

BIRTHDAYS:

Volume 5, Issue 7 July/August, 2019

July

Pat Brand, 7/1
John Womack, 7/12
Cheryl Weidmann, 7/15
Susan Warren, 7/28
Fred Weidmann, 7/30

August

Becky Hettinger, 8/19
Jimmie Pierce, 8/12
Stan Trekell, 8/29

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Newsletter Staff Needs Your Help!

If you like to write, or even if you don't, but have good ideas for articles and/or subjects for the newsletter please consider joining the newsletter staff.
Contact Sandra Rosen or Paula Marshall for more information.

We welcome all of our Master Gardeners to forward articles or information for our newsletter to our Editor:
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Paula Marshall Anna Baker
Don Taylor Jan Graham
John Womack

Pollinators need you. You need pollinators.

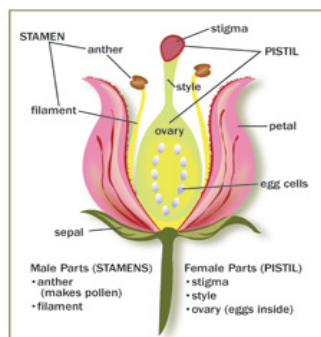
from www.pollinator.org,

Birds, bats, bees, butterflies, beetles, and other small mammals that pollinate plants are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food. They also sustain our ecosystems and produce our natural resources by helping plants reproduce.

Pollinating animals travel from plant to plant carrying pollen on their bodies in a vital interaction that allows the transfer of genetic material critical to the reproductive system of most flowering plants – the very plants that bring us countless fruits, vegetables, and nuts, ½ of the world's oils, fibers and raw materials; prevent soil erosion, and increase carbon sequestration.

This nearly invisible ecosystem service is a precious resource that requires attention and support - - and in disturbing evidence found around the globe, is increasingly in jeopardy. Pollinator Partnership (P2) urges you know how this system supports you, and how your actions can help support healthy and sustainable pollination.

What is pollination?



When a pollen grain moves from the anther (male part) of

a flower to the stigma (female part), pollination happens. This is the first step in a process that produces seeds, fruits, and the next generation of plants. This can happen through self-pollination, wind and water pollination, or through the work of vectors that move pollen within the flower and from bloom to bloom.

Who are the pollinators?

Birds, bats, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, wasps, small mammals, and most importantly, bees are pollinators. They visit flowers to drink nectar or feed off of pollen and transport pollen grains as they move from spot to spot.

Why are pollinators important?



Some of the many foods that rely on pollinators

Somewhere between 75% and 95% [1] of all flowering plants on the earth need help with pollination – they need pollinators. Pollinators provide pollination services to over 180,000 different plant species and more than 1200 crops. That means that 1 out of every three bites of food you eat is there because of pollinators. If we want to talk dollars and cents, pollinators add 217 billion dollars to the global economy, and honey bees alone are responsible for between 1.2 and 5.4 billion dollars in agricultural productivity in the United States.

In addition to the food that we eat, pollinators support healthy ecosystems that clean the air, stabilize soils, protect from severe weather, and support other wildlife.

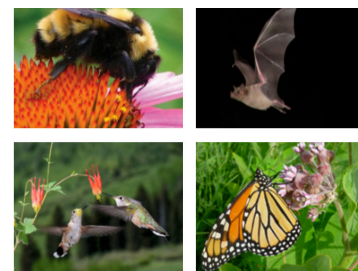
What do we know about their status?

Pollinator populations are changing. Many pollinator populations are in decline and this decline is attributed most severely to a loss in feeding and nesting habitats. Pollution, the misuse of chemicals, disease, and changes in climatic patterns are all contributing to shrinking and shifting pollinator populations. In some cases there isn't enough data to gauge a response, and this is even more worrisome.

How can you help?

Pollinators need help, but we know how to help them! P2 scientists and research partners that have been studying pollinators for over three decades have been able to show that conservation techniques work. If everyone – home owners, local governments, national governments, and private industry – made the effort we could change the future for pollinators and secure our own.

1. Habitat Areas Count
2. Plant the right plants
3. Encourage gardeners to plant pollinators.



President's Message

By Paula Marshall

Gardening ... Watch Out for the Unexpected!

A neighbor was digging potatoes last week and his wife followed behind, shaking the dirt from the plants and collecting the potatoes. It was a cool, beautiful sunny morning and the kids were having fun running through the rows of potatoes seeing who could jump the most rows at one time.

Things were going great until the wife felt a sharp pain hit her gloved hand, and in an instant she yelled, "SNAKE!" A copperhead that was wrapped up in the top of a potato plant had bitten her and she immediately felt the venom moving up her arm.

The husband killed the 12" snake, tied a tourniquet around his wife's wrist, threw the dead snake in a Styrofoam cup and they all headed for Trinity Mother Frances Clinic outside of Canton. He called the clinic to tell them they were on their way, but was told to call 911 because the clinic was not set up as an emergency room. The 911 operator told him to meet the ambulance at the Shell Station at 19 and I20, and by the time they arrived his wife's blood pressure had already dropped to a dangerously low level. She was immediately given anti-venom by ambulance personnel and transported to a Tyler hospital where she stayed for three days.

I started thinking about some of the dangers we are exposed to when working in the gardens, and wondered if I would know what to do if something like a snakebite should happen. I have had several painful spider bites this year, a wasp sting, found a snake curled up in a potted plant on the front porch, and endured severe goosebumps and a season's worth of mental anguish trying to remove a very determined rat snake from a flower bed that, in turn, slithered up into the chassis of the Ranger I had parked nearby. We found him very comfortably nestled into a crack under the hood of the Ranger, and he outsmarted us for over an hour as my grandson and I tried to remove him. We finally lost him when he dropped down into a hole near the wheel well never to be seen again. And, since we were physically exhausted and mentally drained, we gave up by telling ourselves he was "probably" gone.

Why am I telling you all this? Just to get you thinking about what to do if you are working in the garden and something like this happens to you or someone who is with you. Do you have a plan? Would you know what to do?

In the case of snakebite or a venomous spider bite, would you know to call 911 immediately and not try to drive yourself or a victim to the hospital? It might have been too late had my neighbor decided to drive his wife to the hospital in Tyler instead of relying on 911 for instructions. Would you know to kill the predator and take it with you so that medical personnel could identify it and administer treatment accordingly? We think these things happen to others, but they can easily happen to any one of us. Have a plan. Know what to do in case of emergencies, and never hesitate to call 911 for instructions. Remember ... when in the garden or yard, be on the lookout – ALWAYS – for the unexpected.

Nona's Rub

By Paula Marshall

A seasoning for many different things; roast beef, pork, baked chicken, sausage gravy, scrambled eggs

Blend equal amounts of fresh garlic, rosemary and sage separately. In a blender or food processor until finely processed.

After processing each herb in the blender, combine the three together with salt and pepper to taste and blend together for a few seconds until thoroughly mixed. Store in the refrigerator.

Garden Guru



Dear Garden Guru – What are the advantages of fermenting vegetables?

Well, there are many. Fermentation is a really old way of preserving vegetables that went out of style when we discovered canning and freezing. However, now nutritionists understand that all the sterilizing and freezing was not good for the vitamins and minerals in the vegetables as well as not good for the taste. In addition, fermenting preserves and enhances B and C vitamins, it makes nutrients more readily available, it aids in digestion, it doesn't call for chemical preservatives, and it supports the immune system. And it is easy! Yes.

By John Womack, MG

"This was received from Marsha Sasser from her grandson who loves plants.

*Once in the forest
I strolled content,
To look for nothing
My sole intent.*

*I saw a flower,
Shaded and shy
Shining like starlight,
Bright as an eye.*

*I went to pluck it;
Gently it said:
Must I be broken,
Wilt and be dead?*

*Then whole I dug it
Out of the loam
And to my garden
Carried it home,*

*There to replant it
Where no wind blows.
More bright than ever
It blooms and grows."*

- Goethe (1813)

July/August Gardening Chores

Tommy Phillips

County Extension Agent, Ag/NR

Good news for Texas gardeners: Although many areas of the country are experiencing some sense of a prolonged dry spell during this summer, no areas of Texas are in what is considered "severe or extreme drought" at this time. In fact, 99% percent of the state is not in a drought at all.

That being said, August is traditionally one of the hottest and driest months for us, and our gardens often show it. While we can still plant and be active in our August gardens, sometimes it's best to let them rest as they gear up for the next growing season. Here's a rundown of some great activities and chores to keep your garden going into the fall.

Start vegetable seeds for the fall/winter garden.

Vegetable and flower seeds can be started now for your cool-weather gardens.

Vegetable seeds to sow:

- broccoli
- cauliflower
- kale
- cabbage
- Winter squash

Flower seeds to sow:

- pansy
- snapdragon
- viola
- alyssum

Start them in seed trays, peat pots or pots made from rolled newspaper.

Plant herbs

Add herbs to your garden by popping in transplants of Mexican mint, marigold, oregano, rosemary, sage, artemisia and all types of mint. Most herbs prefer full sun and well-drained soil. Mediterranean herbs in particular, such as rosemary, prefer to dry out a bit in between waterings, so be sure your soil doesn't retain unnecessary moisture.

Plant wildflower seeds: **Bluebonnet** (*Lupinus texensis*) is the state flower, so many of us want to add it to our gardens. Late August is the perfect time to begin sowing seeds of bluebonnets and other wildflowers such as **Mexican hat** (*Ratibida columnifera*), **Indian paintbrush** (*Castilleja* spp.), **Winecup** (*Callirhoe digitata*) and Pink Evening Primrose (*Oenothera speciosa*). Choose a sunny site, loosen up the soil (adding soil amendments if necessary) and plant seeds 1/2 inch deep. Water in and keep watered regularly throughout fall.

Fertilize container plants. Plantings in containers have a unique environment; they don't have a ready-made source of nutrients, so it's important to feed them continually to ensure flower production and healthy growth. Water-soluble fertilizers work well, as do time-release fertilizers, but don't forget foliar feeding. Regularly spraying the leaves of your plants with a product such as liquid seaweed maintains health and drought resistance.

Prune annuals and roses. Although this is not the time of year for a hard (severe) pruning, many plants enjoy a bit of a haircut during the long, hot summer. Cascading annuals such as petunias often get leggy and stop blooming, so cut them back by half to promote bushier growth and increase flower production. Roses that are known to be repeat bloomers will also appreciate a light pruning to encourage a fall bloom cycle. Remember to fertilize your roses after pruning and water in thoroughly.

Water deeply and less frequently. Light, frequent waterings will simply encourage shallow roots, which will not serve your plants well in times of heat and dry weather. It's preferable to water more deeply but less often, encouraging your plants' roots to dig down deep into the soil. Avoid watering directly onto the foliage of your plants, and water earlier in the morning or later in the day to avoid rapid evaporation. Better yet, install drip irrigation or soaker hoses to direct water closer to the plants' roots.

Mulch as necessary.

To make sure your soil is evenly moist, conserve water and keep weeds at bay, apply a 2- to 3-inch layer of mulch in any bare areas of your garden. You shouldn't be able to see any bare soil, particularly when the weather is hot and dry.

Use a quality native hardwood shredded mulch, and avoid heaping it on the base of your plants, which can quickly lead to rotting. Instead, feather it toward the stem without actually touching it.

FSMG - Garden Reviews and Updates

The Extension Office Garden By Paula Marshall

The Extension Office Gardens are becoming easier and easier to take care of thanks to planting perennials and native plants that survive season after season. With the addition of a few annuals in the spring and early summer, a new layer of mulch now and then and watering during the dry spells, the gardens sustain their beauty throughout the year. Each and every time we are there working, strangers stop by and tell us how much they enjoy the gardens. There is no greater reward than that.

Community Garden By Sharon Palmer

Every year and every season in a garden can be so different from the previous year. I've learned that my expectations of what should be are going to be challenged in the most aggravating ways possible. Flexibility, patience, and an extreme amount of persistence and determination are key characteristics to have when you are a gardener! If you can recall last year's bounty, then you surely remember that we had an overabundance of squash! This year, however, we are struggling to keep our plants alive. Such a wet year! I am happy to report that some of our other plants are doing well and producing! We have been harvesting cucumbers for a couple of weeks now. We planted a burp-less cucumber variety that retains its juicy, good flavor; no bitterness! There are also jalapeños, bell peppers, tomatoes, and basil producing right now. Our green beans, Lima beans, eggplant, and squash have blooms on them; such a beautiful sight! Carter just planted three rows of okra. Gumbo, anyone? Fried, perhaps? I'll eat okra just about any way it can be prepared. I'm hoping for a great harvest of sweet potatoes this year...we are just shy of 30 slips that were planted. They produced wonderfully last year and the vines were vigorous, so fingers crossed for this year! Carter and I have been diligent in weeding; it's such a tedious job! We are thankful for those who have dropped in to help with that; we know it isn't the most fun thing to do on a hot, muggy day. Should you feel the overwhelming urge to help in the community garden, then we will gladly accept that help. The garden is located at 503 W. Hwy 243, Canton, TX 75103.



Blackwell House Museum By Becky Hettinger

Becky was invited to the Van Zandt County Museum Board monthly meeting so the members could give their views on the landscaping for the house.

The Board wanted permanent greenery planted in front of the porch.

As requested Pat Taylor and Becky Hettinger planted dwarf yaupon hollies.

All the beds have been reworked, and new plants have been put in, including caladiums, lantana, and sun impatiens.

All the hard surfaces such as benches have been power washed including the storm shelter.

Next on the agenda will be all new edging for the beds and possibly a keyhole garden.

Pollinator Garden at Canton Jr. High

By Bob Williams

We planted some more perennials, we did some weeding last week, we mulched, but there is still an old problem of over watering by the sprinkler system.



Gardening Events – July/August, 2019

By Don Taylor, MG

July 9, 2019

East TX Arboretum 2019 Canning Series* – Jams & Jellies
Each session \$25, Women's Building East TX Arboretum @ 6pm

July 11, 9:00am Successes & Failures/Questions for Tommy,
Plant Swap, Free State Master Gardeners - Members Only

July 16, 2019

East TX Arboretum 2019 Canning Series* – Salsa's
Each session \$25, Women's Building East TX Arboretum @ 6pm

July 18, 2019

East TX Arboretum – Nature's Tiny Creatures Day Camp 9-3pm
Call 903-675-5630 and must register by Monday, July 15th

July 23, 2019

East TX Arboretum 2019 Canning Series* – Pickling
*Presented by: Carolyn Tyler, Henderson Co. Extension Agent

August 8, 9:00am Free State Master Gardeners, VZC
Library, A&M AgriLife Field Trials/Overton, Becky Wilson

August 15, 2019

Free State Master Gardeners Library Series
10:00am - Creative Gardening, Peggy Rogers, MG

August 15, 2019

Henderson Co. MG – Plant Propagation Workshop – Time & Place
TB

September 14, 2019

Henderson Co. MG – Plant, Seed & Bulb Sale – Time & Place TBD

May 12-14, 2020

TMGA State Conference in Waco, TX–Check their website for
more information

Advanced Training Offerings in 2019

This information is from the TXMG Web site

Vegetables – August 13-15, hosted by Bexar County,
San Antonio

Entomology - September 9-12
Hosted by Williamson Co., Georgetown

Greenhouse Management – October 17-19, hosted
by Tarrant County, in Ft. Worth

Save these dates!

JMG-September 24-26, hosted by Denton County,,
Corinth, TX

Additional Training Opportunities

Training opportunities for Texas Master Gardeners are
listed below:

MASTER GARDENER ADVANCED TRAININGS –

These workshops provide advanced training whereby a
corps of Master Gardeners can obtain a specialization
which supports or expands specific county educational
programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. To
be eligible for an Advanced Training designation, an
individual must possess an up-to-date Master Gardener
certification.

EARTH-KIND® TRAINING FOR MASTER

GARDENERS – Texas Master Gardeners may
select on-line modules to obtain up to 3 hours of re-
certification education credits in a calendar year. Each
module is worth 1 hour of credit. Master Gardeners are
not encouraged to seek re-certification credit for training
modules they have completed in previous years.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN STUDY COURSES – These
courses provide an opportunity for more in-depth
training in landscape design than is normally included
in the Master Gardener curriculum. Each course is
typically approved by local Master Gardener chapters
to qualify for 12 hours of continuing education toward
maintaining certification for Master Gardeners.

FREE STATE MASTER GARDENER LIBRARY SERIES PRESENTS



Texas Olives

with Jim Henry, Owner
Texas Olive Ranch

Van Zandt County Library

Thursday, July 18

10:00 a.m.

Come learn about
olive trees and
olive oil production
in Texas.

Hear about this true
Texas Family
business.

Visit their website
for products,
recipes and the
history of this
business.

texasoliveranch.com



Free Public Program
Everyone Invited!



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts Cooperating.
If you need auxiliary aids to attend this or any Extension Program please contact the Extension office at 903-567-4149 one week prior to event.

What's New In The Garden

By Nancy Sazbo, MG

As most of you know, I like to experiment with not so usual vegetables every year. The Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds catalog (www.rareseeds.com) enables my addiction, so is anxiously awaited every spring. This year, Park Seed had some interesting offerings that I just had to try as well. Let me tell you about my fun, new crops.



Chinese Multicolor Spinach

plan on stir-fry sometime this week.

First is the Chinese Multicolor Spinach (amaranth tricolor). This large leaf turned out more purple than the lime green in the catalog. It has a slight bitter taste but is a great addition to salads. My husband does not like cooked greens, so I report on its flavor that way.

Next is the Golden Beet (BC). If you like beet greens, this stem has a yellow color just like the beet itself. It tastes like a beet and makes for an interesting plate when served along side the dark red ones.

I really loved the Carrot Rainbow Blend (www.parkseed.com). The carrots are a true rainbow of color.

I tried the Extra Dwarf Pak Choy (BC) which came up well but you need to check daily as it bolts quickly. My Pak Choi Purple (PS) was a little fussy with germination but those that took came in full and beautiful. Unfortunately, keeping ahead of the pests is a chore. I have not cut one yet, but



Carrot Rainbow Blend



Golden Beet

Celtuce Red Mountain (BC) from China was truly off-the-wall. High in vitamin C, it is a more cold-hardy plant. I did harvest some and added it to stir-fry and



Celtuce Red Mountain

salad. The flavor is mild and adapts well to whatever seasoning is used. It has since bolted and I will try to collect seeds. Some seed was saved as BC advises planting in the fall.

The Easter Basket Mix (BC) of radishes was another fun surprise. The purple radish seemed to prevail over others but I was able to harvest a green radish with a rosy center that looked like a watermelon!

The Strawberry Spinach (BC) in the catalog shows pretty red flowers that I am still waiting to see. The leaves are very small, making it difficult to harvest – almost not worth the effort.

I would have added pictures of the Takane Buckwheat (BC) that I was growing however, my hubby misinterpreted my directions on what could be weed-wacked – bless his heart. It did come in with pretty red stems and pink flowers. BTW – the cows enjoyed munching on it!



Pak Choi Purple



Strawberry Spinach

Quick and Easy Roasted Tomatoes

By Sandra Rosen

Line with foil a large baking sheet with sides like a jelly roll pan. Cut a mixture of tomatoes into quarters (or halves if they are small) leaving on the skin. Add some peeled and quartered carrots and some nice sweet onions also peeled and quartered. All the chunks of veggies should be about the same size to roast evenly. Sprinkle with a nice Extra Virgin Olive Oil. Add about 1/3 cup combination of 3 chopped herbs: parsley, rosemary, thyme, sweet basil, and marjoram or oregano, or use 1/8 cup of the same herbs dried. Bake at about 400° about 45 minutes or until onions start to brown. Let roasted vegetables cool, then put them into a food processor or blender and puree. Pack into containers and freeze. Thaw well before using and drain off any water. This is great as a pizza sauce, pasta sauce, or meat loaf ingredient.

Pesto

By Paula Marshall

(For sandwich spread, dipping a baguette or toss on warm pasta)

- 2 cloves garlic
- 4 oz. Parmesan Cheese
- 2 Cups Herbs (Basil or Cilantro)
- 1/3 Cup toasted nuts (your choice, pine nuts are traditional)
- 6 TBSP canola oil
- 1/4 tsp salt

Place all ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Refrigerate or freeze.

Susan Dahlman, Master Gardener

By Joan Driver



Susan Dahlman's gardening roots originated in her native Philippines with her grandmother, who supervised servants employed to care for her gardens. Susan says she has always been fascinated with the beauty of plants and their variations.

After she and Terry married and moved to the U.S., she was involved with two gardening clubs in Corpus Christi that worked closely with Master Gardeners, and she always wanted to be a member. When they relocated to the Mabank area, she signed up for training in Henderson County but had to cancel because of a family emergency. Learning that classes were forming in

Van Zandt County in 2015, she applied and was accepted on the very last day of application, after Tommy and a committee interviewed her in a conference call.

Susan prefers raised beds and containers for her flowers and vegetables. Among her favorites are hydrangeas and hostas. She admits to lots of failures but says the successes keep her going. She loves to finish off a garden project with a glass of wine.

Susan's gardening advice is to check plants every day in order to get acquainted with them and pay close attention to their needs. "When you look at them frequently, you learn to notice changes and anticipate problems like water and bugs before they're in serious trouble." Although she says with a laugh that she would not necessarily recommend the practice, one of the memories of her grandmother's gardening that she found most interesting was her practice of having the yard boys feed her many bougainvilleas with the liquids collected from the family chamber pots.



Susan's beautiful azalea, and hydrangeas!
Grandmother knew best!

Broccoli Corn Bread

- 2 pkgs Jiffy Cornbread mix
- 4 eggs
- 1 chopped onion
- 1 1/2 c butter (I use 1 cup)
- 1 box frozen chopped broccoli, thawed
- 1 cup cottage cheese

Sauté onion in butter until soft. Mix all well. Pour in 9X13 greased dish and bake at 400 for about 25 min or till golden.

Dee-licious!

Bob's White Peaches



are ready, Call or Text

Robert Williams

713-628-6936

robertjwilliams74@gmail.com

Needle Me Designs EMBROIDERY

on
Shirts
Hats
Towels
Gifts

Call or Text

Shari Curran

903-340-5444

nobigwoof@gmail.com

Bonton Farm Field Trip or How to Change a Food Desert

By Becky Hettinger and Jimmie Pierce



Welcoming Committee at Bonton Farm



Nesting Trailers with Hens



Up close, check out the curls



Mangalica Boar

Not so close, happy pig!

Bonton Farm's Market Manager, Kim High, greeted our group of six Master Gardeners and two guests on Wednesday, July 19th. After a stormy night that brought a lot of unexpected rain, we found the farm wet as we pulled into a very muddy parking lot. But anxious to see the farm that is changing people's lives, our spirits were not dampened.

Martha Mitchell and Joan Driver stepped aboard a waiting ATV driven by Mariah, the daughter of Bonton's Extension Farm Manager. The rest of us, Becky and Charlie Hettinger, Jimmie and Dale Pierce, Mimi Sherwin, and Candy Kane, followed Kim to the pasture where over 400 chickens free range. Huge chicken tractors equipped with nesting boxes were full of laying hens. Eggs are gathered daily to sell at the Dallas Market.

Nearby a very friendly Mangalica Boar resides. We were all amazed to see a pig that grows a thick, curly coat similar to that of a sheep.

Next we saw a few of the farm's goats and a beautiful Scottish Highland calf, the offspring of a pair that were donated to Bonton.

We then relaxed a few minutes in the shade of their rustic pavilion, crafted from cedar logs harvested on the property. Gatherings of all sorts use the facility throughout the year. Mimi Sherwin joined the group here.

Last but not least, Kim coaxed 2 huge and rare Berkshire pigs out of their shed for us to see, one of them weighing over 300 pounds. The vegetable gardens, at Bonton, are located in two areas. Both have raised beds and the larger of the two has rows of plants, as well. A shade cloth arbor covers raised beds of herbs. A special shed has been built to wash all the produce that will be marketed.

One of the missions of Bonton Farm was to supply nutritious food in the middle of a urban food desert. If you are interested in learning first hand they have a volunteer day every second Saturday of the month from 9 to 12 and sign-up is required before arrival.



Artichoke's in downtown Dallas.

Additional Photos on Page 9



Scottish Highland Calf

Katharine Palmer, 4th in State 4-H

By Sharon Palmer, MG



Katharine Palmer, daughter of Sharon Palmer, competed in the senior division State Fashion Show through 4-H. This is her first year in 4-H and she placed 4th in the state under the refashion category. This would not have been possible without the help and encouragement of Melisa Rhodes, Tommy Phillips, and last, but not least, Mrs. Carolyn Davis. Mrs. Carolyn Davis, 4-H sewing instructor, passed away shortly before this competition, but she has certainly left a wonderful legacy with all the youth she taught!

Additional photos from the Bonton Farm Field Trip



Raised Beds



Shaded Herb Beds



Vegetable Cleaning Shed



Event Center