

The Dirt



Carroll County Master Gardener Newsletter

August, 2008

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From the President's Desk:

As my term as MG President comes to a close, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped in any way to make my tenure, I believe, successful.

We've incorporated a new class into our ranks, and I've been pleased to see a good percentage being very involved in our ongoing projects. We've begun at least three new projects, and they look quite nice I think—Little Eureka Lake, Baskets on the Square, and the revival of the Butterfly Garden at K-5 in Berryville. We had booths at both Berryville's Garden Show on the Square and Eureka in Bloom in Eureka Springs. Our Annual Plant Sale was a great success also, raising \$462. The plants looked good and sold quickly. Will's rocks and stumps were an added attraction bringing in \$90. The existing projects have been maintained also. If you haven't already, may I suggest you all go by each project and see what has been done? I believe that will instill a sense of pride in what we are doing.

We have also enjoyed some social events and tours of state and local events. There have been some very interesting programs given at our monthly meetings, some by our own members, as well as some of our group giving programs at other events.

Although we work hard at our projects, we also find ways to have fun whether at work or at play. On that note, I do have a concern I feel needs to be addressed. It was brought to our attention at the last meeting that we have not been getting a good turnout of workers on our work days. The same six or eight workers have been doing 90% of the manual labor of maintenance. The question was raised as to why we should be expected to maintain these projects. It was brought out that we have national and state guidelines to follow. Enclosed in this publication are the project guidelines from the state office in Little Rock. I have highlighted some of the requirements, and I encourage you to read the entire brochure. I then want to ask each one of you

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

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The Dirt for Carroll County Master Gardeners

From the President's Desk...continued

to commit to your share of work in keeping these sanctioned projects in good standing. Pick one or two projects to spend your work hours on, and then no one will be overworked, and we can all enjoy our organization.

Saturday night was our Annual Family Picnic at our house and to say the least, it wasn't our usual, normal get-together. Luckily, we had set the food tables in the garage to try and throw the flies a curve. Just as we were filling our plates the thunder began to roll. Since the tables were in the backyard, several brave souls took their plates to that area. A few bites into their supper the rain began to fall. What's a few showers for Master Gardeners, right? Just grab your plates and run to the shelter of the gazebos. Some of us more discerning souls were smart enough, we thought, to stay in the sun room, but as the summer shower turned into a 3" downpour, none of us were certain of our judgment in where to seek shelter. I'm sure I saw some of our group standing on the table in one of the gazebos. Bob Rutz finally braved the elements with a large umbrella to rescue the ladies but not before most were rather wet and bedraggled. Even after everyone was safely inside, the water began to rise in the sun room and the towels we threw on the floor to absorb the water soon became "terry cloth boats"!

To make matters worse, Will had insisted everyone park outside the yard so as not to "crush his grass." Needless to say waiting for the rain to slack wasn't working so "someone" had to swim to the cars and come back for their passengers. Through it all everyone was a good

sport about the whole thing, and I believe everyone arrived home safe, but very wet.

I gathered the soaked towels from the floor, threw them in the washer and went to bed to deal with the whole thing the next day. WELL—what can get in can also get out. When we checked in the morning, all was normal and dry. See what you miss when you don't come to our parties. :)

I hope each one of you will resolve to stay committed and involved in all facets of our organization, and let's all grow together. Thank you again for all you've done. I love you all.

Best Regards and Happy Gardening, Lavonna

If you have any questions or concerns regarding anything contained within this newsletter, please feel free to contact me at 870.423.2958.

All meetings and activities announced in this newsletter are open to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally-protected status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (large print, audiotapes, etc.) should notify the county Extension office as soon as possible prior to the activity.

Sincerely yours,

Leon Duncan
County Extension Agent-Staff Chair

The Dirt for Carroll County Master Gardeners

CCMGs Attend State Convention

The Springdale Holiday Inn and Convention Center was the headquarters of the AR State Master Gardener Convention, May 29 – 31.

Ten Carroll County Master Gardeners were among the more than 500 registered attendees for the tours and seminars hosted by the Washington County Master Gardeners.

A pre-conference tour in Eureka Springs included Blue Springs Heritage Center and Indigenous Plant Trail and a tour of Karen and Patrice Gros' organic garden.

The opening afternoon included tours of the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks and the Wilson Park Horticulture Gardens and ended with a tailgate barbeque party at the University of Arkansas campus "the Gardens" – Jones-Lindsey. The evening concluded with the Moonlight Madness Trade Show and Silent Auction at the Convention Center.

Proceeds from the silent auction will help fund the Master Gardener 20th Anniversary Birthday Celebration on October 13.

Friday tours were a choice of Water and Woodland Wonders, Shades of Northwest Arkansas or Backyard

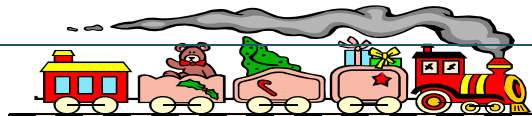
Beauties. These tours ranged from formal and informal residential gardens to rugged, rocky Ozarks terrain all in urban settings.

Seminars ranged from Arkansas Medicinal Plants by Stephen Foster of Eureka Springs to Wildflowers by Bob and Julie Holland of Holland Wildflowers Farm located near Fayetteville; to Rain Gardens by Katie Teague, a County Extension Agent in Washington County; to Garden Whimsy by Joyce Mendenhall of the Cooperative Extension Office in Washington County. Choices of other seminars were also available.

The Awards Banquet Friday night featured the Master Gardeners throughout the state who have been members for five, ten and fifteen years. Those from Carroll County receiving awards for ten continuous years were Merrily Ward, Lavonna Schell and Will Schell.

Those attending from Carroll County Master Gardeners were Anita Engert, Faye Martin, Shirley Clark, Karen Wall, Lavonna Schell, Jean Ericksen, Beth Stafford, Will Schell, Neta Sue Stamps and Merrily Ward.

THE TRAIN IS READY TO LEAVE THE STATION. . .



Your friendly Conductor greets you and wishes you well on the continued journey of the Carroll County Master Gardener Express as it prepares to depart for 2008-2009 travels.

The Engineer has stoked the engine, and we are ready to railroad—Oh, My! That is what we have already done. Yes, it is true, two of the nominating committee have railroaded the third member into accepting our recommendation as nominee for President for 2008-2009.

We made a list and checked it more than twice, but calls were met with an outright "NO" or "Well, maybe next time." Everyone start thinking of who we can encourage to run for office next year.

Oh, would you like to know who we railroaded? Past President Jean Ericksen finally agreed to run for President for 2008-2009. Congratulations, Jean, and Thank You.

~Your nominating committee: Jean Ericksen, Will Schell and Neta Sue Stamps

CCMGs Visit Welsh Herb and Vegetable Gardener

by Sharon Dahl

When Terry Edwards and violinist husband, Reg, retired to the U.S. from Britain in 2002, they chose Gaither Mountain in Boone County “because it is very like Wales.” “Perfect soil” was first on their must-have list. They found ten acres of perfect soil, “didn’t even notice the house,” fifteen minutes from Harrison; and in five short years, they have created a garden that had all twelve Carroll County Master Gardeners who visited there on July 2nd drooling.

Earlier this year, Mrs. Edwards gave a lively presentation on herbs and their uses to the Carroll County Master Gardeners in Berryville. This diminutive woman with the charming accent and expressive face captivated everyone in the audience with tales as rich and abundant as the flora in her garden. She shared her recipe for making comfrey salve and gifted many with little jars of it. According to Mrs. Edwards, comfrey is a natural healing agent that reduces pain and skin

irritation from insect bites and stings, relieves itching from poison ivy, and soothes burns. “It has allantoin, which helps grow new cells, and is very good on some kinds of eczema,” she explained.

A graduate of a medical herbist course, Mrs. Edwards owned her own nursery in Wales, complete with a teasop where she sold “rich, dark marmalade made from Seville oranges.” In addition to plants and design services, her customers clamored for her comfrey and lavender salves. Sheep farmers ordered oversized jars of it, claiming it healed many sheep-related ailments.

Having spent most of her life as a garden designer and “all-around horticulturist,” Mrs. Edwards attributes her skills and passion for gardening to her mother, who “was a tremendous gardener.” Growing up in a village in Lincolnshire, England, they walked often in Hampton Court Gardens and “always had a garden. Always.”



The Edwards’ garden is like a park, an expanse of perfectly mowed lawns shaded by mature oaks and a variety of native trees, interspersed with vibrant colors from island beds planted in the cottage style. Her classic cottage-style beds, replete with arched trellises with climbing Westerland and Moss roses, hold an abundance of flowers, an occasional vegetable, and herbs densely planted in exuberant array.

“Herbs like a lighter soil, not the clay soil so prevalent in the Ozarks. Woody herbs prefer to be rooted in soil that is more easily drained.”

“I had wanted a French Chateau garden,” Mrs. Edwards explained, “but Arkansas was completely out of my temperature range. And, I had no idea about the pests here. We have two big problems: animals—voles, armadillos,

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CCMG's visit Welsh herb...continued

possums, deer, raccoon—and insects. We also get a lot of fungal problems.”

Undaunted, using trial and error, she has achieved the beautiful cottage look with flowers well suited to NW Arkansas’ hot, humid summers—Echinacea, day lilies, lavender, roses—the Dixieland Linda Rose, La Reina Victoria, William Baffin and David Austin—phlox, lambs quarters, sedum. Of her Moss roses she said, “You have to cover up their ankles.” To do that, she uses masses of oak leaves for mulch, which also helps eliminate voles.

To keep the deer out, she borders her fenced vegetable garden with flowerbeds. Although the fence is low, only four feet, bordered on the outside with the five foot wide flower and herb beds, it is sufficient to keep deer out. Deer “don’t like to jump into small spaces,” Mrs. Edwards said. “Mrs. Edwards explains.

She has a fenced orchard of dwarf fruit trees—peaches, pears, cherries, Japanese plums, and a variety of apples including Arkansas Blacks, Granny Smith, Fuji, and Yates. “Yates seems to be a good apple that hangs on to its

fruit,” Mrs. Edwards said. When several of the CCMGs noted her fruit trees didn’t look like dwarf trees, she cheerfully replied, “I tell you we’ve got great soil.”

In spring, she’s weeding and planting from 6 a.m. to noon with another hour at the end of each day. “By July, I can knock off a bit. I patrol the garden every day, watching for bugs and thinning out. August is hell, but September is pure pleasure. In February we prune the fruit trees and give them an oil wash.” And her TLC shows: everything is lovingly cared for with barely a weed in evidence.

A Master Gardener since 2002, Mrs. Edwards is taking the year off to visit her far-flung family. The Edwards have six children living in Britain, Spain and France. When the weather turns cold, she quilts and is an active member of EHC, the Extension Homemakers Club.



Comfrey Salve

Here’s the comfrey salve recipe from Terry Edwards. It can be used for bruises, bites, poison ivy, some eczema, skin chapping, and burns.

Ingredients: Comfrey, pick in spring or early summer; about 2 ounces beeswax; 2 cups vegetable oil, olive if possible; 1 heavy saucepan or double saucepan.

Put oil and wax in saucepan on a very low heat until melted. Tear up the comfrey leaves and put in as much as possible. Cover saucepan and simmer for min. 1 hour. Longer won’t hurt. Take saucepan off heat. Strain the liquor through sieve into a basin. Discard the leaves. Stir the liquor until it thickens. Pour into jars and keep refrigerated.

<<Merrily Ward speaks to the Carroll County Extension Homemaker Clubs about Growing & Using Herbs

JUDGING CLASS

In our quest for continuing education, the Carroll County Master Gardeners in conjunction with our Extension agents hosted a 3-hour class Saturday, July 19th on the duties of the fair superintendents and what the judge looks for in the horticulture and floriculture departments.

Dr. Craig Anderson, Horticulture Specialist at the UofA in Fayetteville was our instructor on veggies, herbs and fruits, with our own Leon Duncan giving us pointers on the do's and don'ts of flower exhibits. This after telling us the only flower he grew better has something to eat attached to it.

Linda Chappell was the driving force behind the class and gave out a lot of very informative information to each one in attendance. We were happy to have some MGs from Ozark. No MG class would be complete without a test, this one titled, "The Test of All Tests." Try to get a copy, and see if you can pass it.



Springstar Japanese Beetle Traps

After seeing my rose bushes and heirloom tomatoes being tortured by the Japanese beetle, I turned to my old friend the Internet and my favorite search engine: DogPile.com. I always have the best luck finding what I'm looking for on that website, even if it does have a funny name; but then again, I love dogs, so why not. I went to www.BestNest.com, a really neat gardener's website. Go visit it.



I checked out buyers comments on several different traps and chose to go with the SpringStar Japanese Beetle Traps. They made more sense than any of the others, and all the comments from buyers were 10 scores. They also were close in price to the plastic bag traps that had a 1 (1 to 10 score with 1 the lowest score). I ordered them real quick, and the company returned the favor and sent them real quick. At first, we were not sure that they would work, but they work great. The trap is a little funny to look at but was designed to attract the beetles with its bright yellow top that permits them to go into the lower bottle but not fly back out. Japanese beetles cannot fly vertical so once they fly in there is no escape. These traps are more effective as the lure attracts both male and female beetles. Make sure you dump the trap every day if it has a lot of beetles in it; otherwise, it stinks real bad. The only problem is: heavy rains like we have had this year will thin down the lures, so if you know there is to be lots of rain, put the pheromones inside where they will stay dry; if you take care of them, they will last about 12 weeks. And yes, you can buy new lures so the traps last for several years, depending on how well you take care of them. Priced around \$8, however. I checked before this writing, and there is a 4-week ship date, if you order now. Guess we aren't the only ones who are having beetle problems.

~Rita Williams

CCMG Fair Information

Fair Dates: Sept. 4 – 6; Setup for booth – Wed., Sept. 3

PLEASE READ AND REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

We will be having a bake sale again this year: ALL BAKE SALE ITEMS TO BE PRICED AND PACKAGED BY DONATORS, NOT BY THOSE MANNING THE BOOTH. PLEASE DO NOT BRING FOOD THAT IS UNCOVERED, HEALTH DEPT. RULES, NOT OURS. ANY FOOD BROUGHT TO US NOT PACKAGED WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please bring anything for sale that is considered something to do with the garden be it fruit, veggies, bird houses, feeders, row tags for next year's garden seeds, flower seeds, any seeds you might want to share with others, potted plants, etc. ~ Rita Williams

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TEMPUS FUGIT!

(especially when you are trying to work on sanctioned projects!)

What good is "TIME" if it is not put to good use? Well, fellow dirt-under-the-fingernail-ers, I thought you might like to know how we spend our time on some sanctioned projects. Here are some facts and figures for you to digest. Mind you, the following is time I have received as of July 19th.

PROJECT	NUMBER OF MGs REPORTING	TOTAL HOURS
K-3	9	59.5
Bv Library	12	45.5
Fairgrounds	6	17
GF Square	3	6
K-3 Butterfly Garden	8	80.75
Newsletter	3	22
Officer's Duties	3	145.25
Plant Sale	9	79.25
Little Eureka Lake	1	31.75
OTHER	11	319.5
Education	21	566.75

Of the 24 members for which I have Time Records, nine have reported no work hours and four have reported no hours for education. On the above 10 Sanctioned Projects, there were an average of 6.5 Master Gardeners who worked an average of a little over 124 hours each. An average of approximately 30 education hours were reported for each of the 21 MGs reporting; however, this ranged from a report of four hours total to over 80 hours.

I know that most of you do have time that you have not bothered to report. Yes, I realize that is a hassle, but, people, please get your reports in. It is part of being responsible as well as showing you really do care about being a part of the Master Gardener Program.

Your out-going Time Keeper wants to hear from YOU!

~Neta Sue Stamps



<<Shirley Clark oversaw the planting and hanging of the flower baskets on the square.

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Butterfly Garden on K – 5 Campus

The Berryville school system has enlarged the K – 5 campus to include grades 4 and 5. They have also constructed a large multi-purpose building that will be used as a gym, concert and banquet hall and other activities. The butterfly garden is located next to the new activity building. We have erected a 16” stone wall to define the garden. All the plants that were moved back to the garden are thriving, and all new plants love their new home. It is really looking good. The butterflies on the stone sign are embellished with bright and multiple-colored stones. The garden has been heavily mulched, and grass has been planted on the outside of the new wall.

Kelly Swofford, 5th grade teacher and co-coordinator for the Carolee Walker Outdoor Classroom on this campus is excited about our garden and helped in building the wall. Mrs. D. Mann who is the music teacher expressed a desire to share the garden with her students and felt that the art teacher will also want his students to sketch the garden. Dr. Randy Byrd, Berryville School Superintendent, visited the garden and was very pleased. This project is becoming more exciting as the teachers are

getting involved, and they love what they see. Next year, it will truly glow in its beauty.

Before school convenes this fall, we will have the banners in place and the fall plants that are in bloom planted with decorative mulch covering the garden.

I would like to thank the faithful crew that worked every workday: Rita and Robert Williams, Lavonna and Will Schell, Mary and Richard Knight. A special thanks to the three men because we could not have done it without them. Others that worked were Merrily Ward, Neta Stamps, Jean Ericksen, Karen Wall and June O’Connor.

Karen and her husband and son will install the poles and banners.

I would like to thank Jimmy Jones Construction for donating mulch and dirt. Rick Smith Construction also donated material that we needed. Barrows Excavation Inc donated the poles for the banners. As usual Will Schell used his truck to haul the stone, dirt and mulch.

Master Gardeners, when this is totally completed in the fall, I think you will be well pleased and proud of this project. Thank you for making it possible.

~Mary Knight, Chairperson



K – 5 Butterfly Garden - BEFORE



K – 5 Butterfly Garden - AFTER