

The Dirt



NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTROSE BOTANICAL SOCIETY: SPRING 2025

One of our earliest bloomers
in the Cactus Garden:
Iris reticulata 'Pauline'



© J. N. Cencer

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Liz Mauch, MBS President

Happy spring! The Botanic Garden is starting to wake up from winter's slumber; the tulips along the promenade, and the crocus, grape hyacinth and tiny iris are popping their heads up from the grass plots to greet the sun. I'm anxious to start gardening in my own yard, but am avoiding the urge to tidy up and to leave the vegetative matter alone for the overwintering insects for a few more weeks. We have posted signs in the Botanic Garden to explain why we are waiting to begin the clean-up.

Speaking of garden cleanup: our Wednesday Weed Warrior volunteer workdays will be resuming before too long (March 26, weather permitting), so plan to come join us. It's a great way to help us beautify the gardens, learn some horticultural tips, get a workout, and socialize. All good for our bodies, minds and souls!

I'm happy to introduce our newest At-Large Board members, Anne Britton and Anne Schuttig, and we thank outgoing Vice President Sara Ungrodt and Member At-Large Linda Bentley for

their dedicated service. (See pg. 2) They are both bringing new ideas and expertise to the Board and we are grateful to have them on the team.

You may have noticed our 30th anniversary logo above. While we will weave our anniversary into the gardens in various ways this year, the main celebration will be Saturday, September 13. I hope you enjoy the condensed timeline on page 5 and a fuller version on our website. If you know of important events that we have missed, or **if you'd like to help plan our celebration, please send a message to us at info@montrosegardens.org.**

Our adult and children's program lineup for 2025 (see pg. 8) was assembled by Tracy Harrison, Linda Bentley, Anne Britton, Brenda Bafus-Williams and Sara Ungrodt. Thank you for your time and work!

(continued on next page)

MBS BOARD

President

Liz Mauch

Vice President

(open position)

Treasurer

Peggy Justis

Secretary

Brenda Bafus-Williams

At Large

Anne Britton

Tracy Harrison

Anne Schuttig

Board meetings on the
third Wed. of each month
unless otherwise posted.

4:00pm - 6:00pm at:

230 S Second Street

Montrose, CO

Horticulture

Sara Ungrodt

Operations & Maintenance

Rob Clapper

Membership

Anne Schuttig

Website & Newsletter

Brenda Bafus-Williams

Laura Perfors

Montrose Botanical Society

P.O. Box 323

Montrose, CO 81402

Visit the Gardens at

1800 Pavilion Dr

Montrose, CO 81401

Free admission; dawn to dusk

www.montrosegardens.org

[facebook.com/
montrosegardens](https://facebook.com/montrosegardens)

info@montrosegardens.org

A TALE OF TWO ANNES: BRITTON AND SCHUTTIG JOIN MBS BOARD

The board of the Montrose Botanical Society extended its deepest gratitude to Vice President Sara Ungrodt and At-large member Linda Bentley as they wrapped up their terms at the end of 2024. The board also welcomed newly-appointed At-large board members Anne Britton and Anne Schuttig.

Anne Britton has deep roots in MBS, joining the organization in 2007, shortly after she and her husband John moved to Montrose. Her experience as a Financial Manager for a medical manufacturing company on the Front Range made her a natural to serve as MBS Treasurer in 2014-2016.

Anne Schuttig also brings strong business experience to the board. She is a retired Business Analyst who enjoys hiking, biking, gardening, reading, travel and any combination thereof!

She and her husband Dave have lived in Colorado for 20 years, the last six in Montrose. "We love it here, and I want to use my time and energies helping to make Montrose, and the world, an even better place to live."



Anne Schuttig (left) and Anne Britton show off their new MBS tote bags at the December board meeting.

THANKS TO THE CITY OF MONTROSE!

From the very beginning of the Montrose Botanic Gardens, the City of Montrose has been a valued partner – from leasing MBS 3.55 acres south of the Pavilion, to providing water for our plantings, to assorted excavation and other utility services. The MBS Board sends a hearty thanks to the City and its employees for all their support over the years!



This winter, with the start of development of the Veterans Memorial Plaza on City-owned property to our west, the Gardens benefitted again as the City brought an electric line along our western boundary. This represented a significant cost saving for MBS. From there, we were able to install a separate service pedestal to bring power into our metal storage building (BOB). Think of it – lights, outlets to recharge batteries for garden tools, heaters when we need to work in the winter time! Thank you again, City of Montrose!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED...

(continued from previous page) Our first program is on April 5 at the Montrose Public Library, entitled "Developing Seeds for Climate Resiliency" with Laura Parker from High Desert Seed and Gardens in Paonia. Once again, we are continuing our long-term partnership with the Montrose Regional Library for our children's programs.

We are proud to be sponsoring awards in two youth divisions in the Floriculture exhibit at the Montrose Fair this summer. Thank you to members Linda Corwine McIntosh and Tracy Harrison for organizing our participation.

Some exciting news: We are in the early stages of planning for construction of the Children's Garden. We will be putting together a Scope of Work/request for proposals for Landscape Design firms in the coming weeks. We'll share more information and opportunities for member review and comment later. See you at the gardens!

WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT OUR WEED WARRIORS ?

What could you do with nearly 2,000 hours of volunteer labor? In 2024, the Montrose Botanical Society's 34 Weed Warriors poured that considerable amount of effort into maintaining our Gardens as a vibrant, blooming community asset!

MBS expressed its gratitude to these dedicated gardeners at our annual luncheon on February 12. Everyone, from our first-year newbies to our seasoned veterans, received a round of applause and a token of MBS appreciation. A special shout-out goes to Bryan Cashion, a Weed Warrior himself, for keeping track of all those hours worked.

Our Weed Warriors meet every Wednesday morning from April through October at 9:00 am to Noon -- earlier when it gets hotter. Please consider joining us this year!



Thank you to all these volunteers!

One year

Ginni Greer
Laulii Martin-Neff
Anne Schuttig

Two years

Jody Buntin
Tim Garvey
Cindy Larson
Carol Schroer
Greg Wilburn
Anne Wilburn
Brenda Bafus-Williams

Three years

Leslie DuBois
Debby Ingram
Peggy Justis
Linda Scarborough

Four years

Mary Nelson

5 to 14 years

Fran Adams
Linda Bentley
Anne Britton
Nadine Carlotto
Bryan Cashion
Rob Clapper
Janice Hein
Connie Kolker

5 to 14 years

Liz Mauch
Liane Muller
Terri Simon
Linda Walline
Charlie Winger
Diane Winger
Susan Woody

15 to 19 years

Lynn Lewis
Carol Pyle
Sara Ungrodt
Cindy Youngstrom

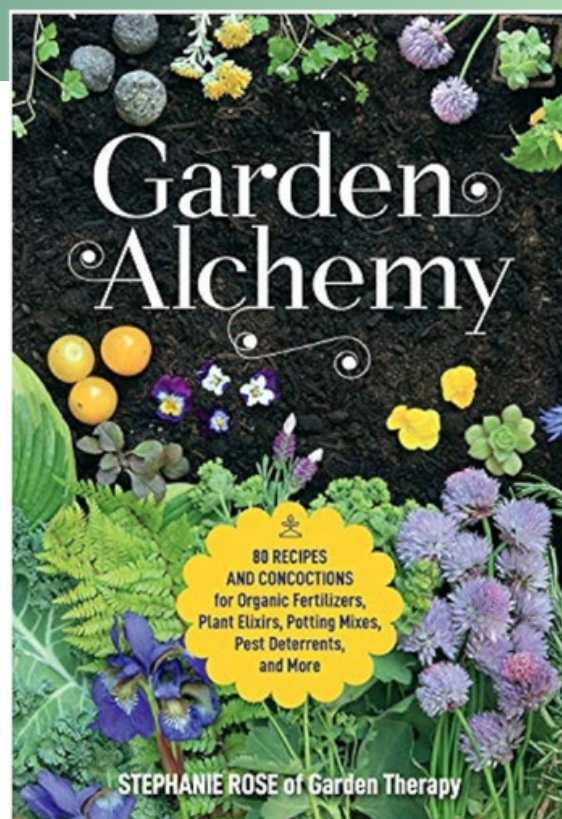
BOOK REVIEW: GARDEN ALCHEMY

By Anne Schuttig, MBS At-Large Board Member

In *Garden Alchemy*, author Stephanie Rose synthesizes her principles of organic gardening as a creative and therapeutic outlet into an easy to digest guide. Somehow, she accomplishes this being both scientific and artistic!

Part recipe book and part reference manual, this short tome covers simple "at-home" soil testing as well as guidelines for custom amendments, mulches, composts, and fertilizers to improve the performance of your soil. Rose also tackles numerous strategies to persuade beneficial critters (birds and bees and insects) into making your garden their home.

In the author's hands, gardening becomes a creative venture. From heart-shaped seed bombs (Mother's Day or teacher's gift, anyone?) to seed starters, bird feeders, and citronella candles, Rose illustrates just enough of her ideas to ready you to create your own. *Garden Alchemy* is not a definitive resource on organic gardening, but it is a great stepping stone for anyone needing encouragement or ideas about how to make their outdoor space more nurturing.



MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT: LINDA CORWINE MCINTOSH

by Liz Mauch, MBS President

I had a most delightful time interviewing Linda, who recently retired from her Montrose Landscape Consulting and Spraying business. (Congratulations, Linda!) Linda has a lifetime love of gardening, starting at her childhood home in Colorado Springs. After college, she worked in a greenhouse in her hometown, then moved to Montrose in 1975 and worked at the Johnson Greenhouse on west Main St (long gone). They grew poinsettias, and started annuals and vegetables from seed. After her two girls were born, she worked at Four Seasons Nursery (later sold to Sheree Wanner and renamed Camelot Gardens).

Linda gives much credit to Tri-River CSU Horticulture Agent Dr. Curtis Swift for his Master Gardener and Advanced Master Gardener training, along with his friendship and mentoring. With her Master Gardener training as a foundation, she eventually took the exams to become an ISA Certified Arborist and also obtained her Commercial Pesticide Applicator license. Throughout her career, she has especially enjoyed figuring out what is causing problems with a plant or tree.

Linda has given, and continues to give, so much to our community: She is Superintendent of Floriculture and Crops for the Montrose County Fair. She has written timely gardening articles for the *Montrose Daily Press* since 1995. She was named "Colorado Master Gardener of the Year" in 1996, and currently serves on the Tri-River Area Master Gardener's Advisory Board, and has served on the Montrose County and Ouray County Weed Boards. For many years, Linda has inspected and treated the trees as needed in the Botanic Gardens. We appreciate you, Linda!



Linda was one of the Montrose Botanic Garden's founders, and was our fourth President. The southwest area was full of Russian Knapweed, and they got it under control. Most of what was planted or achieved in the early years came through donated materials and labor. During her term as President, she wrote several grants and received grant awards to enable construction of the Valley Garden.

In her spare time, Linda enjoys.....GARDENING! -- especially growing vegetables, and canning/freezing /dehydrating them. Living out of town in the country, she has been experimenting with and learning about plants that are deer resistant and drought tolerant.

THANK YOU TO OUR PATRONS AND OTHER GENEROUS DONORS!

* Indicates they're a new member also.

Anonymous (2)
Alpine Bank
Gil Bolinger
John and Anne Britton
Bob and Pat Brown
*CAM Electric
*Cimarron Wealth Management
Bryan Cashion & Sara Ungrodt
Mary Coluccy
*DMEA / Elevate
Charlotte Duckett
Tim Edgar
John and Nancy Eloe
*England Fence
*John and Beth Gordon
Hairlines and Nail Design

Darrell Hartigan
Michiko Hitchcox
*Mike and Suzi King
Jolie Clark Lehman
Cherie MacDonald
Dr. Mindy Miller
*Misty Mountain Irrigation
*Montrose Forest Products
Jerry and Carol Pyle
*Rotary Club of Montrose
Constance Roth
*San Juan Gardens
Sandy Storey
Barbara van Schaik Estate
Brenda Bafus-Williams
and Kevin Williams
Mike and Anita Winter

WELCOME to our NEW MEMBERS!

since the Summer of 2024

(see also Donors with (*) at left)

Bruce Ackerman
Michael & Helen Crist
Hops & Homes
Marjorie Hutchinson
Suman Morarka
Laulii Martin Neff
Nurturing Art LLC
Melinda Vicencio





Celebrating 30 Years of the Montrose Botanical Society

On a warm August evening in 1995, a group of enthusiastic people met to discuss the creation of a botanic garden. The Montrose Botanical Society emerged the following month with the purpose of developing the Montrose Botanic Gardens. Some highlights of our history are given below.

To read more, go to <https://www.montrosegardens.org/history>.

1996



Election of MBS's first officers who sign a 50-year renewable lease with the City for 3.55 acres south of the Pavilion.

1997

Groundbreaking with Mayor Tom Cheney presenting the first seed to be planted – a sunflower.



2001



Planting of the "Spring Snow" crabapples along both sides of the Promenade.

2003

Shift in plans from a Meditation Garden to a Xeric Garden (now called the Waterwise Garden) as a result of chronic drought.



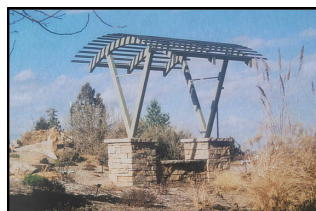
2005



Creation of the stream feature in the Waterwise Garden, as well as the installation of the first phase of of the Native Garden.

2006

Completion of a new shade structure funded by a \$5,000 donation from Montrose Rotary Club.



2009



Celebration of a new class of volunteer gardeners who are dubbed our Weed Warriors.

2011

Creation of the main entrance gate, as well as initial grading and irrigation installation for the Valley Garden.



2014



Installation of 1,000 square feet of sod in the Valley Garden by Eagle Scouts. The remainder of the lawn is hydroseeded.

2015

Creation of the Crevice Garden, overseen by Kenton Seth of Paintbrush Gardens and Michael Kintgen from the Denver Botanic Gardens.



2016



Building of the stage and Cait's Corner memorial in the Valley Garden, as well the west perimeter fence.

2019

Completion of the Waves of Grass in the Valley Garden, as well as the development of a new Master Plan.



2020



Initial work on the Rose and Sensory Gardens, which are both part of the Valley Garden.

2021

Rehabilitation of the flowerbed on the west edge of the Promenade, as well as the addition of the metal storage building (BOB).



2023



Development of the Home-stead Garden, including: reassembling historic cabin; planting orchard trees; and improving soil tilth using cover crops.

2024

A record-breaking return of the Garden of Lights after a three-year break. Over 5,000 people attend over five nights.



2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

By Peggy Justis, MBS Treasurer

Greetings, fellow Society members! What a great year 2024 turned out to be. Among other things, we launched Aplos as our new accounting system, and it is working well. This year, with the help of a new board member, we will be utilizing it even more from the membership/volunteer side of things. If you ever see something with an "Aplos" label, it is most likely from the MBS.

We even used Aplos' ticket module for our Garden Tour event, which was a huge success. We also held our Scarecrow Festival and, of course, brought back the Garden of Lights. With these three fundraising events, we raised close to \$50,000 in 2024. A HUGE thank you to all the volunteers that made this possible! We couldn't flourish without you. Now the executive board is getting ready to lay out our budget for 2025.

2024 Statement of Activities

REVENUE

Dues	\$ 9,217
Donations	\$41,138
Fundraising	\$49,686
Other	\$12,595
Unrealized Gain/Loss (Endowment)	\$9,765

TOTAL REVENUES \$122,401

EXPENSES

Garden Operations	\$18,614
Administration	\$13,942
Fundraising	\$8,177
Outreach & Other	\$8,414

TOTAL EXPENSES \$49,147

NET GAIN/LOSS \$73,254

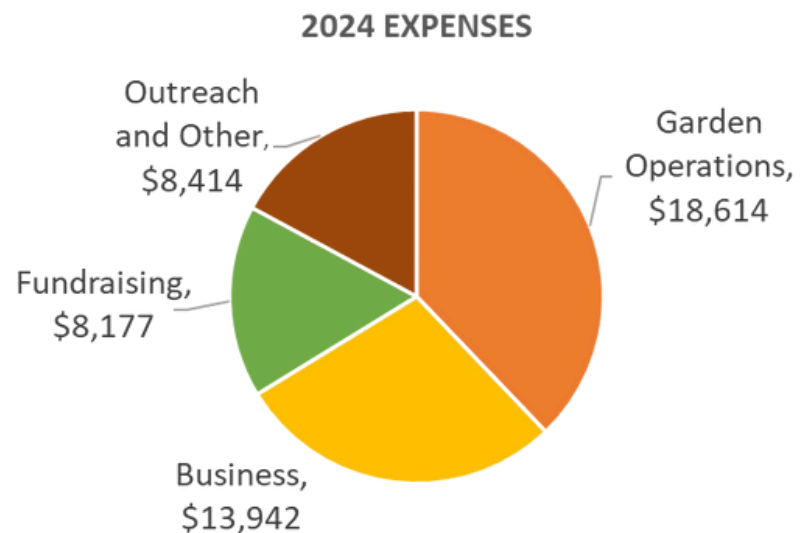
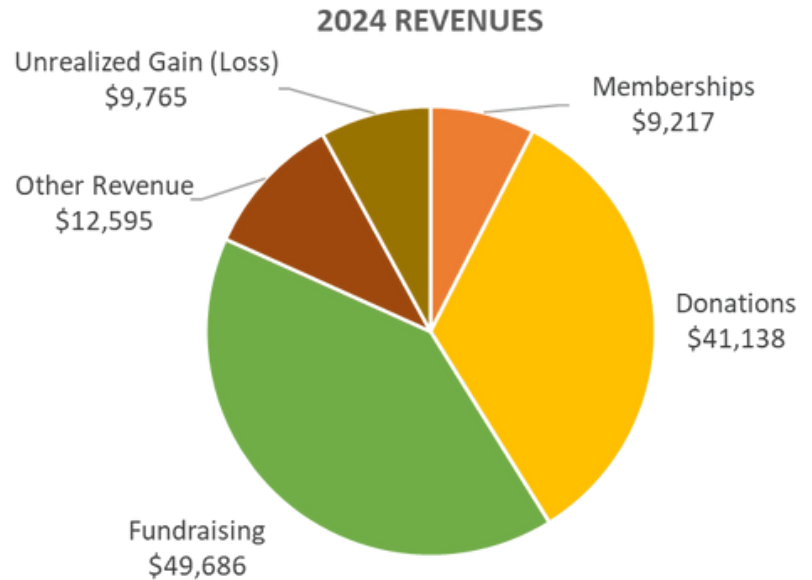
BALANCE SHEET as of December 31, 2024

ASSETS

Checking/Savings	\$187,184
Other (incl Buildings/Endowment)	\$316,947
TOTAL ASSETS	\$504,131

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities	\$307
Equity	\$503,824
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$504,131



Present your MBS membership card to receive these discounts:

Abel's Ace Hardware - 10% on gardening items
Camelot Gardens - 10% on nursery trees & shrubs
Chelsea Nursery - 10% on plants, shrubs & trees
Cooper Soils - 10% on soils & mulch
San Juan Gardens - 10% on plants

Please support
these
generous
businesses!

BEEKEEPING ALONGSIDE NATIVE POLLINATORS

with Steve Manis and Gayle Johnson

Keeping bees can be an amazing experience – enlightening, humbling, educational and rewarding. There is nothing like looking into a hive and seeing thousands of bees, pounds of honey and honeycomb cells full of pollen. Unfortunately, there is also nothing more humbling than looking into a hive and seeing nothing except dead bees when you have no idea what went wrong.

Beekeeping is a study of a biome -- trying to understand the relationship between flowers, pollen, native pollinators and honey bees, which are non-natives. The majority of food crops rely on pollination by some species of bee so maintaining a healthy pollinator population is vitally important.

Gayle Johnson and her brother Steve Manis have been keeping bees west of Montrose for about 10 years. They maintain about 35 hives at three different locations and collect 30 to 50 gallons of honey every year.

Gayle and Steve try to balance good plant pollination without jeopardizing the native pollinators. They try to keep the number of non-native honey bees low to prevent overwhelming the native pollinators. They understand the need for pesticides but try to avoid putting a large number of bees near crops that require extensive insecticide applications.



Gayle and Steve's commitment to learning and sharing that knowledge is evident as they support both novice and experienced beekeepers. They also actively participate in meetings to stay informed about the latest advancements in bee health and disease management. Through their efforts, Gayle and Steve embody the principles of responsible beekeeping, promoting both honey production and the conservation of pollinator diversity.

**Join us for Steve and Gayle's
presentation on beekeeping on
Saturday, April 12 at 10:30 am in the
Montrose Library Community Room.**

BOOK REVIEW: DURABLE PLANTS

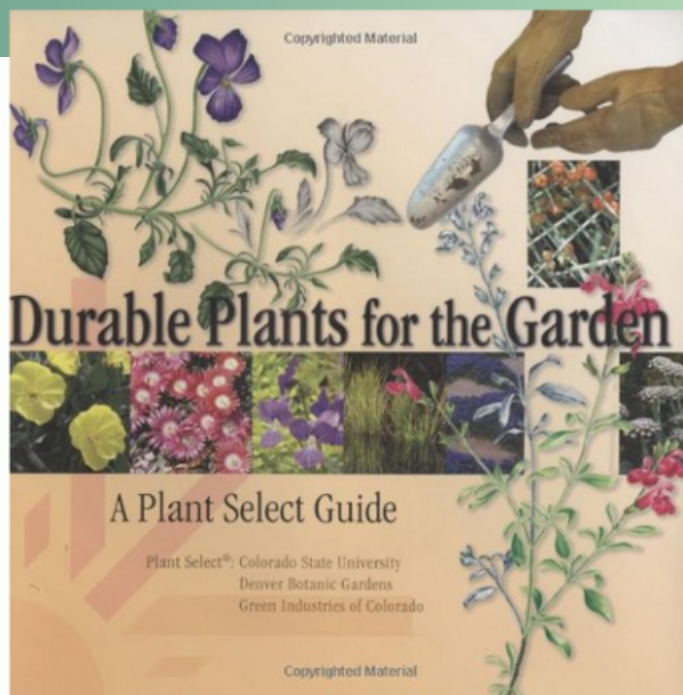
by Tracy Harrison, At-Large Board Member

I love to recommend this book, *Durable Plants for the Garden: A Plant Select Guide*, especially to newcomers.

I first became aware of PLANT SELECT when I became a Master Gardener for the Tri-River Area CSU Extension. I bought this book in 2009 at the wonderful, educational Landscapes West Conference in Grand Junction. This book covers the start of PLANT SELECT and the great plants that are perfect for our Rocky Mountain Region and how to grow them.

The PLANT SELECT organization is alive and thriving with new additions each year. Also, the Montrose Botanic Gardens is a PLANT SELECT Demonstration Garden.

So, stop by the Gardens to scout out the ID tags for the PLANT SELECT flora that survives in our High Desert climate.



Montrose Botanical Society

2025 PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Check facebook.com/MontroseGardens or MontroseGardens.org prior to events for any changes.

Except where noted, programs are free of charge to MBS members; \$5 suggested donation from non-members.

**Events with asterisks will be held at the Montrose Botanic Gardens, 1800 Pavilion Drive.

DEVELOPING SEEDS FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Saturday, April 5, 1:30-2:30 pm

Montrose Regional Library

Presented by Laura Parker, owner of High Desert Seed + Gardens in Paonia, where they are growing, selecting and adapting seeds for the unique conditions of the high desert and mountain bio-regions.

BEEKEEPING ALONGSIDE NATIVE POLLINATORS

Saturday, April 12, 10:30 am-noon

Montrose Regional Library

Presented by Gayle Johnson and Steve Manis, keepers of 35 local beehives. Understanding the art of beekeeping as the study of a biome -- the relationship between flowers, pollen, native pollinators and honey bees.

**GET YOUR ROSES READY TO ROCK!

Wednesday, May 7, 10:00 am-noon

Presented by Laulii Martin Neff, Master Gardener and lifelong gardener. Demonstration of rose pruning techniques followed by plenty of hands-on practice in the Gardens. Snacks provided by MBS.

THE SOIL IS ALIVE: IT FEEDS YOUR GARDEN

Saturday, May 17, 10:30-noon

Montrose Regional Library

Presented by Dave Dearstyne, Soil Scientist for over 30 years. Learn the importance of healthy soil and ways to keep it thriving.

**KIDS' PLANTING DAY IN HAPPY HOLLOW

Saturday, May 31, 10:00-11:00 am

Presented by Liane Muller, MBS member. Help plant the Children's Garden that we'll harvest on September 13. Plant a living "garden gnome" to take home, plus story time with Montrose Regional Library's Bookmobile.

**UTE ETHNOBOTANY

Saturday, June 7, 9:00-10:00 am

Presented by Mary Menz, CSU Native Plant Master. Highlighting native plants that are culturally important to the Ute people. Sample some iced rose hip tea and Mormon tea, and see some sample items made from other native plants.

**NEW PLANTS, OLD PLANTS, HOT PLANTS, COOL PLANTS!

Saturday, June 21, 9:00-10:30 am

Presented by Sara Ungrodt, MBG Horticulturist and Landscape Architect. Join us for a fun stroll around the Gardens to learn about the plants that do well here in Montrose, the Plant Select® program, irrigation practices and lessons learned.

**GETTING CREATIVE WITH SOIL

Saturday, July 12 at 9:30-10:30 am

Presented by Liz Mauch, MBG President. Try your hand at painting with different colored soils, and making a simple pot or other object using clay found locally. Geared for children ages 4 and up with an adult; family-friendly activity. Limited space; sign up online starting June 15.

A GLIMPSE INTO LONDON'S KEW GARDENS

Friday, August 8; 10:30-11:30 am

Montrose Senior Center (east end of the Pavilion)

Presented by Georgia Timpson, a Horticulture student from London. Hear about some of the work being done at Kew's Royal Botanic Gardens, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**BUILD YOUR OWN CREVICE GARDEN

Saturday, Sept 6, 10:00 am-noon OR 1:00-3:00 pm

(Two sessions) Presented by Kenton Seth of Paintbrush Gardens in Grand Junction, co-author of The Crevice Garden. Kenton will pull his truck into our Gardens filled with the ingredients to create your own crevice garden in a broad, shallow pot. Limited space; sign up online starting August 1. \$40 MBS members, \$50 non-members.

**KIDS' HARVEST DAY IN HAPPY HOLLOW

Saturday, Sept 13, 10:00-11:00 am

Presented by Liane Muller, MBG member. Harvest the gardens that we planted in May to make a snappy salsa to eat with chips. Plus a nature craft and storytime with Montrose Regional Library's Bookmobile.

**MBS 30th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, September 13 -- Music, fun and games in the Gardens. Stay tuned for more details!

