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Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • September 2025

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Having said all that, the *Garden Thyme* is best viewed in your browser (instead of viewing it within your email). **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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## **SEPTEMBER MEETING**

### **Shelters for Wildlife**

**Hope to see you at our monthly meeting and **annual business meeting** on **Tuesday, September 2, at 6:30 p.m.**, at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2925 Old Missouri Road, Fayetteville. [Here's a map showing the location of Good Shepherd](#)**

The guest speaker is our own Randy Butler, who will discuss "Shelters for Wildlife." He will focus on backyard visitors such as birds, bees, bats, and other native creatures, what shelters they prefer, and ways we can help them survive and thrive.

Randy was born and raised in Scott County, Arkansas. His family had a truck farm and grew fruits and

vegetables. They also had milk and beef cows, hogs, and chickens. Randy had four brothers and four sisters. They hunted and fished on their 100-acre farm and helped their parents with the daily chores before they rode the bus to school in Waldron.

Randy has always had an interest in growing things, fixing things, and building things. He worked in the family building materials store and was well known as the person to call if you needed to know how to fix something. He decided to run for mayor of Waldron and was elected for four years.



Randy and his wife, Pam (our WCMG vice president) retired and moved to Northwest Arkansas to be near their grandchildren. He does woodworking along with Master Gardening. His yard is bursting with native plants and trees and was on the Garden Gate Tour last year. He enjoys feeding hummingbirds and songbirds and watching native bees and butterflies.

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## Taking Care of Monthly and Annual Business

**We will vote on these items at our September 2 monthly business meeting.**

August 2025 Business Meeting  
Minutes

July 2025 Treasurer's Report

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

President – Pam Butler

Vice President – Rick Oliver

Secretary – Carole Ball

Treasurer – Julie Murray

Assistant Treasurer – to be determined

Member at Large – Mary McCully (first year of two-year term)

Member at Large – Judi Sartwell (second year of two-year term)

Member at Large – Steve Shearman (Class of 2025 representative for one-year term)

Assistant Treasurer nominations will be taken from the floor at the September meeting. If you are interested in the position, please read the job descriptions for Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer in the bylaws found in the Member Resource Guide on the [WCMG website](#) and contact [Liz Hale](#), chair of the Nominating Committee.

**We will also vote on our 2026 annual budget.**

2026 Annual Budget

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# From Your President

**ALFI ANDERSON**

## **Change of Season**

As summer winds down, we can all feel the shift toward cooler days and the promise of fall. The end of August always brings with it a mix of relief and reflection that the long, hot days of watering are nearly behind us, and reflection on how much has grown in our gardens and in our friendships this year. Even when we grow a little weary of tending the plants, we continue to nurture them, just as we tend to the friendships and connections we've built together.



It's hard to believe that September is already here, and with it comes not only a seasonal change, but some changes in our organization. At our upcoming meeting, we will be presenting and discussing the new slate of nominations for next year's officers. This is an important step in continuing the strong leadership and dedication that keeps our group thriving.

Our wonderful Nominating Committee has done an extraordinary job in selecting and interviewing a slate of officers who have already agreed to our bylaws, policies and procedures, our timelines, and the responsibilities of their positions. I am looking forward to introducing them to you.

Change is coming—not only from summer to fall, but also within our organization. Change is good, necessary, and sometimes hard, but it is always important for growth. We are working on a few proposed changes to our bylaws, policies, and procedures. Some of these updates are needed to keep us in compliance with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, while others will help our organization run more smoothly and efficiently.

**Our next meeting, the annual business meeting, will be held on Tuesday, September 2, at 6:30 p.m. at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Since it is our annual business meeting, the agenda will include the election of officers, approval of the annual budget, approval of annual dues, the Bylaws Committee report, and the approval of membership meeting dates and times for the following year.**

My heart is touched and warmed by the fruits of your labor—not only those you enjoy from your own gardens, but also the bounty produced through our sanctioned projects. The harvests that are shared with the community, especially those less fortunate, reflect the true spirit of giving and service. A heartfelt shout-out to all of you who make this possible. I want you all to know how much I've noticed your amazing service and the heart you've poured into every project. Each effort, big or small, adds to the beauty and strength of our Master Gardener community. I am truly grateful and appreciative of all that you do. Here's to cooler weather, a new season ahead. Can't wait to see you all at the meeting!

# Tick Tock! Awards Deadline Draws Nigh.



Photo by [Malvestida](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## **GERI ALVIS and JAN LEFLER** **Awards Committee co-chairs**

The WCMG Awards Committee manages the WCMG awards and recognition activities. Award nomination requirements and guides are found on the [WCMG website](#) in the Member Portal section. Prior WCMG award winners for all categories are listed in the WCMG Member Resource Guide in the Award Forms section. (This shows projects and/or individuals who are eligible for awards.)

Arkansas Extension Consumer Horticulture Educator Randy Forst says, "Master Gardeners truly make a difference in our communities, and it's important to recognize their hard work and the impacts they make all over the state."

The Arkansas Master Gardener County 76 Recruitment, Retention and Recognition (RRR) Project manages the Arkansas Master Gardener Awards program. State MG awards are presented at the annual Arkansas Master Gardener conference.

WCMG awards include:

- **Excellence in Education.** A WCMG project that demonstrates significant learning provided in a targeted audience of special groups and has been implemented for at least one full year. The project's total effort, scope, and measurable results are judged. It is open to all projects EXCEPT prior winners for Project of the Year or Excellence in Education (EIE) in the last five years.
- **Individual Friend of Master Gardeners .** A non-WCMG individual who has shown

outstanding support of the WCMG program EXCEPT those who have won in the last five years.

- **Organization or Business Friend of Master Gardeners** . A non-Extension or non-WCMG business or organization which has shown outstanding support of the WCMG program EXCEPT those who have won in the last five years.
- **Master Gardener of the Year** . A WCMG member who has made an exceptional contribution to the WCMG program, Extension Service, and county. All active WCMG members are eligible EXCEPT previous winners.
- **Project of the Year** . A sanctioned project that has shown exceptional contribution to the WCMG program, Extension Service, and county. Project's total effort, scope, and measurable results are judged. It is open to all projects EXCEPT prior winners for Project of the Year or Excellence in Education (EIE) in the last five years.
- **Rookie of the Year** . A first-year WCMG who has provided outstanding volunteer service to the WCMG program and/or Extension Service and the community. Eligible trainees who finished their MG classroom training and completed their first-year membership certification within the designated time frame.
- **Mimi Cox Mentor of the Year** . A WCMG member who has made outstanding mentoring efforts helping their assigned first-year WCMG, MG transfer, or reinstated WCMG member through their first year. All active WCMG members are eligible to be nominated EXCEPT previous winners.
- **Joyce Mendenhall "Yes, I Can" Award** . WCMG members and/or first-year WCMGs who clearly demonstrate a "can do" attitude and have shown outstanding support of the WCMG program. All nominations are eligible EXCEPT previous winners of MG of the Year, Rookie of the Year, Mentor of the Year, or Joyce Mendenhall "Yes, I Can" awards in the last five years.

**2025 WCMG award nominations are due before October 15, 2025.**

Start now making notes about contributions/achievements/measurable results against goals, etc., of individuals, teams, and projects all year long. Use statistics to track measurable results. Take action-oriented photos throughout the year and ID all in each photo and each person's role.

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## Milestones Achieved

Years of service recognition is awarded annually to high-achieving Washington County Master Gardeners. Arkansas Master Gardener County 76 generously underwrites these awards. Active Washington County Master Gardeners who have completed MG training, fulfilled the annual requirements for volunteer work and education, and paid annual dues annually are recognized at the time they have attained 5, 10, 15, and 20 years of service to the Arkansas state MG program. There are no nomination requirements.

Congratulations to these deserving Washington County Master Gardeners recognized at our July meeting for 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, and 20 years of recorded volunteer service.

*Photos by Kitty Sanders.*

## FIVE YEARS



From left: Terry Hedden, Lynette Terrell, Brad Neidecker, Kimberly Hosey. Not pictured: Leslie Bailey, Keith Blowers, Randy Butler, Elizabeth Hale, Audley Hall, Julia Murray, Virginia Ramos.

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## TEN YEARS



From left: Linda Morrow, Geri Alvis, Chris Bell, Mary McCully. Not pictured: Janet Brown, Dawn Didier, Jim MacLean, Linda MacLean, Donilyn Rutherford, Janice Torbett, Michael

## FIFTEEN YEARS



From left: Betty Nichols, Ruth Cohoon, Jane Bryant, Marguerite Abowitz. Not pictured: Jill King.

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## TWENTY YEARS



Jaylon Haley. Not pictured: Ginger Candrilli.

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# Meet the Trainees

## OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL

### Caleb Israel

I'm a European immigrant originally from Latvia. My heart-and-soul is caring for others, nature, and my dogs, alongside my wonderful husband, Elijah. Newlyweds as of early November 2023, we started a company showcasing our hobbies in plant education and sustainability. Elijah is a vegan chef and dietary specialist. I knew I had to marry Elijah after he visited me while we were dating and cooked a vegan meatloaf. I was stunned that it was so good. My mother would have killed me if she knew I married a vegan seeing as all I wanted to eat as a child was salad but grew up eating meat. My belly was full, and my heart was happy. No one had cooked like that for me before or been able to match Elijah's skill. Elijah grew up cooking and went to school for it as well. We eat very well in our home.



While I call Fayetteville my home as of 2023, anywhere my husband and our dogs, Benji (7) and Skippy (4) are, is going to be where I find fulfillment.

I am finishing my master's degree in legal studies from the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University. I have a degree in business and HR, and I aim to start a doctoral program in social and cognitive psychology in the Fall of 2026. I have diverse skills, interests, and experiences. I sit on several committees and non-profit boards, I'm involved in education, music, politics, finance, human resources, interior and exterior design, and I work as a leave specialist, administering FMLA, ADA, and other federal and non-federally protected types of leave for Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City.

I grew up on a ranch before my parents moved to Colorado and I have experience with most things hands-on; DIY-ing is a specialty in the Israel home. As an Air Force veteran, I planned deployments and redeployments for joint bases, which taught me professional precision, tact, and poise. These skills support the drive, education, and growth that I set my heart and mind to throughout my life.

Some of my extended family in Dallas are Master Gardeners, so I grew up seeing the importance of nature and design together and jumped at the idea of getting involved locally as well. The Israels' personal gardens and home transport you to a page out of *Better Homes and Gardens* and into a beautifully curated landscape that anyone would call classy, with unique and refined details and touches. Elijah and I look forward to further involvement with other gardeners. We are always looking for friendly faces and to increase our ever-growing knowledge of the world around us.

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**August Photo of the Month Contest:**

# "Native Gardens"



**FIRST PLACE**

**"Coming in for a Landing" by Delcina Cunico**

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**SECOND PLACE**

**"Skippers and butterflies, oh my!" by Mariette Spidel**

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### THIRD PLACE

"Texas Greeneyes and Phlox" by Kitty Sanders

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The September Photo of the Month contest theme is "Cut flowers/arrangements from my garden." Deadline to enter is September 15. Contest details are available on the [WCMG website](#).

[Here's a link to the 2025 photo contest themes.](#)

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## COMPOST CORNER

### What's Wrong with These Pictures?

MARIETTE SPIDEL

WCMG Master Composter



Compost Photo 1



Compost Photo 2

This month we are encouraging everyone to think back to your basic training or to your best practices as a composter and let us know what is wrong with the two images seen here.

We will give you a hint: there is more than one thing wrong with both pictures.

The first two WCMGs with the most correct answers will win a gallon of worm-castings. Vermicompost worm castings can be used to top dress potted plants or to enhance the soil in any garden or flower planting space.

So, put your thinking cap on and email your correct answers to [Mariette Spidel](#) before Tuesday, September 10, at midnight. Please note the names of the photos as "Compost Photo 1" and Compost Photo 2."

Answers will be reviewed by WCMG Master Composters and your vermi-castings will be awarded to you at a determined time and location.

Happy composting!

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## Congrats to 2025's Latest Hive of Busy Bees!

The Busy Bee Award program was started in 2024 by the WCMG Executive Committee to recognize WCMG members and trainees when they record their first 50 sanctioned project or committee hours each year. (Non-sanctioned or education hours are not considered for this award.) From April through December, qualifying WCMG members or trainees receive a Busy Bee lapel pin at WCMG membership meetings.

*Name followed by first active year in WCMG. Photos by Kitty Sanders.*

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### APRIL BUSY BEES



From left: Kim Coslett (2025), Jessica Guillory (2025), Doris Cassidy (2018), Stacy Lake

(2023), Brad Neidecker (2020), Roger Faulkner (2025), Danna Grear (2023), Laura Underwood (2023). Not pictured: Kathryn Birkhead (2017), Roxanne Gallup (2023), Peter Gavin (2024), Teri Kinsey (2021), Vicki Mayo (2019), Rick Oliver (2024), Lisa Owen (2018), Pam Salamo (2024).

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## **MAY BUSY BEES**



From left: Susan Young (2007), Chris Bell (2015), Lynette Terrell (2020), Peggy Sissel (2023), Betty Nichols (2010), Steve Shearman (2025). Not pictured: Nan Abbiatti (2021), Mariette Spidel (2017).

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## **JUNE BUSY BEES**



From left: Kelly Chaney (2025), Janice Walker (2021), Vicki Spencer (2021), Judy Cohea

(2021). Not pictured: Talya Boerner (2019), Regina Gabel (2014), Donna McDaniel (2025), Jeff McGuire (2025), Stephanie McGuire (2024), Judith Reighter (2022), Mary Sparks (2025), Dale Thomas (2019).

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## In Memory

### **KAREN HANNA-TOWNE** **Memorials Committee**



Photo by [Piotr Musiol](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Dale Ingram Miller was a Master Gardener from the trainee class of 1993. He was 91 years old when he died on August 8. His full obituary may be found in the [August 14 edition of the Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#).

If you have any information about Dale's participation in WCMG, please contact the Memorial Committee members (Shirley Durning, 479-442-6367 or [eansdurning@aol.com](mailto:eansdurning@aol.com); Jan Hayes, 479-466-3689 or [janhayes5ar@gmail.com](mailto:janhayes5ar@gmail.com); or Karen Hanna-Towne, 479-879-4445 or [21wqsa@earthlink.net](mailto:21wqsa@earthlink.net)). We would like to prepare a brief bio for the Memorials page on our WCMG website but don't have any additional information. Please write us if you know which projects he worked on or if he served in any leadership roles.

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## Life in Milkweed

### **TALYA TATE BOERNER**



**Image courtesy of Talya Tate Boerner.**

Milkweed is vital for monarchs because it is THE host plant for monarch butterflies (meaning, monarch butterflies lay eggs ONLY on milkweed, AND monarch caterpillars ONLY eat milkweed). Of course, there are a variety of other species besides monarchs that enjoy nectaring from milkweed.

This year, I've been keeping track of the critters I've noticed in my swamp milkweed—life beyond monarchs. And, I thought it would be fun to document this life in milkweed, the teeny flies and bugs, frogs and just-hatched insects, the butterflies feeding every afternoon. Each time I inspect my milkweed (and I do it multiple times a day), I see something new. [Click here](#) to see for yourself. . . . (This link will take you to Talya's blog on her *Grace, Grits and Gardening* website.)

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## Gardening and Community Events

### **PAM BUTLER**

*This calendar features events close to home. To stay in the know about MG and UADA gardening-related activities across Arkansas, [sign up for the state calendar of events](#) sent by the Extension Service headquarters in Little Rock.*

**SEPTEMBER 2, 9:00–11:30 a.m. CAVE SPRINGS RAIN GARDEN VOLUNTEER DAY.** Illinois River Watershed Partnership, 221 S. Main Street, Cave Springs. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 6, 8:30–10:30 a.m. GARLIC BRAIDING WORKSHOP.** White River Nursery, Fayetteville. \$55. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 6, 9:00–11:00 a.m. 2025 OZARK EXPLORATION: FALL FORAGING & SETTLER HISTORY.** Ozark Natural Science Center, ONSC Main Campus, 1905 Madison 1305, Huntsville. Donation. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 6, 6:00 p.m. NATIVE PLANT SEED STARTING WORKSHOP.** Hosted by Wild Ones Ozark Chapter. 2474 W. Pump Station Road, Springdale. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2:00–6:00 p.m. OZARK NATURAL SCIENCE CENTER NIGHT AT THE NATURALS GAME.** Arvest Ballpark. \$12. [Ticket information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 8–12. FALL PLANT SALE.** Native Restoration and Management, 216 West Birch Street, Rogers. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 11, 12:00 p.m. GROW YOUR OWN GROCERIES: FIGS.** Zoom program by UADA extension agents and staff. Free. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 12, 5:30–6:00 p.m. BIRD SONG SYMPHONIES.** Devil's Den State Park, Sundial at the Visitor Center. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 13, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. PASTURE WALK: THE COFFEY'S IN LINCOLN.** Grassroots Grazing Group at the Coffey's farm. Sponsored by Illinois River Watershed Partnership. 12082 Hwy. 59 South, Lincoln. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 13, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. NATURAL DYEING WITH WILDFLOWERS WORKSHOP.** Sacred Hollow Farm, 3830 East Hwy. 264, Lowell. \$35. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 13, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. PLANT SWAP.** Fayetteville Public Library, Walker Community Room. Free. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 13, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. WORDS OF WARMTH: CARDS FOR CLEAR CREEK MEMORY CARE.** Fayetteville Public Library, Art and Movement Room. Free. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 13, 2:00–3:00 p.m. DESIGNING THE NATURAL GARDEN.** White River Nursery, Fayetteville. Free. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 13, 2:00–4:00 p.m. FALL GARDENING WITH TARSHA SHEPHERD.** Fayetteville Public Library, Walker Community Room. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 14, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. FROM FOREST TO TABLE: FALL WILD SPICES.** Ozark Natural Science Center at Mount Kessler, 1725 Smokehouse Trail, Fayetteville. \$10–\$15. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 15, 12:00–1:00 p.m. MASTER GARDENER MONDAY.** Zoom gardening program plus Master Gardener event updates with Randy Forst, UADA consumer horticulture/Master Gardener coordinator. Free. Registration not required. [Email Randy for the Zoom link](#) OR [sign up for the calendar of events](#) sent out by the Extension Service headquarters in Little Rock.

**SEPTEMBER 18, 9:00–11:30 a.m. PICK UP WHERE YOU PLAY: CLEANUP AT SPRING CREEK.** Illinois River Watershed Partnership at Luther George Park, 300 Park Street, Springdale. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2:00–2:30 p.m. NIFTY NESTS.** Devil's Den State Park, Café Pavilion. [For more information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 18, 6:00 p.m. ECOBENEFICIAL LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES FOR THE CLIMATE CRISIS.** Kim Eierman presenting for Wild Ones-Ozark Chapter. Zoom. Free with suggested donation of \$5-\$10. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 19, 9:00–11:00 a.m. CONSERVATION BREAKFAST.** Hosted by Northwest Arkansas Land Trust, Ozark Mountain Smokehouse, Fayetteville. Free. [Registration information.](#)

**SEPTEMBER 19, 9:30 a.m.–2:00 p.m. LAWNS TO LANDSCAPES: HISTORY AND DESIGN WORKSHOP.** Presented by the Illinois River Watershed Partnership and the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History. Held at the Shiloh Museum, Springdale. Free. [Registration information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 20, 8:40–11:00 a.m. SEPTEMBER 2025 LAKE FAYETTEVILLE EXPLORATION: FOCUS ON FALL.** ONSC @ Lake Fayetteville, 599 East Lakeview Drive, Springdale. Donation. [Registration information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 20, 9:51 a.m.–2:30 p.m. 2025 ROCK & ROLL GEOLOGY BUS TOUR.** ONSC Mount Kessler, 1725 Smoke House Trail, Fayetteville. \$10–\$25. [Registration information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 20, 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. MONARCH FLIGHT FESTIVAL.** Luther George Park, Springdale. Sponsored by the Shiloh Museum and Downtown Springdale. Free. [For more information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 24–27, 7:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. NATIVE TREE AND PLANT SALE.** Compton Gardens, 407 NE B Street, Bentonville. [For more information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 25, 4:00–4:45 p.m. PLANT ARMOR: FROM THORNS TO TOXINS.** Devil's Den State Park, Ballfield in Campground E. [For more information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 27, 11:00–11:30 a.m. MIGHTY MORPHERS.** Devil's Den State Park, Café Pavilion. [For more information](#).

**SEPTEMBER 27, 5:00–6:00 p.m. WATERCOLOR BY THE WATER'S EDGE.** Devil's Den State Park, Picnic Area C. [For more 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

[Alfi Anderson](#), president; [Pam Butler](#), vice president; [Carole Ball](#), secretary; [Julie Murray](#), treasurer; [Stephanie McGuire](#), assistant treasurer. Members at large: [Rick Oliver](#), [Marty Powers](#), [Judi Sartwell](#). Ex officio: [Liz Hale](#), past president; [Colin Massey](#), Washington County extension agent for agriculture and horticulture.

*Banner photo of thyme courtesy [Lucy Meskill/flickr](#)*



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WCMG website



Washington County  
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