

June 2020

Big Country Master Gardener
Association Newsletter
Bcmgtx.org
mgardeners@yahoo.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

So far there are no events scheduled in June because of CDC, State, County, and City guidelines. Please watch for email updates if there are changes that allow workdays or meetings or if a virtual meeting is scheduled.

There may be a workday added to weed and work on the Demo Beds at the Extension Office later this week. Please watch your email for information about this project.

Please contact Sandy Shaw at 505-690-3950 or sandyshaw@ctesc.net if you need additional information about projects.

Please let Jackie know if you have questions about hours or membership.



2020 Officers

- President – Sandy Shaw
- President Elect – Jackie Sledge
- Vice President – Sarah Adams
- Secretary – Terry Shuffield
- Treasurer – Richard O’Shields
- Past President – Gene Shelhamer

The Garden Thymes

A message from our president.....Sandy Shaw



Meditation Garden.... Red, White and Blue!

Most of you have been to the Meditation Garden across the street from First Central Presbyterian Church at 4th and Beech. For those who have never been by the garden - It is time to go see! For a couple of years now we (BCMGA) have shared an agreement with the Church to work in the garden. Things changed somewhat, the leadership/plan for the garden was contracted to Adam Andrews at Willow Creek Nursery. His plan was for the entire lot, and has been carried out, not to the finish as yet, but at least to good working order; the Labyrinth is used regularly by members and neighbors, some memorial services have used the “Chapel” built at the back side. Still work to be done. We master gardeners who had worked the garden from the beginning were not sure if the new plans included our work, but Adam reported that they would create a large bed for us - to “pollinate”! When they paved our designated area, we were happy to see a long (30’), raised bed filled with fertile, happy soil and they had promised us drip irrigation! When we planted, we were focused on perennials, pollinators, etc....but anticipated the bed to really be in bloom in late spring, early summer. So, Kathy suggested ...”.how about let’s do patriotic, for the 4th of July!?”. So, we planned red white and blue salvias, lilies, etc. and it is just beautiful! Today we added red and white pentas, planted in ‘stripes’ to carry out our flag theme. One of the best surprises was the growth of the red (paprika) yarrow- they are the center surrounding the red salvia and red and blue verbena and are worth a trip to see. We have a couple of more Henry Duelbergs to plant then will just enjoy for the rest of the season. (Ok...our ‘blue’ is a little bit purple)...

So, here is a great opportunity for someone to take on the supervision of this neat and tidy perennial bed. The work is done for a while; the flowers are dripped and the upkeep would be minimum, Call me if you are interested! It’s time to “show your colors “.

See ya soon we hope.



Project Committee –

Fred Perkins Garden Grant!

(Richard O'Shields presenting Marty Lannon and Janet Payne from the Swenson House Historical Society, the \$500 Fred Perkins Garden Grant from Big Country Master Gardener Association to help them upgrade their fish pond .)

This past year BCMGA created and offered a \$500.00

'Fred Perkins Garden Grant' opportunity.

The Garden Grant application was submitted by Janet Payne, President of Swenson House Historical Society, was considered by the BCMGA Project Committee and Executive Board, and awarded to Swenson House Historical Society for the purpose of Lily Pond restoration. The pond needs a more efficient filtration pump...and BCMGA would love to donate new plantings around the pond.

An exciting part of this grant is the involvement of the Master Gardeners. The original pond was created by Mr. Swenson in the 1920's, then, decades later, refurbished as an Eagle Scout Project, and is now in need of another update, a new filtration system. When we announced this as a possible project, we had immediate interest and at least 20 master gardeners signed on for working if it indeed became a project. We are fortunate to have fellow member Steven Davis who is a pond guru and has agreed to lead this work.

We hope this project can turn into a fun and interesting class experience as well. Stay tuned for news of that.... Here is a picture of our Treasurer, Richard, presenting the \$500.00 check to Marty Lannon and Janet Payne from the Swenson House Historical Society.

Thanks to all of you for the interest and support.

June Gardening Tip

Do not plant where weeds do not grow because your plants won't grow there either!



WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN

Fresh Refrigerator Pickles from Your Surplus Slicing Cucumbers

From March 2001 BCMG Cookbook

- 3 cucumbers
- 1 T salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ C sugar
- 1 medium green pepper
- 2 T celery seed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ C vinegar
- 1 medium onion



Cut cucumbers into 1/8-inch thick slices. Thinly slice green pepper (remove seed) and onion. Mix all together with salt and celery seed. Let stand for 1 hour. Drain. Combine sugar and vinegar, and stir. Pour over vegetables and mix well. Cover and refrigerate. Pickles are ready to eat in about a day. Store, uncovered, in refrigerator. This makes 5 cups of very good-tasting bread and butter type pickles.



- 1 cup white sugar (plus 2TBSP extra)
- 1 egg
- 1 cup peanut butter

Pre heat oven to 350. Mix peanut butter, sugar, and egg together in a bowl until creamy. Roll mixture into small uniform balls then roll in extra sugar. Place on baking sheet; flatten each with a fork, making a criss-cross pattern. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cook on sheet for 2 minutes before removing.

What To Do In.....



- Plant lawns. Sow Bermuda from seed or any of the warm-season grasses (Bermuda, St Augustine, zoysia, buffalo grass) from sod. Water daily for the first couple of weeks to keep the grass from drying out.

- Plant landscape plants. Watch for end-of-spring sales. Plant immediately and water every other day.
- Plant crape myrtles while in bloom to make sure you are getting the color you want. Be sure to water during heat.



- Plant heat-tolerant annuals such as purslane, moss rose, pentas, lantanas, gomphrenas, begonias, flowering tobacco, ornamental sweet potatoes, firebush, purple fountain grass, caladiums, and coleus. Be sure to select proper plants for your yard depending on sun or shade.

- 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.
- 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.



- 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.

- Be sure to feed and water the pollinators.

Tips from Neil Sperry and Doug Welsh.

Demo Garden Update!!

Yay!...We have waited a long time for the 'rings' to be in place - one thing and another, we have been delayed. No more!! They are in place, thanks to Dwayne Yarbrough and his crew.

They have been moved from the trailer to bed #4 and the guys made it look easy. These cylinders were powder-coated 'Aggie -maroon' and will be filled almost 'Keyhole - style', then planted.

We would love to have your raked leaves, old straw, newspaper, you know the drill...we will soon designate a day to soak and layer.

Stay tuned , thanks to all for the help. Sandy



MILKWEED AND MONARCHS

The Adventure Continues

By Molly Lorch

It's been a month since I told you about the new awareness I was developing for the tough life of a monarch butterfly. It was a big relief at the end of April to have no more hungry caterpillars. All of them had formed their chrysalis. Now I just had to wait. No more terrors could possibly happen, right?

It usually takes about 14 days for the monarch butterflies to emerge from their chrysalis. The chrysalis starts out a beautiful green with gold spots. You know the adult is about to emerge when the chrysalis is no longer green and you can see the orange and black wings of the butterfly inside. My husband and son got to see butterflies wiggling out, but I never did. The first time an adult emerged they called me on the phone and frantically asked what to do. You just let them hang out in the cage until their wings are dry. Sometimes we put flowers in the cage for the butterflies to enjoy. However, most of the time the butterflies seemed more interested in getting free than enjoying the flowers I had grown for them. Upon release most of the butterflies headed directly for a pecan tree rather than my flower garden! Jean Dotson had told me they like pecan trees, so once again, she was correct.

Everything seemed to be going along great until one day. Wesley was concerned because one of the chrysalises had fallen to the bottom of the cage. He consulted the internet and discovered that a butterfly could still emerge if the chrysalis was on the ground. He chose to get some string and tie it up to the top of the cage. That idea worked fine. A few days later that butterfly emerged happy and healthy. Sadly, I had two chrysalises that never emerged. Upon examination, one was dried out and the other one was gooey inside. It turns out there are milkweed shortages, dangers, diseases, and predators that can keep a caterpillar from forming into a beautiful adult monarch.

Please join me in growing and planting more milkweed to help make their life a little easier. I hope that we, the Big Country Master Gardener Association, can start over 500 tropical and 100 native milkweed plants by this time next year.



Beautiful Green Chrysalis



Almost ready to emerge



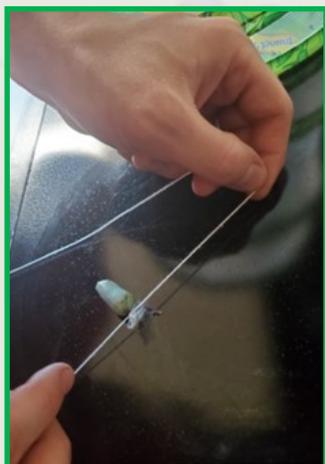
Empty Chrysalis



Newly Emerged



Newly Released



Tied String onto Chrysalis



Tied Chrysalis Yielded
Healthy Butterfly



Please remember to nominate an individual (even yourself) for the You Rock Award. The nomination should be for someone who has done something outstanding during the month.

Please send your nominations to Dorothy Kiser at dkiser44@gmail.com.

First of all, I'd like to say a big THANK YOU to all that sent photos of your flowers, gardens, and supporting information to Susan for the virtual tours!

We've had so many nice comments about your yards! I appreciate each of you and especially Susan for doing such a terrific job of organizing and sending out the emails.

It was unfortunate that we couldn't see all this beauty in person, but I'm thankful for technology that allowed us to do the virtual tours.

Dorothy Kiser
Chair, Tour Committee

We decided that no awards will be given out for April and May since we've not been able to do much volunteer work. If you have been working in the various beds, please remember to send Jackie your volunteer hours. Thank you!



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.

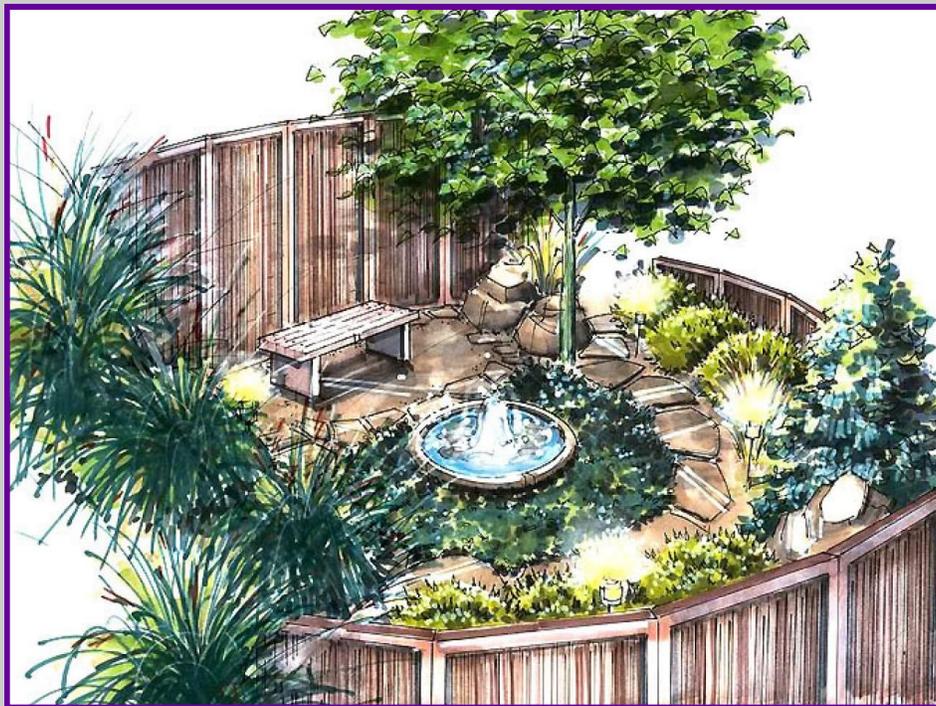
Therapeutic Garden.....

- Touch. If you're a hands-on person, look at textures. Examples are lamb's ear, sedum, ornamental grasses.
- Taste. If you're stimulated by taste, consider some fruit and vegetable perennials. Examples are lemon balm, sage, strawberries, mint, honeysuckle, any perennial vegetable.
- Sight. If you're relaxed by sight, select plants that flower in your favorite colors or attract pollinators. Examples are daisies, coneflower, coreopsis, asters – this list is endless!
- Sound. If you're soothed by sounds, consider plants that attract birds. Examples are ornamental grasses, butterfly bush, honeysuckle, yarrow, daisies, coneflowers plus wind chimes, fountains, rain sticks.
- Smell. If you're affected by aromas, include plants with distinct, pleasant fragrances. Examples are roses, lilac, fennel, lavender, mint, lemon balm, iris.



There is no one design that is relaxing to everyone so select what is best-suited for you. Intermingle perennials to appeal to all senses. Remember that this is YOUR therapeutic garden so make it your own space, a place where you can escape and relax. Include things that bring calm into your life, that leave you feeling refreshed, that help you detach from the details of life.

Do I need a therapeutic garden? Absolutely! Many of us already have some components of a therapeutic garden in our yards, and maybe we just need to intentionally add a few more things to make the area a place to enjoy life while being in our own personal garden spots.





**Texas
Master GardenerSM**



History of the Texas Master Gardener Program

When the term "Master Gardener" was first coined in the early 1970s to describe a new Extension program in Washington State, few could have predicted it would spread into Texas and blossom into one of the most effective volunteer organizations in the State. The Texas Master Gardener program had its beginnings in 1978 in an Extension horticulture training at A&M University when Dr. Sam Cotner (Extension vegetable specialist) described the success of the movement in Washington state. At that time, county agents in the Texas Cooperative Extension were experiencing overwhelming demands for horticulture information, much like their colleagues in the Pacific Northwest.

The first Master Gardener class was held in 1979 in Montgomery County and drew about 25 people. The 50-hour course was held in the evenings and taught by Extension agents and specialists from Texas A&M using a manual compiled from Extension publications and news articles. Volunteer service was optional, but class members were encouraged to work on Extension projects.

Two more counties, Galveston and El Paso, started programs in 1981. By the end of the decade, five more counties had Master Gardener programs: Harris ((1986), Dallas (1986), Tarrant (1987), Bexar (1989) and Denton (1989).

The Texas Agricultural Extension Service made an official commitment to a Texas Master Gardener program in 1987 with the hiring of a statewide coordinator. At that time, guidelines were developed for the program, including a minimum of 50 hours of formal training and 50 hours of volunteer service to become a certified Texas Master Gardener. The 500-page training handbook also was completed then.

In the 1990s, the Texas Master Gardener movement exploded, fueled by the program's success and visibility. In 1991, a statewide, non-profit organization was formed and called the Texas Master Gardener Association.

History of the Texas Master Gardener's Program....

Some projects are common to all Master Gardener programs. Answering homeowner's questions by phone is at the heart of most Texas programs.

Classroom gardening is another popular project. Some programs add different twists such as cylinder gardening (Harris, El Paso, Galveston), vermicomposting (Smith) or butterfly gardens (Denton). Other common projects are speakers bureaus, community gardens and information booths at local events.

Many projects that Master Gardeners are involved in directly reflect their communities. Examples are the Big Tree Contest (Orange), Wetlands Reclamation (Galveston), state historical part landscaping (Paris, Grayson) and State Capitol landscaping (Travis).

A love of gardening and search for knowledge is central to why Master Gardeners join the program. They remain Master Gardeners to enjoy the camaraderie and friendship of others who share their interests, to gain and share horticulture knowledge, and to give back to the community.

On the other hand, the 54 Master Gardener programs are as individual as the gardeners who inhabit them. Size of overall programs varies from 1 Master Gardener (Madison and Leon) to 8 Master Gardeners (Lamar) to 478 Master Gardeners (Bexar). Regardless of the size program, there is always a waiting list of individuals wanting to enter the Master Gardener program.

Though Texas Master Gardeners are united in name, the program's strength lies in its ability to meet the diverse needs of the individual communities it serves. By combining statewide guidelines with local direction and administration, the program offers the flexibility necessary to keep it a vital and responsive organization that serves all of Texas.

Did you know the TMGA has its own YouTube Channel? Videos are continuously being added.



2020 Advanced Training Offerings

Rainwater Harvesting

September 24-26
Hosted by Resource Connection of Tarrant County in Fort Worth

Greenhouse Management

October 15-17
Hosted by Resource Connection of Tarrant County in Fort Worth



LEMON
EUCALYPTUS
OIL



LAVENDER
OIL



CITRONELLA
OIL



CINNAMON
OIL



CATNIP



PEPPERMINT



NEEM



THYME



TEA TREE
OIL

NATURAL MOSQUITO REPELLENTS THAT REALLY WORK



Top10
Home Remedies

To explore more, visit
www.Top10HomeRemedies.com

No recommended for use on children under 3 years of age.



June 9

Sandy Dugger

June 12

Karen LaRue

June 22

Shannon Abbott

