

Williamson County Master Gardener JOURNAL

President's Report

Jeanne Barker

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EDITORS:

[Martha Baddour](#)
[Jinna MacLaurin](#)

This is a note received after our Spring Garden Fair:

"Thank you so much for a very well organized event.

You guys rock!

I am so impressed with growth of your organization and enthusiasm of all volunteers that had MG badges on Saturday.

I always enjoy coming to speak at your Spring Fair.

Keep up the great work you do."

**Emsud Horozovic, Forestry Manager
City of Round Rock, Parks and Rec. Dept.,
Urban Forestry Division**

What a glowing testimony to our organization! Emsud's note expresses my thoughts exactly. I was so impressed with everyone's efforts. I heard so many compliments from both workers and attendees. From the initial planning team to all that implemented the final execution, I'm just amazed. You are an amazing group! Thank you!!

At the April monthly meeting, you may have noticed our new method of making announcements. Catherine Nickle suggested (and offered to implement) the use of scrolling Power Point slides to make announcements. Having the visual announcements allows details to be shared clearly. If you have announcements you would like shared at the monthly meetings, please send those to me or to Cat McGrath-Farmer a week prior to the meeting.

Another new idea was implemented at our last meeting. Our program chair, Cat McGrath-Farmer, is asking members to complete evaluation forms for each speaker. She wants to know if you are happy with the speakers and the program selection.

Have an idea for a MG project? The Project Committee asks that you plan ahead and submit your Project Proposal Form at least six weeks in advance of your proposed project. The committee meets monthly, so in order to review the proposal at a regularly scheduled meeting, get questions answered, etc., they need six weeks.

Thanks to everyone who completed a membership survey. We will be compiling your submissions and sharing the information soon. Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback.

Using Emsud's words, You guys rock!



Berry Springs

Susan Blackledge

A special thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers!



Spring Clean Up / Potluck 2013

Berry Springs is an equal opportunity volunteer facility for folks who enjoy the great outdoors, like to have fun and also like learn something while giving back.

Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Native Plant Society members, Boy Scouts and park patrons are getting to know each other while contributing their time and energy on behalf of the park. Each year the park hosts several events that benefit the park but also those who volunteer.

In January we had our United Way Day of Service on MLK Holiday. We continue to develop our 1/3 mile of Nature Trail located on the west side of IH35. We had thirty volunteers clear sections of the trail to further define it. In the fall, on United Way Day of

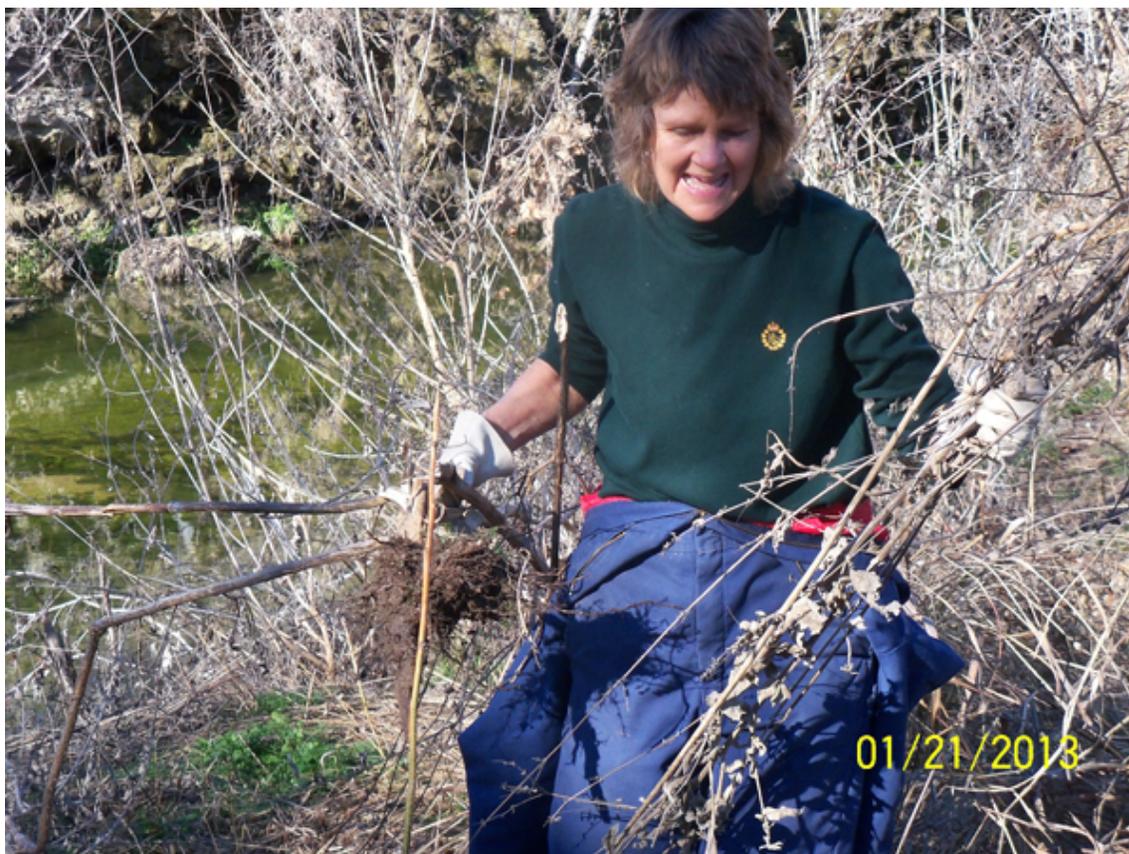
Caring, we planted 22,000 square feet of wildflowers along the trail edges. During Archeology Days, the Native Plant Society had a booth had where kids make seed balls and these were thrown onto the trail in the fall also. This spring you can see the fruit of our labor. Wildflowers are popping up everywhere!



Volunteers working in the Donkey's Carrot Garden

l to r: Poco the donkey, Mike Harper, Betty Phillips, Mary Sexton, Linda Carter

We had our Spring Clean Up/Potluck luncheon on Saturday, March 2nd and despite being a little cool, it was a beautiful successful day with beds being cleaned and pruned in anticipation of warmer weather and plants coming back to life. A great lunch was had by all.



Colleen Sweeney cleans the Nature Trail

On March 16th, The Native Plant Society led the first in a series of hikes along the newly developed Nature Trail to identify plants at Berry Springs Park and Preserve. This information is being compiled and documented to help us with our ongoing prairie restoration and to identify invasive plants for removal. The next hike is scheduled for May 25th. The hike will be along the 36 acre prairie restoration areas that have been underway since 2010.

Archeology Days was co-hosted by the park and the Williamson Museum on March 22nd and 23rd. Many folks from Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Native Plant Society and the Museum volunteered once again to pull this annual event together. Kids and adults participated in activities that were fun and educational, teaching everyone about the history of the area.

Special recognition needs to go out to Master Naturalist & Gardener Pam Goolsby, her husband Mike, and Master Naturalist Cindy Stone for their diligence in taking care of the park's eastern bluebird nest boxes. Mike has been building the boxes and together

these folks have been monitoring them for the Nest Watch Program for Cornell University.

Master Naturalist Jim Hailey, along with Pam Goolsby and Cindy Stone have been conducting a weekly bird survey to document the different species we have here at the park. This information is sent to the eBird Database and people can go online to identify hot spots to go birding. As of late, there has been a very noticeable increase in the bird watching activity that is going on in the park.

Eagle Scout, James Hardt, with the donations from the Native Plant Society has replaced, repaired and added to the interpretive plant signs located along the park trails. The updated map will be coming out soon, but in the mean time all you have to do is hike the trails and you will see the signs identifying the different plants, shrubs, and trees that are along the way. The signs and some of the plants were washed away from the September 2010 flood that closed Berry Springs for a month.

Throughout the year the Park depends on all of you wonderful folks to volunteer to make it a special place. There is always something to do and learn at the park. We will be harvesting bluebonnet and wildflowers seeds in the future, continuing to take care of our pecan trees, flower beds, nature trail and prairie restoration areas to name a few of the activities you can participate in. To get involved, please contact the park at 512-930-0040 or email Susan Blackledge at sblackledge@wilco.org. Let's all work together to enhance, preserve and enjoy the natural beauty we all are so fortunate to have so near to us.

Did You Know?

Jinna MacLaurin

Did you know that Texas A&M Agrilife Extension has a [list of recommended daylilies](#) for south central Texas gardens? Below is a picture of Jason Salter daylilies in my garden last summer. They made it through the last few years of drought and are still going strong with occasional watering. However, they are not deer resistant, as I found out to my dismay one summer!



Volunteering at Joss Gardens

Jinna MacLaurin

Williamson County Master Gardeners frequently volunteer at Joss Growers, a nursery located in Georgetown, which sells plants wholesale to area landscapers. Joss propagates thousands of new plants every year. Their products include flowering perennials, gorgeous ornamental grasses, cactus, succulents, bushes, shrubs, trees, vines, ground covers, ferns and bamboo. Although they generally sell in huge lots wholesale, Joss does make an exception for volunteer Master Gardeners, as sometimes weekday volunteers can buy an available plant or two (or three, oh, don't get me started!). Joss also is the supplier of the wonderful plants we sell at our Spring Garden Fair! Although volunteering at Joss is considered volunteer work, it is also an awesome opportunity to learn about all kinds of propagation.



Pictured from back left are Mary Sexton, Jinna MacLaurin, Viki Strauss, Shelia Nally, Deseri Nally (guest), Bunny Phillips and Paul Howe.

On March 16, a group of six volunteers got together at Joss to work on propagation of inland sea oats. We had previously participated in the planting of sea oat seeds in flats, and now it was time to separate the small plants and replant so that they could develop further. Each small bunch of plants was removed from its container and the roots were carefully separated, creating three or more bunches, each of which was then replanted. We had a nice opportunity to talk and socialize as we worked. It was a very enjoyable morning.



Volunteers separated and replanted seedlings.

Volunteering opportunities at Joss are generally available on alternate Saturdays and Wednesdays. For more information or to volunteer, contact Paul Howe at paulfhowe@aol.com.



One of the many, many greenhouses at Joss Growers. Not pictured, but also a must-see for animal lovers is the cat house built from an old house trailer with an attached “catio”.

Monthly Gardening Tips

Winola VanArtsdalen

Gardening Tips for May

Plant Care and Maintenance:

- For drought survival, train plants now by watering deeply and infrequently so roots will stretch for moisture.
- Cut back spring flowering shrubs after blooming. Pinch back fall bloomers like aster to encourage branching.
- Plant summer-bloomers like cosmos and fall bloomers such as fall asters and Mexican mint marigold.
- Watch for aphids; blast with water. Be sure there is good air circulation for all your plants.

Lawn Care:

- Water lawn deeply (to depth of 6 inches, or as much soil as you have), but only as needed.
- To avoid stressing grass, be sure to cut no more than 1/3 grass height when mowing.
- Fertilize bermuda grass May 1-15. Fertilize St. Augustine grass, grown in full sun, in late May to early June. (Grass growing in shade is in stress, thus should be fertilized less.) Avoid weed and feed. Not only is it unhealthy for the environment, but the timing for weed control is not the same as feeding.

Gardening Tips for June

Oak Tree Pruning:

- February to July is the worst time to prune oak trees.

Plant Care and Maintenance:

- Mulch to help soil hold moisture, avoid temperature extremes, and keep out weeds. Nutrients will be added as mulch breaks down. Keep mulch away from crown of plants and away from tree trunks. It is too late to put top dressing on lawn now. Wait until cooler weather.

- Water more deeply, less often, so deep roots will have moisture.
- Plant summer color like zinnias, cosmos, rudbeckia, and portulaca. Remember that succulents store water in their fleshy leaves, so can be watered less often.
- Moderately fertilize established annuals and perennials using formula like 15-5-10 or an organic alternative, ie. fish emulsion or seaweed extract.
- If plants have yellow leaves with dark green veins, treat for iron deficiency. Greensand will help plants absorb the iron.

Lawn Care:

- Check lawns for insect activity. Use Nolo bait for grasshoppers. Treat grub worms only if you have three or more grubs per square foot.
- Cut no more than one-third of grass height when mowing

TEXAS MASTER GARDENER
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

Spring Garden Fair
April 6, 2013
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
3151 SE Inner Loop
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Georgetown, Texas

Native Plant Sale
Country Store
Demonstrations
Fun for Children
Program speakers

**A GREAT SUCCESS
THANKS TO EVERYONE!**

For more information see our website
<http://txmg.org/williamson/special-events>

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Save the Date:**MG Monthly Meeting****May 13, 2013 6:30 p.m.***African Violets by the African Violet Society***MG Monthly Meeting****June 10, 2013 6:30 p.m.***Armand Hufault, The Other Pollinator; Monarch Butterflies and Monarch Waystations***WCMGA Calendar:**<http://txmg.org/williamson/calendar-2>**Newsletter Submissions**

Thank you to those Master Gardeners who submitted articles, pictures, and ideas for this newsletter issue. If you would like to contribute to the July/August 2013 *Williamson County Master Gardener Journal*, please send your submissions to Martha Baddour at mars418@yahoo.com by June 15th.

As you garden, volunteer and learn, please take a moment to share your experiences with other gardeners.