



Greetings fellow gardeners,

First of all, I want to apologize for the way the projects were presented at the meeting to be voted on. It was a very poor plan on my part. I did not consider the new members not being familiar with the projects and knowing where they were. There were no pictures attached to the evaluations. If I had it to do over again, it would be done entirely different. Again, I am sorry for this mistake on my part. To try to clarify and help to familiarize our new members with the projects, I have attached the written evaluation that was handed out at the meeting. If you have time, and at your convenience, please open the attachments and physically go to the site. This will clarify a lot of questions. I have included the proposal for the Carnegie Library in Eureka Springs.

We had a great attendance of 39 at our meeting, with three visitors: Karen Welch's husband and Kristy Rice's precious and delightful daughters. Thank you for coming, and we hope you will come again. We opened with a presentation by County Agent Randy Forst on bag worms and how to exterminate them. The minutes from the November meeting were read and the financial report given. We then voted on the sanctioned projects, with all passing. Neta Sue Stamps advised us that *The Dirt* would be emailed only, due to the cost of printing and postage. There are only two in the group that do not have computers, and they will receive hard copies of *The Dirt*. Thank you, Neta, for doing such an outstanding job. In the future, the minutes and the financial report will be emailed to each member. This will give you time to read and suggest any changes. Richard Knight distributed the new time sheets while encouraging everyone to **PLEASE document your time**. Several letters were sent to members that had not met the requirements of work and meeting hours last year. The letter explained that it is necessary to meet the requirements to maintain membership, but that they would have this year to rectify their status.

The meeting was adjourned, and we all enjoyed a delicious lunch of soup, gumbo, homemade bread, salad and wonderful desserts. A big thank-you to the Ward's and the Rissler's and everyone else who contributed to the luncheon.

HOW TO GROW PLANTS FROM SEEDS

Everyone was so appreciative of **ECHO** as our meeting place that we will meet there **Saturday, Feb. 11 at 10:00 a.m.** This is not only going to be educational, but fun.

Karen Reeves is going to teach us how to **successfully start plants from seed**. She will also demonstrate how to build a light from PVC pipe that will be necessary to grow your plants if you do not currently have a greenhouse, bright window or necessary lighting. It is inexpensive and easy and will be a great asset to most of us. Also, the program will be a hands-on demonstration and a **SEED EXCHANGE**. For our new people, the seed exchange is great fun. Bring seeds that you would like to exchange. They can be flowers and/or vegetables. You can purchase 100 little 2-by-3-inch re-closable clear plastic bags at Walmart. I think they were \$1 and were in the jewelry making aisle. When you bring your seed, it needs to be identified, along with if it loves sun or shade, how tall it gets and how wide, and requirements for watering. This meeting will open with the refreshments of coffee, tea or water and a finger-food breakfast snack. We will take about 15

minutes to visit before starting the meeting with our seed presentation.

More information about the February meeting will be emailed the closer we get to the meeting.

Our March 10 meeting will be at Lavonna and Will Schell's. **Randy Forst will teach us how to prune brambles and fruit trees.** It will be a short business meeting, with the majority of our time spent on learning how to prune correctly. This is when we all will need to pray for a continuation of warm temperatures. The Schell's have a variety of berries and fruit trees, and we are grateful that they have agreed to host our meeting. Again, the closer we get to March, you will receive more information about this meeting and demonstration. There are a lot of us that missed having a pruning teaching/demonstration in our training, and we are really looking forward to this opportunity.

Our goal this year is to have educational programs at every meeting that will help us enhance our gardening knowledge and that will help us to effectively develop beautiful projects in Carroll County.

Until we talk again, have a great weekend and enjoy the mild temperatures and no snow/ice. Is this not an unbelievable January?! Talked to my daughter in Texas, and it is going to be 80 degrees today.

Mary



BAGWORMS



The most commonly observed form of this pest is the spindle-shaped silk bag camouflaged with bits of foliage, bark and other debris. Completed bags range from 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 inches long. The larva within the bag is brown or tan, mottled with black, and the bee-like adult males have clear wings and fur-covered bodies. The females remain larva-like and do not emerge from the bag. The larva may stick its head and front legs out of the top of the bag to feed and move. When disturbed, the larva immediately pulls its head into the bag and holds the opening closed. Mature larvae may stay on their host plant or drag their bags some distance before firmly attaching the bag for transformation into the adult stage.

The bagworm occurs in the eastern United States from New England to Nebraska and south through Texas. The larvae seem to prefer arborvitae and red cedar, but many other conifers and deciduous trees are attacked. These include pine, spruce, cypress, juniper, willow, black locust, sycamore, apple, maple, elm, poplar, oak and birch. http://www.fxpest.com/tree_insects.html



Our picnic at the Schell's has been changed from July to June. Lavonna and Will think is a good idea because of how hot and miserable it was last July with all the bugs.

I DON'T EXERCISE!
It makes my coffee spill.



www.cafepress.com/GeezerShop

FROM LAVONNA SCHELL

For anyone who might be interested, Randy gave us some info as to where we can buy berry plants at a good price.

I talked to the nursery this morning and placed our order. We are going to pick them up about middle of March, so if anyone else would like to order, we would be happy to get theirs at the same time, thus saving shipping costs.

The Web address is http://www.simmonsplantfarm.com/index_files, or we can bring the info to the next meeting.



2012 Master Gardener & Horticulture Events

FEBRUARY

4 Composting Class 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Feb. 18, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon

Who: Any interested Master Gardener or school teacher. Program taught by Washington County Master Composters

What: This intensive course will be classroom as well as hands-on at the compost demonstration site.

Topics include: The science in composting, composting techniques, worm composting, compost teas, and use of compost

Cost: **\$25 registration fee due by Feb. 1.** Mail check to the Washington County Extension Office, 2536 N. McConnell Ave., Fayetteville, Ark. 72704. Provide email address to confirm receipt of registration fee.

8 DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION FOR Farmer's Market Growers Conference at U of A Southwest Research and Extension Center, Hope, Ark. March 1. Registration: \$15.

11 CCMG meeting at ECHO clinic, 10:00 a.m.



18 Stone County Master Gardeners' *Spring's A-Comin' Seminar* 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

First Baptist Church, 224 King Ave., Mountain View, Ark. 72560

Cost: \$20. Registration deadline: Feb. 11, 2012. **Seating is limited.** Mail registration form (below) or mail name, address, telephone number and email address along with \$20 check payable to Stone County Master Gardeners by Feb. 11, 2012 to:

Pam Alexander, 644 Wildcat Mountain, Melbourne, Ark. 72556.

For more information, call Debra Alexander at 870-269-3092 or Pam Alexander at 870-219-3280.

20

Love Your Pet Day is the day to indulge your pet and is celebrated on Feb. 20 every year. It is on this special day that people have an excuse to spend time with their pets and to treat them with special gifts and care. People just love their pets. Whether it is a dog, cat, fish, snake or your pet rock, just give them lots of attention and loads of love.



21 **Rain Gardens Advanced MG Class**, Little Rock State Extension Office – registration form will be sent out soon. Space is limited, and you must be a **three-year active** MG to attend.

24-26 **Arkansas Flower & Garden Show, Statehouse Convention Center**, Little Rock, Ark.
<http://www.arflowerandgardenshow.org/>

MARCH

10 CCMG meeting

Grow Your Own Vegetables!



March 10 or April 7 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Ozark Electric Community Room
3641 Wedington Drive, Fayetteville, Ark.

Pre-registration is required. Class size is limited. The cost is \$75 per person, and includes the gardening book *How to Grow More Vegetables...* by John Jeavons. Register by sending a check to Calvin Bey, 8779 W. Forest Hills Drive, Fayetteville, Ark. 72704. Please provide your name, address, telephone number, and email. Call Calvin at 479-527-6951 or email cfbey1936@cox.net for more information.

APRIL

28 "WHEN IRIS EYES ARE SMILING" Central Arkansas Iris Society 47th Annual Iris Show, Hillcrest Street off Kavanaugh, Grace Lutheran Church Family Life Center, **FREE ADMISSION**, www.centralarkansasiris.org Rain or shine!



In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back, while others showed both legs and both arms. Prices charged by painters were not based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are 'limbs'; painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression, 'Okay, but it'll cost you an arm and a leg.' (Artists know hands and arms are more difficult to paint)



Kristy Rice was born Dec. 23 in Baton Rouge, La. She has lived in Arkansas a total of 20 years, “almost 11 years this round”. She hopes to increase her knowledge and hopefully her ability to grow things through becoming a Master Gardener. She is also looking forward to making new friends with similar interests. Kristy moved to Arkansas because it’s a beautiful place with wonderful, friendly folks. The seasons are great, and her husband found a great job here. One thing she likes most about living here is that the weather is nice enough much of the year and permits her family to enjoy the great outdoors. A couple of things she likes the least are the poor educational system here and the fact that too many folks do not have ambition to better themselves.

Her hobbies are hiking, gardening riding and training horses, swimming, sewing cooking reading – and the list goes on! (My, busy gal!)

Her dream vacation would be to revisit Scotland and England and to visit Cornwall and Ireland.



Sam Davis was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa on Aug. 9 and has lived in Arkansas 27 years. He is interested in participating in projects that enhance the beauty and quality of life in our county and to grow and develop skills and knowledge of gardening and ornamental plants.

Sam moved to Arkansas because it is the “Land of Opportunity”. He and his wife enjoyed visiting this area when they lived in Tulsa, Okla. They love the woods and nature, so they bought 35 acres on the lower Kings River and began homesteading in the fall of 1984 with their newborn daughter.

Things he likes the most about where he lives are the many wonderful people they have met, he likes working on their place, the wildlife and variety of plants,



the continually changing colors and light throughout the seasons. They especially like the home that they designed and built, in addition to getting dirt under his fingernails with each landscaping project. Among the things he likes the least are the overabundance of deer – driving hazard – the rocky soil and red clay and TICKS. Fortunately, these are things we have little or no control over – so he focuses on what he likes the most about where they live.

Sam’s hobbies include woodworking, photography, videography and reading. His dream vacation is whatever their most recent vacation was. “It’s all good!” he says.

Thank you, Kristy and Sam, for letting us get to know you!



Whatever hits the fan will not be evenly distributed.

Learn from the mistakes of others.

Trust me... You can’t live long enough to make them all yourself.

I’ve tried!



Happy February Birthday to:

6th Joy Flake

17th Faye Martin

20th Karen Reeves

24th Neta Sue Stamps



<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org/GardeningCalendars/february.htm>

Depending on our winter season, mid-to-late February is the time to start the vegetable garden. English peas and sugar-snap peas are the earliest vegetables for the garden, followed with cabbage, greens, carrots, broccoli and the other cool-season vegetables. Start small and plant a little more each week. Make sure you don't work the garden if it is saturated with winter precipitation. Mulch your plants. Early gardens tend to be the easiest to maintain, since most insects and diseases are not active yet. Keep winter weeds hoed down to keep them from competing with young vegetable plants.

Houseplants that are indoors are not doing much growing during our shorter days of winter, with low light and low humidity. Fungus gnats can sometimes plague our plants, especially if you are keeping them too wet. Catching the offending adults on a sticky trap — a yellow piece of paper covered in petroleum jelly — works well. Then start letting the plants dry out between watering. If you still have them after you do this for a week or two, try watering with a solution of insecticidal soap. No fertilizer is needed now, nor is it a good time to repot.



Be sharp. First, if you haven't already cleaned up and prepared your gardening tools for the spring, do it now. It's quick and easy to get a lawn mower tune-up in February; much tougher in April. Metal tools should be cleaned and oiled to prevent rust. Pruners, loppers and saws all can be sharpened now for spring pruning.

<http://bettyongardening.com/FebruaryHints.aspx>

What To Do in the Garden – February

Regional Gardening Guide for February By [Marie Iannotti](#), *About.com Guide*

February may well be the toughest gardening month. Thank goodness it's short. Gardeners in warm climates don't know what kind of weather to expect from day to day or from day to night. Gardeners in cold climates have put the holidays behind them and just want to see the sun shine again.

But that doesn't stop the true gardener from working on his or her garden. February is for planning, and for seeing the first signs that spring is around the corner. And it is especially for pruning. So take advantage of those rare sunny days and get back in your garden

Cold Regions ([USDA Hardiness Zone](#) 7 and Lower)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prune trees and shrubs, both ornamentals and fruit• Check flower beds for plants that may have heaved• Replace mulch as needed• Check outside plants and trees for animal damage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cut some branches for forcing indoors• Rejuvenate holly bushes with a hard pruning• Check evergreens for sign of desiccation• Start seeds of cool season vegetables and flowers |
|---|--|

From *The Independent* – London, England

Shoots in the dark: Farming without sunlight

It's more efficient, reduces transport costs and won't fail because of the weather. Is farming without sunlight the future of food?

By [Hal Hodson](#)

Monday, Sept. 26, 2011



Sunlight. It is the foundation of life on Earth, the daily pacemaker of human existence and, with the exception of geothermal, the basis for all energy consumed on our little marble. Without it, Earth would be cold, dark, and unrecognizable.

Light's contribution to food is particularly important. Crop plants use it to convert carbon dioxide and water into sugars and oxygen, for eating and breathing respectively. It's our most precious chemical reaction but, as global population diverges from the planet's ability to feed it, one group of Dutch scientists thinks we need a new approach. This approach isn't to meddle with genes, or to plug extra fertilizer into nitrate-soaked soils. The Dutch group, called PlantLab, have scrapped sunlight altogether.

"The plants look black," says Gertjan Meeuws, one of the five-strong team. That's not because they're rotten or genetically engineered, it's because they are bathed solely in blue and red light – there is no green light in the PlantLab hanger for the plants to reflect.

The hanger looks like something a character in *Blade Runner* might have dreamt about. Huge sliding trays of leafy greens (blacks), are tended by an army of robotic arms, and given, according to Meeuws, precisely what they need to thrive. He and his team have been studying plants since 1989, working to better understand their needs and to make the growing process more efficient. They are scientists and engineers, not just businessmen.

"Growing in an open field or greenhouse is not enabling plants to maximize their potential," Meeuws says. "You have to look at our system as taking two steps at once. Firstly, we grow plants in totally controlled conditions – plant paradise, as we call it. The second step is placing these nurseries right at the end of the supply chain, to produce around the corner from the consumer."

PlantLabs's controlled conditions are underpinned by some interesting physics. Plants are green because they reflect green light, meaning those specific wavelengths are not involved in the process of photosynthesis. If

you tried to grow a tomato plant under a green light, it would die. In the process of reflection, the plant heats up. Like humans, plants have a mechanism for cooling down, but it costs energy which the plant would otherwise use to grow.

“Plants have a very intelligent way of cooling themselves,” Meeuws explains. “They take up water through their roots and evaporate it through their leaves. Energy is needed for evaporation, and this energy is taken from the leaves, cooling the plant.”

By giving the plants only blue and red light, PlantLab can avoid heating its plants up unnecessarily, leaving more energy for growth. The atmosphere in the underground hanger is completely controlled for the same reason – to give plants the ideal conditions for growth, rarely found in the real world.

Although there are technical kinks behind farming in the dark, the potential benefits are broad: more nutritious produce, eradicated air-miles, year-round access to fresh vegetables, in any environment on earth. “We have been talking to people in winter sport areas. In the seasons where those areas have the most guests, they have no real fresh salads. It’s a very interesting idea to serve really fresh, just-picked salads right where the consumers are,” Meeuws says.

Human convenience factors are important, but not fundamental. Water is fundamental, and it’s one resource that PlantLab’s vertical farm does a very good job of conserving. Meeuws says that PlantLab’s system uses 90 percent less water than conventional open-field growing. The only water which ever leaves the facility is in the form of plant matter for human consumption. The rest – runoff and evaporation – is collected and fed back into the system.

“Water savings are probably the most important part of our work,” Meeuws says. “Water will be more important in the future than energy.”



[There are two more pages to this article if any one is interested I would be glad to forward. Interesting!]

I have not received a copy of the minutes from the Jan. 14 meeting and have not received a recipe for this month, so that is it for now.



*I read recipes the same way I read science fiction –
I get to the end and think *****
Well, that’s not gonna happen!*

Neta Stamps, Editor

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating.

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