

May 2019

Big Country Master Gardener
Association Newsletter
Bcmgtx.org

The Garden Thymes



UPCOMING EVENTS

- 5/4
Wings on the Wind CANCELLED
- 5/6 5:30-6:30
Swenson House Workday
- 5/11 1:00-4:00
Pollinator Grant Event, Swenson House
- 5/14 6:00
Executive Committee Meeting; Extension Office Conference Room
- 5/16 8:00-12:00
Kids, Kows & More (contact Juanita Campos for information)
- 5/18 9:00-12:00 Grand Tour
- 5/21 6:00-8:30
Social Time, Education, May Business Meeting; Extension Office Conference Room
- 5/25 9:00-12:00
Saturday Seminar-Irrigation and Rainwater Harvesting; Extension Office Conference Room
- 5/27 5:30-6:30
Swenson House 4th Monday Workday

Please watch your emails for , Executive Committee date and time, and other opportunities in May

2019 BCMG Officers

- President - Gene Shelhamer
- Vice President- Cheri Drysdale
- President Elect— Sandy Shaw
- Treasurer - Sandy Dugger
- Rec Sec - Ann Clark
- Cor Sec - Misty Hayward

GENE SHELHAMER, 2019 BCMGA PRESIDENT



Well, the Spring Plant sale is over, and we had great success thanks to our Master Gardeners, Interns and Trainees.



We have several projects currently in process.



The Kid's Day Pollinator Event will be at the Swenson House on May 11th from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. It will involve many, many of our MGs, Interns and Trainees with an opportunity to get several hours and make Abilene more aware of Big Master Gardeners and how we can share gardening knowledge to our community and have fun too.

And...Congratulations to our chapter for winning 3 awards at the state level! Check our Dorothy's article on page 6! Thank you to everyone who helped put together these nominations.

2019 Spring Plant Sale

By Jackie Sledge



The 2019 Spring Plant Sale is now behind us, and it is time to reflect on what a wonderful event we had – thanks to every one of you and the many hours you volunteered to make it such a success.

We had over 700 people attend the sale, and we had a net profit of over \$16,000.00!

So let's look at what happened to make it such a great sale:

We had a number of planning meetings with the various committees to ensure that all details were in place for the sale.

The Plant Selection Committee worked many hours researching plant availability lists to select and order plants. We had beautiful plants that were very appealing to our customers.

The McMurry Greenhouse group grew some of the plants for the sale, and these plants were also very healthy and beautiful additions to the variety of plants available to our customers.

The Marketing Committee ensured that Spring Plant Sale information was available throughout the community in the form of signs, posters, flyers, cards, TV programs, radio programs, newspaper articles, etc.

The Profile Committee prepared profiles for the new plants so they were ready to put with the plants early in the week before the sale.

The Set-up Committee made the best possible use of the Modern Living Mall to showcase the plants and make it as easy as possible to navigate through the maze of plants.

The Food Committee ensured that we had wonderful lunches and plenty of snacks and drinks when we worked during the week before the sale and then breakfast the morning of the sale.

The Cashiering Committee made labels for plants and set up our scanning and square systems so that we had an efficient system for checking out the day of the sale.

The Clean-up Committee ensured that the Modern Living Mall was cleaned up and all supplies taken back to the storage shed and the Extension Office after the sale.

Sandy Dugger, treasurer, oversaw the entire Plant Sale as well as kept up with the expenses for the sale and income from the sale so we were able to know a profit estimate fairly quickly.

Kathy Turner, Plant Sale co-chair, also worked many hours planning, selecting plants, and keeping us on track leading up to the sale.

The sale was also successful because of the many volunteers who worked during the week to pick up plants, unload plants, clean and label pots, associate profiles with plants, and many other tasks necessary to have everything ready to open up at 8:00 on April 6th. We had a couple of hiccups along the way, but your flexibility and hard work got us through.



We had a couple of surprises for the customers this year. The eggs hidden around the plants contained mostly candy, but four lucky customers received coupons for \$10 off their total purchase. The sweet lady at Doodlestones provided painted stones that were placed in various pots, and some very lucky people found these unique surprises when they purchased their plants.



I have to say that you all made this a very enjoyable, fairly stress-free Spring Plant Sale. We have already met to talk about what worked and what changes or improvements need to be considered for future sales, and we welcome any feedback you have.

Just send any comments or suggestions to mgardeners@yahoo.com, and we will definitely consider them for future events.

Speaking of... We are already talking about a potential Fall Symposium and Fall Plant Sale. Please send any suggestions to mgardeners@yahoo.com so we will have them for planning sessions.

I almost forgot to add that I had fun – fun seeing different plants, fun working with each of you, and fun getting to know some new people. I hope you did, too.



Sandy Shaw

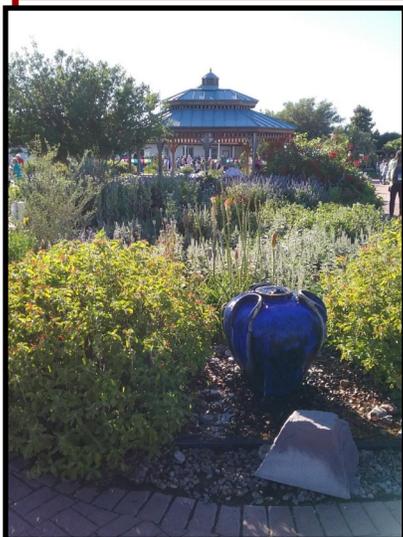
Texas Master Gardener Association

Victoria! What a beautiful (but long!) drive to attend the 2019 Texas Master Gardener Conference. The hills were solid with Indian Blanket, Coreopsis, Mexican Hat and the end of the Paintbrushes. Quite a sight. I was excited about attending this year's conference; the last one I went to, was several years ago. It is always fun to be in the company of so many like-minded people, with matching experiences, questions and sometimes, problems? My first event to attend was the Leadership Training, held

the day before the conference had its opening ceremonies. The focus was on fund raising- with discussion of several master gardener groups events, methods and successes; a how-to, more or less. (We could have headlined that segment, with a run-down of the BCMGA Spring Plant Sale!) The second half of the training dealt with recruiting members, the application process, followed by ideas on mentoring. Very interesting, but the news announced that afternoon would have the most direct effect on our group. The new training/reference book is ready! It is beautiful and I'm sure there is a photo of it on the TMGA website. The most interesting thing was the second 'unveiling' of the day; the new Texas Master Gardener Association logo! I am certain it also is on the webpage. The goal is to unify the 117 county programs under one trademarked logo; the individual group logos will "fade away".

My favorite thing? A visit to the Victoria Educational Gardens...see pictures!

Next year - May 12-14 - 2020 TMGA State Conference 2020 Texas - Waco - McLennan County!



What To Do in May

Jackie Sledge



- * Plant summer veggies like okra, southern peas, and melons.



- * Plant summer annual color. Buy hardened plants that are already acclimated to sun.
- * Plant summer and fall flowering perennials. Buy types that will provide a sequence of continuous color.

- * Put in new lawns. This is the best month to put in new turf. Select the correct type for sun or shade.



- * Prune spring-blooming shrubs and vines.
- * Remove low branches on shade trees if they cause visibility problems or cast excessive shade on turf. Wait until mid-summer to prune oaks.

- * Feed turf, trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials, and vegetables.
- * Troubleshoot problems such as black spot, blight, webworms, bagworms, scale, weeds.



- * Add mulch to the beds. Make sure you have at least 3”.
- * Do a quick inventory of your sprinkler system, and repair any problems found before the main summer watering season.

- * Put out hummingbird feeders to feed and water the birds.



BCMGA State Awards

Dorothy Kiser

Great and exciting news! We learned on Friday (the 26th) that our Association received three state awards this year. As Chair of the Awards Committee, I submitted four proposals and we placed on three of those.



Jackie Sledge received the BCMGA Member of the Year for our association last December. This qualified her to be nominated for the **Outstanding Individual Award** for the state. I submitted her name for this award and she received second place for our category (based on the number of members in our association). **Congratulations to Jackie on receiving this prestigious honor!**

The Swenson House was our **Project Award** submission; **Carol Waters** was instrumental in writing the proposal for this award. We won second place in our category for this project. Congratulations to Carol and the many individuals that have helped with the Swenson House cleanup and restoration of the gardens.



And our third award.... we won first place on the Youth Award category. **Molly Lorch** helped write up information on the “Water, Water Everywhere, but Only a Drop to Drink” proposal, which was part of the Kids, Kows and More program presented to AISD fourth graders. Congratulations to Molly and all of the Master Gardeners that helped with the presentations to the youth in Abilene.

I would like to personally thank all that helped me with writing and proofing—Cheryl McCormick, Susan Trice, Gene Shelhamer, Molly Lorch, Carol Waters, Charlotte Rhodes, and any others that I can't recall. And most of all, thank you to YOU as Master Gardeners that make BCMGA special!

WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN

Herb Butter

This savory butter is infused with parsley, thyme, rosemary, black pepper, and lemon zest for a flavorful spread that tastes delicious on garlic bread, dinner rolls, steak, and more.



Ingredients

- ½ cup salted butter, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon lemon zest, optional

Instructions

In a medium bowl, combine all of the ingredients until evenly mixed. Let sit for 2 hours for the herbs to infuse the butter. Then stir again. Use right away or wrap for later use.

Note

This butter will keep for 5 days in the fridge and 1 month in the freezer.

Alice Griggs Chicken Salad (served at the plant sale....We had many requests for the recipe.)

Ingredients:

- 3 cans Chicken drained and shredded
- 1 cup red seedless grapes cut in half
- 1/4 of an apple peeled and finely chopped
- 1/2 to 3/4 cups dry roasted pecans coarsely chopped

Instructions:

- Mix together 1/2 cup mayonnaise and 1/4 cup sour cream and two tablespoons of lime or lemon juice
- (add more Mayo and sour cream mixture if desired)
- In a large bowl mix all ingredients well chill and serve



Dry roasted pecans:

Place pecans on dry cookie sheet or cake pan, Place in 375 degree oven for 7 to 9 minutes
Or use dry skillet place pecans and cook over med heat stirring .

Unfortunately mosquito season has arrived...

Tis the season, and we have some tips for you. Using plants for mosquito control is an easy, safe and natural alternative to store-bought sprays.



Citronella is known as the mosquito plant because the citronella scent is infused into many candles and sprays. Keep this natural bug repellent near your doorway for easy pest control. If you decide to plant these in pots, move it outside to your porch where you gather. This plant loves a little afternoon shade and rich, moist soil.



Lavender-Insects are deterred by the plant's leaves and flowers making it another option for a mosquito repelling plant. Lavender is a perennial plant that requires full sun. It prefers to live in pots with rich soil that isn't too moist. It makes a beautiful addition to any porch with its beautiful light purple, pink or white flowers.



Marigolds-The distinctive smell of marigolds is considered particularly offensive to mosquitoes. Marigolds contain Pyrethrum, which is a compound used in many insect repellents. Besides repelling mosquitoes, marigolds can be planted near your vegetable garden as they repel insects that prey on young tomato plants as well. These beautiful plants prefer full sun and fertile soil.



Carry **Pennyroyal** leaves and stems with you to deter insects. An added bonus is they also deter fleas and ticks from your pets. Be sure you don't consume the oils from pennyroyal plants as it can be toxic to humans.



Garlic's ability to deter unwanted insects has been scientifically proven, although the exact component is unknown. Toss the bug spray and try this unexpected mosquito repellent instead.



Mints have a distinct aroma that acts as a natural insect repellent. Mint is a hardy and prolific plant that grows well in a potted environment. You can pick the mint leaves and rub them on your skin for added protection.



The sweet aroma from **Lemongrass** is detested by insects. It can also calm nerves, promote restful sleep, and reduce digestive distress. You can plant this in pots around your porch and keep it near your home entrances for easy pest control. For a quick relief from insects, crush up a handful of leaves and keep them in your pocket or rub them on your skin.



Catnip-the pungent smell also repels mosquitoes. Start catnip by sowing seeds in pots or your flower beds. This herb of the mint family will grow in almost any soil in full sun. Catnip can grow 3-5' tall so don't plant this one where you have limited space.



Try growing **Basil** in an herb garden or in pots on your porch. As a natural way to keep insects away crush a handful of leaves and put them in your pocket or rub them on your skin. For best results, try lemon basil or cinnamon basil. These emit a stronger scent.

....If you have an overabundance of mosquitoes, don't underestimate them! Using natural plants is a safe and effective way to ward them off, but sometimes additional protection from sprays may be necessary...

A Master Gardener's Passion.....This is a new series in our newsletter! We all have our favorite plant. We all love hearing about each others passions...

What I Know About Bougainvillea's by Alice Griggs

I have this big attraction to Bougainvillea's!

They come in many colors: Red, White, Purple, Variegated, Pink, Yellow, Orange and others. (This is just a few of the colors I have).

Bougainvillea are annuals. They do have to go inside for the winter months. I prepare mine for the greenhouse just before frost by giving them a big hair cut. I use the cuttings for propagating. I always have plenty to share with friends! They come back out with new branches and blooms before winter is over. I water occasionally if the leaves start to wilt.

When I bring them out for the summer I fertilize and give them a good soaking. I can then enjoy their beautiful blooms all summer. I use Bougainvillea fertilizer (You find it at Garden World). As the temperatures get hot, I water every day and fertilize once a month. They seem to do better in full sun, they are very pretty



in hanging baskets or pots, you can also stake them and grow as a tree.

I have shared many Bougainvillea's with Master Gardener's and friends, I shared one with Linda Chapel a few years ago. She was so excited and enjoyed many seasons of beautiful blooms. When I talked with Linda a few days ago, she could vaguely remember it (she says hello to the Master Gardener's).

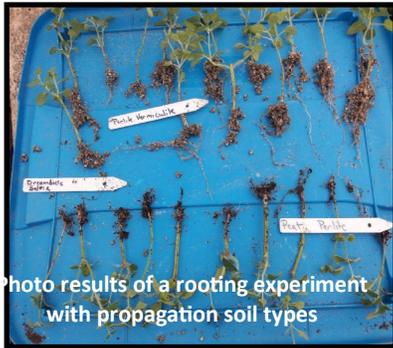
You can find any information you desire about Bougainvillea's; just go to Google you can get tons of information. Or you could ask me! I'll be glad to share what I know about them. I hope you will try one..... but beware! You can really get attached to them.

....Thank you Alice

McMurry Greenhouse Project: Challenges and Rewards

Molly Lorch

What is the McMurry Greenhouse project?

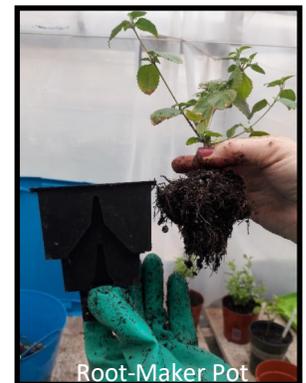


To some BCMG members it is a wonderful place to discover exciting new plant growth. It is cool to walk into the warm greenhouse on a cold winter day to see new flowers blooming on a succulent or new growth on a plant you are propagating. It is also fun to show the greenhouse to a curious McMurry employee who stops by. McMurry students and staff have walked by and said they always wondered what was going on inside.



The greenhouse is also a place of hard work, struggles and learning. We have learned to battle aphids, fungus gnats, and mealy bugs. I have personally learned that being extremely near-sighted is a great weapon I can use when searching for harmful insects. Neem oil has become my faithful companion in fighting aphids and a small spray bottle of alcohol helps to overcome an outbreak of mealy bugs. Hydrogen Peroxide will not harm most plants, but will reduce the number of fungus gnats crawling out of the soil.

I have decided that I agree with Aristotle ...“The more you know, the more you know you don't know.” Vicki and I have learned to ask questions. Growing plants in a greenhouse is obviously a different environment from growing that same plant outside or in your own home. We must learn how to translate that difference into a plan of action. We need to ask what type of soil should I use for each plant and how and when do you fertilize it. Oh, yes, and how far back can I cut that newly propagated plant to make it bushy instead of leggy? Will the plant say, “Ouch that hurts!” Or, “Thank you?” See we are still asking questions and needing answers!



Part of learning has also involved a little bit of experimenting. As Albert Einstein once said, “If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?” When I find conflicting research or instructions on the internet; sometimes I experiment to see what will work in the McMurry Greenhouse environment. What works for a botany professor in his California backyard may not work in a greenhouse where temperatures vary from 55 to 110 degrees... or will it?

I recently came across this quote from Leonardo da Vinci, “I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.” We will all make mistakes. I must accept that while I do not know everything I need to know; I must try by doing something to keep the plants alive.

The bottom line is: **I often figure out that I have a lot more to figure out.**

.....Let's all give a shout out to Molly and Vicki!!.....





March 2019 Busy Bee
Award

Due to inclement weather,
No awards were handed out at the April
Business Meeting.



March 2019 You
Rock

You Rock Award is an award given to the Association Member who has done something outstanding in the previous month.

Busy Bee is given to the member with the most hours contributed the previous month.

Individuals can nominate themselves or other gardeners by completing a short form and submitting to the Awards Committee.

MASTER GARDENER SPOTLIGHT

Vicki Adams



I adored my Grandmother, my Mom's Mom! She lived in Freeport, Texas, and could grow ANYTHING! Every relative I knew and many other people enjoyed the fruits (and vegetables) of her labor of love. I thought she could even stick a pencil in the ground and a marvelous big tree would grow and produce amazing fruit. That fact wasn't proven though.

I wasn't too interested in attempting gardening at my parent's home in West (no comma) Texas, especially without her guidance. But when I married the love of my life, who wasn't a city person, but a (gasp!) farmer, I decided I needed to get some gardening education.

Big Country Master Gardeners to the rescue! What wonderful new friends! What a wonderful class! I even learned how to say "monocotyledon"! Little did I know that was only the start. There aren't enough hours in the day to learn everything a person can learn about plants, dirt/soil, bugs, etc.! But I'm trying. Still haven't had any success with the pencil thing.

Tip: We all know that rainwater is best for our plants. If you don't have rainwater, the next best thing is to fill buckets with tap water and leave the buckets out for 24 hours before using the water. This water is better for the plants because the chlorine has evaporated.



May

5/7 Sherry Gilmore
 5/8 Patrick Conner
 5/18 Ashton Anderson

5/19 Carol Blessing
 5/22 Danielle Delhomme
 5/28 Wendy Porter

