

## President: Linda Timmons

Another year is just about done. Have you noticed how fast time seems to fly toward the end of a year? It's time for us to recognize Wood County Master Gardeners who have made outstanding contributions during 2016. I thought it might be good to briefly review the projects we have been involved in this year.

The year always starts with the training class.

Linda Bradley and her committee spent a lot of time during 2015 preparing so that the 2016 class could be a success. I'm always gratified to see the enthusiasm and varied backgrounds and skills that these new Master Gardeners bring to our association. I'm also proud that at least 6 of the classes were taught by current or past WCMGs.

The next WCMGA project was the Spring

Fling. Karen Anderson headed up that community program. Again all 3 of the educational sessions were presented by WCMGs.

Our Science Days', training the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders of Wood County, had weather and personnel challenges but was completed successfully. Jan Whitlock and Reggie Askins headed up the project. All but one of the learning modules were presented by WCMGs.

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## VP: Melissa Deakins - WINDING UP THE YEAR

During the meeting on **November 17th** we will recognize some of our outstanding members for all the hard work and dedication they have shown as Master Gardeners this year with an awards presentation. Project chairpersons will share with us the activities that have taken

place during this year at our various locations. Members will gain an overview of all the opportunities and events Master Gardeners participate in and take pride in all we do in Wood County.

**December 16** will be a brunch at the Stinson House in Quitman.

Members will have the opportunity to view the home in all it's Christmas glory, visit friends, show off that holiday sweater and get into the holiday spirit. We will push our regular time to 10 o'clock and take time to install the new officers. We would love to see everyone at our last meeting of the year.

### 2016 Slate of Officers

**President:** Linda Timmons

**VP:** Melissa Deakins

**Treasurer:** Molly Mathis

**Secretary:** Jan Whitlock



## President Article continued:

A new project this year was the Farmers Market committee. We had been disappointed with our Festival outreach over the last few years and decided to try to focus on the 2 largest local farmers markets. Judi Luce stepped up to head that committee. She was assisted on a rotating basis by at least 5 other MGs. They set up tables at the markets 4 times in the Spring and two times in the Fall. They provided horticulture information and had our Tip Books and plants for sale.

The Winnsboro Library project has been through some changes this year. Twala Watters has taken on this project and has been using community minded groups to help with improvements.

Our GHP Arboretum and Botanical Gardens project in Quitman continues to shine. WCMGs work in all areas and assist in promoting horticultural education and practices through the demonstration gardens, plant sales, classes and news articles.

The Wildscape gardens at the Mineola Nature Preserve are a favorite haunt of nature photographers. The Wildscape committee was headed by Karen Anderson until she resigned in May. I've been heading it up since then but the workers at the Wildscape don't need much direction.

Our other major outreach projects are the newsletter (Sylvia Johnson, editor), the web page (Keith Zimmerman, webmaster), and Facebook (Robin Sanchez). I don't know how many hours these three have put in to maintain these areas but I think they've been doing great jobs.

Other committees that don't get enough recognition are the audit, budget, and nominating committees. They may not be glamorous jobs-they aren't part of our community or educational outreach-but we wouldn't be a successful association without each of the MGs that serve on these committees.

I don't want to finish without mentioning the executive committee. Melissa Deakins (VP) has been in charge of our programs, Jan Whitlock (secretary) has kept our minutes and association records, and Molly Mathis (treasurer) has been on top of our financial records almost on a daily basis. All three deserve our thanks.

Clint has sent out a request for your nominations for five WCMGs that deserve recognition for their contributions as a Master Gardener this year. As you can see from this brief recap we have a lot of MGs that deserve recognition. Please send Clint your nominations. You don't need to have a nominee for all five. If you only want to suggest someone for one award, that's fine. He will need your vote by **noon on November 7<sup>th</sup>**. We will announce the awards at the November association meeting on November 17<sup>th</sup>.



There will be an **All Associate Work Day** on November 2nd at the Quitman Arboretum and Botanical Garden. It is strongly requested that all associates attend and bring your own tools. We will begin at 9 AM. Lunch will be furnished.

## AgriLife Agent– Fall is the Best Season to Plant: By Clint Perkins

Fall is getting closer. The weather will hopefully be getting cooler and wetter and gardeners will slowly be migrating back outdoors after the heat of this summer. Now is a perfect time to plan the addition of a new tree or a grouping of shrubs to the landscape. Or perhaps you have an area in the landscape that needs ‘remodeling’ or rejuvenating. The fall may be the best season to plant, surpassing even the spring.

Many people prefer January through March for planting, but the fall months of September through December have distinct advantages. Fall planting follows the heat of summer, before a cool winter season, and trees and shrubs planted in the fall use this to good advantage. Plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which may occur all winter in Texas. During the winter months, the roots systems of the fall-planted specimens develop and become established. When spring arrives, this expanded root system can support and take advantage of the full surge of spring growth.

Fall is the optimum time to plant balled and burlapped trees and shrubs. Balled and burlapped plants have ample time to recover from transplanting and proliferate roots before spring growth begins. Remember, however, all bare root plants, including roses and pecan and fruit trees, should be planted in late winter when they are completely dormant. When buying plants for your landscape, be sure to get healthy, well-grown plants. Always buy from a reputable dealer. Those in the plant-selling business year-round depend on repeat customers, and should only be selling customers quality plants which can assure future business. Beware of plant bargains. They can easily turn out to be real headaches. A bargain is no good if it dies. The price tag, especially the cheapest one, is not the best guide to quality.

All plants have growing requirements. Think about the plant’s needs before you invest. Is it adapted to your area’s soil? Will it grow in sun or shade?

Continued on next page

## County Extension Agent-Ag/NR: Clint Perkins

Wood County TX  
AgriLife Extension Service  
618 South Main Street  
Quitman, TX 75783-0968  
Phone: 903-763-2924

Interested in becoming a Master Gardener and contributing to your county? If so, call the Wood County AgriLife Extension office for more information and to join.

TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

## AgriLife Agent continued:

Does it need a wet or dry location? Is it cold hardy? Some nurseries have this type of information on tags beside the plant. If not, ask a nursery professional or your county Extension agent.

'Plan before you plant' is always a good rule of thumb. Whether you are planting a single plant or an entire landscape, plan first, then plant. Good planning is a worthwhile investment of time that will pay off in greater enjoyment of attractive and useful home grounds, and in increasing the value of your home. It's much easier to move plants on paper than to dig them after planting in the wrong place. A plan saves many planting mistakes.

Every plant in the landscape should serve a purpose. Ask yourself if you want a plant for screening, for privacy or for shade. How large will it be five years from now? Plants, like people, grow up. Remember, that a small one-gallon size plant will look entirely different after a few years of growth in your landscape.

Don't forget the Earth-Kind Living workshop on November 18th in Sulphur Springs. Volunteers are requested to help man our booth.

Happy Gardening

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## Fall Farmer's Markets: By Judi Luce

Beautiful fall weather was the backdrop for the WCMG Farmers Market booth on Oct. 8 & 15.

**The Winnsboro Farmers Market** was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the Autumn Trails Arts & Crafts Festival. Our booth educated folks on numerous fall planting topics. We also sold plants, herbs and garlic bulbs. Garlic was the best seller of the day and Linda was able to teach people how to grow this wonderful plant. Jenna, Gwenda, Linda, and Judi worked the booth.

**The Mineola Farmers Market** was on the 15<sup>th</sup> and we sold garlic bulbs, succulents, and jalapeño peppers. The attendance was very poor at this venue but still we were able to educate people and just have our Association's presence there. Linda and Judi worked the booth.

Our consensus after these weekends was that we should probably just participate in the spring farmers markets when there is more interest in gardening. In the spring we will be able to have a larger variety of plants, bulbs and other items to sell. This could be a great fund raiser for the Association. As always, these sales would go along with our distribution of Master Gardener based educational information on gardening.



Photo sent by Linda Timmons

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## QUITMAN ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDEN (QA&BG)

Fall and spring are such busy times of the year. The annual Yard Sale has come and gone. The rooms that were packed with sale items have now been vacuumed in readiness for holiday decorating and our annual Open House. In much the same fashion, the annual Fall Plant Sale has come to an end, and the area inside the picket fence is being cleaned up and cleared out. Also, we have recently added a few new lamps and pieces of art the Stinson House.

Many thanks to our Wood County Master Gardener friends, and all those others, who attended one of these vital money raising projects. A yard and its surrounding gardens are a drain on the pocket-book as we all know. Add to that a house that was built in the late 1860's, and you have yourself a passel of fiscal responsibilities.

Lin Grado has taken many garden clubs and study groups through our gardens in the past few months. Her vast knowledge and low key presentations have been a draw for those visiting Quitman. We look forward to many other guests in the coming months as word of mouth spreads the news about the gardens.

We are preparing for The Haunting of Hogg Park, a joint venture between the Quitman Arboretum, the City of Quitman, the Quitman Chamber of Commerce and several local banks, businesses and civic organizations. Many "age appropriate" activities will be available for all attending. We look forward to this being an annual event for the City.

A fall workshop will be offered on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>. This event will cover the selection, planting and general maintenance of fruit trees. Registration will begin at 9:00. There is **NO** charge. Registration is open to any and all who are interested.

Future gardening plans include updating and replanting some of the rose gardens. Major renovations will be made to the small "island area" in the middle of the road that passes in front of the Arboretum. We have perennials that need to be thinned out and relocated when the calendar says it is the right time. Fire ants have to be dealt with and building continues on our barn/storage facility.

We have been so happy to include some new helpers from this year's WCMG class. These folks have faithfully shown up on the Wednesdays they are free. Their assistance is appreciated. You don't need an invitation to come on out and assist. We are there every Wednesday and the coffee is on. Christmas decorating is just around the corner. Decorating the House and gardens is a big job to be sure but one that is always full of laughs and surprises. We would love to have you join us.

Nine years have passed since the inception of the Quitman Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. Thank you to those WCMG's who had the foresight to begin this project along with a big thank you to those who have supported our efforts over the years.

We look forward to welcoming all you to the House during the WCMG Christmas Brunch and of course hope to see you on the evening of December 13<sup>th</sup> when the house will be open in the early evening hours for the annual Open House for our friends and family.



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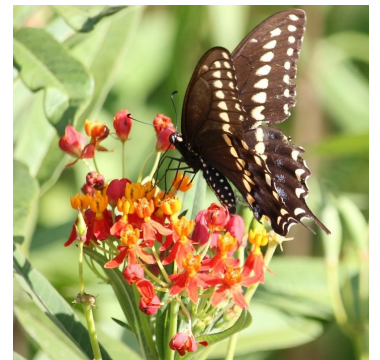
## Wildscape Garden at the Mineola Nature Preserve By: Linda Timmons

Our Wildscape was a hit during the recent Mineola Nature Preserve Nature Fest. Butterflies and hummingbirds were out in abundance. Two plants were the stars of the show, the flame acanthus and the butterfly weed. <http://mineolanaturepreserve.com/>

Flame Acanthus (*Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii*) is also called hummingbird bush, Wright's desert honeysuckle, Wright acanthus, Mexican flame, or Wright's Mexican flame. With all those names you can understand why having knowledge of the botanical name might be important. Flame acanthus is a small (3-5') shrub that has orangey red blooms from summer through fall. It's winter hardy to zone 8. In Wood County, we're right on the edge between zone 7 and 8 so when we get a really cold winter it will die down to the roots. This little shrub is extremely heat and drought tolerant. Flame acanthus produces lots of seeds which can spread readily and sprout easily. We will have plenty of babies at the Wildscape garden to share.



Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) is one of our native Texas milkweed cousins. The mature plants form 2-3' tall clumps topped with bright orange flowers. They have a long bloom time usually continuing to bloom into late Fall. It is an extremely drought tolerant plant and really prefers not to be fertilized. The flowers form seed pods that burst open when dried to release seeds that resemble dandelion seed. They blow all over the place and the garden will sprout lots of seedlings. Mature Butterfly weed is not easily moved because of a long tap root. It's best dug in the Fall or early Spring if you want to move the volunteers.



One other interesting thing about Butterfly weed is that it is often infested with Yellow Oleander aphids. This doesn't bother the plant. It does provide a food source for hungry ladybeetles.



[wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)

Butterfly weed has nectar- and pollen-rich flowers which attract several varieties of butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. This plant is a favorite of Monarch Butterflies because it arms them with a toxin which makes the Monarch distasteful to predators. During Nature Fest we found several monarch caterpillars chowing down on the Butterfly weed. Nearby there were also 2 chrysalises.



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"We are going to put in a fence," stated my husband. Well, I guess that solved my dilemma about a fence around the kitchen garden. With mixed feelings I agreed.

We purchased two fifty foot rolls of chicken wire and my husband came up with a plan to attach the wire to the raised beds so that the fence would be high enough to deter even the boldest buck. We drove fence post into the corners of the raised beds and stretched the wire around the perimeter of the boxes. Since the wire was mounted on the top of each raised box, we had to add small pieces of wire to close off the walkway areas where smaller garden thieves could simply walk under our enclosing fence.

Then there is the box that has a low tunnel over it that needed to be excluded from the fenced area. Oh yes, and the asparagus bed already had a fence around it simply to hold up the growing spears as each turned into large ferns.

Our fencing scheme soon became a catacomb of tricky pathways. One pathway became a dead-end. No outlet-go around became my watchword. My beautiful garden that was designed for ease of use had become a human trap. The critters can't get in, but neither could I! Now a day working in the garden becomes an organizational exercise complete with tool lists and buckets of supplies I might need just in case, and multiple trips back and forth from the greenhouse.

The only thing that attacks my brassicas now are cabbage loopers. I'm enjoying super sweet cherry tomatoes, a variety of peppers, eggplant, turnip greens, kale, bok choy, arugula, nappa cabbage, black-eyed peas and sunflower seeds. The cole crops are yet to come.

I'm learning to deal with the fence. Now if I can only remember to close the gate!



## Can we grow this in our gardens? By: Sylvia Johnson



### Yes, you can grow Tea in Texas

*Camellia sinensis*, a shrub that, truth be told, is of no special ornamental value. However, it is an attractive evergreen plant that bears single, cream-colored flowers. What interests us today is the plants foliage, which when dried and processed may be brewed into the popular caffeinated beverage, tea.

[http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate\\_archives/2007/jan07/CamelliasTxGard.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/2007/jan07/CamelliasTxGard.html)

The 1904 St. Louis World's Fair was the site of the great American invention, Iced Tea (although I would not recommend the method used of sending hot tea through lead pipes buried in ice to make it "iced"). I must admit that anyone who has ever lived in Texas knows and loves Iced Tea. Whether you drink it "straight" or "sweet" or "flavored", hot or cold, I can't imagine life here without Tea. <http://www.arbortees.com/blog/a-little-iced-tea-history/>

**Growing:** If you grow the showy red or pink *Camellia japonica* you can grow tea. Better known as the "Tea Bush or Tea Plant" *Camellia sinensis* wants well draining moist acidic soil; our East Texas sandy soil which has been amended with compost is perfect. Plant in soft sun to light shade as the direct full fury of Texas summer sun may wither your plant. As we all know the heavier the shade the spindlier the plant. So, if you want a full landscape bush or hedge give it more sun. This plant is hardy to Zone 8. The bushier the plant the more tender first growth leaves there will be to harvest. Tea Plant will grow 20' H x 15' W if left un-sheared. But, if you pick the leaves for tea you can decide the size of the plant. It will make a small tree if the bottom branches are pruned. (Note: this is not to be confused with "Tea Tree products" sold in stores. That is *Melaleuca alternifolia* an entirely different plant.) Tea Plant can be grown in containers but be sure to use sphagnum moss to ensure good drainage. It may need to be sheltered if temperatures go below 10°.

Tea Plants take time to mature. Let your plant grow 2-3 years before you start heavily harvesting, other than shape pruning. After 5 years, one plant will provide a person with all the tea you need for a year. One plant per person is the rule of thumb. Hedges of Tea Plants have been known to grow for over 100 years. Plant more Tea Plants and share with your friends, what better gift than "home grown Tea"?

<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/camellias/>

<http://www.fast-growing-trees.com/Camellia-sinensis-Tea-Plant.htm>

**Harvesting/Saving Seeds:** Tea leaves are harvested while young and tender. Pluck your youngest leaves and buds in the early morning. The more you pick the first flush of leaves the more often the plant will flush, depending on your weather.

This one plant provides the leaves for making four different styles of tea. Green Tea, Oolong Tea, White Tea and Black Tea. Yes, they are all made with the same leaf as it just depends on how you process the leaves as to what your tea will taste like. You can find all the directions on how to do this on the web. <http://coffeetea.about.com/od/preparation/a/growingtea.htm>



The fruits are small and hard, (similar to a hazelnut) with seeds that are about 1/4" in diameter. Tea seeds are relatively easy to grow. If you are not planting right away, store the tea seeds in a refrigerator. Tea seeds left at room temperature will rapidly lose moisture and become less viable. <https://narien.com>



## Nominations for 2017 Officers

The following have been nominated to hold office in the Wood County Master Gardeners Association for 2017:

President – Reggie Askins

Vice-President – Melodee Eishen

Secretary – Jan Whitlock

Treasurer – Tracey Snow Murphy

If you would like to be considered for any of the above posts contact Linda Timmons ASAP. Voting and tally will be announced during the November stated meeting.

## Texas Master Gardener Magazine by Karen Anderson

It is the Holiday season. If you have friends or family who like to garden (or who want to learn more about gardening in Texas) a gift subscription to Texas Gardener Magazine would make a great gift. It is easy to order and puts a little money in the Wood Co. Master Gardener bank account for educational programs and projects. Please contact me to process a **gift subscription**. You can now get a



or



## From the Editor:



## Work Days and Schedules

**Mineola Nature Preserve and Wildscape**—Tuesdays starting around 8:00. Bring your basic gardening tools. We do have larger tools like shovels, rakes, etc. We will work every Tues. unless there is a chance of severe weather or high percentage of rain.

Project Leader: Linda Timmons

**Quitman Arboretum & Botanical Garden**—Wednesdays at 0900. Bring your own gardening tools. Please come and help us maintain our public garden.

Project Leader: Pam Riley.



*If you are a Wood County Master Gardeners Association Member and have time to work but can't make the above schedule, call the project leader and tell them you want to work. They will let you know what needs to be accomplished. Just because you cannot meet the schedule does not mean that you are not needed! Even an hour of your time would help keep our projects updated. If you are working on your own without the "group" be sure to wear your WCMGA T-shirt and nametag to identify yourself to the public and other Associates.*

## 2016 WCMG Officers



Photo by Keith Zimmerman

Melissa Deakins, Linda Timmons, Jan Whitlock, Molly Mathias

### Online with WCMG

–**Website** at <http://txmg.org/woodcounty> for up-to-the-minute news and scheduled events, back issues of the newsletter and seasonal videos. Any new content for the web-site can be sent to Keith Zimmerman.

–**Facebook**, <https://www.facebook.com/Wood-County-Master-Gardeners-Inc-205733709448425/?fref=ts>

**Facebook Group:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1534107646899295/>

–**CEU—ON LINE:** <http://txmg.org> -look to side of page, click on Training, click on Training Opportunities, click Earth-Kind Training for Master Gardeners, almost to bottom of page you will find Directions. There are 12 subjects, click on arrow in front of subject for video then click on survey or test. You are not graded on the test.

–**Sunshine:** If you know of a member who needs a warm thought or sympathy contact **Jenna Nelson:** [Jnelson@peoplescom.net](mailto:Jnelson@peoplescom.net)

–**Volunteer Hours:** <http://texas.volunteersystem.org> Just click on the link and you will see where to enter your password. Before logging in, right click on the page and save to favorites or bookmark or Create Shortcut to your desktop. Thanks for entering your hours. If you need help contact Peggy Rogers.

*You can find all E-mail address and/or contact information on the Membership Roster sent to you by E-mail or on the Member Roster on the Volunteer Hours Website site above. -SJ Editor-*

*Unless otherwise annotated, all photos in this publication were taken by the author of the article in which they appear. SJ Editor*

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