

SANCTIONED PROJECTS **Washington County Master Gardeners**

ARKANSAS AIR & MILITARY MUSEUM (*Sanctioned 2008*)

Project Co-leaders: Luanne Diffin, Peggy Konert and Julie Murray

The Arkansas Air & Military 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 attract pollinators and 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 Tuesday and Saturday mornings.

ASK A MASTER (*Sanctioned 1992*)

Project Co-leaders: Laura Wilkins and Jim Sposato

The Ask a Master project is responsible for answering the Washington County Master Gardeners' 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 Co-leaders: Patsy Louk, Kitty Sanders and Kathy Launder

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 may work in other horticulture areas under the supervision of one of the BGO gardeners throughout the gardening seasons. Not only do WCMG volunteers help 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, and assist with garden events and festivals.

COMPOST DEMONSTRATION SITE (*Sanctioned 1999*)

Project Co-leaders: David Edwards and Geri Alvis

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 Co-leaders: Doris Cassidy, Carole Ball and Jim MacLean

WCMG volunteers plant and maintain gardens surrounding the Elkins Community Center building. project includes the flagpole 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 Co-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 Leader: Laura Underwood

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 Co-leaders: Geri Alvis, Kristi Campbell, Jan Lefler, Janice Walker, and Betty Nichols

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. The original four-acre property was used alternately as a Civil War headquarters by both Union and Confederate armies. In 1967, the house was donated to the Washington County Historical Society (WCHS) 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 continue to collect and maintain heirloom and native plants, shrubs, and trees. WCMGs maintain a detailed plant list referencing common and botanical name, and year planted in the garden. They assist in preparation for garden-related activities hosted by WCHS. Gardening begins early in the year with rose pruning and continues into late fall as needed. Project co-leaders may arrange flexible work schedules for WCMG volunteers as requested. Planning sessions, educational opportunities, and celebration gatherings are part of the gardening experience.

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

Project Co-leaders: Mary Crumley and Jody Miskell

The Jr. Master Gardener 4-H Club 1.0 is a project comprised of certified 4-H leaders, 4-H youth, 4-H parents, and Master Gardeners. It is a recognized 4-H club that is the parent project that led to the creation of The Garden Explorers. The club teaches parliamentary procedure in conducting meetings while encouraging 4-H members to give speeches, demonstrations, and participate in 4-H contests. The club also performs community service projects, including making hand-made cards to celebrate the retired veterans at the Veteran's Nursing Home and providing them with sugar-free candy for the holidays. The Master Gardeners, leaders and other volunteers instruct the club members on gardening skills and specialize in working with worms and have a worm exhibit at Farm Friends where the participants can see and touch the vermiculture 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 and encourage them to enter and participate fully in the Washington County Fair.

WCMG SANCTIONED PROJECTS

LINCOLN COMMUNITY GARDEN *(Sanctioned 2016)*

Project Co-leaders: Jim Sposato and Judy Cohea

The Lincoln Community Garden was established to provide fresh garden produce for charitable organizations such as G.R.A.C.E. 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, Middle School East Labs classes, etc., help in maintaining the garden. Farmers COOP and local businesses and volunteers have donated money to maintain the garden.

PRAIRIE GROVE MOCK PARK *(Sanctioned 2003)*

Project Co-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, workdays are begun or completed with visiting and refreshments. Volunteers are welcome to work independently as well.

PRAIRIE GROVE NEIGHBOR'S GARDEN *(Sanctioned 2024)*

Project Co-leaders: Susan Donnangelo and Sara Bartlett

The Neighbor's Garden is an opportunity for WCMG volunteers to help plan, preserve, and maintain heritage gardening at Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park. WCMG volunteers may share collective knowledge, traditions, and memories of stories from prior generations. The 19th century-inspired beds around the Latta Kitchen, Springhouse and Smokehouse contain herbs used for culinary, medicinal and textile purposes. The Latta House also showcases historical flowers, shrubs, and trees. While working areas around the Latta Village is routine, WCMG volunteers have opportunities to offer education to park visitors. The hope is to create space to learn and grow with others while appreciating a shared relationship with nature and the landscape. Volunteers are needed to help with research, planning and presenting programs/workshops related to historical gardening. The park has recently installed a native rain garden to help others learn about stormwater runoff and water conservation. Social gardening workdays are Friday mornings and the first Saturdays of each month at 9 am. Individual gardeners may get their hands in the dirt (when life allows) after attending a brief orientation. Many volunteers like to come earlier during the heat of summer – which is great, too! Park staff is available to assist daily starting at 7 am. Everyone is welcome and there are tasks to fit all abilities.

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

Project Co-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.

WCMG SANCTIONED PROJECTS

VETERANS HOSPITAL GARDEN (*Sanctioned 2017*)

Project Co-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 feet 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 Co-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.

WASHINGTON COUNTY FAIR (*Sanctioned 2003*)

Project Co-leaders: Doris Cassidy, Kathy Launder and 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 the fair 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.

WCMG SANCTIONED PROJECTS

WEST FORK GARDENS (*Sanctioned 2006*)

Project Leaders: Liz Hale and Aileen Wilson

The Washington County Master Gardeners maintain rain and pollinator gardens surrounding the West Fork Library. 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
- information and resources from the U of A Extension Service.

Programs are for the West Fork Library, West Fork School District, 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 a cooperative activity involving 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.