Next Meeting will be February 2
Social- 6:00pm
Meeting- 6:30
Program - MG Business

From the President
Ann Ferguson

Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.

I hope that everyone has settled into the New Year and is ready to get going. By the time that you receive this newsletter, we will be well into the planning and implementation of our early 2017 projects. Our new member class is under way, we are finalizing the details of our seminar, Countdown to Spring, and planning for our FFA-CDE event is well under way. Check into these projects. There is always a place for extra people and it gives all members the opportunity to learn more about who we are and what we do. You will find more about these projects and events elsewhere in this newsletter.

We have all of our project chairs in place except one and I am looking for someone to chair our downtown projects. If you think that this would be something that you would like to do, please give me a call. I am in the process of contacting possible chairs now. These are high visibility locations and we receive a lot of compliments and honors from people who enjoy these on a daily basis.

I am humbled that you allow me to be your president. I love being a Master Gardener. You are a great group!
Hopefully everyone survived the holidays. With some of the unseasonably warm weather we have had the past few weeks, I'm starting to get gardening on the mind. It is essential we test our soil to insure that we provide a suitable environment for our precious plants.

Beds, yards and gardens should be sampled in several areas by gathering soil 4-6 inches deep. Mix the soil and remove about a pint and bring to the Extension Office for analysis. Information needed besides name and address are size of area, whether you have applied lime in the last 4 years, last crop grown and what crop you want to grow.

Samples are sent to the lab in Marianna for analysis. Results are normally received in 7-10 days and are either emailed or mailed. Results include the pH of the soil and nutrients available for plant growth. Correcting pH is achieved much easier before plants are planted.

If you have any questions about soil sampling, please call the Extension Office and we will be glad to assist you.

Get Dirty Be Happy

Gardeners know how important soil is to plants, but studies are now finding out that it’s good for people, too. Researchers at Bristol University and University College London discovered that the soil bacteria *Mycobacterium vaccae* helps elevate your mood. Originally used to treat cancer patients' pain, scientists found the bacterium also increased feelings of well-being. Studies with mice found that *M. vaccae* affects the brain in a similar way to anti-depressants. So get out in the garden and get dirty - it's good for you!

(from Garden Gate Magazine, Jan. 2008, submitted by Peggy Lane)

Health and Wellness Magnet School

Be watching your email for work hours in the HWES Children's Gardens greenhouses! Planting will start the end of January!
Minutes of the January 2017 Meeting
By Ethel Cole

The January 5, 2017 meeting of the Craighead County Master Gardeners was called to order at 6:29 pm by President Ann Fergeson.

Program –
New program chair, Laura Bettis introduced the evening’s speaker, Blann Britton. Mr. Britton lives in Crawfordsville, AR and holds a degree in Accounting and Economics from Millsap College. He operated the 5700 acre family farm for 30 years, retiring in 2002. He currently works as a financial advisor for Wunderlich Securities in Memphis. His passion is gardening, a trait passed on by his father, Cliff Britton who told him at an early age that “someday...you will discover that gardening is soothing.” His passion was very evident in the many photos he shared in his presentation. He has a large garden, a greenhouse, a varied assortment of fruits and vegetables, in addition to 375 hybrid tea and floribundas, 1500 zinnias, and other annual flowers. Mr. Britton answered many questions from members following the presentation, gladly sharing his accumulation of gardening wisdom and tips.
Minutes – the minutes of the December meeting were approved as printed in the monthly newsletter.

Treasurer’s Report – Treasurer, Stephanie Neely reported that at the December meeting a total of 53 pounds of food and $555 was collected for the Helping Neighbors Food Pantry. The report was approved as presented.

Old Business – a total of 9,366 hours were recorded by members for 2016. A goal of 10,000 hours is set for 2017; the meeting was the last chance to pay yearly dues of $10; the next class of Master Gardeners will begin January 21, 2017. Mentors are needed for the new members and are vital for their retention and success.

New Business – Stan Bachman is the new chair for the FFA CDE event, and he announced that the date this year will be March 8 at the ASU Convocation Center. Those interested in participating and earning work hours should contact him.
CCMG are also planning a seminar February 21, 2017 at the Southwest Church of Christ. Several well-known speakers are scheduled. Subjects to be covered include heirloom plants, and yard art. The registration fee of $20 includes lunch. Contact Ann Ross for more information.

Members with a January birthday were given a plant.
Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm.
Meet Our 2017 Officers:

Some fun facts

President: Ann Fergusen  
Class of 2006  
Favorite Flower or Plant: Hydrangeas  
Favorite Season: Spring  
Favorite Drink: Sparkling Water

Vice President: Donna Tolewitzke  
Class of 2013  
Favorite Flower or Plant: Poinsettia and Sunflower  
Favorite Season: Winter  
Favorite Drink(s): Diet Mtn. Dew, Coffee w/ cream

Treasurer: Stephanie Neely  
Class of 2014  
Favorite Flower or Plant: Purslane– my favorite because I have never killed one.  
Favorite Season: Summer– especially June  
Favorite Drink: Diet Mtn. Dew– I don’t speak or do anything until I get a drink of my Diet Mtn. Dew.

Secretary: Ethel Cole  
Class of 2007  
Favorite Flower or Plant: Daylily  
Favorite Season: Fall  
Favorite Drink: Sweet Tea and Chocolate Milk  
(not mixed together)
February Reminders

**Dues** - If dues are not paid by January 31, the person will no longer be considered a Master Gardener. Dues are $15 for 2017. Try to make Stephanie happy and remember to take care of this as soon as possible.

**Changes** - If you have moved, changed your email or mailing address, or phone number, please let Mimi know so we can be sure our 2017 directory is accurate. We need to know how to reach you. There is a form for this purpose in the white pages of your red notebook.

**Photos** - Please take lots of fall/winter pictures to enter the 2017 statewide MG calendar contest. All MGs can submit four photos—one for each season. Fall and winter photographs are always in short supply, so grab your camera now and capture some of the last of the leaves, trees and shrubs! More on this later.

**Plant Sale** - Don’t forget to pot up those plants for our annual spring plant sale.

Other Reminders

**Logging in Hours:** If you are having problems logging hours and/or would rather Donna log them for you please email her at dtolewitzke@gmail.com. Please include where you worked, the date and the amount of time you worked. And let’s not forget, include your learning/education hours!

**Being Respectful:** Just a reminder to be respectful of not only the speakers at meetings but to your fellow MGs. You may think you are talking quietly but voices carry making it difficult for others to hear what is going on during the meetings.

**Sign In!** As you arrive at the MG meeting each month, be sure to SIGN IN! The sign-in sheet will be on the table to the right as you come in the door. At the end of each meeting, we will draw from the attendance sheet for a door prize!

**Name Tags:** Be sure to wear your MG name tag to each meeting and receive a KISS! Otherwise put 50 cents in the jar.

Reminder

Our friend, Renee Sheph-herd, owner of Reneesgar-den.com (Renee’s Garden Seeds), is making a wonder-ful offer for Health, Well-ness and Environmental Studies Elementary School. If you go to her website and order seed, and use this code when you order: FR556A, she will donate 25% of the price of the seed you order, to the Health, Wellness and Environmental Studies Elementary Kitchen/Garden Program. Isn't that great? So, go to her website and order some seed, being sure to use the FR556A coupon code.
January

21, 28 & Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28 - CCMG New Members Class - Jonesboro Extension Office -
The program includes so far:

George Selden, Extension Specialist II, will discuss water gardens, rain gardens and hydroponics on January 21 at 10:15 a.m. immediately following the break.
Dr. Sherry Smith from the disease lab in Fayetteville will be here on January 28 at 8:30 a.m. discussing diseases.
Botany will be the topic for the afternoon session beginning at 1:00 a.m.
Dr. Kim Pittcock will be here February 11 beginning at 8:30 a.m. discussing plant propagation, shade plants and annual/perennials.
Janet Carson will speak in the afternoon on tree, shrubs and pruning.
On February 18 beginning at 8:30 a.m. Sherri Sanders, CEA - Agriculture, will discuss fruits and vegetables.
Other topics will be finalized after the first of the year. Members are invited to attend sessions that may be of interest to them but remember space is limited.

February

4 - Fayetteville—Asexual Propagation: Make More Plants From the Ones You Already Have!—Botanical Garden of the Ozarks—A demonstration class featuring two types of asexual propagation: division and cuttings. We will explore how to divide a different types of plants commonly found in the garden. We will also give a demonstration on how to make cuttings from herbaceous and woody plants. 10-10:45 a.m. Free admission. To reserve your spot, call 479-750-2620

3-4 - Pine Bluff—29th Annual Home and Garden Show—Pine Bluff Convention Center—More than 125 exhibitors offering plants, herbs, beekeeping supplies, honey, home, lawn and gardening exhibits, and more. Featured speakers, how-to sessions, quilt show, and children's activities—9 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. For more info call 870-247-1177.

10 - Washington—Sweetheart's Valentine Dinner—Historic Washington State Park—Enjoy a romantic evening with someone special at our historic William's Tavern Restaurant. A surrey ride, live entertainment, and a delicious dinner are all part of the evening. Make reservations for yourself and bring some friends! Reservations are required. 6-9 p.m. Admission: $70 per couple. For more information, call 870-983-2684

10-12 — Little Rock—LANTERNs! Winter Festival—Wildwood Park for the Arts—Held over three magical evenings, guests are transported to far away lands and times as they stroll through the beautifully lit pathways of Wildwood's gardens. Live entertainment, food, drink, games, and more throughout the Park's Butler Arboretum and inside the Lucy Lockett Cabe Festival Theatre. 6 p.m. Admission: $10 adults, $5 ages 6-12, 5 and under free. For more information, call 501-821-7275 or visit wildwoodpark.org.

11 - Hot Springs—Shiitake Mushroom Farming—Garvan Woodland Gardens—Presented by Dennis and Becky Denison, this workshop will focus on the habitat preparation, growing, and harvesting of shiitake mushrooms. Participants will inoculate logs of oak and sweet gum with mushroom spawn to create a habitat that will produce mushrooms for several years. All materials are provided. Reservations required. 10 a.m.-noon. Admission: $30/members $45/non-members. Register online at garvangardens.org or call 800-366-4664.

22 - Fayetteville—Healthy Yard, Healthy Planet: Gardening for Sustainability—Botanical Garden of the Ozarks—Lissa Morrison, garden designer and manager at BGO, encourages and teaches how to landscape for biodiversity and sustainability. Learning how to incorporate native plants in a manicured setting is an important part of this picture. 6-7 p.m. Free admission. To reserve your spot, call 479-750-2620

24-26 — Little Rock—Arkansas Flower and Garden Show—Statehouse Convention Center—The Arkansas Flower & Garden Show is the largest three-day celebration of gardening in the state. The goal of the show is to cultivate interest in the Natural State through what is grown for beauty and sustenance. Visitors come to learn about gardening and shop for their homes and gardens. Hours: Friday 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission: $10-$15, children 12 and under free.

For list of Arkansas shows, meetings, etc. see statebystategardening.com/ar/calendar/

For Master Gardener events see http://www.uaex.edu/yard-garden/master-gardeners/events.aspx

For information on Memphis events see www.memphisareamastergardeners.org/events.htm
February Birth Month Flower: The Violet

The Violet signifies watchfulness, loyalty, and faithfulness.

Give a violet to someone to let them know you’ll always be there for them.

Fun and Useful Links

Arkansas Master Gardener Program
http://www.uaex.edu/yard-garden/master-gardeners

CCMG Facebook Page
https://www.facebook.com/pages/Craighead-County-Master-Gardeners/629232630461141?ref=hl

HWES School Gardens Facebook Page
https://www.facebook.com/HWESschoolgardens

Janet Carson’s Blog - In the Garden
http://uofacesmg.wordpress.com/

Jim Long’s Blog
http://jimlongsgarden.blogspot.com/

Public Horticulture Events
http://www.uaex.edu/yard-garden/master-gardeners/events.aspx

University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Research & Extension
http://www.uaex.edu/

Garvan Gardens with Janet Carson

Craighead County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers working with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service and Craighead County officials to provide beautification projects and horticultural information to the residents of the county. In 2016 Craighead County Master Gardeners reported more than 9366 hours of service and education to benefit Craighead County.

Branon Thiesse BS, MS
County Extension Agent - Staff Chair

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Weeder’s Digest is the official newsletter of the Craighead County AR Master Gardener Program.

Please contact the newsletter editor at dtolewitzke@gmail.com with your articles, ideas, photos and suggestions.

Newsletters are Adobe files and require the latest Adobe Reader to view. You may download the latest Adobe Reader at "http://get.adobe.com/reader/".

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Craighead County Master Gardeners
Gardening Seminar 2017
“Countdown to Spring”
February 21, 2017

Southwest Church of Christ, Better Life Center Gym
1601 James Street, Jonesboro, AR 72401

Registration: 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Seminar: 9:30 – 3:00 p.m.
$20 fee includes lunch, snacks, drinks

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Janet Carson – “Foolproof Plants for the Garden”. Janet is the Horticulture Specialist with the University of Arkansas Extension Service. She writes for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, hosts the TV program “Today’s Garden”, and is the state coordinator of the Arkansas Master Gardener Program.

10:45 – 11:45 Dr. Lelia Kelly – “Plants from Grandmama’s Garden”. Dr. Kelly is an Extension Professor and Consumer Horticulture Specialist for the North Mississippi Research and Extension Center, Mississippi State University Extension Service, and is the Master Gardener Program Coordinator.

11:45 – 12:30 Lunch

12:30 – 1:30 “Plants from Grandmama’s Garden, continued.

1:45 – 3:00 “Creating Art for the Garden from Recycled Materials” and “Making Birdfeeders”. Luci Murray and Maleigha Cook. Luci is a local artist and a member of the Craighead County Master Gardeners. Maleigha is the Craighead County Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development.

Vendor: County 76-Gardening Tools

For more information contact Ann Ross at cross@astate.edu or call 870-930-0549.
Seminar Registration Form
“Countdown to Spring”

Registration Closes February 14, 2017

Please make checks payable to CES for $20 and mail to:

Gardening Seminar
Craighead County Cooperative Extension Service
611 E. Washington Ave.
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Your Name _____________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________

E-Mail or phone contact __________________________________________

Lunch will be provided by Demo’s Barbeque (barbeque sandwiches, baked beans, coleslaw, and dessert)

Note: Registration Limited

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