

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Volume 9, Issue 2

April 2008

Concho Valley Master Gardeners



President's Message

By Ferd Koehn

Master Gardeners:

Well, spring is in full swing. Green is popping up all over. The old saying "if it thunders in February, it will freeze in April". Let's hope not.

Another successful plant sale is behind us. Thanks to all who helped make it a success again. I know that lots of time and effort went into this project.

There are lots of projects in progress, so getting your vol-

unteer hours for 2008 should not be a problem. Speaking of volunteer hours, be sure to log your hours and turn them in on a regular basis to the Extension office. Our hours for 2007 was considerably lower than what was reported in 2006. I believe that we are doing the volunteer hours, but just not turning them in to the Extension office.

An easy and convenient way to turn in your hours is to bring a COPY to the bi-

monthly meetings. We will make sure they get to the Extension office so that they can be logged.

Reminder, the next meeting is May 13th, hope to see you there.

Ferd



The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over never weeded a garden.
Ray D. Everson

Columbine: Submitted by Jane Capen



One of the most welcome spring flowers for many is the columbine, particularly our eye catching, bright yellow Texas Gold variety. It usually begins blooming in March, and with careful deadheading may continue to bloom through May. Columbine will also bloom in some shade, making it especially attractive to many gardeners. A tough plant, seldom requiring pesticides, Texas Gold Columbine is the first perennial to receive the "Earth-Kind" label from the Extension Service in Texas. Of course, Texans are

not the first to enjoy this flower.

The state flower of Colorado, columbines have been known to other people and cultures for centuries. In other parts of the world they come in different colors, different forms. They may be red, blue, white, purple, or a combination of colors, single or double. Some varieties thrive in sunny sites. As a garden plant the earliest reference to columbine can be found in a painting, Paradiesgaertlein (Little Paradise Garden) by an unknown artist about 1410. In 1613, the Hortus Eystettensis, an early botanical tome, recorded 12 cultivated varieties. In the 19th century the North American columbine had become quite popular in European gardens, but was out of favor

by 1900, being considered too "old fashioned" for stylish gardens. There are several interesting and diverse legends and symbols associated with this flower which has been known by such names as "granny bonnets", "Venus plant", "Jack-in-Trousers", "European Crowfoot", and "Mary's Bells". The oldest myths relate the columbine with the Norse goddess Freya, the goddess of love and fertility. Over time the myth and symbolism was appropriated by the Christians and the symbolism shifted to the Virgin Mary.



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Minutes: Concho Valley Master Gardeners — March 11, 2008; 5:30 PM

The meeting was held at the new 4-H building on Hwy 67 North, east of San Angelo at 5:30 p.m. President, Ferd Koehn, presided. The minutes from the previous meeting were e-mailed to membership and approved. Norma Cummings, Treasurer, submitted a report that there was \$ 4,264.25 in our bank account. No bills were presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

Library Garden: Carolyn Mason reported that there was a work day and they will need a couple more hours work done after the plant sale to complete the spring prep. Mary Chatfield called as President of Friends of the Library. It is official; they are going to give us \$200.00 to get another bench for the library garden.

Habitat for Humanity: Debbie reported that another Habitat house will be completed at the end of May or the first of June. The date for our work day is not set, but there is a signup sheet for that project. She will let us know when the work day is set.

Wall School Garden: Kay reported that the kids did a spring cleanup except for the Greggs Mist which we will use for the plant sale. There is a signup sheet for this Thursday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. to get the plants ready for the sale. Kay has some 1 gallon pots and we will need some more pots for this work day. Kay will go to Bobby's and get a bag of potting soil for the work day.

4H Building: Lynn Alexander reported that thanks to the rain they haven't had to water too much. Everything is looking good. We have a signup sheet for a work day to spread mulch and rock on the other side of the entrance. Rather than set a day now, Lynn will call those on the signup sheet and advise them of a time and date. John has acquired a desert willow for that area. We don't know when the flag pole is to be set.

Jail Landscape: We had a work day after the last meeting and everything is alive and looks great. We probably need another day to put in mulch and some rock. She will call and set up another work day after the plant sale.

Rainwater Capture Grant: Kay reported

that she had sent in a letter of request to The Wolslager Foundation regarding the rainwater capture project. They accepted the letter and want a full proposal. Kay has the paperwork that needs to be filed with The Wolslager Foundation by the first of May. They will not award the grant until December 1, 2008. After a lengthy discussion as to whether to begin the project by purchasing a poly tank and getting the project started as an incentive to The Wolslager Foundation for their participation and approval of the grant. It was decided that since most of the funds we have in our bank account are already promised for the greenhouse it was not the time to buy the poly tank. A motion was made and seconded to make the grant application for the full amount. The motion carried.

Home & Garden Show: Carolyn Mason stated that the show is set for April 5th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and April 6th from noon till 4:00 p.m. There will be a setup time the morning of April 4th. They are reworking the displays to highlight xeriscape landscaping. So they need some pictures for the display featuring native and/or low water plants. The booth will have gardening books for children. There will be sunflower seeds for the kids as well. The booth will be more family focused this year. The drawing will be for Succulents in dish gardens. They have a signup sheet for all three days for workers.

Plant sale: Donna reported that they have over 1500 plants. The sale will be on April 5th at 8:00 a.m. at the Farmers Market facilities. On April 4th at about 3:00 she will need trucks trailers and drivers to meet at the City Greenhouse to load up. Donna and Ferd will be on Pat Atteberry's Noon show in the Thursday prior to the sale. Two weeks prior to the sale John Begnaud will put the information in his weekly newspaper column.

Greenhouse: Ferd reported that the Bronte facility was sold to another company. The Bronte school district let the

purchaser know that we are interested in the purchase. The greenhouse purchase may or may not happen. He will try to find out what is happening with our offer to purchase the greenhouse.

Begnaud Dedication: Ferd went down yesterday to look over the site. We are waiting for the concrete to be poured for the flagstone. No date has been set for the dedication of the Begnaud park area. Most of the materials for the rock wall have been donated. The City will deliver the pots and bench to the location and place them. The city is doing a lot of the work on the site. There is a space for a bronze plaque on the wall. The prices range from \$337.00 for an 8" x 8" or \$250.00 for a 4" x 8" plaque. There are no funds set aside in the budget for the plaque. Fran is still looking for a better deal at other places. The project is on hold till after the State Parks and Recreation Convention which the City is hosting. The work won't start back up till after Easter. Fran is working on getting something together for the ceremony.

Dove Creek: The project is almost done. We need to gather approximately 10 five gallon buckets of rocks and place mulch in the part we didn't get done last spring and top dress the area we finished last spring. There is a signup sheet for a workday on March 29 at 9:00 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

Dues List: Ferd reported that everyone should have received a card and an e-mail about their 2008 dues. We are going to purge the list at the end of this month. Ferd has a copy of the list that Kathy keeps at the office. He has highlighted those who have paid their dues and knows that a few more have paid. He will get an updated list. The dues were mailed to the State office March 2, 2008. Some have advised

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Continued Minutes of Meeting- March 11, 2008

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us that they want to be dropped. Members were asked to review the list and encourage those who have not paid to pay their dues.

Newsletter: Debbie reported that we need to change our newsletter format to fit in an envelope because the new postage meter machine at the office jams. It cannot accept our newsletter as it is. It was suggested that we forward it via e-mail for all those with access to e-mail and to mail the newsletter to those who don't have e-mail addresses. It would cut down on postage costs.

Training: Ferd requested that we get a coordinator to review the website: www.texasmastergardeners.com

perhaps weekly and report back to the group either via e-mail or through the newsletter about training and educational programs that are offered. He feels that we as a group are missing some opportunities for continuing education or specialization. It was decided that the state directors do the review and report back to the group with the information as things are changed or added to the state website. It was discussed that some of the events allow only two persons from each club to attend and they are further limited to a first come first served basis. A motion was made that and seconded that anyone can submit an application and pay their own way to any educational event they want. The first two from Tom Green MG group to apply get to go. Motion carried.

BWI: Bob Houck reported that he spoke to a friend who runs a buyer's co-op. There is a significant difference in how they run their co-op and how we probably will need to run our account with BWI.

He volunteered to coordinate the ordering process initially. Ideally an

email would go out to the membership announcing that we are putting together an order. Each member would contact him via e-mail the items they want. He would put it in a coherent format and forward it to BWI. The order would be delivered to Bobby Peiser's. You would be advised as to delivery date and would be expected to pickup and pay for your order ASAP. One wrinkle would be that we as individuals need to pay up front at the time of the order, not at the time of delivery, as our deal with BWI is COD. So our payments need to be received by the treasurer before she is called upon to cut a check to pay the order. An additional wrinkle in the system would be that price changes and fuel charges would not be known when you initially sent your order in, but would be known by the time your order arrived. It was suggested that we as individuals pay list price for all items and that should take care of cost difference. Any excess would go in the general fund to help pay for the items the group uses for group projects. The need for a coordinator comes in to play in the order process and in making sure Bobby has a check to give the BWI driver when he delivers the load. If not handled properly it can be a paperwork nightmare for the treasurer. Another wrinkle is our status as a 501(c) 3 organization with respect to the federal tax, and our need to get that paperwork done prior to asking for a sales tax certificate from the State Comptrollers office. After a lengthy discussion, a Motion was made and seconded that we use BWI except for group orders and not for individuals until Norma has completed the paperwork and research necessary to complete our 501(c)3 documentation and research State Sales Tax. The Motion carried.

Election of Officers: Ferd asked for input regarding changing our nomination and election of officers to coincide with the dates the State officers are nominated and elected. Therefore, our elections would need to be changed from May to December with the new officers to begin serving in January 2009. After a brief discussion a Motion was made and seconded that the current officers remain in office until December to align with the State elections. Additionally, that our elections for

new officers would be held in November and the new officers take over in January 2009. The Motion carried.

Monthly/Bi-Monthly Meeting change: Ferd reported that he has been getting inquiries from various members about our meeting schedule. There has been an increase in projects and the need for more speaker events to be used for CE units. Do we need to make a change? After a discussion and a show of hands it was decided that we will retain our bi-monthly meeting schedule. Kay volunteered to coordinate some CE speaker events with a possibility of special meetings to address that need.

Change of Venue/Time: Ferd also has been asked by some members whether we would consider changing our meeting back to noon at the Commissioner's Courtroom as we had previously. After a discussion and evidenced by a show of hands it was decided to retain our meetings at 5:30 p.m. at the 4H building on the second Tuesday of every other month.

Westlake Hardware Event: Sandy reported that she was approached by an employee of Westlake hardware about their gardening event scheduled in May of this year. They would like us to attend the event dressed in our shirts or aprons with name tags, etc. This would be to assist them in talking about plants and gardens, not to sell anything. They have donated the use of some of their garden furniture for our use in our Home Show booths for the past few years. The date has not been finalized yet. Sandy will keep us advised about a date and time. A motion was made and seconded to attend help with their event. Motion carried.

No other business was brought before the membership. A Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted:

Brenda White,
Secretary

According to Christian myth, columbine was said to have sprouted where Mary's feet touched the earth on her way to visit Elizabeth, and was symbolic of her innocence. The flowers were also thought to resemble a covey of doves, and doves were representational of the Holy Spirit. Over time, however, this meaning changed considerably. By the seventeenth century the columbine was a symbol of cuckoldry and a woman who received a bouquet of columbine was considered to be unfaithful or wanton, quite a deviation from its earlier meaning.



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from aqua, the Latin name for water and lego, Latin for "collect" referring to the flower's ability to hold either water or nectar. Columba is the Latin word for dove or dove-like and it has been said that the flower petals resemble a circle of doves. Finally, the Saxons called it "culverwort", with culfre denoting pigeon (similar to dove) and wyrt meaning plant.

Columbine has been used in the past for a number of medicinal purposes; this despite the fact that the plant is considered poisonous. Among the maladies it has been used to treat are kidney stones, sore throats, measles, small pox, head lice, infertility, impotence, and plague. While some sources say that heating and/or drying eliminates the poisonous prop-



erties, it's probably not worth the risk. Far better to enjoy the columbine for what it is -- a beautiful tough perennial that bloom in shade, is disease resistant, and produces enough seeds to share. Not only that, it makes a good cut flower. Best cut when half of the flowers are open, it is lovely in an arrangement. *Just do not give a bouquet of columbine to a woman familiar with its seventeenth century meaning.*

References:

- <http://trialgardens.cas.psu.edu/CutFlower/BackyardCutFlowers06.pdf>
- <http://trialgardens.cas.psu.edu/CutFlower/BackyardCutFlowers06.pdf>
- <http://www.englishplants.co.uk/columbine.html>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquilegia>
- <http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/cemap/columbine/txgoldpaper.html>

Editor's Note: Jane Capen is an active member of the Bell County Master Gardeners (Temple) and is known for her thorough research on horticulture topics.

TIPS TO MAINTAIN YOUR ENERGY ALL DAY

By Doreen Grimes



We could all use more energy, especially during this busy gardening season. As I read an article written by Jodi Helmer in

the May/June 2008 ARTHRITIS TODAY magazine I realized how helpful these tips might be for Concho Valley Master Gardeners. This publication deals with all sorts of general health and fitness issues, not just arthritis.

On some days I'm actually tired when I get up and seem to drag all day. It may not happen often, but when it does it can be a real downer. Other days it may be a mid-morning or mid-afternoon slump. Whenever it hits, here are some suggestions for overcoming a tired or "anything but alert" feeling.

(1) According to researchers, listening to music assists in boosting energy and even helps you think positively. As much as an



hour a day of listening reduces chronic pain and depression. Since I'm a musician, this tip really appeals to me.

(2) According to Stephen Kary, chiropractor in West Chester, PA, posture plays a major role in your energy and alertness. When you slouch, the muscles have to work harder to hold up the body which causes fatigue. And this applies to sitting and to standing. Remember what your mother told you: stand up straight!

(3) It's a good idea to keep peppermints handy. Eating a peppermint can get you through an afternoon slump. Lighting a peppermint candle also helps.



(4) Breathing deeply and slowly, forgetting all the pressures of your day for even three minutes, helps stave off fatigue.

(5) To keep your blood sugar on an even keel, snack on healthy foods like nuts (plain, no oil or salt), low-fat cheese, fruit or yogurt. Avoid high fat and fried foods.

(6) Wearing a bright article of clothing on a day when you awaken sluggish can also help, according to Sondra

Kornblatt, a life coach and co-author with Susannah Seton of 365 ENERGY BOOSTERS. Red is especially effective.

(7) Do some simple stretches during the day. Just a few minutes helps.

(8) Laugh! Giggle, chuckle - any kind of laughing - is good for your health.

(9) Be sure to get enough sleep. If you've been listening and reading lately, good sleep at night is crucial for alertness and feeling good throughout the day.

(10) Drink plenty of water, usually at least 8 glasses (8 oz.) a day. Avoid liquids that have lots of sugar like smoothies.



(11) According to Dr. Judith Orloff, MD, positive self-talk is important in maintaining your energy level. Tell yourself (aloud) "this morning is going to be a great day" -- anything positive. Dr. Orloff says "--- the very best thing you can do to boost your energy and promote good health" is to stay positive.



Garden Checklist: May - June

By John Begnaud

Taken from Concho Valley Master Gardener Newsletter Files- April 2003



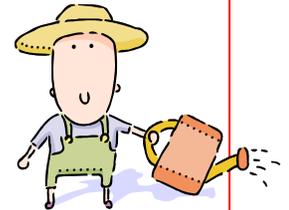
- ✓ Caladium tubers can be planted now that soil is warm and chance of freeze gone. Most require shade. New sun-tolerant varieties include "Red Flash", Fire chief," and "Rose Bud".
- ✓ Iron applications combined with aeration of roots now can improve yellow leaves on yaupon holly, hawthorns and fruit trees. Repeat applications are often necessary on persistent yellow plants.
- ✓ Yucca blooms are quite edible. These blossoms resemble asparagus in flavor and are sold in the produce markets of Central America and claim to have cholesterol-

reducing faculties. Rose petals, squash and daylily blossoms are also available to those who like grazing on the landscape.

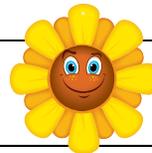
- ✓ Oleanders are easy to propagate from cuttings taken in May through October. Cuttings should be 8-12 inches long, with all but one or two leaves removed and dipped in a prepared rooting hormone. Pick cuttings from known winter hardy bloomers from our area.
- ✓ Greens lovers need to look at spinach as a summer vegetable! And often called hot weather spinach, "New Zealand", will grow here but is not even a relative of

spinach. Seeds are available from Burpee and other mail-order companies. I hear it taste like chicken.

- ✓ Consider daylilies for summer color. They perform well in full sun to part shade. West Texas wind can be hard on some taller bloomers. Two good "repeaters" or "ever bloomers" are "Happy Returns" and "Stella d'Oro". Dusty Miller or Russian Sage is a good companion plant that offers a stark texture/color contrast.



Annual Plant Sale Report



The annual Concho Valley Master Gardeners had a GREAT day for their annual Sale. Many MGs showed up to lend support and happiness to the sale day. We had over 2000 plants and sold nearly all of them. As a club, we basically made \$3,000 in 3.5 hours. Many area residents were glad we had the sale and Porter tomatoes were once again in great demand. We hope to expand the sale plants next year. Loretta Burgess has graciously accepted the torch passed on to her and mark

your calendars for this event to continue. Thanks to everyone that lent a hand to help make this event a great success. As chair of this event for the past 2 years, I appreciate all the support and time everyone gave to help the cause, and consider it a great experience. Thanks again for all that was accomplished on behalf of the Concho Valley Master Gardeners.

Donna Thomas,
Plant Sale Chair



Home & Garden Show Report



Thanks to everyone who helped to man the booth at the Home & Garden Show, held April 5 & 6. Sandy Rogers & Carolyn Mason were chairs of getting this event organized, with publications and handouts for persons at the event. The booth was outstanding in its presentation and 100s of people passed thru during the 2 days. Thanks to Kay Thompson who provided a presentation on Xeriscape which was very well received and hopefully will be presented again in the future. Along with people that came through, we gave away 3 succulent gardens as well as tomato plants and sunflower seeds for the kids. We appreciate all those MGs who took time to work especially with many other events going on at the same time.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



 **4-H Building Landscape**—there is a planned work day beginning at 8:30 AM at the 4-H Building on Saturday, May 10th. Work includes finish planting, running drip and mulching. Contact Kay Thompson to RSVP; 653-9329 or dkthomp@zipnet.us

 **Dove Creek Project**—project is nearly complete; work day planned for May 19th, 9 AM. Contact Brenda White at 223-9014 for more info or to volunteer.

 **WestLake Hardware**—plan gardening event at the Store and have asked for CVMGs to assist in answering questions about plants and gardens, not selling anything. Would like MGs to wear shirts and/or aprons with name tags, Scheduled for late in May. Contact Sandy

Rogers for more info or to sign up.

 **Habitat for Humanity**—work planned for late May or first of June. There is a sign-up sheet in office for those who have not already signed on. Contact Debbie Vinson for more information on scheduled work day.

 **Wall School Garden**—there was a spring cleanup done by the school students and work prepared and plants dug up for plant sale. Work will continue throughout summer and may be in need of volunteers to keep garden green while students away. Contact Kay Thompson for more info.

 **Business Meeting**—next scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, May 13th at 5:30 PM at the 4-

H Building. Updates on work projects and updates from the State MG Conference will be reported. Contact Ferd Koehn for agenda items.

"COMPOST, BECAUSE A RIND IS A TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE."

 Please keep the Extension office informed of any changes of your mailing address or of your e-mail address. If you change or obtain a new electronic mailing, the office would appreciate notification so that we can keep an up-to-date list for emergency notification mailings.

CONCHO VALLEY MASTER GARDENERS

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We had 8 Master Gardeners attend the event in Montgomery County (Conroe) for the Texas Master Gardener Conference, April 24-28th. It was excellent event, the weather great, tours fantastic, and we are bringing back lots of pictures, ideas and a big surprise. Updates will be given at the next CVMG meeting.

June 18-21, 2008 - Regional Master Gardener Conference - Oklahoma City, OK

Keynote Speakers: **Dr. William Welch** - Accessories in the Landscape And **Steve Owens** - Native Plants in the Garden
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