house museum. The house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 24, 1971. In 1997, WCHS recruited WCMG volunteers to establish and maintain the now one-acre gardens in the 1850s style. WCMG volunteers researched plant records from the Tebbetts family journal and a local 19th century horticulturist Jacob Smith. They helped collect and maintain heirloom and native plants, shrubs and trees that continues to this day. WCMGs also maintain a plant list referencing common and botanical name, location, date brought to this area (when known), and year they were planted in the garden. WCMGs assist in preparation for garden-related activities hosted by WCHS.

JUNIOR MASTER GARDENERS 1.0 (4-H Club) (*Sanctioned 2008*)

Project Leaders: Mary Crumley and Jody Miskell

The 4-H Jr. Master Gardener 1.0 Club is comprised of certified 4-H leaders, 4-H youth, 4-H parents, and Master Gardeners. The club teaches parliamentary procedure in conducting meetings while encouraging 4-H'ers to give speeches, demonstration and participate in 4-H contests. The Master Gardeners, leaders and other volunteers instruct the club members on gardening skills and specialize in working with worms. The club maintains the Pollinator Herb Garden at the Extension Grounds and maintains the beds and potted plants at the U of A Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Center where the club meets. Leaders provide Horticulture Projects and Craft Projects for members to enter in the Washington County Fair and encourage their full participation in the county fair.

LINCOLN COMMUNITY GARDEN (*Sanctioned 2016*)

Project Leaders: Jim Sposato and Judy Cohea

The Lincoln Community Garden was established to provide fresh garden produce for charitable organizations such as Grace Place, Lincoln Senior Center, and other people in need from the Lincoln area. WCMG volunteers provide an educational background for Lincoln schools science classes to observe science first-hand. Local community groups such as 4-H, after school Adventure Group, etc., help in maintaining the garden. American Legion, Tyson Foods, Farmers COOP and local businesses have donated money to maintain the garden.

WCMG SANCTIONED PROJECTS

PRAIRIE GROVE MOCK PARK (*Sanctioned 2003*)

Project Leaders: Linda Morrow and Chris Bell

Located in the heart of Prairie Grove, Mock Park is a city park steeped in local history. The park contains an historic spring that was at one time the water source for the town. WCMG volunteers maintain the flower beds and other plantings throughout the park. Project goals include maintaining the original plantings as possible, including more native plants, focusing on attracting pollinators, and educating the community on the importance of using native species and attracting pollinators. WCMG volunteers work on Monday mornings normally from March 1 to October 30. Contingent upon morning temperatures, work days are begun or completed with visiting and refreshments. Volunteers are welcome to work independently as well.

SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY GARDENS (*Sanctioned 2012*)

Project Leaders: Marty Powers, Jayne Laster, and Kathryn Birkhead

The Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, which is currently the only sanctioned project in Springdale, is in the heart of downtown Springdale. The museum's grounds are rich in history and help tell the story of Northwest Arkansas' beautiful Ozark Mountains and the people who have called them home, from the earliest inhabitants to the diverse communities we see today. WCMG volunteers enhance the visitor experience with historically-appropriate gardens and native plantings throughout the two-acre campus, with an emphasis on pollinator-friendly plants. In the summer of 2022, Shiloh Museum's Master Gardeners instituted a seed bank to provide free seeds for plants that help pollinators. Since the summer of 2023, Shiloh Museum grounds have been the home to an active hive of bees.

VETERANS HOSPITAL (VHSO) GARDEN (*Sanctioned 2017*)

Project Leaders: Steve Brizzi, Mo Shamseldin, and Aimee Payne

The mission of the VHSO Garden is to provide fresh produce for food insecure veterans in the area and to create a place of healing and service to visitors. The garden is located on a 5,200 square foot plot of land just off the southwest corner of the main hospital's circle drive. It includes 15 steel raised beds consisting of 1,168 square feet of space for growing vegetables, 96 square feet for shade gardens, and 450 square feet for a pollinator garden with a water feature. Each bed has a timed irrigation system.

The garden has two shaded sitting/meeting areas, a 96 square foot storage shed, a solar powered off-grid electrical system, and is surrounded by an 8 foot deer fence. The project is committed to practicing organic gardening. An important component of the garden's mission is to train volunteers in science-based gardening practices and to provide classes on topics such as vegetable canning and garden-to-table menu planning.

WASHINGTON COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE GROUNDS (*Sanctioned 1991*)

Project Leaders: Chuck Rutherford and Donilyn Rutherford

Washington County Master Gardeners consider the Extension Office their home and take pride in maintaining the surrounding grounds and assisting in the office as needed. With the assistance and leadership of the UA Horticulture and Landscaping Departments, the grounds were originally planted with Ozark native trees and shrubs. WCMG volunteers work on a regular basis to maintain the beauty and integrity of the landscape design. A new design for the area behind the Extension Office building was implemented in 2016 with a Monarch Butterfly Waystation and picnic table.

WCMG SANCTIONED PROJECTS

WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIR (*Sanctioned 2003*)

Project Leaders: Doris Cassidy, Kathy Launder, Beverly Didier

Washington County Fair, located across the street from the Washington County Extension Office, is held the last week of August each year. In 2009, WCMGs assumed the operation of the Horticulture Building and its activities. Early in the year, WCMG volunteers review and update the horticulture section of the Fair Catalog. Superintendents for the eight divisions are recruited and trained. The entry sheets and entry books are updated and assembled, and award funds are arranged. Days prior to the fair, the building's exterior has large pots filled with plants and WCMG Butterfly bench is relocated from the Extension Office to attract fair-goers. Saturday before fair's start, from 7am-2:20pm, WCMGs install shelving, hang department signs, and prepare the kitchen. The County Fair is an intense week encompassing multiple activities. Fair week schedule is Monday 7am-7pm; Tuesday 7am-7:30pm; Wednesday–Saturday 9am-9pm. Sunday is check-out/clean-up from 2pm-4pm. During the week, WCMGs accept fair entries, assist with judging, and keep entries attractive, etc. Since 2010, WCMGs also sponsor a sale table with WCMG-donated items. Profits are used for Youth and Adult Grand and Reserve Champion horticulture entry awards.

The fair is an educational experience with emphasis on growing and displaying quality agricultural and horticultural items as well as outdoor and a nature journal. Some funds are used in this educational endeavor. Food trucks now operate during the evening hours. WCMGs have opportunities to contribute by helping with a meal and desserts for the judges and the Horticulture workers on Tuesday's judging day. The fair is an excellent opportunity for MGs to share knowledge with fair visitors and serve as ambassadors for the WCMG program.

WEST FORK GARDENS (*Sanctioned 2006*)

Project Leaders: Liz Hale, Haley Deatherage, Susan Donnangelo, Aileen Wilson

The Washington County Master Gardeners maintain rain gardens surrounding the West Fork Library, at the West Fork Recycle Center, and a flower bed at the four-way stop on Main Street. The gardens grow mostly native plants best suited to survive drought and rainy seasons, and bolster food web support for native pollinators. Working with the West Fork Library staff, WCMGs provide:

- community outreach education programs about basic herbs, uses, and cooking classes;
- advice for planting home gardens, the importance of pollinators and what to plant for them, and
- resources and information from the U of A Extension Service.

Programs are for the West Fork Library, WFISD, children schooled at home, and the community at large. Flexible work schedules for WCMG volunteers can be arranged. Beginning and end-of-year planning potlucks bookend the outdoor gardening season.

COOPERATIVE PROJECTS are not the responsibility of Washington County Master Gardeners.

They do utilize WCMG volunteer labor, skills, and expertise. Two include:

(1) Arbor Day is cooperation between WCMG volunteers and local 4-H groups since 1993. The one-day event usually includes the planting of a tree in a pre-selected location, such as a school or other public area. WCMG volunteers help the local 4-H groups in this endeavor.

(2) Farm Friends is an annual event sponsored by the U of a Cooperative Extension Service since 1996. Displays, hands-on activities, farm equipment and live animals are gathered to showcase local farm life. The all-day spring event welcomes school groups and the public. WCMG volunteers participate with displays, activities relating to gardening, and cornbread donations. Location: Pauline Whitaker Building.