If you have any questions regarding anything in this newsletter, please feel free to call (870) 779-3609 or visit Room 215 in the Miller Co. Courthouse, 400 Laurel.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Caraway
County Extension Agent - Agriculture
JWC:jds

Dear Red Dirt Master Gardeners,

I can’t thank you enough for your generosity in throwing me a surprise baby shower. It was certainly a surprise and very unexpected but so appreciated. I am so honored to be the agent to work with such a great group of individuals who not only work so diligently with the community but welcomed me with open arms. Thank you again for the outpouring of love and support to our soon to be addition. I can’t wait to introduce him to all of you.

Love,
Jennifer Caraway and family

Note from Jennifer

Introducing Clayton Ray Caraway, born at 2:41 am, 12-29-15. He is beautiful and absolutely perfect. Mommy & baby are doing great.
SO here we are on the first day of the New Year of 2016. Gee, they say that the older you get, the quicker time flies by – and are “they” correct! Am I the only one who remembers the Y2K scare….

Along with a fresh calendar slate, we also have a great empty slate for our Master Gardener program. We just finished a very successful Intern Training Program and are happy to have our “seedlings” hit the ground running. As the warmer weather starts coming in, we will all want to be outside working, and we have lots to do. Just watch your Newsletter for all the upcoming projects getting under way and other opportunities for you to get your Volunteer hours in.

As we get this New Year started, I would like for us to always keep in mind how vital the Miller County Master Gardeners are to the community.

As I always say, there is something in Master Gardeners for everyone; just find your passion and jump right in!!

Happy Master Gardening!

Teresa Stack
President

Dues Are Due

Please mail your dues - $15 – to Robert High, 16021 Broadleaf, Texarkana, TX 75503 or bring to the January 14th meeting.

Seedlings: – you are paid for the 2016 year.

Per By-Laws: “Membership dues are to be paid by the first month of the calendar year (January). If dues are not paid by January 31st, they will increase by an additional $5 for Feb. ($20), and an additional $5 for March ($25). If dues are not paid by March 31st, membership will cease.”
The queen bee controls the sex of the bees she produces. If she uses stored sperm to fertilize an egg, a female bee is produced. If she does not use sperm to fertilize an egg, the result is a male.

**Did You Know?** …

The queen bee uses stored sperm to fertilize bees she produces. If she does not use sperm to fertilize an egg, a female bee is produced. If she does use sperm to fertilize an egg, the result is a male.

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**“Eating Fresh in Howard County” - Grant**

by Debra Bolding

Community First Wellness, a non-profit in Nashville, has been awarded a $45,500 grant from the Blue and You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas for 8 projects, most of which will be programs under the umbrella of Nashville Demonstration Organic Garden (NDOG) and Howard Co. Farmers’ Market (HCFM). All these programs will be a good opportunity for education and we will need MGs to assist with many of the classes. Any MG interested in participating in any of these projects should contact Debra Bolding at (870) 557-2352 for more information on this cookbook.

Project 1: Media Campaign $6,000

Each week during the campaign, five "spots" will air daily, Mon. thru Fri., on each of the two local radio stations. The spots will be "rotated on schedule" so that each airs at a different time of the day throughout the week. Each spot will be short (approximately 1-2 minutes) and typically starts with a "Did You Know" fact or statistic targeting a specific health concern. The "Did You Know" is followed with information about Nashville’s Growing Healthy Communities projects (below) and other relevant events and resources in the community. HCFM used this tool in previous years to promote many of our workshops, cooking demonstrations and other market activities.

Project 2: Healthy Eating Libraries $2,500

These funds will be used to supplement programs at the Farmer’s Market’s new greenhouse as well as courses at the Howard County Children’s Center and Nashville’s elementary school.

Project 3: NDOG’s “You Can Do It” Home Gardens $7,500

Twenty individuals (15 adults and 5 youths) will be provided with low-maintenance, small “square-foot” gardens and taught how to grow produce organically through a series of workshops that will also be open to the general public. Training and guidance for each of the beds will be provided throughout the growing season in sessions also open to the general public.

Participants will share a dish prepared with produce from their garden in a fall “Harvest Celebration” at HCFM.

Project 4: NDOG’s Universally-Accessible Gardens $5,500

Plans are to construct several large raised-bed, universally-accessible gardens, suitable for “group” gardening, at the Howard Co. Children’s Center, which provides programs for local handicapped individuals, a local retirement center, a new soup kitchen and at the home of at least one individual with confined to a wheelchair.

Training and guidance for each of the beds will be provided throughout the growing season in sessions also open to the general public.

Participants will share a dish prepared with produce from their garden in a fall “Harvest Celebration” at HCFM.

Project 5: NDOG’s Community Greenhouse & Composting Facilities $5,500

Grant funds will be utilized to provide propagation & composting workshop materials at the new greenhouse facility being completed this year and to equip the new greenhouse with storage and shelving needed for workshop materials.

Project 6: HCFM’s Local Grower Trainings $5,500

A series of workshops and garden/farm visits will be made to recruit and train at least 10 new farmers and home-gardeners how to grow and sell at market.

Participants will receive...
2016 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show

Volunteers Needed

Come be a part of the 2016 Arkansas Flower & Garden Show to be held Feb. 26th, 27th, and 28th, 2016, at the Statehouse Convention Center in downtown Little Rock, AR.

This year is our SILVER ANNIVERSARY “25 Years of Gardening in Arkansas” It will feature 140 booths, nearly 100 vendors and our large show gardens packed with design ideas. Past shows have drawn more than 12,000 visitors.

Volunteers are needed for all 3 shifts on all 3 days, from setting up or taking down to selling/taking tickets.

To volunteer, call our office for a registration form or visit the new web address at www.argardenshow.org. You will find a schedule of events and speakers listed there. Fill out the form and return it by January 15th.

Krista Quinn, executive director of the AR Flower & Garden Show said, “People sometimes don’t understand the importance of horticulture in our lives – it’s the food we eat, the green spaces around us. It impacts our lives on a daily basis. It improves not only the lives of individuals, but it’s also good for communities. Landscaping improves property values, and often leads to decreases in littering and vandalism.”

Eating Fresh in Howard County, Continued from page 3 assistance as needed with low-cost drip irrigation systems & will receive specific training & guidance on utilizing these systems. Participants will share a dish prepared with produce from their farm in the fall “Harvest Celebration” at HCFM.

NDOG’s Greenhouse is Up!!!

NDOG’s new greenhouse is complete except for installation of entry doors, heater, fan, vent and water supply, all of which should be in this month. The greenhouse was built with $8,000 from Weyer-haeuser and a $4,000 grant from Arkansas Rural Development as well as more $4,000 in-kind donations from local businesses and volunteers. Plans are to begin using the greenhouse for classes this spring, so be on the lookout for a schedule soon!

Office $3,000
Project 8: Farm Expo Summit (These funds for the local elementary school, but HCFM and NDOG will participate in the training) $10,000

Project 7: Nutrition Classes at HCFM and through the Howard County Extension

If you attended the 2015 MG PNG Conference, you were made aware of an upcoming Code of Conduct document that each MG will need to sign. Current members have until March 31st to get this document signed. The document is found at https://www.uaex.edu/yard-garden/master-gardeners/resources.aspx.