

The Latest Dirt

November 2011

McLennan County Master Gardener Association

Children's Garden Fair October 16, 2011



Carson and William Lutz, Lori's boys, made grow baby heads.



1000 young and old came to play

“Look, Mom, there’s a red chicken in there!”
Pat Goaley’s daughters, Stephanie and Macallan, take turns parading the grounds as the Arboretum’s Cardinal Mascot.



“... loved by all who know her.”

Jeanette Kelly spots migrating monarchs on her blue mist shrub (Caryopteris).

See page 3 for her story.

**Next MCMG Meeting:
November 9, 12 noon
Carleen Bright Arboretum
Program:
Cacti
by Ernie Petru**

September 2011 Volunteer Hours

Volunteer hours	460
Education hours	125
Contacts	3,073
Media	117,732
Meetings	55
<i>(Hours below are included in Volunteer Hours)</i>	
Arboretum	89
<i>Trailside Garden</i>	13
<i>Superstar Garden</i>	5
<i>Garden Fair</i>	58
<i>Rose Garden</i>	12
<i>Herb Garden</i>	2
McGregor Demo Garden	5
Phone, misc. time - Ag office	189
Cedar Ridge Elementary	52
Woodway Elementary	18
MHMR	6
MG new class 2012	12
MG clerical	24

Reminder:

Annual dues are due: \$12

Christmas dinner reservations:

\$12 per person-- must pay in advance!

Bring checkbook to Nov. 9 meeting

October 12 Meeting Attendance

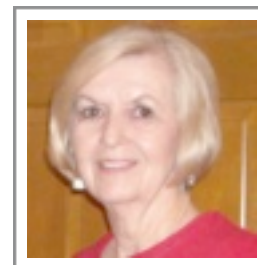
Members: 46

Back, Sandy; Barnes, B.L.; Belanger, Bonnie; Belanger, Dick; Bonner, Grady; Buchanan, John; Burchfield, Linda; Carothers, Ila Jean; Cunningham, Jean; Davidson, Emily; Demuyne, Lynn; Dougherty, Kim; FitzGerald, Eva; Fitzgerald, Melody; Ford, Kris; Foulks, Xan; Gifford, Penny; Golubski, Brenda; Henson, Margaret; Hering, Jene; Herndon, Jane; Kelly, Jeanette; Khoury, Julia; Lovecky, Steven; Lutz, Lori; Matthews, Sherry; Mersinger, Barbara; Milam, Elizabeth; Moore, Andrea; Moore, Linda; Peterson, Georgia; Plasek, Ann; Reinking, Art; Romano, Sharo; vonRosenberg, Jo; Schaffer, Janet; Schmeltekopf, Judy; Serface, Jan; Setter, Della; Trice, Mary Lou; Vance, Barbara; Vokes, Barry; Waldrop, Melba; Warriner, Sonia; Whitehead, M.J.; Wood, Carol

Interns: 6

Beazley, Madge; Mabry, Cindy; Newton, Kai; Scott, Sandra; Seale, James; Wilhite, Amber

Jan's Notes



Before you know it Christmas will be here and all the family festivities that are our traditions. MCMG has one tradition that we had to rearrange last year, but not for this year. Sometimes we fail to read our membership booklet so I'll help.

Tuesday, December 6, 2011 is our final meeting for 2011. All members are invited to attend along with your special friend or significant other. It will be a catered dinner by **Big Daddy** and his staff. (He happened to come here from San Angelo where the Blaneck family is well known in the catering and restaurant business. He caters many of Baylor's events.)

WHEN: Tuesday, December 6, 2011

WHERE: First Woodway Baptist Church

TIME: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$12 per person

You must purchase tickets in advance so Big Daddy will know how much food to bring. Please make your reservations at our November meeting if possible.

Madge Beazley, Norma Folse, Eva FitzGerald and Sherry Henson are planning the evening including table decorations. If they ask for help, please say "yes." This will be a fun evening and a good time to get better acquainted with everyone. Please plan to attend because we will miss you if you aren't there.

Last month we collected almost half our dues for 2012. Please remember to pay your dues this month. Yes, we want the whole \$12 for the year.

November is the meeting when we vote for the new officers or if you choose to nominate someone else, you may do so. We have a wonderful slate of officers.

President - Sandy Back

VP - Jeanette Kelly

Secretary - Brenda Golubski

Treasurer - Barry Vokes

We also have an educational meeting at the end of our regular November meeting about Cacti by Ernie Petru if you need one more hour of CE.

We look forward to seeing you in November and December.

Keep smiling and have a great gardening day!

Jan

She shares her love of nature

Jeanette Kelly is consistently among our most active members and loved by all who know her. A Florida native, she grew up in Lakeland. Florida is dotted with little lakes and ponds and Jeanette's family lived on one filled with alligators, ducks, snakes and turtles. Florida is surrounded on three sides by the sea, so salt water was a big part of her upbringing. She dreamed of rescuing sea turtles.

Gardening is in Jeanette's blood. Her dad, a metallurgical engineer, was an avid gardener, expert at grafting and propagation by cuttings. Her mom arranged flowers and often judged at flower shows. When her family moved to Texas, it took Jeanette some time to adjust to Texan culture. She majored in art and biology at Baylor University. Later in life she returned to school and became a registered nurse specializing in oncology, and later, outpatient surgery.

Jeanette got involved in MCMG along with her friend Barbara Mersinger. The two of them met Barbara Vance and became interested in the Master Gardener program. They talked and decided to attend an orientation session. Barb Mersinger signed up right away. Jeanette was a Master Naturalist and not sure she could spare the time for both programs. At the last minute she signed up for the 2004 intern class – and is glad she did. So are we.

The year 2004 was a vintage year for MCMG. That was the year the Green Classroom project began at Cedar Ridge Elementary School. Jeanette's fellow 2004 intern Sandy Back planned and helped implement the Cedar Ridge garden. The year 2004 also marked establishment of the Superstar beds at the Arboretum and the Woodway Elementary School garden.

The Children's Garden Fair, held annually at the Carleen Bright Arboretum, began with a brainstorming discussion at an executive committee meeting in 2008. A tradition had emerged in which a joint annual project was undertaken with the Arboretum. Someone suggested a children's theme for that year's joint project, and the Children's Garden Fair was the result. That first year Judy Schmeltekopf took the lead and the following year Jeanette led the effort. Today the Children's Garden Fair is overseen by Jeanette, Judy and Arboretum Director (and MCMG member) Janet Schaffer.



With gardening in her blood, Jeanette always tried to maintain a small backyard garden, typically growing tomatoes, green beans, cucumbers and a few other vegetables. It was a pleasant diversion from the daily routine of living and being mom to her boys. There was always something rooting in a glass of water in the windowsill but never enough time for serious gardening.

Jeanette has a particular interest in butterflies (remember, Master Naturalist). This goes back many years, when she attended a talk at Reynolds Creek Park. The park ranger's children were out looking for butterflies and finding them.

It amazed her that so much of nature surrounds us and we mostly take it for granted. So she began paying closer attention. She now shares her love of nature with her grandchildren.

Jeanette and husband Tom live a short distance from the Arboretum in Woodway. Their back yard is small and gardening space is limited. In time this led to purchase of five acres alongside the Brazos River – “Perfect for me.... land, water, nature, quietness.” Jeanette and Tom have a little cabin there plus kayaks and a canoe.

Jeanette maintains a garden at her river place, but this year the weather did not so much cooperate. The extreme drought “finalized” many of her carefully nurtured plants, a familiar story to those of us who tried to fight Mother Nature this past summer. There is always next year and Jeanette is making plans for her riverside garden.

Then there are the donkeys.... It seems that Jeanette and Tom agreed to purchase four calves to keep the grass munched down at the river place. So off Jeanette went to the cattle auction and eyed the livestock on offer. She spotted a female donkey (a “jenny”) and her male offspring (a “jack”). Says Jeanette: “They were so cute and the auctioneer assured me that they would eat grass.” That, as you might expect, was that. So home came Jeanette with the two donkeys.

Husband Tom went out to the river place to meet the “calves” and Jeanette introduced him to his namesake “Monroe” (Tom's middle name) and Monroe's mother Jenny. Jeanette admits they are very spoiled donkeys.

Jeanette and Tom live with their golden retriever Ozzy and their two cats Inky and Chrystal. They have four sons and six grandchildren.



Madge Beasley receives her MG member credentials from Jan Serface at the October meeting. Patricia Goaley and Valerie Schillacci also completed their hours, but were not there.

Six speakers fill Oct. schedule

October 3 - Jan Serface gave a program on *"What is a Master Gardener"* to the Shakespearian Club. Twenty-four attended.

October 4 - Steven Lovecky and Ernie Petru spoke to the Steel Magnolia Garden Club in Lorena about *Cactus & Succulents*. Twenty people attended.

October 10 - Sarah Ortiz presented a program on *Container Gardening* at the H.O.T. Fair Exhibits Building. Forty people attended.

October 11 - Ila Jean Carothers spoke to the American Business Women's Association. Her program *"Some Like It HOT"* covered heat tolerant plants. Eighteen attended.

October 13 - Melody Fitzgerald spoke to the Garden Forum Garden Club about *Bulbs*. Fifteen people attended.

Upcoming engagements:

November 10 - Jo vonRosenberg will speak to clients of Edward Jones about gardening.

November 15 - Barry Vokes and Louie McDaniel will present a program on *Rainwater Harvesting* at Cottonwood Creek Golf Club.

November 17 - Jeanette Kelly will present a program on *Children's Gardening* to the Garden Patch Garden Club.

Nelda Cooper, Bureau Chair

Membership Skills Survey

This survey was done by Doug Quicksall in '03 and Jan thought it was a good one to use today. Please fill out and give to Jan or Sandy Back.

Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Skills:

- ___ Computer
- ___ WORD or WordPerfect
- ___ Power Point
- ___ Spread Sheet
- ___ Digital Camera
- ___ Web/Desktop Publishing

- ___ Teaching
- ___ Speaking
- ___ Writing
- ___ Photography
- ___ Art
- ___ Working w/ children

Garden Topics for Presentations

- ___ Soils
- ___ Lawns ___ Landscaping
- ___ Annuals ___ Perennials
- ___ Shrubs ___ Trees
- ___ Vegetables ___ Herbs
- ___ Shade gardening ___ Water gardening
- ___ Roses ___ Fruits/Nuts
- ___ Plant problems ___ Insects/Diseases
- ___ Other: _____

Office Staff Schedule open dates

November, December 2011

Due to one of those computer glitches, there is no schedule of openings for November, December. But there are some openings, so please email or call Carol Reinking to reserve your spot.

Contact: Carol Reinking - sscarol.24@gmail.com
399-0927

Minutes: October 12, 2011

The Master Gardeners met at the Carleen Bright Arboretum October 12 to conduct the monthly meeting. President Jan Serface called the meeting to order at 12 pm. Jan called for any changes to the minutes that were posted in the October newsletter. No changes were called for so the minutes were approved as submitted. The treasurer's report was approved as stated on the October agenda.

The first item under *new business* was the welcoming aboard of three new members of the intern class of 2010. We welcome Madge Beasley, Patricia Goaley, and Valeri Schillaci as new members. Madge Beasley was able to attend the meeting and be presented with her membership.

The *nominating committee* consisting of Steven Lovecky, Sharon Richardson, and Barbara Vance presented a slate of officers to be voted on at the November Meeting. The candidates are: *President – Sandy Back; Vice President – Jeanette Kelly; Secretary – Brenda Golubski; and Treasurer – Barry Vokes*. Again, we will vote on these positions at our November meeting. We hope to see you there to help us select our new officers.

Brenda Golubski, our volunteer coordinator, updated us on the coming projects that are available. Cedar Ridge Elementary has a workday scheduled for October 21 at 8:30 a.m. with a follow up work session for October 28 from 8:15 to 3:00 p.m. Spring Valley Elementary hosted by Sherrie Prather will have workdays. Check your email for available work times. Woodway Elementary has a work session, hosted by Kim Dougherty, scheduled for October 21, from 8-12:00 noon. We need telephone help at the office as always. Contact Carol Reinking to schedule a time.

Jeanette Kelly presented the last update before our major project, the Children's Garden Fair, scheduled for October 16. All three of the coordinators have been working diligently to prepare for this exciting event. There are a lot of last minute details that need to be taken care of. Jeanette thanked all the volunteers for their assistance. Please wear your name badges. We will have a Master Gardener scarecrow, which is named Ms. Rose Bush.

The set-up and decorate time is scheduled from 10:30 a.m. Cars need to be off the parking area and parked up the hill or across the street by 1:30 p.m. We'll have bicycle police patrolling the area. Be prepared for at least 800 to 900 visitors as we had that many last year. We will have supplies needed for the booths and water will be supplied. Carol Reinking will be our nurse. Let's be ready to go at 1:30 p.m.

Julia Khoury has her computer up and running again so anyone who has hours to turn in, she will be happy to take them.

Ila Jean asked that everyone who is bringing airplane plants to bring the whole plant and they will cut the part off the plant for the kids. When we are finished you can take the plant home. She gave a final review of the Open House. We had 40 plus attend the Open House with 18 guests. There were nine people who signed up for the upcoming Master Gardener class and we received letters from several local dignitaries.

Ila Jean received an email from Rachele Kemp at TSTC stating that four scholarships have been given out in the amount of \$500 each to horticultural students.

We have a volunteer list to man the telephone for the rest of the year. It will be turned over to Carol Reinking. Please sign up.

Melody Fitzgerald thanked everyone for helping her with her project.

The Judy Tye memorial has received \$128 for the memorial which was used to purchase different kinds of horticultural books.

Jene Hering said that the McGregor garden has perked up and it is worth seeing.

Barbara Vance has brought aloe vera plants and the price is right.

With no other business the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dick Belanger
Secretary

McLennan County Master Gardeners Association Officers 2011

President - Jan Serface • Vice President - Sandy Back • Secretary - Dick Belanger

Treasurer - JoAnn Clafferty

AgriLife Sponsor - Shane McLellan, County Agent

Newsletter - Sonia Warriner jwarriner@hot.rr.com

Our web site: www.mclennanmastergardeners.org



Send volunteer hours to Julia Khoury, 8512 Bosque Blvd., Waco 76712 or tkhoury@hot.rr.com

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating



Ask Master Gardener: Mark Barnett

Prepping for Perennials

There is still time to start planning for next spring. This is the time when all types of perennial garden plants that multiply or produce off shoots need to be divided. Some will need dividing simply to thin them out so they can have room to grow and flower better next season. Others need thinning to keep them healthy and prevent disease. Still others can be divided if you want to make more or share with a friend.

Before you start digging and chopping on your plants, you need to know what you are going to do with them once you start. Where are these plants going? If you are keeping them, you need to have the new location ready for the new plants before you dig up the old ones. If you are planning to give them away, then you need to have a good idea of where they are going and when so that they can go back into the soil as soon as possible.

Not all plants are treated equally; some need to be handled differently from others. For example daisies, mums, asters, cone flowers, Lambs Ears and any other leafy plants that do not have tuber-like roots or bulbs, need to be dug carefully to keep as much of the root on each piece as possible. You want a nice plant that has healthy leaves and plenty of roots to keep it going once it is re-planted.

Check each division and keep only healthy ones that are nice and green and will look “vigorous” when planted. If it looks puny or yellow or nearly dead, then do not keep it. Shasta Daisies and Lambs Ears need thinning once in a while to keep them healthy. They can develop fungus problems if the plants are left too close together over time.

Other plants such as day lily, iris, amaryllis and most other perennials that have tuber-like roots or bulbs are a little more forgiving and easier to handle. Day lilies and most bulbs can be dug and kept in moist potting soil or damp newspaper for a little while. Now I said damp not soaking, dripping wet.

Iris on the other hand need to be allowed to heal for a day or so after digging so that the cuts in the tubers can dry to prevent rot from starting once you plant them. When you dig the iris plants keep only the tubers that are nice and firm and have no bad spots on them. Trim the leaves a bit to keep them from dehydrating too much, and if you have had a fungus or disease problem in the past or just want to prevent one, you can treat the iris tubers with a fungicide as soon as you dig and clean them. Then let them dry for a few days before re-planting. Remember not to cover the tuber with soil or mulch. Iris are not like other “bulbs.” Part of the “root” or tuber needs to be exposed to the air and only the bottom half is in the soil. *To cover the whole tuber is to guarantee that you will have problems with fungus or rot.*

When preparing the new areas or cleaning up the old area to put the plants back in, always add some compost if your soil is hard and sprinkle in a light all purpose plant food to give the transplants a boost till their roots can get going. Water to soak the area after planting to settle the soil around the roots of the plants and keep it moist but not soggy.



This year’s scholarship winners for our \$500 awards were (left) Vanessa Laxson, Matt Edwards and Taddie Kelly. The TSTC horticulture and landscape program is directed by Rachelle Kemp (MCMG class of ’96).

Note: a fourth student was selected to receive a scholarship, but left school due to illness. The award will be given at a later date.



A “Pumpkin Princess”

Contributors to this issue: Mark Barnett, Jeanette Kelly, Rachelle Kemp, Lori Lutz, Janet Schaffer, Judy Schmeltekopf, Barry Vokes and Jo vonRosenberg.

Mulch around those plants that need it with loose mulch that will allow air to move but water to soak in and keep the soil covered to keep down weeds. You do not want anything that is big and chunky but you also do not want mulch that is so fine that it compacts into a dense mat that will not allow water to move through it.

from the cardinal's corner

The 4th Annual Children's Garden Fair was a huge success! The Carleen Bright Arboretum would like to thank all of the volunteers who made this special day possible. With our very small staff, events like these would NOT be possible without each and every one of you. We counted 1,000 guests who came through the front gate. (This number does not include the people who came through the top gates). As you can see the fair has grown considerably each year.

The scarecrow contest was a great addition this year. We had nine scarecrows along the nature trail (including Ms. Rose Bush) for families to enjoy and cast their votes. We counted 321 ballots and awarded blue ribbons in three categories: 1st Place for "Most Creative" went to the "Deer Warrior"; 1st Place for "Best in Show" went to "Buster the Rock Star" and 1st place for "Most Life-Like" went to "Man on the Hammock."

If any of you know of a company or group that would like to participate next year, please let us know!

Although these two women probably do not want me to mention it, I would like to thank Jeanette Kelly and Judy Schmetekopf for the hours and hours they put into planning this fair. These two women are remarkable. They planned this event all the way to the final details, leaving nothing to chance. The positive feedback we have gotten is amazing. I thought I would share a few of the comments:

"It is so nice to take my children to an event where they are not plowed with sugar; we still enjoyed being around them at the end of the day!"

"Thank you for having an educational event where the children actually learn."

"This was great fun, thank you!"

"An outdoor event that s educational, fun, and free that my children didn t want to leave – very rare – Thanks!"

Janet Schaffer, Arboretum Manager



*Photos
by
Janet
Schaffer*