

# September 2019

Big Country Master Gardener  
Association Newsletter  
Bcmgtx.org



## The Garden

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 7 8:30-3:15**

Fall Landscaping Symposium, San Angelo

**September 9 6:00**

Executive Committee Meeting,  
Swenson House (change in location because of the Fair)

**September 17 6:15**

Social Time, Education Program, and  
September Business Meeting,  
Extension Office Conference Room

Watch emails and the calendar for additions and corrections such as workdays for the Demo Gardens, Meditation Garden, and Swenson House.

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### 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

### Demo Garden Update-

The demo garden prep took a lot of time and effort in cleaning up, planning drainage, removing old stumps and getting ready for the pergola. It has been completed. Thank you to everyone who helped with this major overhaul. We are all waiting to see what a beautiful addition to the office everyone can learn from and enjoy.

### Maple Street Update-

The water faucets are in place and the water meter has been set. Hopefully the sea container will be set on the Maple St property soon.

### Education Series were a big success!!

We have now finished the three "Last Saturday of the Month" education sessions for the public and MGs. They were a great success and well attended. We have several great comments and praise from the public.

**"By all these lovely tokens  
September days are here,  
With summer's best of weather  
And autumn's best of cheer."**

- Helen Hunt Jackson, *September*, 1830-1885

## So is it Fall Yet? By Sandy Shaw

My gosh it seems as if August and its 100+ temperatures will last forever. This is the hardest month for our projects...people being on vacation, the debilitating heat... we try to keep things, if not flourishing, at least alive – to welcome in blessed October- my favorite month!! (Notice I am omitting September....it too is insufferably hot most days and not a productive garden time. We are thinking fall - our weather is 'acting summer'). We have some important projects on our agenda and even though we are not planting yet, we are planning, so get ready to volunteer when the time comes. Better yet, volunteer for the planning part - we need your ideas!



**Our largest project upcoming is the Demo Garden** – large not only moneywise, but in plant presentation and definitely large in volunteer hours and people working.



As the focal point of this four bed project, and the first thing to be constructed, is a pergola! It will serve as a visual anchor- giving some protection from wind and sun as well as a place for display and information. The bid for work has been accepted and under advisement- the challenge now is ours- arranging the ground prep; tree stump and extensive root removal....( there is always something isn't there, to keep things from being easy peasy.) We look forward to our work with Dr. Billy Kniffen; our water catchment and drainage guru who has most generously agreed to consult on this project. Think about joining the crew! What a fun way to get us through hot September.

**Project Committee**



## What To Do in September

*Jackie Sledge*

- \* Fall is the prime time for planting trees and shrubs.
- \* Fall is also a good time for planting spring-flowering perennials. Plants planted in the fall will thrive in the spring.



- \* You can divide ajuga, amaryllis, canna, daylily, iris, rudbeckia, liriopie, violets, and Shasta daisy this month.
- \* Dig and divide grape hyacinth, narcissus, oxalis, and spring-flowering bulbs. Replant the divided bulbs immediately.
- \* Start planning on fall bulbs to plant like iris, crocus, daffodils, and more for spring color.



- \* Plant cool-season color such as pinks, snapdragons, mums, ornamental cabbage, and kale this month. Wait until October to plant pansies because weather that is too warm results in lanky plants.
- \* Sow wildflower seeds in September and October. Cultivate your soil lightly before sowing.

- \* Deadhead beds to remove browned leaves and stalks.



- \* Now is a great time to seed your lawn – either seeding a new lawn or over-seeding an existing lawn. This allows the grass to establish good roots before winter. Be sure to keep the soil moist for the first two to three weeks.



- \* Mow the lawn frequently at the recommended height. Weeds can be crowded out in dense grass.
- \* Clean out your flower beds and mulch them for winter.



## Sarah's Fall Tomato Garden

By Sarah Adams

I have been vegetable gardening for approximately 15 years and I love it! If I am being perfectly honest – I love tomato gardening! I grow many other kinds of vegetables but I LOVE tomatoes! As with all gardening, it is a lot of work, it is usually very hot, and some years the weather cooperates and some years it doesn't, but I truly enjoy the journey! I enjoy growing varieties that aren't widely available and I try new varieties from seed every year!

Here is my disclaimer – I am pretty sure that I do most everything wrong!! I don't plant a second round of tomatoes; I take good care -well, as good as time allows- of my summer tomatoes so that they will produce again in the fall. So, as I am writing this article, it is August and I have eaten or given away all the tomatoes that I have grown so far. Further, it has been so hot that the tomatoes haven't been very productive these last few weeks. Now is the time to think about getting the tomatoes plants back in shape and ready to grow a good Fall crop as soon as the temperature dip back down to the low 90's.

I select tomato plants using all of the standard Texas tomato advice: 1) pick tomato plants that have medium to small tomatoes, 2) pick plants that can take the Texas heat, and 3) pick plants that have a shorter time to ripen. But the main rule in order to use the Spring tomato plants for the Fall tomato garden is that the plants must be indeterminate.

If you go to a garden center the word "indeterminate" should be printed on the label of the tomato whether you buy seeds or plants. If it isn't on the label then just google the type of tomato plant and it should be easy to find. Indeterminate tomatoes will grow and produce fruit until killed by frost. These tomato plants routinely reach heights of 6 feet. They can grow in an out-of-control manner and really require tall cages. Most heirloom tomato plants are indeterminate so there is a great variety in color and shape! My indeterminate tomato plants produce tomatoes kind of like a rose bush. There is the first great harvest and then it just continuously produces until it gets too hot to set fruit.

If a tomato plant is not an indeterminate plant then it is a determinate plant, these are more "bush" tomatoes that stay very compact in height (usually under 4 feet) and they produce all at once and then they are done. These are great plants if you want a large tomato crop all at the same time.

### Sarah's Fall Tomato Garden....continued



So, if I had my act together, I would plant these as my second tomato crop and then I would have a bunch of tomatoes all at the same time, which would make canning them a much more predictable task. But..... I don't.

Instead, at the hottest time of the year, I go out into the garden and assess the situation. I am looking for plants that didn't make it through the heat.

I remove those from my garden. Then I look at the plants that look good but just need some tidying up. I remove any dead or stressed branches. I also make sure that there are not any tomatoes laying in the ground that might attract pests or birds. I also make sure that the cages are still holding the plants. This sounds silly but these things have a mind of their own! Sometimes the tomato plants that I planted next to the cage that I am working on have crept into this cage. Is my garden a bit unruly? – well maybe so! I also make sure that there is plenty of water and good fertilization in the garden. My main focus is keeping the plants healthy.

I am one happy camper when the temps cool down the plant starts to put on new tomato blooms. We continue to eat them, but then when I get too many instead of giving them away, I start canning them for the winter. I love to can! I was asked recently why I don't just freeze them and the answer really is that they keep a better texture when they are canned. At least to me! I do make tomato sauce and freeze that.

Then just as I am feeling pretty good about my fall tomato crop, I hear the worst news..... The temperature might get under 35! OH! It always seems to come at the most inconvenient time. Further, "they" are never sure if it is *really* going to freeze. So now comes the great tomato gamble. Do I pick them or do I leave them? For me, it comes down to 2 things: 1) how tired am I and 2) what temperature are they predicting. In this interest of full disclosure, I should tell you that I am a terrible gambler! Usually, I cave and pick all the green tomatoes. Really, I don't have anything to lose if I pick them and I have all of the tomatoes to lose if I don't.

So, I pick all the green tomatoes. ALL OF THEM! I lay them out in a single layer in a cardboard box or just newspaper and leave them in an out of the way place. I don't wash them; I just wipe them down to get any dirt or bugs off of them. Then depending on the variety and the stage at which they were picked, over the next weeks or months they ripen and turn red! It is really a great winter-time treat to have fresh tomatoes!!

# WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN

## Double Chocolate Zucchini Bread

### Ingredients

Makes 2 or 3 loaf pans.

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 cups zucchini, grated | 2 tsp vanilla              |
| ½ cup cocoa             | 4 cups flour               |
| 1 tsp soda              | 1 ½ cup sugar              |
| 1 tsp cinnamon          | ½ tsp baking powder        |
| ½ tsp nutmeg            | ¾ tsp salt                 |
| 1 ½ cup milk            | 1 ½ cup oil                |
|                         | 3 eggs                     |
|                         | 1 cup mini chocolate chips |



- ⇒ Combine dry ingredients.
- ⇒ Mix zucchini with remaining ingredients except chocolate chips.
- ⇒ Add to dry ingredients.
- ⇒ Stir in chocolate chips and put batter into prepared pans.
- ⇒ Bake 1 hour and 15 minutes at 350 degrees.
- ⇒ Cool on rack about 10 minutes. Remove from pans and cool completely.

Adjust your irrigation schedule. We all hope fall will bring some rain and cooler temperatures so let the plants tell you when they need water. Tremendous amount of water are wasted in the fall by watering on the same schedule as in summer.



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“gardening:  
the fine art of  
soul to soil.”

- Jan Bills

www.twowomenandahoe.com

# August 31 Saturday Education Seminar-Dressing Up Your Yard



## Fall is an Important Time for Master Gardeners

**We have recovered from the fast-paced BCMGA spring schedule which included:**

- Intern training classes
- Adding and planting new beds at Swenson House
- Replanting existing beds at Swenson House
- Tearing out beds at the Meditation Garden
- Totally taking out the Demo Beds at the Extension Office
- Numerous tasks at the McMurry Greenhouse (propagating, planting seeds, watering plants, killing bugs, adding outside plants, washing pots, washing pots, and washing pots)
- Cleaning beds at FaithWorks
- Adding and planting new beds at FaithWorks
- Saturday Seminars the last Saturday of each month
- Programs such as Kids, Kows & More
- Pollinator events at FaithWorks and Swenson House as part of the Pollinator Grant
- And the Spring Plant Sale

**Now it's time to get the fall activities and events in place so here are some of the ones on the calendar:**

Reconstruction of the Demo Beds at the Extension Office

Add Demo Beds at the Modern Living Mall

Continue work at Swenson House, McMurry Greenhouse, and possibly FaithWorks

Programs such as Food and Fiber Day for students during the West Texas Fair

Possibly be able to start work at Maple Street

Possibly start the Master Gardener pollinator bed at the Meditation Garden

Complete the activities for the Pollinator Grant

Elect BCMGA officers for 2020

Prepare the budget for 2020

And last, the Fall Plant Sale



Fall is continued.....

We are working on the plans for the Fall Plant Sale, and we would certainly like any feedback you have about previous plant sales. We would also like any suggestions for the Fall Plant Sale because that's the time to try anything new or different since it's a smaller sale. There are always things that can be improved to help streamline the process to make the plant sale run smoother, and we want to hear

what you think. Please send your suggestions and plant recommendations to [mgardeners@yahoo.com](mailto:mgardeners@yahoo.com) with Fall Plant Sale in the subject line, and we will see if any ideas can be implemented plus order suggested plants if they are available.

Now last, but certainly not least, BCMGA needs everyone to make and keep it an asset to the Big Country. Each person has



valuable knowledge and skills that

can be used in a variety of ways to help. We need people to plan, people to do the work, people to help with education, and the list goes on and on.

Last year BCMGA reported about 9,520 hours, and that is a contribution of \$242,093.60 in volunteer time if we put a monetary value on it. That's a tremendous number of hours and monetary contribution, but more important is the value of the education we provided to the public through presentations, seminars, plant sales, events, and the

beds and gardens open for public viewing and education.

Do we matter? Absolutely. Do you matter? Absolutely. This could not be accomplished without each of you and your contribution to BCMGA. Thank you for your part, and thank you from the public for making our community a better place to live.



**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...

## I LOVE FALL VEGETABLES!

By Junita Campos

I do still plant summer veggies but fall veggies are truly my favorite.

I really and truly don't know of a plant that I do not like. But my most favorite, since I became a Vegetable Specialist has got to be fall veggies. The list is extensive but does include broccoli, cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, spinach, kale, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, and lettuce.

I never knew there were so many varieties of lettuce.



**My favorite season is the fall.** Did you know fall veggies require very little work? It's true. Most of the bugs have left by this time of the year and fall crops are free from all the diseases that attack summer veggies.

That makes it a lot easier and more interesting to see how they grow with such little care. They just kind of take care of themselves.



**So to help you get started ...**

1. You plant them
2. Water them initially till they develop
3. Kind of check in on them every now
4. Before you know it it's time to harvest and enjoy!



As a vegetable specialist, I am here to help you get started.



## 2019 4-H Community/Civic Award Goes to BCMGA

The Big Country Master Gardener Association was selected to receive the Taylor County 4-H Community /Civic Award for 2019. This was a sign of appreciation for generosity BCMGA has shown to the 4-H organization over the past several years.

Mr. Kit Horne said, "The Big Country Master Gardeners are an important part of the Extension program in Taylor County and a big supporter of our youth educational programs. They are always willing to conduct sessions at the Kids & Kows & More and Food & Fiber Day ag literacy programs and Junior Master Gardener programs. They also financially support our youth leadership programming such as the Taylor County's Best Youth Leadership Program. We do appreciate the many ways you help youth of Taylor County."

Give yourself a pat on the back if you have ever helped in one of their programs. Actually, every BCMGA member should consider this as sign of thanks because every member was involved in this award. Every one of us has done something to help 4-H even if you do not realize it.

MG President Gene Shelhamer received the award plaque at the annual 4-H Awards Banquet on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Master gardeners who attended the banquet were: Juanita Campos, Molly Lorch, Tom Lorch, Gene Shelhamer, and Jackie Sledge. Mary Sue Riskus was invited but not able to attend.



From left to right-Gene Shelhamer, Molly Lorch, Juanita Campos, Jackie Sledge



The Awards Committee consisting of Dorothy Kiser and Susan Trice awarded the following awards



**Jo Rake**, the You Rock award for May. She was nominated for her work in coordinating specialist training and many other things.

**Sandy Shaw** received the You Rock award for July. She was nominated for this award because of her work as project.



**Terry Sheffield** received the Busy Bee award for May, having reported the most hours for the month. Please remember to turn in your hours each month as the month ends.

YOU can nominate deserving individuals for the You Rock award to [dkiser44@gmail.com](mailto:dkiser44@gmail.com). I'm always in need of nominations.

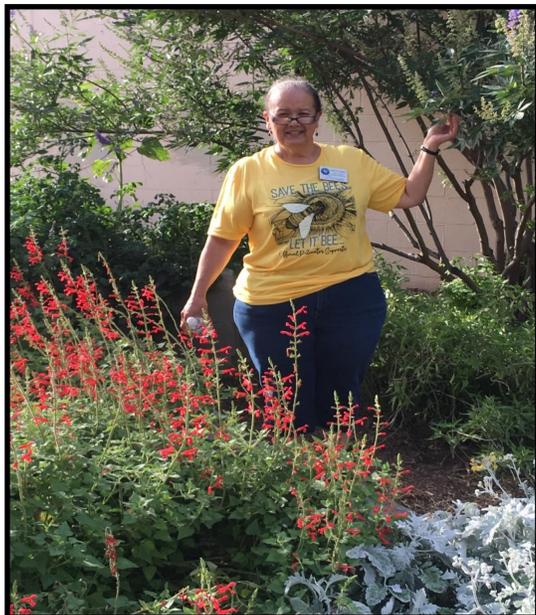
**You Rock Award** is an award given to the Association Member who has done something outstanding in the previous month.

**The Busy Bee** is the member who submitted the most hours the previous month.

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

# Master Gardener Spotlight

## Juanita Campos



I was born in La Feria, South Texas.

We moved up to the panhandle when I was in 1st grade. Let me tell you it was a culture shock, because we had never seen a true winter, and in the panhandle in the 60's it snowed a lot!

Regardless, we got used to it after a couple of years. Then a young sailor swept me off my feet. We traveled all through the US and our last duty station was in Virginia. Oh, I fell in love with Virginia.

Our youngest daughter married a young man in the Air force and guess where he was stationed, yep, Dyess. I did not want to deprive myself of being near my grandchildren, so guess what, we Packed up and moved back to Texas. We really didn't like Abilene at first, but it too grew on us. Actually we have been here almost 20 years.

My love for gardening began as a child. My grandmother and mother always had vegetable and flower gardens. I always worked in the gardens with both of them. My daughter works at the zoo, and one day she came home and told me, "Mom, there is a cool gardening club that I think you would like."

So in 2011, I signed up. I love being a Master Gardener because I love being around people, but mostly kids, that's why I decided to go into the JMG program. Gardening for me is so therapeutic. I love to just go out in my yard and get lost. I seem to really love perennials and vegetable gardening in a keyhole garden.

But winter veggies are my favorite.

# September



3-Kathy Feagan  
 7-Jackie Lee  
 7- Terry Shuffield  
 20- Beth Hamaty  
 21-Jean Seymore

24-Misty Hayward  
 24-Carol Waters  
 28-Kim Anderson

