November Meeting – Election of Officers

By Teresa Slack

You do not want to miss our meeting on November 10th. We will be voting on so many things for the coming year – New Officers, MG of the Year, MG Rookie of the Year, and many other items that keep us going. Also, you will have an opportunity to sign up for the projects that you will be working on in 2017. We need your input so please be sure to be at the meeting.

Also, our December meeting is our Christmas party and our Silent Auction. We have so many talented and artistic Master Gardeners; I cannot wait to see what you bring for us to bid on. Last year was very successful and we know this party will be even better.

Please Report Your Hours

We are reminding you to please report your hours online. These hours are the lifeline of the Master Gardener Program and the Arkansas Master Gardener program counts on these hours when applying for grants and many other reasons. You have until December 31st, 2016 to get your hours recorded for the year and if you think you can wait until February 1st and explain to a computer why he/she should accept your hours – well then, good luck with that. To recertify as a Master Gardener on January 1st, 2017, you must pay your dues and have your minimum number of hours recorded. NO KIDDING. It is very important to get your hours turned in. If you need any assistance with this, Andrea Thomas is waiting by the phone to help. Call her.

Three-Day Horticulture Workshop Update

Our 3-day workshop was a huge success! We had about 60 people attend each day to hear programs from some of our favorite speakers that always help with Basic Training.

A big THANK YOU to First Presbyterian Church for sharing their venue and to Golden Corral for providing our daily meals. Our Workshop Hospitality crew did an awesome job as usual, keeping us happy and well fed.

We are planning several workshops in the coming year so stay tuned for more information.
THANKSGIVING is my favorite holiday of the year. I love the part about family, pumpkins, food & getting together with everyone to watch football games on TV. I think the cooler weather just brings out the best time of the year.

Thanksgiving is all about being thankful and I have SO MUCH to be thankful for. First and foremost, I am thankful for my Heavenly Father who has prepared an eternal home waiting for me; for my family and friends who care about me and let me know on a daily basis; for all the blessings that I have received over the year; for good health .... Gee, I could go on and on. I am truly blessed.

I am thankful for all the Master Gardeners who has assumed leadership roles this year to keep our organization thriving...no way I could name each one, but every time I need help with projects, there is always someone to step up and say, ‘I’ll do that.’ I appreciate all of you so very much.

I am also thankful for all the Master Gardeners who volunteer their time to help with our projects. There are so many projects available that it is very easy to find something fun to do to count for volunteer hours.

As we look forward to Thanksgiving and the following Holiday Season, 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 Slack

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Christmas Trip to Garvan Gardens

Please sign up for our trip to Garvan Gardens to see the Christmas lights on Monday, December 5th. According to the website, more than 4 million lights decorate the 17 acres of gardens; numerous three-dimensional displays including the 50-ft. rose tree, which plays 15 minutes of holiday music accompanied by an animated light show; nature inspired displays such as butterflies in flight; elves working in Santa’s workshop; hand-on train engine with smokestack and sound effects.

The bus and ticket into the Gardens are free, but because seating is limited, you MUST sign up by emailing Teresa Slack. You can also bring your spouse or friend for $10 (cost of the ticket) if space permits. Deadline for signing up is Friday, November 11th.

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Weather Lore

Full moon in October without frost No frost ‘till November’s full moon.

Know the difference between folklore and weather lore? Both are interesting & entertaining and have been around for thousands of years; but while folklore are beliefs based on superstition, weather lore is based on observations of environment & the effects that change has on insects, animals, birds & people.
**Little Known Pumpkin Facts**

- The word ‘pumpkin’ comes from the Greek word, ‘pepon’, which means a ‘large melon.’

- Pumpkins originated in Central America.

- Pumpkins are actually a fruit. Many people think it should be our national fruit.

- Pumpkin is really a squash. It is in the Cucurbita family along with squash and cucumbers.

- The yellow-orange flowers that bloom on the pumpkin vine are edible.

- Pumpkin seeds taste great roasted and contain medicinal properties.

- Native Americans grew and ate pumpkins and their seeds long before the Pilgrims reached this continent. Pilgrims learned how to grow and prepare pumpkins from the Native Americans.

- Pumpkin was most likely served at the first Thanksgiving feast celebrated by the Pilgrims and the Native Americans in 1621.

- The earliest pumpkin pie made in America was quite different than the pumpkin pie we enjoy today. Pilgrims and early settlers made pumpkin pie by hollowing out a pumpkin, filling e shell with milk, honey and spices and baking it.

- Early settlers dried pumpkin shells, cut it into strips and wove it into mats.

- Pumpkin has been prepared in a variety of ways from soups to stews to desserts since immigration of the first European settlers.

- The “Pumpkin Capital of the World” is Morton, Illinois. Home of Libby’s pumpkin industry.

- The state of Illinois grows the most pumpkins. It harvests about 12,300 acres of pumpkins annually.

- Each year, growers compete for the title of having grown the world’s largest pumpkin. The largest recorded pumpkin grown was on October 1, 2005 at the Pennsylvania Giant Pumpkin Growers Weighoff. It weighed in at 1,469 pounds, breaking all previous world records. It was grown by Larry Checkon of North Cambria, Penn.

- Pumpkins were formerly considered a remedy for freckles and snakebites.

- Natural medicine practitioners have proven that consuming pumpkin seeds reduce risk of prostate disorders in men.

By Deborah Tukua from Farmers Almanac, Home and Garden

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**Beekeeping Classes**

The UofA Extension Service offers complete beekeeping courses around the state. These courses are open to anyone interested in honey bees or beekeeping. No prior experience with bees is necessary to participate.

Learn everything you need to begin keeping honey bees safely & successfully at home by attending this three-part short course with different materials presented each night; so plan to attend all 3 sessions. All classes are taught by University of AR Extension apiculture specialist, Jon Zawislak, an EAS-certified Master Beekeeper.

Classes will meet **Nov. 7th, 14th, & 21st** at Beech Street Baptist Church, Texarkana.

Classes are offered **free** and are open to the public but registration is required to ensure sufficient materials for all participants. To register, call 870-779-3609.
Red Dirt Master Gardener Minutes

October 13, 2016
REA BUILDING

The meeting was called to order by President, Teresa Slack at 6:15pm. The minutes were approved as printed in the Newsletter. Motion was made to approve the minutes by Bill Bean and seconded by Joan Evins. The Treasurer’s report was approved and will be filed for audit. In on-line reporting of volunteer hours, Andrea Thomas encouraged members to continue to file hours promptly.

A visitor appeared at the door during the meeting—she introduced herself as “Rosemary” (aka Sheila Keever) and gave a lively chat about her garden. She handed out treats of organic candy worms! She asked the members if anyone could identify a large seed pod. No one seemed to know what it was. Rosemary was invited to join the Miller County Red Dirt Master Gardeners when she is in our area. A big thanks to Rosemary for adding fun to our meeting!

In unfinished business, Gayle Renfro reported that scale on the crepe myrtle trees at the courthouse was still time to plant your spring bulbs like daffodils and tulips. ~ Winterize your sprinkler system. Water plants before extended periods of freezing temperatures. ~ There is still time to plant shrubs, groundcovers, and trees.

In new business, Kathy Boyles announced that a bus trip to Garvan Gardens to see the Christmas lights is being planned for one day in the first week of December. Members are to have most of their volunteer hours recorded by that day. The trip will be paid for by the funds in the membership’s account. Spouses or a close friend are invited to attend – there may be a small fee. More news to follow in email to members about the date and details of the trip.

Reports from the 2016 Plant-Nurture-Grow (PNG) Leadership conference were given by Rita and James Lamb, Annette Lachowsky, and Brenda and Chris Engledowl. These members all reported a great conference and were encouraged to learn from Master Gardeners in other counties in Arkansas. James said that an emphasis on retaining master gardener members was also addressed.

The “Pizza Ranch” sign-up sheet was at the back table. Volunteer hours can be earned for helping with grade school kids Friday, November 4 from 8:45-2:30 at the AG Center at the Fair Grounds.

Teresa announced that the MCG Intern Training has been canceled due to a low turnout for applicants. Instead, a 3 day education workshop is being planned for late October at First Presbyterian Church, Texarkana, Arkansas. Janet Carson will give a presentation and other speakers may give presentations. Teresa will email an update to the members as soon as the dates are confirmed. Reservations are suggested due to a limited amount of seating. This workshop will be open to the public.

Gayle Renfro reported from the Nominating Committee a proposed slate of officers for 2017. They are:

President-James Lamb
Vice President-Chris Engledowl
Secretary-Jan Lavender
Treasurer-Glenda Griffin.

The membership will vote for officers and projects at the November meeting.

This is the last night to turn in orders for mums—a check or cash must be turned in with each order.

The Bee Keeping

Classes- by Jon Zawislak- are scheduled for Nov. 7, 14, 21 at Beech Street Baptist Church from 5:30 - 8:30 each day. These are great education hours. Call the Extension Office to sign up.

Backyard Basics- Education Classes- will be Tuesday, October 25 at the Southwest Center from 8:30-11:30am. Andrea Thomas will teach on rain barrels, and keyhole gardening.

The clothing order for new Master Gardener products will be finalized on October 28—last day to place your order. Mail check & order to Martha Bean. Orders will be delivered at the November meeting.

James Lamb announced the County 76 will meet in January at the Arkansas Extension State office in Little Rock to plan the next PNG Conference. Members from all Master Gardener organizations in Arkansas are welcomed to attend. There are 4 meetings/year for planning for County 76 events.

After the business meeting, Scottie Burnett introduced Dana Cox with Cox Exterior Design and Development. Dana gave a great presentation on his life experiences in landscape design.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Lavender, secretary

November Gardening

Re-arrange your garden as needed; now is the time for transplanting! ~ You can still plant fall annuals. ~ There is still time to plant your spring bulbs like daffodils and tulips. ~ Winterize your sprinkler system. Water plants before extended periods of freezing temperatures. ~ There is still time to plant shrubs, groundcovers, and trees.

Master Memos