

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Volume 10, Issue 2

April 2009

Concho Valley Master Gardeners



President's Message

By Carolyn Mason

I left the 4-H building a little while ago. A crew was putting their newly gained knowledge about drip irrigation to work installing the drip irrigation in the front garden beds near the water tank. Thank you, Kay, for sharing your expertise. Others of us moved the table pieces into the greenhouse so that the site preparation for the additional rain water storage tanks can begin. Please watch for a work day for the wrapping of the greenhouse in plastic. Keep in mind this task is requires little or no breezes.

One of the items discussed at the meeting was a new website that will have greater flexibility. The website will have a members-only section and a public section. It will be a great way to find out about volunteer activities. Watch for a future announcement about the launching of the website. I expect it to grow and adapt to our needs. Please provide feedback and suggestions for improvements. From the discussion at

the meeting some master gardeners and apprentices know a whole lot more about web design than me.

Lynne Alexander will be pacing off the demonstration plots for the student projects in the next few weeks. The decision has been made that the Austin stone will need to have mortar placed between the stones for the raised beds. Debbie Vinson and Donna Anderson are seeking a skilled brick layer to provide basic instruction to a small group who will then spearhead the bed construction. Once the beds are built, the plots will rapidly take shape. Watch for future announcements!

Allison Watkins will be starting a Junior Master Gardener program on Sunday April 26 at noon. She has recruited several MGs to assist her. We have provided with some start funds to purchase some supplies. She will be circulating a list of items she needs/wants in case MGs have spare trowels, etc in their garage or garden shed.

At the May meeting we will be having a MG trash-to-treasure swap. Bring any plants, containers, yard art, whatever garden related, that you want to share/discard. After the business meeting on May 12, we will move out to the parking lot and swap stuff. The topic of the June meeting is Rain Water Collection and will be open to the public.

The plant sale is over for 2009 but plans are underway for 2010. Please start saving pots for next year. Once the greenhouse is finished the pots can be stored inside the greenhouse.

Spring/Summer is a busy time for Master Gardeners. I hope to see many of you at various volunteer activities and meetings.

Happy planting,

Carolyn Mason
President



Annual Plant Sale Wrap-Up

By Loretta Burgess

The morning of April 4th, 2009 arrived blustery and cool as Master Gardeners prepared to open the doors of the 4-H building for the annual Plant Sale. This year the sale was held in the arena and we couldn't have asked for a more perfect place. By 8 am, customers were pouring through the door with 'want lists' in their hands. They were greeted by Master Gardeners who explained prices and gave

them trays to hold the plants of their choosing. By 10:30 am all the plants had been sold!! It was a wild ride!

Many "thank you's" are in order. First to the propagating crew that met weekly every Thursday am at the city greenhouse starting October 1st. Literally hundreds of cuttings were stuck and seeds planted over the course of the six months. This crew includes Pat Karmany, Janie Medina, Sandy Rogers, Donna Anderson,

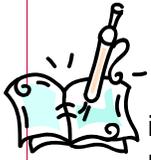


Jo Valliant, Elaine Briley, Lois Draper, Norma Cummings, Connie Niles, Deborah Vinson and myself. Another "thank you" goes to Bobby Peiser, John Begnaud and Allison Watkins for advice and sharing knowledge. Thank you to everyone who brought plants from their

(Continued on page 3)



Minutes: Concho Valley Master Gardeners – March & April



Minutes March 10, 2009

Carolyn Mason called meeting to order at 5:45pm and ask new agent Allison Watkins to introduce herself. Rudi Wallace gave Treasurer's report for Jan 01-Mar 07 2009(see separate Income & expense Statement). Rudi explained new check request form. Kay Thompson stated the need for a clean up of the 4H landscape before the plant sale and suggested a volunteer organize the cleanup on Sat., March 28 at 9:00am. Loretta Burgess presented sign up sheet for set up before plant sale. Carolyn Mason explained set up for Home and Garden Show. Motion was made by Lynn Alexander and seconded by Donna Anderson to spend up to \$30 for door prize plants. Motion passed. Carolyn Mason proposed program for 4-yr olds at San Angelo Day Nursery with goal to have a monthly program. Motion made by Sandy Rogers and seconded by Elaine Briley to proceed with program. Motion passed. Allison Watkins announced three opportunities for Master Gardeners to help.

- ▶ Jr. Master Gardening program on April 26 & every Sun @12:00 noon.
 - ▶ Coordinate with local garden clubs to help house mothers at West Texas Boys Ranch with landscape.
 - ▶ Plant pals at Holliman Elementary on May 5th & 6th. Prep day on May 1st. Debbie Vinson request we participate with Royal Neighbors and Girls Scouts in planting a tree at San Angelo State Park on May 2.
- Ferd reported Green house was ready for sides and roof.
Art Mavrode proposed a historical garden at Fort Concho in memory of the Fort's chaplains. Motion made by Art Mavrode and seconded by Donna Anderson. Motion did not pass.
Kay Thompson reported there would be no review on grant for 4H property and greenhouse until September.

Lynn Alexander reported on committee recommendation to plant a tree in memory of Mr. Hughes and Mrs. Wimpee with a marker at the 4H building. Motion made by Kay Thompson and seconded by Pat Karmany to spend \$150.00 each. Kay presented continuing education proposal:

- April—Drip irrigation
- June—Rainwater Harvesting
- August—Composting
- October—Trees

Motion made by Kay Thompson and seconded by Donna Anderson to have business meetings every month from March thru October. Motion passed.

There will be a work day at Wall school on April 26. Motion made by Elaine Briley and seconded by Donna Anderson to spend \$250 on advertising plant sale in Standard Times. Motion passed
Meeting adjourned

Debbie Vinson, Secretary

Minutes April 14, 2009



President Carolyn Mason called meeting to order at 5:45pm. March minutes were amended to show a motion was made and seconded by Elaine Briley and Lynn Anderson to spend \$100.00 on drip tubing for the 4H building. Motion made and seconded by Donna Anderson and Brenda White to accept the amended minutes. Motion passed. Jackie Swanson gave the Treasurer's report for Rudi Wallace (see attached) Motion to accept the report as presented made and seconded by Linda Rowe and Janie Houck. Motion passed. Loretta Burgess reported that after all expenses the plant sale cleared \$6781.31. There will be a pot luck dinner at her house on April 27th at

6:30pm to review sale and plan for next year. Motion to give \$300 to 4H for power washer made and seconded by Kay Thompson and Bob Houck. Motion passed.
Report sent from Ferd Koehn about greenhouse. Workday scheduled for weekend of Apr 25th & tables need to be moved to make room for rainwater tanks. Motion to spend \$156.00 to repair greenhouse fan made and seconded by Lois Draper & Donna Anderson. Motion passed. It was noted that the land has been cleared for demo beds. Memorial committee reported that two trees would be planted at 4H building for Dixie Wimpee and Homer Hughes and their names put on a perpetual plaque. The money for project was voted at the March meeting. Motion to accept the report made and seconded by Kay Thompson and Linda Rowe. Motion passed. Bob White reported on the plan for compost bins. Estimated cost for 3 4' bins is \$370.00. No one volunteered to be coordinator and project was tabled until May meeting. Sarah Whitehill reported on plans for the new web site. Motion made and seconded by Donna Anderson & Danny Rhea to contract for the website for two years at a cost of \$215 and name the site conchovalleymg.org. Motion passed.

Carolyn Mason announced that Del Britton requested 4-5 master gardeners to help with an event at Olives Nursery in June. Time and day to be announced. Ferd Koehn or Carolyn Mason will be coordinator. There will be a plant swap at the May meeting. Meeting adjourned.

Debbie Vinson,
Secretary



(Continued from page 1)

yards to be divided and shared. A big "thank you" to Robie Long, De Farmer and Helen Martin for sorting and packing seeds. Another "Thank you" to Robie and De for producing the information sheet that went home with each customer. And last, but not least, all of you that came on plant sale day to work: cashiers, cashier assistants, plant toters, greeters, seed salespersons, yard art salesperson, and all that stepped in to total for each customer and answer all their questions.



The total number of plants grown for the sale this year was 2,165. There were 69 varieties of plants from which to choose. We had many requests for more herbs and vegetables for next year and that is one of our goals. After expense, we cleared \$6,781.31. We would love for more of our members to participate in this worthwhile project. It is a lot of fun (most of the time) and the knowledge learned is invaluable. Thanks again to everyone who made this a success.

Respectfully submitted, *Loretta Burgess*

SPOTLIGHT ON MASTER GARDENER: JO VALLIANT

By Doreen Grimes



No organization can survive without those members who work tirelessly behind the scenes without recognition, but without whom the necessary tasks could never be completed. Such is new member Jo Valliant, a member of the newest class. Jo helped at the greenhouse every week from about October to the date of the plant sale doing propagation, watering, and caring for the plants that made our plant sale so successful!

Jo is a native of San Angelo and a product of the schools of the city. She attended San Angelo College and, after receiving an Associate degree transferred to Texas Tech University where she earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education.

A number of different schools benefited from Jo's teaching expertise since she and her husband moved frequently. Eventually they settled in Brady where she taught for 20 years before retiring and moving back to San Angelo. Jo's hus-

band was a soil conservationist, filling an important need for the farming communities of West Texas. They have two children, a daughter who is a nurse in Arlington and a son who lives in Fort Worth and works for the Texas Aerial Inspection Company as a pilot. His role is to inspect the numerous gas pipelines that crisscross across Texas and the adjoining area. The Valliants have 3 grandchildren ranging in age from eleven to nineteen.

Jo enjoyed her teaching career and found teaching second grade to be the most satisfying. But, she hastens to add that she is enjoying retirement as well. She says that she has always had an interest in growing plants of all kinds. Since she felt that she needed to know more about how to make plants grow and thrive, she decided to try Master Gardener training. Since her primary aim was to learn more detailed information about growing all kinds of plants from flowers and vegetables to shrubs, Jo

found the classes extremely enjoyable and has praise for all the people who helped to teach the class. She enjoyed the variety of teachers and the knowledge they brought to each session.

Among Jo's hobbies, in addition to growing things, she listed reading, crafts, learning about new things, and travel. A special interest of hers is growing herbs and using herbs in her cooking. She is growing a number of herbs including lavender, rosemary, two varieties of basil, aloe vera, and mint.

Jo is an active member of the Native Plant Society and of the San Angelo Garden Club. Volunteering is one of her special interests which she pursues on a regular basis as witnessed by her faithful service to Master Gardeners.

Welcome to Master Gardeners, Jo!

Comments from Allison



First I would like to congratulate all of you on the great success of the annual plant sale in April. A huge thank you goes out to everyone who worked so hard to make it such a winner of an event; it was the first one I have attended, but it was very exciting and must have been the best one yet. The Master Gardener booth at the Home and Garden Show in March was also a success. The booth had a lot of great

informational handouts, the master gardeners who volunteered to run it were able to talk to a lot of folks about EarthKind principles, and there was even a sample rain barrel on display. I am proud to work with such a wonderful group of Master Gardeners, you are a really enjoyable bunch and I have appreciated all the opportunities to work with you and get to know you better. We are making good progress in developing a Jr Master Gardener program here in

the area. The "Concho valley kid's Garden Club" was started at a local church, and has already had two very successful activity days. We are starting small so we can learn as we go, but have high hopes for the program in the future and plan on expanding an enlarging as the program evolves. If you are interested in being involved in Jr MG activities you are welcome and invited to join in!



2009 Texas Master Gardener Conference

By Sandy Rogers



A very tired but happy group of CVMGs returned recently from the annual State Conference in Marshall, Texas. If you are not familiar with Marshall, it is east of Dallas and 37 miles west of Shreveport, Louisiana, in the beautiful Piney Woods area of Texas. The drive was long, but well worth it for those attending. Our group was represented by Loretta Burgess, Bob & Janie Houck, Sandy Rogers, Linda Rowe, Jackie Swanson and her husband Ted, Kay Thompson and Debbie Vinson. Brian & Judy Hetherington also joined us in Marshall. They are Taylor County MGs but live in Bronte and have attended some of our meetings, so we consider them “home folks”, too.

All of us enjoyed the Conference speakers and sessions, and learned new ideas and techniques that we hope to put to use here at home. We each attended the programs and presentations of our choice, so altogether the rewards were great. If you have a question about subjects ranging from “wrangling” earthworms (for vermiculture) to native bulb cutting, to placing yard art tastefully, someone from the group can answer that, and so much more!

One subject of importance to all Texas Master Gardeners was covered by Dr. Doug Welsh of A&M, who brought us up to date on the Earth-Kind Landscaping trademark that has been adopted by Aggie Horticulture. The Master Gardener handbooks have been revised to include this designation, which encourages water conservation, energy conservation, reductions of fertilizer and pesticide use and reduction of yard wastes entering landfills. The Earth-Kind principles include planning and design, practical turf areas, appropriate

plant selection, soil improvement and efficient irrigation, with emphasis on rainwater capture. Earth-Kind Landscaping, which is quality landscaping that conserves water and protects the environment, will now be a part of the Texas Master Gardener classes. We will be hearing “Earth-Kind” to describe landscaping practices that were once called “Xeriscape”, “Water-Wise”, etc. We encourage everyone to log onto the website - earth-kind.tamu.edu - to learn more about Earth-Kind Landscaping, and to take the Earth-Kind challenge online. As Master Gardeners, one of our most important duties is to tell others that a healthy environment starts in our own backyard, and to put that into practice.

At the Friday night dinner, awards were presented to representatives of the 40 counties in Texas who submitted entries in many different contest areas such as the Jr. Master Gardening program, publications, mass media, individual achievements, and other topics related the Master Gardening program in Texas. We were all encouraged to start now to prepare entries for the 2010 State Conference. Several groups entered story boards depicting MG activities in their areas, and these story boards were on display at the conference. They were informative and very entertaining, and in our opinion could have all received blue ribbons. Results of all contests will soon be posted on the TMGA website - texasmastergardeners.com.

On Saturday our group split up and took the tours of our choice, which



were ALL great! The tours included a Caddo Lake boat tour, Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Minglewood Estate, Master Gardener Gardens, Marshall Pottery and Ellis Potters, local historic homes and Enoch Winery. Our only regret was not being able to take them all!

One of the benefits of attending the State Conference was the opportunity to meet and talk with other MGs in our state. We now have friends in many areas with the same interests and goals, and it's great fun to compare notes and get new ideas. We all learned from each other and cherish the new friendships.



The vendors' booths, Thursday Block Party, delicious meals, door prizes and great entertainment were all appreciated as well. All in all, this year's conference was a huge success, and our compliments go to the Harrison County Master Gardeners (all 28 of them!) for the education and entertainment they provided in Marshall. The 2010 State Conference will be held in Dallas County, April 8-10, 2010, and we would like to see even more CVMGs in attendance next year. So, please make plans now to attend. Mark your calendars, and watch the website - 2010tmgaconference.org - for more information. Reservations usually begin sometime in November. Hope to see you there!

Gardening Health Tips: Hay Fever Allergies

By Sheree Delgado



Pollen grains are usual culprits that trigger allergy symptoms better known as hay fever. Wind pollinated trees, grasses and weeds release these pollen allergens. Ragweed is a prime example. Allergens are also transported by soil



and other debris so that even when pollens are no longer released, they can still be stirred up by soil and debris causing allergy symptoms even after pollen season ends.

Allergy symptoms include: sneezing, congestion, post nasal drainage, itchy nose and throat, ears popping, runny nose, itchy, watery eyes, itchy palate and pressure sensations over cheeks and forehead. These can contribute to fatigue, weakness, even asthma symptoms can occur. Persistent or untreated hay fever can increase risk of sinus infection and upper respiratory infections.

It is best to learn what you are allergic to. Testing can be helpful in pinpointing the allergen and what treatment is best.

With proper medication therapy, it is possible for allergy sufferers to get relief of symptoms. Be sure to read labels regarding possible side effects and drug interactions with other drugs. Persons with certain disease conditions, i.e. heart disease, diabetes, glaucoma should seek medical advise before taking over-the-counter allergy medications. Simple tips that may provide relief:

- ◆ If possible, avoid outdoor activities between 5 AM and 10 AM when pollen counts may be highest.
- ◆ Use a dust mask when doing yard work.
- ◆ Shower or bathe after outdoor activities and before going to bed. This can help reduce contaminates that cling to skin and clothes.

◆ Changing or cleaning filters on air conditioners, furnaces, and dryers on a regular basis can help reduce exposure. A HEPA filter (High Efficiency Particulate Air) is much better than a loose weave filter.

◆ Drink plenty of fluids, eat fruits and vegetables with high H2O content; i.e. celery, cucumbers, potatoes, tomatoes, cantaloupes, carrots, oranges, and watermelons.

◆ Get plenty of rest

◆ Vitamin C may be helpful.

◆ Salt water gargles for sore throat, even saline nasal irrigation can help.



WILDLIFE GARDENER MINI-CAMP

Join us for The Texas 4-H Conference Center's Wildlife Gardener Mini Camp July 10-11, 2009 Dig in to gardening for wildlife! Identify local birds, mammals insects, reptiles, and amphibians. Investigate lifecycles and interrelatedness of wildlife and plant life. Learn about habitat and constructing a wildlife garden. How to attract and happily co-exist with wildlife. And much MORE!!

FOR [registration and info](#) contact Texas 4H Conference center or call the Extension office.

Join us for
The Texas 4-H Conference Center's
**Wildlife Gardener
Mini Camp**
July 10-11, 2009

Dig in to gardening for wildlife!
Identify local birds, mammals insects, reptiles, and amphibians. Investigate lifecycles and interrelatedness of wildlife and plant life. Learn about habitat and constructing a wildlife garden. How to attract and happily co-exist with wildlife. And much MORE!!

Camp Includes

- Wildlife Gardener Golden Roy Series Certification: more than 12 Activities + Service Learning Activities + Life Skills/Career Exploration Activities
- Lodging
- 3 Meals + Snacks
- FUN! FUN! FUN!

Costs: \$70/youth & \$50/adult

Schedule of events:
Friday July 10-
5 pm-Registration/Unpack
6 pm-Dinner
7 pm-The fun begins!
10 pm-Sweet Dreams
Saturday July 11-
7:30 am-Breakfast
8 am-The fun continues!
11:00am-Lunch
1pm-Even more fun!
4:30 pm-Closing Assembly/Departure

For more information about camp, including what to bring, registration instructions, and directions, visit: <http://texas4h-ctr.tamu.edu>

Or contact: Texas 4-H Conference Center
5600 FM 3021
Brownswood, TX 76801
325-784-5482

For more information about JMG or the Wildlife Gardener Curriculum visit: <http://www.jmgkids.us>



Texas Master Gardener License Plates

Support the Texas Master Gardeners by displaying specialty license plates on your vehicle. More than 70 percent of the specialty plate fee is dedicated toward a scholarship fund for future Master Gardener Coordinators. The specialty plate fee (\$30 or \$40, depending on the plate) is collected in addition to the regular registration fee and any other applicable fees. Place your order online at:

<http://rts.texasonline.state.tx.us>

Look for Texas Master Gardeners under Speciality License Plates, Organizations.....

CONGRATULATIONS to Marshall and Harrison County MG for an EXCELLENT Conference!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The 2010 TMGA Conference will have it ALL...

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Tours to Inspire

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State Master Gardener Conference
2010
Dallas County

For updated 2010 TMGA Conference information visit:
www.2010TMGAconference.org

2010 TMGA Conference Office: (214) 904-3054
Dallas County Master Gardener Association, Inc.
Texas Agrilife Extension Service

 Memorial Plantings – holes to dig and planting for Dixie Wimpee after business meeting on May 12th. Please stay to help and assist in planting; holes to be dug after meeting for tree planting for Homer Hughes; planting with family to be held on May 15th at 5 pm. To assist or more info – contact Lynn Alexander

 Business Meeting – bi-monthly meeting to be held on Tuesday, May 12th at 5:30 pm. Trash-to-treasure Swap will be held in parking lot after meeting; bring any items garden related to swap and exchange.

 Wall Garden – schedule for summer maintenance work will be announced; look for sign-up sheet at meeting to register for the summer work schedule. First planned workday is June 20th. For more info – contact Kay Thompson.

 Rainwater Harvest Workshop – “tentatively” set for July 18th at 4-H Building; Billy Kniffen, Extension Specialist will provide program with event open to public; more details and exact agenda will be announced later. Watch e-mail for more news.

 4-H Building / Greenhouse – plans to continue for ongoing clean-up, bed preps, greenhouse construction & completion and landscape plantings. Watch e-mail for info or look for signup sheets at meeting to register your interest.

CONCHO VALLEY MASTER
GARDENERS

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