



# THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Volume 8, Issue 4

October 2007

## Concho Valley Master Gardeners



### President's Message

By Ferd Koehn

#### Master Gardeners:

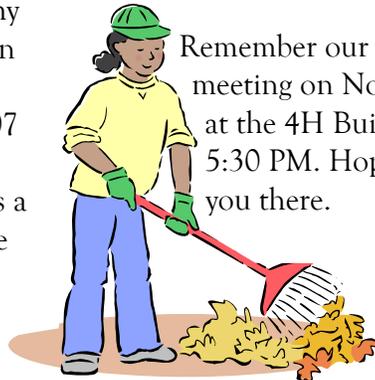
This is not my favorite time of the year. I do, however like the cooler temperatures, but the changing from green to yellow and brown is a downer for me. All is not lost, this is the time to prepare beds for next spring. And there are things that can be done now to make those gloomy cold winter days a little brighter. In case you have not done so, take a look at the Master Gardener's 2007 calendar for October, November and December. The calendar gives a great number of things that can be done now and throughout the remaining months of 2007 to get your yard ready for the coming spring days.

Progress continues to be made on all of our on going projects. If you are not currently involved, there are many projects that can always use more helpers. Call either D'Aun Butler or Robie Long for project information.

*"Grass is just a flower bed in waiting"*



*"If I could only grow green stuff in my garden like I can in my refrigerator"*



Remember our monthly meeting on November 13, at the 4H Building at 5:30 PM. Hope to see you there.

*Ferd*



### Wall Butterfly Garden

by Kay Thompson



Several weeks ago, a few pictures of the Monarch tagging that had been going on at the Wall Garden were sent to all Master Gardeners via email. In case some of you did not receive and have not heard, we received our Monarchway Station Certification from Monarch Watch. What IS a Monarch Waystation anyway?

A "waystation" may be defined as an intermediate station between principal stations on a line of travel. If we imagine the principal stations for monarchs to be the overwintering sites in central Mexico and the points of reproduction in the breeding season, then it becomes easy for

us to visualize the value of resource-rich waystations along the monarch's route through its annual fall and spring migrations. Without resources-in the form of nectar from flowers-fall migratory butterflies would be unable to make the journey to Mexico. Similarly, without milkweeds along the entire route north in the spring and summer months, monarchs would not be able to produce

We provide nectar, host plants, and water within our garden for the migrating butterflies. We can tag migrating monarchs and follow their progress when or if recovered

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Minutes: Concho Valley Master Gardeners—September 11, 2007; 5:30 PM

The meeting was held at the new 4-H building on Hwy 67 Northeast of San Angelo at 5:30 p.m. President, Ferd Koehn, presided. The minutes from the previous meeting were and approved as read. Norma Cummings, Treasurer, reported that there was \$ 5,505.91 in our bank account. No bills were presented.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Library Garden:** Pat Karmany reported that the Cardinal Climber on the archway looked great. At one point we had 5" rain during one 48 hr. period. The tomatoes are all gone. The Hyacinth beans are just beginning to flower. The figs have matured. There will be a work day at the end of September or the first of October.

**Wall Garden:** Kay Thompson reported the garden looks great with all this rain and the tanks are still full. The garden was submitted for a Monarch way station where the Monarchs who are migrating have a place to stop and rest. It will provide shelter and food. Within an hour of making application on the website we were certified. The Monarchs are due to arrive the last week in September. The children are very excited to see the Monarchs arrive. They will be capturing and marking the Monarchs for further study.

**Dove Creek Project:** Brenda White reported that we had a work day back in late July. They had one of our master gardeners to help with a crew or about 6 from the community. They moved mulch from Foster Park and spread it throughout the landscape and placed gravel. They are about 85% complete with what they are planning to do. They have some more mulch and placing river rock. They are going to have a work day at the end of the month, September 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. to move some more mulch and place gravel. They need volunteers to come and help me with moving the gravel to the site. There is a signup sheet.

**Habitat for Humanity:** Debbie Vinson reported that we finally got the last house finished. They had trouble with the sod, and other things. The Sod was placed by community service people. The next house will not be completed until next year and will be built on site.

**4H Building Report:** Kay Thompson reported that part of the landscape project is going to be worked into the Landscape Course that John is starting tonight. They have laid the mat and the first phase of rock is laid for the dry creek beds. People who come into the course can see it. In later phases of the Landscape Course our volunteers will arrive early and dig a few holes and show how to plant some of the plants we are going to use here. John will be delivering rock on Sunday. They will have a work day Monday evening about 5:30 to put liner down and place more rock.

**Propagation:** Donna Thomas reported that they will be meeting at the City Greenhouse tomorrow Wednesday, September 12, at 8:00. They will try to meet every Wednesday through the fall and winter.

### OLD BUSINESS:

**4 H Building:** Ferd Koehn reported that they had a meeting with Gary the 4H coordinator with regard to Master Gardener's use of the premises. He reported that we have the use of all the area within the fenced area for our projects. Gary was excited that we want to put in a greenhouse and some demonstration gardens. John reported that we are going to have an Earth kind Rose demonstration garden at the 4H facility.

Sam reported he is reworking the Gazebo garden and anyone who wants roses let him know. We can also get them for the propagation workshops or the demonstration garden.

### NEW BUSINESS:

**Community Day:** Sunset Mall is having Community Day again this year on October 6, 10:00 to 5:00 p.m. There will be a signup sheet to determine our participation. We need two or three people for the morning and two or three people for the afternoon.

**BWI Schulenburg:** Bobby Peiser reported that there is a need for us to set up

an account with BWI Schulenburg to buy potting mix and other items for the propagation program. After a discussion as to the details of the contract minimum order and our initial order, it was agreed that the first order should include items for Donna Thomas propagation usage. Subsequent orders can be from the various members, Debbie Vinson made a motion that we set up an account with BWI Schulenburg with an initial order of at least \$500 to comply with BWI's requirements and not to exceed \$750.00 without consultation with the membership. Motion Seconded. Motion carried.

The application will be completed by Ferd Koehn and the deliveries will be made to Bobby Peiser's home. Anyone wishing to get supplies ordered through BWI Schulenburg needs to coordinate with Bobby for our initial order.

**Eco-Fair:** Bobby Peiser reported that there will be an Eco-Fair at the Museum on October 20<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:00 or 10:00. When he was approached with this he told them that our participation in this project would not involve our continual maintenance and assistance. He is requesting some volunteers to assist him in landscaping a bed there and for help with leading tours through the gardens. There will be a signup sheet.

**Pecan show:** John Begnaud reported that the pecan show will be held December 7<sup>th</sup> at the Library. He will need workers on the 6<sup>th</sup> to help with the preparation.

Debbie Vinson made a motion to adjourn. Donna Thomas seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:  
**Brenda White**, Secretary

## Wall Butterfly Garden (cont)



(Continued from page 1)

when they reach Mexico. There are 20-22 kids involved in the class and they are so excited.

As of October 4<sup>th</sup>, we had tagged 15 thus far and did at least 10 more in the next week and could have done more. While tagging, they have to identify if they are male or female, and put a small numbered dot on the lower wing. Currently all the tags (25 total) have been filed with the Watch program and we just have to wait to see if any tag numbers are posted when and where they might be found in the mountains of central Mexico.

The picture with two monarchs were mating when they were caught and believe me they were not going to separate so we

had to tag them like that. The picture with the kids next to the tent were being released after tagging.

Lots of information on the entire migration of the Monarch butterflies, an interactive progress map and updates can be found thru the internet or an excellent site to check out for specific Texas sites and migration is

<http://www.texasento.net/dplex.htm>.

Special thanks to those individuals who came out to Wall to help work to keep the garden looking great during the summer months. Your help is greatly appreciated and your efforts do not go unnoticed. We look forward to doing more research and learning more about butterflies found in this particular area.



## Comments by John



Sometimes it may not seem that much is going on or projects do not move at a fast enough pace. When you sit down and compile the involvement of our group and the accomplishments it is mind boggling. Just the fact that volunteers can pick what projects interest them and choose to help where they can makes our group special. Having a group of leaders, which includes officers, volunteer coordinators and project coordinators, is what makes our CVMG program so effective at choosing projects, planning, implementing and then evaluating for program effectiveness and future reference. I for one am very proud of the effectiveness of our group and the learning we can continue to obtain.

Thanks to all for the work on the annual Landscape School held this September. Nearly 50 families attended along with many MG's. I had to do so little preparation and the break refreshments were once again very well received by participants. Janice, office administrator has compiled a great CD of all the power points presented and they are available upon request to MG's. Special thanks to Sandy Rogers, project coordinator, and all those that assisted and attended.

The propagation group is ahead of schedule and the plant sale scheduled for April 5, 2008 will have some neat stuff again this spring. The parks department has been great to let us use the facilities until we have our own. If you are interested in learning more about plant propa-

gation or have plats to contribute contact Donna Thomas.

The 4-H landscape project is coming along nicely. One fourth of the project is completed. This group has had to work around the availability of materials, wetness and the county horticulturist's schedule. The last being the biggest challenge. This project is truly one that has involved learning. The landscape school was able to observe planting, drip irrigation installation and methods used in mulching and hard-scaping by attending the school while the 4-H landscaping project was being installed. This will be a learning project for the whole community, especially when our rainwater capture system will be installed in late winter or early spring of 2008.

So many other projects must be mentioned even for fear of leaving any out. The Library Garden was fantastic. A true showcase for the community. We will get some plant materials and propagate for our plant sale from the garden, now that they have been proven winners. Thanks to Pat Karmany and her group for their leadership on this garden.

The wall garden, which involves several MG's under the direction of Kay Thompson, Wanda Gully and Christine Wilde, is an example of a school garden that works. This award winning youth garden is a great example of a project that keeps on giving. The Monarch tagging project involving the 4-H youth is a sidebar that developed from this beautiful and functional garden.

We had several opportunities to assist with Habitat for Humanity landscaping of new homes. It is a great feeling to see our volunteers use their gardening knowledge to solve challenges that these new homes offer to their new owners, who usually have little experience in maintaining a landscape. The finished landscapes have been very attractive and functional.

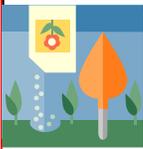
Our newsletter undertaken by Dr. Doreen Grimes continues to be a key communication tool for our group. One of the best in the state! Thanks to Janice Alexander and Kathy Hinds, Extension office staff for their assistance.

Cam Stone has been working with Janice to upgrade and change our webpage. This looks like it may happen soon. We are excited about the research Cam has done and the willingness of Janice and Cam to make this communication tool happen. Our goal is to have a site for all gardeners of the Concho Valley to get useful and timely information.

As always we welcome any involvement no matter how big or small, when and where it can be. Life changes, challenges and interests determine our individual involvement. The list for the next class is nearly full already. That speaks well of you all. Thanks.

*John Begnaud*

## PLANT PROPAGATION UPDATE



Exciting things are happening with the work that Master Gardeners are doing with the propagation of plants these days! According to Donna Thomas who is spearheading the project, the turnout is good for the work days and the plants are thriving.

Plants are still needed as well as

seeds for plants that grow well in the Concho Valley but are not available commercially. If you have anything to contribute, call Donna Thomas at 651-1884.

Starting in January, Master Gardeners will be needed to keep the plants in the greenhouse watered. Contact Donna to sign up for a time. People will be needed right up to the sale date, the first Saturday in April.

The proposed site for the annual sale is the Farmer's Market location at the Paseo.

The next workday for propagation is set for November 7 at 8 AM at the City Parks greenhouse (call Donna for directions on how to get there). You will need gloves & tools and it will take no more than an hour of your time.

## PROGRESS ON THE 4H BUILDING LANDSCAPE PROJECT



One of the most exciting projects right now for Master Gardeners is the 4-H Building landscape work. According to Ferd who heads this work, the area on the east side of the building is 90% complete. All plant materials have been planted and the drip irrigation is 95% finished. The dry stream beds are 90% done but some additional mulch needs to be added. Some small rock is on site for the stream beds. However, larger rock is

needed. John will be getting the larger rock this week.

The area on the west side of the entrance has a few plants planted and is only about 10% finished. That area will be the focus during the next two weeks. The area to the west of the large door will be the location of the rain water capture system and a flag pole with plant materials integrated. John is working on getting the flag pole and associated hardscape installed.

The rain water capture system is being looked at in a couple of ways: one is acquiring a grant to fund the project and the other is getting a rain water system that was being donated to another non-profit organization. There is a possibility that the non-profit organization will not use the capture system and it could be re-directed to the 4H project.

## Health Tips: CVA

by Sheree Delgado, RN



A cerebrovascular accident (CVA) also known as a stroke occurs when blood supply to a part of the brain is stopped or interrupted. Oxygen which is carried by the blood cannot get to the affected area of the brain. A lack of oxygen causes injury or death of brain cells leading to loss of certain bodily functions that are controlled by the affected area of the brain. The major types of strokes are (1) those caused by a blockage to an artery to an area of the brain by either a fatty plaque or blood clot. This is an ischemic stroke which occurs 85% of the time. (2) A blood vessel that suddenly ruptures causing bleeding in the surrounding brain tissue is called a hemorrhagic stroke which occurs 15% of the time. Some factors that increase risks are: smoking, cocaine use, alcohol, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, history of having had a previous stroke or family history of stroke, atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries, and high blood cholesterol levels.

Signs & symptoms can occur quickly or may take hours. They can be subtle. Therefore, it is important to recognize and not dismiss; seek help quickly. Call 911. It is safer to call for EMS. It can be life-threatening situation, certainly is a life-changing disease. Time is utmost importance. Symptoms and signs can vary & depends on the area of the brain affected. Sudden weakness or numbness of one side of the body (face, arm, leg) can occur. Confusion, passing out, sudden severe headache, dizziness, difficulty walking, talking, swallowing, or even difficulty in understanding can be experienced. Vision can be blurred or doubled and even a lack or coordination can be seen.

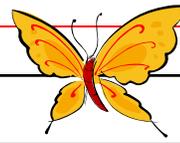
Special x-rays are used to diagnose a CVA. Type of treatment and medications to be used will depend on the type of CVA diagnosed. Prevention is very important. Lifestyle changes may be required and even necessary. If diagnosed with any of the above mentioned risks or are at

risk of developing, follow your doctor's orders, discuss how to lower the risks. Take medications as prescribed on a regular basis. You should not miss doses or taken just whenever. Learn to eat a healthy diet. Stay away from illegal drugs, and teach children and grandchildren the danger of these drugs, smoking, and also drinking... this not only includes beer but also wine, liquor (vodka, whiskey, adult mixed drinks). How much is just as important as how often a person drinks.

Having a stroke is a life-changing situation not only for the person who suffers one but also for the family! We may not always be able to prevent a stroke but knowing what some of the signs and symptoms are can alert us to get help quickly. Passing on this information to others may help someone else. Stay healthy and enjoy life!

(information taken from Micro-Medex Care Notes and American Heart Association, (ACLS))





## Hortus Agrie color by Bobby Peiser

Can't believe it but it is time for the newsletter again. If time keeps flying by at the current pace, surely I shall be old before my time. Anyway, before I get to the main topic (which at the present time is completely unknown), I would like to discuss the recent invasion of *Danaus plexippus* or Monarch butterflies. I first noticed a few in my front yard on Oct 9<sup>th</sup> and they seemed to reach their peak on the 13<sup>th</sup>. We had some wind and a light shower Monday morning and most of them have left to continue their journey to Mexico. Don't really know why but in previous years, the greatest concentration was on the Chinkapin oak on the north side of the house but this year that tree attracted only a few while there were a great multitude on the live oak and pecan tree south of the house. Perhaps this change was due to prevailing wind, temperature, humidity or perhaps they simply wanted a change of scenery. If you really want to observe them up close, stay up past sundown and with a flashlight you can look and touch as much as possible as they are completely immobile under the light. And did you get to see them literally covering the lawn the morning we had the heavy dew?

**D***anaus plexippus* is Greek and is inspired by the Greek myth of Danaus in which (In condensed form) the daughters of the king of Libya flee to Greece in order to avoid marrying their cousins-oh the shame of it all! Anyway the long migratory flight is reminiscent of the daughters' flight. Hey, I don't make this stuff up!

Normally an adult Monarch will live 4-5 weeks but as autumn approaches, a "Methuselah Generation" is created. In other words, unlike the previous generations, this special generation will live seven to eight months which enables them to fly to central Mexico, relax in the pristine mountain environment while its summer home in the Great Lakes area is covered with snow and cold! Anyway, with the coming of spring, they begin the flight north and upon reaching the United States, a sort of relay race begins and their short lived off spring finally reach their northern home -after several generations. Then along comes Autumn and once again- Methuselah!



It is now October 18<sup>th</sup>. and there are still several hundred Monarchs here, down from a number exceeding the national debt a few days

ago still hanging out in the same two trees. But alas, like the Chinese, they all look alike so I am unable to tell if the ones that are presently here are some of the ones that first arrived last week. It is now Friday and have not spotted a Monarch all day so I shall leave that subject and take up the main topic of this newsletter-spices and herbs. To those of you who are paying attention-I had a vision!

Saffron, *Crocus sativus* is probably the



most expensive and oldest spice in the world. Long before man cultivated flowers for their beauty, a thriving industry in the middle-east grew up around this crocus. This fragrant, deep lavender

flower has scarlet stigmas that are harvested and dried to produce the highly priced and prized spice saffron. There are around 80 species of crocus but only *Crocus sativus* produces the spice saffron. I have never used it but plan to next year providing I am able to locate a good recipe for paella or bouillabaisse. I have priced saffron at HEB and it is quiet pricey. I did purchase 10 bulbs on the internet recently (they arrived today) and plan to grow my own. As it takes 75,000 blossoms or 225,000 stigmas to produce one pound of saffron. I doubt that my crop will be capable of being measured or weighed.

In addition to being used as a flavoring and coloring agent in our food, it has been used throughout history as a medicine, to dye hair and textiles and saffron in wine was a popular hangover remedy. Several years ago, I was in Henry's Diner once and noticed that the gravy on their chicken fried steak was a weird shade of yellow. Well, stupid me, I



assumed that it was thusly because of a combination of assorted animal fats but you don't suppose it was saffron do you? Nah-couldn't be!

Rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*, is one of our most used herbs and has been for centuries. In addition to its culinary uses, I would think that almost every urban landscape would benefit from having several plantings of rosemary. There are several varieties available, ranging from the tall upright to prostrate types. In addition, their colors vary from a mint green to a shade of blue-gray. Usually propagated easily from stem cuttings, they may also be grown from seed. Their main requirements are a well drained soil and plenty of sun. They respond to clipping well so the size and shape are easily controlled. Legend has it that they will live for 33 years, until they reach the height of Jesus when he was crucified and then die. There is one at the park near Robert Massie Funeral Home that is large as my pickup-has to be at least 32 years old! The botanical name Rosmarinus is Latin for "dew of the sea", a reference to its pale blue flowers and also to the fact that it is often grown near the sea. It is a symbol of love, fidelity, friendship and remembrance -but I still think that it smells bad!

John B. recently told me that one could cut a rosemary stalk, strip all the leaves off and skewer a weenie with it, roast the weenie and the once bland, non-descript weenie would be transformed into a culinary delight. I haven't tried it so can not verify the veracity of this claim.

Just remember what Ophelia said in Hamlet, "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance". I bet you all forgot! And please, send me your favorite recipes for bouillabaisse.



## Volunteer Opportunities



 **Habitat for Humanity**—landscaping will be done on houses once they are ready. No new houses will be ready until next year. Contact Debbie Vinson if you are interested in assisting or wanting more info.

 **4-H Building**—Landscaping plans continue with work being done. Keep in touch with office or Ferd Koehn, Lynn Alexander or Kay Thompson for progress and planned work days. Demonstrations were used as part of Landscaping school in September.

 **Wall School Garden**—Work continues on a maintenance schedule for this garden. Several work days were held during summer; and butterfly project was latest endeavor. If you are interested in knowing next work day—watch your e-mail or contact Kay Thompson for planned schedule.

 **Plant Sale**—Propagation for spring sale has already begun. Annual Sale has

tentatively been set for April 8, 2008. For more information or to contribute, contact Donna Thomas.

 **Library Gardens**—continued to be maintained; Watch e-mails for any work-days or contact Pat Karmany for more info.

 **New MG projects**—if you know of a specific project that the CVMG might want to assist in completing, contact Ferd Koehn, President, to fill him in on projects and ideas.

 **New MG class**— the Extension office continues to maintain a list of persons interested in becoming a part of a new class of Master Gardeners in training. If you know of people who might be interested, please have them contact the office and place their name on the list for future contact information. Once a new class has been set, we will send out info.

Except on Halloween most of us don't think much about goblins, ghosts and witches, but there was a time when these creatures of the night were a hot topic. And many of the plants we now use to beautify our gardens were believed to have certain powers that could protect us.

For instance, rue was thought to keep werewolves at bay and larkspur was used to put ghosts on the run. And of course, we all know garlic will keep vampires away and your friends too if you eat enough of it! The thorny hawthorn was considered to be a favorite of witches and it was said that witches danced under pear and oak trees. But all it took was half a cup of basil juice to send them flying into the air. According to the ancient Greeks pomegranate and rosemary placed over a door would protect home owners from misfortune. And of course, the pumpkin was transformed into a Jack-o-lantern to keep goblins away on Halloween.

In the past people believed that plants had specific powers and even today some of us are still intrigued by these myths and superstitions.



 *Please keep the Tom Green County Extension office informed of any changes of your mailing address or your e-mail address. If you change or obtain a new electronic mail address or changes in mailing information, the office would appreciate notification so that we can keep an up-to-date list for all Master Gardener mailings. 325-659-6522*

CONCHO VALLEY MASTER  
GARDENERS

*Doreen Grimes, Editor*



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