September Program

Our September program speaker will be Sabrina Childs with the Ball Seed Company. She is coming all the way from Mississippi to be with us and she has a GREAT program on new varieties, perennials, annuals, vegetables, and more that you will all enjoy. She is also bringing handouts for everyone.

We would LOVE to have a full house for her presentation, so be sure to come and bring a friend!!

Master Gardener Fundraiser

Mums for Sale

By Teresa Slack

This fall, we will again be selling mums. Colors available are: Orange, White and Yellow

10-inch pots are $13 each
14-inch pots are $18 each

We will be taking orders, beginning at our September meeting. You must pre-pay for your order.

Mums will be delivered in mid-October.
100% of the proceeds will go to the Miller County Master Gardeners.

It’s Shirt Time, again...

It’s that time of year to order Master Gardener attire – shirts, jackets, totes, aprons and caps – in Master Gardener green. Attached is an order form for your convenience. The price includes tax. We will take orders and payment, at the September and October MG meetings, as well as the first week of BASIC TRAINING (October 25th – 28th).

Any Questions?
Talk to the “Order Pros”
Jan Lavender & Martha Bean.

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. Court-house, 400 Laurel.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Caraway
County Extension Agent - Agriculture
JWC:jds

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

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate or need materials in another format, please contact your County Extension office as soon as possible.

Dial 711 for Arkansas Relay.
I am so ready for Fall!!!

We have had an incredibly hot summer and I think everyone is looking forward to Labor Day and the fall months coming up.

One thing that reminds me of fall is College Football!

I promise you that I bleed burnt orange (as in “Hook 'em Horns”!!) Ron and I try to make at least one game in Austin each year but I am lucky enough to get to watch my Horns almost every weekend on TV. Here’s hoping we have a great season (hey, stranger things have happened).

And even with the summer winding down, we Master Gardeners have a lot of projects coming up; you can read all about them in this newsletter.

Nothing says fall better than mums… and we are selling them again this year. Last year we cleared $700.00 – our best fundraiser of the year. I hope you will all take advantage of this opportunity; remember, 100% of the proceeds will go directly to the Miller County Master Gardeners.

So, as we look forward to cooler weather, keep in mind how vital the Miller County Master Gardeners are to the community that we serve.

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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Chris and Brenda Engledowl are reaping the rewards of a bounteous summer harvest – with grapes, melons, peas, cantaloupe, squash and more. As a Gardener, Chris has a “Master Green Thumb” … – two in fact.

Chris expresses his gratitude to the Miller County Red Dirt Master Gardeners and to the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture for the wealth of knowledge he and Brenda have acquired since joining the Miller County Master Gardener program in 2014.

Chris and Brenda Engledowl have been a true asset to the Master Gardener program and we look forward to their participation for many years to come.

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By Andrea Thomas

We now have a newer, greater updated version of the Online Reporting System. Some of you may have already discovered this; however, if you are like me and like to walk the same old path, you may have not. Also, if you are like me, you are willing to accept change and try something new.

The Online Reporting System has not changed that much; you will have to go to a different site if you want to go directly to the login. Your user name and password will stay the same and you will only notice a few changes to the site. Under the Members Directory, it will now be Current Member and Past Member. Report Hours has no changes, Reports will still have your Timesheet and My Officers has been added (this is being worked on as currently the officers are not listed). Phonebook is the same; added is a list of upcoming events (right now it is the PNG conference), and the last change there will be a County or Welcome Message (which is in the works).

Now I know you want to try out the new updated system, so there are two ways to get there. First way, go to www.uaex.edu (the University of Arkansas site), then go to Yard & Garden and click on Master Gardener Program, then click on Enter Volunteer Hours here and you will be at the logon site, then log in with your same user name and password. This is also the best way to ensure you have the latest/newest version.

Second way is to go directly to the site, which is www.arkmg-dev.arkmg.org and logon again with your same user name and password.

Should you be curious about how I found out about this – well, it was in a Zoom conference meeting with Janet Carson and thirty more people. Now I was sitting at my house, at my computer watching, listening, talking, and texting during the conference. Yes it was a new experience for me, which I found very interesting & a great learning experience.
2016 Master Gardener Appreciation Day

2016 MG Appreciation Day will be held October 10th at the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks in Fayetteville. Gardens open at 9:00 AM and close at 5:00 PM.

MGs get in free that day with their name tags. Guests are welcome but will pay $7 per person. We will have events going on throughout the garden that day to help educate you about the gardens. Presentations will be informal and flexible and will be scattered throughout the garden. Presentation topics include rain barrels, chickens, monarchs and bluebird houses just to name a few.

There is no need to register UNLESS you wish to purchase a t-shirt. You can use the online link to order lunch or t-shirt with a credit card on the MG Only password protected site. Deadline to order lunch and/or t-shirts is September 23rd.

AR Master Gardener Program Celebrates 28 Years!

It's time to celebrate our Arkansas Master Gardener Program's 28th Birthday! If you are looking for ways to celebrate, here are ideas:

Contact your local officials to proclaim October 9th-15th as MG Week. Be sure to get a photo of yourselves and the dignitaries to send to the newspaper, put on our website, Facebook page — and Newsletter!

Plan to attend the MG Appreciation Day (info above).

At the October meeting, have a birthday cake to celebrate the day!

Plant fall bulbs or annuals in groupings of 28.

Plant a tree each year at a park or MG project to recognize another year of contributing to your community. Place a marker to designate one of your MGs as the "Tree Watcher" to document the growth of the trees. Think how interesting this will be to look back over 25 years to see its growth.

Celebrate our roots by hosting a reunion of original & former MGs to your Oct. meeting. Recognize these "Roots" for their efforts in growing the foundation of your county program. Ask them to speak about the early days, the projects they started and the impact they had on the community.

Host a tour of your MG projects and gardens and invite the public!

Have promotional items made (magnets, buttons, cups, painted rocks) to promote MG week.

Plant a time capsule for future MGs to dig. Include pictures, t-shirts or other MG paraphernalia, a copy of your newsletter, etc.

So get planning and celebrating! We already know MGs are fun-loving, creative people. Don't forget to take pictures for the newsletter!

Keeping Cool in Summer

By Rita Nichols

Eat more of these: mushrooms, citrus fruit, lemon balm, and mint. These foods work to help your body regulate its temperature and keep you cooler.  

Taken from Farmers’ Almanac
What’s Wrong with my Hydrangea?

French hydrangeas may be water hogs but extended periods of wet weather can cause big problems. Suddenly, their leaves become spotted, scorched, and dusted with powder.

#1: Cercospora Leaf Spot. Small brown or purple spots appear on the leaves. As they grow, they develop tan or silver centers with purple borders. Lower leaves are affected first. Then the disease moves up the plant as splashing water from rain or sprinklers spread the spores. Infected leaves drop. Discard any fallen leaves to reduce the number of fungal spores. Don’t wet the foliage when you water and spray foliage according to label directions with Immunox, Daconil, or Natria Disease Control.

#2: Anthracnose. Like leaf spot, this malady likes warm, wet weather and spreads by splashing water. Brown spots appear on the leaves and grow rapidly in size. Light-brown centers surrounded by dark-brown rings create a bull’s-eye effect. When a spot encounters a leaf vein, it spreads along it, forming an angular patch. Leaves turn dark and drop. Discard fallen leaves. Don’t wet leaves & flowers when watering. Spray foliage and flowers according to label directions with Natria Disease Control or copper-based fungicide.

#3: Powdery Mildew. Small gray to white patches appear on the leaves, eventually covering the leaves with a powdery white film. Unlike the previous 2, powdery mildew likes both cool & warm, humid weather. Spray foliage according to label directions with neem oil or Natria Disease Control.

Let’s Report Our Volunteer Time

By Andrea Thomas

Let’s report our volunteer hours.

Go to the site directly at www.arkmg-dev.arkmg.org and logon - OR -
Go to the UofA site: www.uaex.edu, then Yard & Garden, click on Master Gardener Program, then click on Enter Volunteer Hours here and logon. This is the best way to make sure you are at the current or newest version of the On Line Reporting System.

Sanctioned Hours
Have you been helping with the College Hill School project? Report your time under College Hill. This is a new project and it is sanctioned, so these hours are sanctioned.

Have you been planting, weeding, cleaning, pruning etc. in the Miller County Courthouse Flowerbeds? Report that time under Miller County Courthouse Beds, this is sanctioned.

Have you been volunteering at the Nashville Farmers Market & Demo Garden? Report that time under Nashville Farmers Market and Demo Garden, this is sanctioned hours.

Are you volunteering at the Gateway Farmers Market? Helping with demos and/or working in the flowerbeds? Report that time under Gateway Farmers Market, this is sanctioned hours.

Have you been helping plant, weed, pick vegetables, etc. at the Texarkana Downtown Community Gardens? Report that time under Texarkana Downtown Community Garden. This is sanctioned hours.

Non Sanctioned Hours
Did you go to the monthly meeting? You get 1 hour for the business part; report it under Monthly meeting business.

Did you bring one of the wonderful dishes we had for the meal? You do know you get to count the time you were in the store picking up items to make that great dish. (Now you cannot count travel time to the store or the time you were visiting with your neighbors, relatives, or friends while in the store)

How long did it take you to prepare your dish? You get to count that time also. Did you come early and help set up for the meal? You also count that time. All this time will go under Hospitality / Social.

Education
Did you stay for the monthly meeting program on Butterflies? That will count as 1 hour education. Report it under monthly meeting program.

Have you been to any seminars on gardening (flowers, vegetables, etc.)? Time all can be reported under Seminars.

Have you been to a public garden (as Garvan Gardens, Dallas Arboretum, Rose Garden in Shreveport or Tyler, etc.)? Report that time under Garden Tours. Your neighbors’, friends’, cousins’ … garden does not count, it must be public not a private or individual’s garden.

Have you been reading Horticulture Magazines or Books? You can report 1 hour each month for this activity.

Have you been watching a Horticulture program on TV or listening to a horticulture program on the radio? You can report 1 hour monthly for this.

Travel Time
Now the rule is that you cannot count travel time; there is an exception. The exception is: should you be transporting items for a project, you may count the time loading, unloading, & moving/transporting the items. Some examples: hauling compost or mulch for the Courthouse flowerbeds or Downtown garden. Now only the time you are transporting the items. Bringing or transporting your personal gloves, hoe, shovel, pruners, etc. to a project does not count.

If you have any questions on reporting your hours in the on line system or need a password reset, please give me a call 903-832-8111 or send me an email at7550@yahoo.com and I will do my best to help.
Keeping honey bees has become an increasingly popular activity, especially after hearing alarming reports about large-scale declines of honeybees and other pollinators. Others are interested in producing honey and other hive products. Whatever the motivation to take up beekeeping; most find beekeeping a fascinating and rewarding endeavor.

The time required for beekeeping varies considerably by season (see AR Beekeeping Calendar). Spring is the busiest season for both bees and beekeepers. The winter months require less time in the hives, but can be spent repairing and preparing for the spring season. Honey bees are living creatures. Beekeeping requires the same commitment of responsibility as owning any other pet or livestock. Providing your bees with adequate shelter and care takes an investment of time, energy and money.

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers complete beekeeping short courses periodically around the state. These courses are open to anyone interested in honey bees or beekeeping. No prior experience with bees is necessary to participate. Classes will cover everything a person needs to know to begin keeping bees safely and successfully. Most short courses consist of three class sessions, with new information presented in each class, building on what has already been covered. All short courses are taught by University of AR Extension Apiculture Specialist Jon Zawislaw, an EAS-certified Master Beekeeper. Because the beekeeping industry is always changing to adapt to new challenges, these classes can be a great refresher course for experienced beekeepers, who may learn new techniques or better understand the behavior of their bees. Class participants are also encouraged to meet and socialize with others who share their interest in the amazing honeybee. Numerous beekeeping clubs and associations meet regularly throughout Arkansas, providing beekeepers with continuing opportunities to socialize, share, & learn.

If you are looking for information on local area beekeeping club meetings, visit the Arkansas Beekeepers Association. If you are interested in attending these classes in Texarkana, AR, mark your calendars for Mondays, November 7th, 14th, and 21st, 2016 & pre-register now by calling 870-779-3609. More information will be available soon. However, due to limited space, we can only take the first 100 who pre-register. It will fill up fast!

**September Calendar**

- **Sept. 3** – “Fall Preparations for Gardens, Flower Beds, and Yards” at GFM
- **Sept. 8** – MG Monthly Meeting – 6 PM – REA
- **Sept. 17** – Haynesville LA Celebration of Butterflies
- **Sept. 9-18** – Plant Judging and Watering at Fair
- **Sept. 14-15** – Kids Day at the Fair
- **Sept. 24** – Fall Decorating with the MGs at GFM
- **Sept. 25-27** – P-N-G Leadership Training, Ferndale

**Best Plants to Try for Cooler Weather Growing**

While you’re not bringing in ripe tomatoes, there are plenty of delicious options for a late season garden. Give these a try to liven up your wintertime produce list:

- **Spinach** – You can plant spinach 6 to 8 weeks before a freeze. It'll continue growing during the winter and you’ll be surprised at the resurgence in the spring.
- **Kale** – With a little protection, you can harvest kale throughout the winter. Start by seed 10 to 12 weeks before your typical first frost date, or set out plants a month prior. You want decent sized plants going into the winter.
- **Chard** – Chard is a good replacement when you pull out the spring crops by midsummer. Seed it then, and continue harvesting throughout the winter.
- **Beets** – Beets germinate fairly quickly, but you want to give them plenty of time to mature before cold weather sets in for good. Seed at least 7 to 8 weeks prior to your first frost.
- **Carrots** – Carrots take longer than you might think. Seed them 12 weeks prior to a frost. When wintering over, cut off the green tops and insulate them to keep them sweet and crisp.
- **Cabbage** – Seed cabbage at least 12 weeks prior to the cold weather, and plant transplants 6 weeks before.

*From Farmers’ Almanac*
Companion Plantings with Geraniums

Companion planting with geraniums is beneficial because they deter some very common, destructive pests, such as earworns, cabbageworm, & Japanese beetles. Therefore, the best companion plants for geraniums are those prone to suffering from them, like corn, roses, grapes, & cabbage. Scented geraniums are also believed to deter spider mites, leafhoppers and cotton aphids, meaning good scented geranium plant companions are almost any vegetable in your garden.

For effective control, plant a border of geraniums around your vegetable garden or intersperse among the vegetables, especially near plants that have suffered from pests in the past. Plant them near rose bushes to keep bugs at bay and also create an attractive floral accent. Chrysanthemums are a great choice if you want a show-stopping bed of big blossoms in lots of hues. Almost any flower with similar growing conditions will make an exceptional neighbor to geraniums.

Red Dirt Master Gardener Minutes

August 11, 2016

REA

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 by President, Teresa Slack. Motion to approve the minutes made by Joe Young and seconded by Andrea Thomas. The Treasurer’s report will be filed for audit.

In on-line reporting of service hours of members, Andrea Thomas reported that there has been improvement. Members were encouraged to report all hours.

Committee Reports:

Farmers Market--
Samantha Kroll-4H Agent, announced a date of August 27 for a Container Gardening event for 4-H students. MG members are needed to donate supplies and could also help with the event. 4-H students will be able to enter plants at the Four States Fair Horticulture event. Also in Farmers Market news, Chuck Ainsworth is the committee Chair for Education on Saturdays at the Farmers Market. Volunteers are needed.

Miller County Courthouse Beds—Rita Nichols reported that a workday will be announced for mid-September and an email will be sent to the committee.

Downtown Community Garden Chair, Kathy Boyles, announced that the next workday is August 13 starting at 7:30am.

College Hill Middle School (EAST and STEM classes) Chair, Annette Lachowsky updated the membership on the project. She reported that irrigation was installed at College Hill Middle School and that the committee will meet with teachers in mid-September.

New Business:

In new business—a certificate was awarded to the Red Dirt MG’s from Judge Burgess. This was for maintaining the courthouse beds. Five year service pins were awarded to Ed Long, Patsy Bass and Mary Hartness. Jan Scott was awarded a 10 year service pin.

“Kids Day at the Fair” will be September 14 and 15. Passes to the Fair for MG volunteers will be available.

Judging of Horticulture at the Fair, September 7-17—volunteers are needed to judge and to water plants. Charlotte Fuller will oversee this information table.

MCMG Project Evaluation forms must be turned in by all committees to Teresa by October 1. This information will be used to plan projects for 2017.

The Basic Training Committee will meet August 16 at 9AM in the conference room on 3rd floor of the Miller County Courthouse.

In additional new business, Samantha Kroll announced a 4-H fundraiser—“I’ve Been Pied”—nominate friends for $20! Contact Samantha for more information.

Plans are being made for our annual fundraiser of selling mums. Contact Teresa if you are interested in helping with this fundraiser or being Chair.

Rita Nichols explained the PNG conference for leadership training. Chris and Brenda Engledowl will represent our club. Talk to Rita if you are interested in attending the conference in September.

A program about “Butterfly Gardens” in Texarkana was given by Mr. and Mrs. Mike Briscoe.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Jan Lavender, secretary

Firewood Tips: Burning Wood

One cord of wood burned as firewood provides the heat equivalent to that produced by burning 200 to 250 gallons of heating oil, depending on the type of hardwood used.

Freshly cut wood contains up to 50% moisture and must be seasoned to 20 to 25% moisture content before burning. Wood containing more than 25% moisture is wet, or green, and should never be burned in a fireplace or wood stove.

Wet wood is easier to split than dry wood. Wood must be split into pieces and stacked out of the rain for at least six months to season properly.

When seasoning firewood, if steam bubbles and hisses out of the end grain as the firewood heats up on the fire, the wood is wet, or green, and needs to be seasoned longer before burning. Well-seasoned firewood generally has darkened ends with visible cracks or splits. It is relatively lightweight and makes a sharp, distinctive “clink” when 2 pieces strike each other.

Limit the amount of pine you burn. It’s a resinous softwood.