

June 2019

Big Country Master Gardener
Association Newsletter
Bcmgtx.org

The Garden Thymes



UPCOMING EVENTS

06/03 5:30-?
Executive Committee Meeting, Taylor County
Extension Office

06/08 9:00-12:00
Grand Tour – Tour group leaves the Extension
Office at 9:00am

06/10 5:30-6:30
FaithWorks Workday

06/17 6:00-8:00?
Neighborhood Pollinator Event at FaithWorks

06/18 TBD
Master Gardener Summer Party (takes the
place of our June Business Meeting)

06/22 9:00-12:00
Senior Citizen Pollinator Event at Swenson
House

06/24 5:30-6:30
Swenson House 4th Monday Workday

06/29 9:00-12:00
Saturday Seminar – Super Heroes in Your Yard

Watch your email for dates and work times at
FaithWorks and Swenson House to get ready
for our Pollinator Events this month.
Watch your email for additional information
about the Summer Party.

2019 BCMG Officers

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

GENE SHELHAMER, 2019 BCMGA PRESIDENT



We have been very
blessed with moisture this
past month. Many of our
plants are blooming and it's
makes all of us feel good.

In May we had a Kids Pollinator event at the Swenson
House. Although the weather was cool, we had good
attendance and there were about 30 MGs sharing several
aspects plant pollination and it's importance in out lives. See
the article and pictures from Sandy Shaw on page 4.

The State MG Award winning Kids & Kows & More
education event was led by Molly Lorch. Her team of
MGs had an integral part in the large program sharing
information with several 4th grade Abilene ISD classes .
Our part was titled "Water, Water, Everywhere, but Not a
Drop to Drink.."

We are looking forward to
our Summer Master
Gardener Party on June
18th. Hope to see you
there.

Happy gardening!



McMURRY GREENHOUSE: OPEN OR CLOSED?

By Molly Lorch

What does it mean to be an open or closed greenhouse? To properly answer this question you would need to know what it means. I am not referring to being open for business or having a door that is always locked. I use these words, open or closed as to how the greenhouse is ventilated. Also, how open or closed the greenhouse is to the outside environment.



Ventilation in a greenhouse is extremely important. Ventilation includes both internal air circulation and the exchange between inside and outside air. Air circulation inside a greenhouse is important for insect control, disease control, cooling and heating. Can you imagine how weak a plant's stems would grow if



there was no "wind"? Fans are used to blow across young plants to strengthen the stems, reduce insect outbreaks, and dry leaves that get wet from overhead watering.

Some ways greenhouses can be ventilated are: roof vents, side vents, exhaust fans, circulation fans, vent fans, evaporative coolers, open windows, open doors, air conditioner, fan tube, and jet fan.



So, what does this have to do with open or closed? I consider a closed greenhouse to be one that is very careful to keep the outside environment from affecting the inside of the greenhouse. Some greenhouses, like Harry's in Weatherford, have insect screening over windows or vents. Employees at Harry's are very cautious to keep doors closed as much as possible. I would consider Harry's to be a closed or semi-closed greenhouse. A commercial greenhouse that propagates and/or grows plants for profit must be

very careful to reduce the risk of outside contamination. Hydroponic greenhouses can have a two-door air lock system and make you wear covers over your shoes or walk across a mat of antibacterial agent. If you visit a hydroponic greenhouse you will be asked to keep your hands out of the water to reduce contamination. Greenhouses such as these are very closed.



Mickey's Garden...a hydroponics' greenhouse in Hunt, TX. They grow and sell lettuce and herbs as a commercial venture. They grow plants in Styrofoam rafts that float on top of one of eight troughs of water.

The Plant Haus II in Kerrville is a retail nursery and landscape store that has a very fancy up-to-date greenhouse. The systems of the greenhouse are computer controlled and get information from a weather satellite. The sides, vents, air conditioning, heat are all automatic. The outside walls can open automatically when the outside weather is good. The Plant Haus II can be an open greenhouse because it is not a production greenhouse.



The McMurry Greenhouse is an OPEN greenhouse. The McMurry greenhouse vent 'windows' and roof vents do not have insect screening. On hot days you might find the doors propped open to reduce the heat. People, birds, insects, butterflies, or anything can come visit the plants at the McMurry greenhouse.



Recently, there were several McMurry employees that visited the open greenhouse. A man from the Maintenance Department dropped by to check on a fan and asked me about an exotic purple flower he had seen growing inside the greenhouse. I realized he was talking about the passion flower vines that grow 'wild' inside the greenhouse. He wanted to know if they would survive outside. I showed him the ones popping up in the grass near the front door. He wanted to dig them up and take them home. However, I told him that was not necessary because I had some already propagated that he could have. He left a happy man with baby passion flowers. Another day, I new McMurry employee stopped by to see what was growing in the 'hothouse'. I found out that he had just moved to Abilene from Naperville, IL. I was flabbergasted because I moved to Abilene from a town next to Naperville. We discussed how the climate and environment between Naperville and Abilene are very different. I was able to encourage him to learn how to grow plants in Abilene. I was able to tell him what a Master Gardener does.



Feel free to come visit the open McMurry Greenhouse. The doors are locked for security reasons when no one is working. Call or text Molly at 630-797-8437 to arrange a visit or work session. The next big project is the annual cleaning needed to make the greenhouse more sanitary.

Thank you Molly and Vicki for all your organization and hard work!

Swenson House Pollinator Heroes/Pollinator Grant!!

For those of you who were not able to attend the Pollinator Grant, #1 event at Swenson House on May 11th - here is a review!

The best thing about this event for us was the 27 Master Gardeners and 4 Master Naturalists taking part in



the leading of this event!

Our weather was iffy, but rain subsided and the flowers and rose bushes were in good bloom— beautiful!

We had not done a setup, 'stationed program' like this before and according to the evaluation sheets, the public loved it! This might be something we

would recreate yearly? We didn't have the crowd we would have liked, but we had almost 50 participants and those were enthusiastic families with children who had a great time playing games, learning about pollinators, doing crafts and getting their faces painted!



The second Pollinator Grant fulfillment event will be held on June 17th at Faith Works. The first part of the second event there will be a neighborhood party at 6:30 in the evening at Faith Works showing off the garden, sharing information and serving refreshments. The next half of this #2 event will be held on Saturday, June 22.

This will include seniors and friends from three assisted living residences, invited by groups at 9am, 10 am and 11am to tour the gardens at Swenson House!

The garden is still in good bloom and the granite paths lend themselves to easier passage for those in wheelchairs and with canes and walkers. What fun!



Swenson House Pollinator Heroes cont....



State Awards



These individuals were involved in the Swenson House project. There were many others that volunteered who were not at the meeting. This project won second place in the state awards for the Project category.

The Kids, Kows, and More program won FIRST place at the state level in the Youth division. These individuals helped with this program. There were others involved who didn't attend our last meeting.



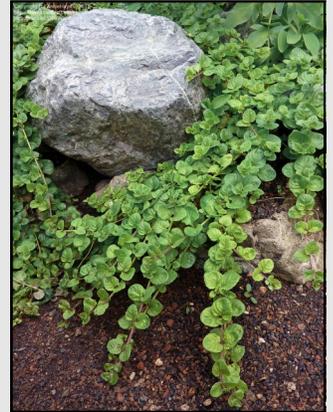
President Gene Shelhamer presented the state Outstanding Individual Master Gardener Award to Jackie Sledge.

Again, congratulations to our great volunteers for earning these awards!

What To Do in June

Jackie Sledge

- * Plant shade-tolerant ground cover under trees where grass won't grow or is too weak.
- * Plant crape myrtles while in bloom to make sure you are getting the color you want. Be sure to water in during heat.



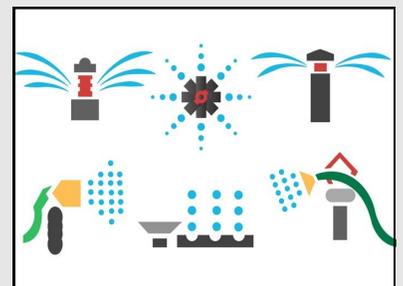
- * Red spider mites can be a problem on beans, melons, tomatoes, and other plants. Spider mites like it hot and dry so control them with a strong stream of water, insecticidal soap, or miticide. As a last resort, use insecticide. Make sure you spray the backs of the leaves too.

- * Re-blooming salvias can be pruned back periodically through the summer. Remove spent flowers and a few inches of stem below.
- * Plan for next spring. Dig and divide spring bulbs. Once the foliage has turned brown, it is time to dig them up and thin them out. Crowded bulbs produce fewer and smaller blooms. It is best to thin them at least every 3 years.
- * June is a great time to choose daylily varieties because they are in peak bloom season.
- * Remove flower buds on caladiums, coleus, lambs ear, mums, and santolina. These plants will do much better if the buds are not allowed to flower.
- * Prune spring flowering shrubs and vines in June.



- * Blossom end rot of tomatoes results in a dried, sunken area on the base ends of the fruit. It shows that your plants are getting too dry between watering.
- * Mow at recommended height for your turfgrass to encourage healthy, dense turf.
- * Water lawns fewer times but deeply – 1" or more. Overwatering causes shallow roots and is also a big waste of a very precious resource.

- * Apply mulch where needed to help conserve moisture in your beds.
- * Be sure to feed and water the birds.



Homemade Cleaning Products

Jane Rowan presented an educational program on homemade cleaning products, and I thought I would share some of her information with our group since we are interested in Earthkind ways of working in our yards and gardens and might want to bring those same concepts indoors.

What is a cleaning product? A cleaning product is a blend of specialty materials used to remove soils and stains from a surface and to restore the surface to its original condition. We clean to protect our health and prevent the spread of disease as well as maintain the look and extend the life of our possessions.

Why homemade cleaning products? Some reasons we might want to make our own cleaning products are to save money, to use less toxic and more environmentally-friendly products, and to address concerns about allergens and irritants. The basic ingredients in many homemade cleaners are vinegar, lemon juice, rubbing alcohol, baking soda, mild dish detergent, ammonia, borax, washing soda, liquid bleach, and water.

WARNING: Never mix bleach and ammonia together. Their chemical reaction will result in toxic fumes that can be deadly!

So here are some recipes for homemade cleaning products:

All Purpose Cleaner

Ingredients:

8 ounces Distilled White Vinegar	2 ounces Liquid Dish Soap
2 teaspoons Baking Soda	10 ounces water
4 ounces Lemon Juice	1 Professional Spray Bottle

To Mix: In a large container or cleaning bucket, add the Baking Soda and Vinegar first and let it fizzle out before adding the rest of the ingredients as it will foam up. When foam settles, funnel the ingredients into your pro spray bottle.

To Use: Lightly spray surfaces to clean. Let sit for a few minutes. Use a clean micro-fiber cloth to wipe down surfaces from the cleanest to the dirtiest. **Rinse very well to avoid slippery shower and tub floors.**

Glass/Window Cleaner

Ingredients:

8 ounces Rubbing Alcohol	1 tablespoon Vinegar
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To Mix: Add Rubbing Alcohol and Vinegar to spray bottle. Shake well before each use. **To Use:** Spray on glass or mirror. You can use either a crumpled up newspaper or micro-fiber cloth to dry and shine your glass and mirrors.

Daily Shower Spray

Ingredients:

1/3 cup Rubbing Alcohol	1 cup Water
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Mix in a spray bottle and shake. Spray on. No rinsing required.

Homemade Cleaning Products continue.....

Furniture Polish

Ingredients:

1 part Vegetable Oil 1 part Lemon Juice

To Mix: Mix together in spray bottle. **To Use:** Spray lightly onto micro-fiber cloth. Rub into furniture and wipe clean.

Wood Floor Cleaner

Ingredients:

½ cup Vinegar 1 gallon Water

Be careful not to let wood floors get too wet!

Marble & Granite Cleaning Spray

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons Rubbing Alcohol 1 teaspoon Castile or Dish Soap

1 ½ cups Water

To Mix: Combine ingredients in spray bottle, close bottle, shake, and clean.

Warning: Never use Vinegar, Ammonia, or Lemon cleaners on stone counters, showers, etc. These products will slowly etch away at the finish of the stone.

WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN

Fresh Corn on the Cob with Chili Butter (Microwave)

½ c butter

¼ tsp salt

2 tsp chili powder

1 tsp lime juice

½ tsp dried oregano, crushed

4 ears fresh super sweet corn, shucked

¼ tsp ground cumin



In a small bowl, stir together chili powder, butter, oregano, cumin, salt, and lime juice until blended. Spread butter mixture evenly over each ear of corn. Place in a microwaveable dish; cover loosely with plastic wrap or wax paper. Microwave on High for 10-15 minutes, turning once halfway through cooking time. Makes 4 servings.

New Happenings at the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens & The Botanical Research Institute of Texas

Over the past year, the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT®) and the Fort Worth Botanic Garden have combined their education and volunteer efforts to launch new and innovative programming.

The partnership — called GROW — has resulted in new opportunities for students, families, and adults, including Family Exploration Saturdays, Spring Break Family Camps, Come & Grow Field Study Trips for schools, botanical art for children, and a variety of botanically related classes and workshops for adults. GROW currently includes joint programming for the two facilities and a combined volunteer program.

As part of an expanded partnership, the Botanic Garden and BRIT will now begin selling joint memberships to encourage community support of these institutions.

The membership will also allow affordable, regular Japanese Garden visits and ultimately, Botanic Garden admission once fees are implemented later this year. It will also allow reciprocal free admission to more than 300 public gardens across the United States – including **Dallas Arboretum** – event discounts, and more.

More membership information can be found through visiting fwGROW.org, emailing membership@fwgrow.org or calling 817.332.4441.

Katherine Campbell (Susan Trice's Daughter) | **Director of Membership** | BRIT® | **817.332.7518**

SATURDAY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

As part of fulfilling our MG objective to provide education to the public (and our own members) the Specialist Committee assumed the responsibility of having educational programs on the last Saturday morning of the month beginning in March and concluding in August. The topics thus far have included vegetable gardening, container gardening, and rain water harvesting/irrigation. For June, Texas Superstars and Greenhouses will be presented. Concluding this year's programs will be Fall Gardening in July and an exciting Yard Art and Hardscape program in August.



Response from the public has been encouraging and support/attendance by our own MGs has been wonderful! MGs get 3 hours of educational credit and have a wonderful time. In addition, contributing “snack food” provides MG with an hour of community service. We would love to have you

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...

My Favorite Plant

By Audrie Gillespie



I was so excited when Jackie said she was looking for someone to talk about their favorite plants for our newsletter...until I realized I had to pick a favorite. My weeping yaupon hollies and weeping redbud take me back to my hiding place as a little girl in a hollow under the lilac hedge. The privacy fence on the west side of our home is lined with redbuds, a crepe myrtle, a pecan tree, and a hackberry. The combination is no doubt due to neglect by previous owners, but I step out of my office door onto a (very short) wooded lane that immediately speaks peace to my soul. Still, what I crave during the long days of winter is the first spring bloom. I need a sign in the back window of my car warning that I brake for flowers. If I must pick a favorite, I choose native and well-adapted flowering plants.

The back yard is my domain. I took out half the lawn and planted a combination of wildflower seeds, mostly native, and buffalo grass. I just walked outside to write down all the different flowers I saw. Black-eyed Susan, black foot daisy, blue flax, pink evening primrose, coreopsis, wine cup, gaillardia, and bee balm soar over the grass and patches of horse herb. Part of the back has been cleared out and seedlings of zinnias are just now coming up, promising a dazzling display later this summer. The surrounding beds and pots contain red poppies, oxeye and/or shasta daisies, hollyhocks, verbena bonariensis, a rain lily that just popped up, zexmenia, yarrow, Jerusalem sage, a 'Bubba' desert willow, and dianthus, many of them waiting for a new home in the beds being prepared in the front of the house for fall planting. It is wild, often unkempt and weedy, but I love the vibrant flower color and shapes, along with the wildlife they welcome.

I am trying to consider curb appeal from my neighbors' standpoint in the front yard with well-defined beds and more evergreen plants. I need color, though. Flowers include 'Henry Duhlberg' salvia, salvia greggii, day lilies, sundrops, catmint, germander, yarrow, and Mexican oregano. The Eve's Necklace tree blooms in early spring. The crepe myrtle and vitex are just now getting ready to shine.

In truth, I am grateful for all the different kinds of plants that we can combine to make gardens and for the gardeners who plant them. I look forward to reading about your favorite plants in future newsletters.

Thank you Audrie!!

Send Susan an article about your favorite plant.

.....smgcampb@aol.com(1 hour of education)



.....next month-"Growing Caladiums in the Big Country by BL

Presentations:**Adding Water as a Design Element to Your Garden***With Anita Nelson***Starting from the Ground Up: Earth-Kind Soil Management for the Concho Valley***With John Begnaud***Native Host Plants for Texas Butterflies & Moths***With Jim and Lynne Weber***From the Backyard to the Back Forty: Managing Landscapes or Ranch Land to Benefit Native Birds***With Rufus Stephens***The Healthy Lawns Checklist: A Simple Guide to Managing a "Happy" and Sustainable Texas Lawn***With Dr. Becky Grubbs-Bowling*

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Concho Valley Master Gardener's

8th annual

Fall Landscaping Symposium

Saturday September 7, 2019

**Location: Texas A&M Agrilife Research & Extension Center
7887 N. US Highway 87, San Angelo****Registration 8:00am****Program 8:30am-3:15pm****Cost: \$30 per person**

No refunds for cancellations

Refreshments and lunch providedVisit txmq.org/conchovalley for infoVisit <http://squareup.com/store/cvmg> to register with credit card**Must Pre-Register by 9/4/2019****FMI: 325-659-6522**

Grand Tours

.....Watch your emails with more details.....!

As I'm writing this article, we are scheduled to go to four homes Saturday, June 1 (rescheduled) and June 8. We had to reschedule because of the bad weather and rain in May.

Scheduled for the 1st were the homes of Christine Moore, Donna Long-Wolfer, Shannon Abbott, and Dorothy Kiser.

Plans are to tour the homes of Richard O'Shields, Don Miller, Sandy Dugger and Molly and Tom Lorch on June 8.

I appreciate each of these individuals for offering their gardens for us to tour. I also thank Ellen Presley who was scheduled for the 18th but is on vacation now. If you have questions, please contact me at (325) 665-3102 or dkiser44@gmail.com.

Dorothy Kiser(Grand Tours Chair)



March/April/May

2019 Busy Bee & You Rock Award Winners



The You Rock award for February went to Terry Shuffield for helping build shelves in the McMurry greenhouse.

I apologize to Don Thompson for somehow not getting his picture. Don won the April You Rock award for teaching interns about rain barrels. Again I'm sorry about the picture.

The Busy Bee award for March was earned by Kathy Turner.

Jackie Sledge was the recipient of the April Busy Bee award.



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

MASTER GARDENER SPOTLIGHT Cheryl McCormick



In 1993, my husband took a job in Abilene. We rented a house, and when the landlord decided to sell it, we bought it because we were too lazy to move. But this gave us a reason to make changes to the house. The yard had

nothing in the front or back. We drove around town and when we saw a plant we liked, we bought it, whether it was good for this area or not. They died.

I got interested in listening to Howard Garrett, the Dirt Doctor, on how to amend the soil and what to plant. I bought his books, and we tried again. Like a lot of people, we still made plenty of mistakes, but learned a lot.

When my dad died unexpectedly, I needed something to do besides grieve. My husband pushed me to take the master gardener classes, so in 2005 I did. Alice Griggs was my mentor, and I remember her saying she hoped I would help working with kids in the Jr. MG program. I have no children, and frankly, they scared me to death. However, my classmate Richard O'Shields wanted to do the JMG program at Nelson Boys & Girls Club, so I decided to help. We did the program for 5 years, and I came to be very fond of those kids. I look back on that time as one of the best times of my life.

Now I've retired, and we are heading back to Colorado. I probably won't garden too much for a while since we hope to travel, but I will again someday. I feel closest to my dad in the garden. I appreciate the friends I've made and the fun I've had being a part of this great organization.

We will miss you Cheryl.....



June

June 6 Brad McCullough

June 9 Sandy Dugger

