2014 P*N*G Conference speaker pumps planning

Dr. Charles Saulsbery from Fort Smith delivered the keynote address for the 2014 PNG Conference. Dr. Saulsbery noted that “life is short and time is sweet.” As he explained the three laws of MG leadership – process, perseverance, and patience – the first process is that leaders require the seasoning of life over the long haul.

“The four phases of leadership development are: 1) I don’t know what I don’t know; 2) I know what I don’t know; 3) I grow and know and it starts to show; and 4) I simply go because I know,” Dr. Saulsbery remarked.

The law of navigation (perseverance) acknowledges that anyone can steer the ship, but a leader charts the course. Navigators draw on past experiences and also listen to what others have to say. It’s also important to examine conditions before making commitments.

The third law of patience shows the value of a goal. A goal properly set is a goal already half attained. The goal is more important than our individual role, so the team must continue to look up at the big picture and call in the right players.

Dr. Saulsbery serves as an adjunct professor for John Brown University and has been a Corporate Trainer for Fortune 50, 100, and 500 Companies providing training in Customer Service and Ethics.
County 76 Quarterly Meeting set for October 28

County 76 will convene its final 2014 meeting at the state office in Little Rock on October 28. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. and concludes by 3 p.m. This schedule is designed to allow MGs outside central Arkansas to make the trip in one day.

Lunch is provided at no charge, so please contact Linda Soffer at lsoffer@gmail.com by October 23 to be included. You have the option to bring your own lunch.

County 76 Membership

County 76 meetings are open to all Master Gardeners in good standing in their county program. In fact, this advisory group works best when more counties are represented in County 76.

What happens in the meeting?

The quarterly meeting includes a group update from Janet Carson and County 76 President John Richardson. Later, the project teams break into groups to brainstorm new ideas and update on existing goals and strategies. The projects include: Training-Walter Jennings (Pulaski); PNG Leadership Conference-Lin Johnson (Garland); R-R-R Mimi Cox (Craighead); Communications-Glenda Bell (Faulkner); and Fundraising-Marcella Grimmett (Pulaski).

These projects have goals with action plans beneficial to county programs, and that’s why it’s important for County 76 to have representation from a diverse group of county MGs.

Project chairs and co-chairs are term-limited so that more MGs have the opportunity to assume a leadership role in the County 76 organization.

President’s Message: A Farewell Note

The PNG Conference set a new record for attendance with 36 counties and 163 people attending. The program was outstanding. Many thanks to Lin Johnson and her team for pulling this off. Also to Julie Treat for her tireless assistance in keeping the ball rolling at the meeting.

On another front, I am announcing my resignation from the President role in County 76. I am doing so for medical reasons that would require me to miss key planning sessions and prevent me from carrying out my duties in the quarterly meetings. I really believe that the Arkansas Master Gardeners are the best anywhere and that is due in part to a dedicated and hard working County 76 group. Thank you for focus, creativity and just plain hard work to make this happen. You are a great group! I leave you in the hands of one who is totally capable to take my place in Jane Burrow. She has worked closely with me on most everything I have been involved in. The Leadership Team has discussed a change in the role of the Vice President to include overall project management responsibilities. The membership will need to look and vote on that proposal at the October quarterly meeting.

Again thanks for everything and really appreciate all of the help you have given to make County 76 the organization that it is.

Note: Special election will be held at the October 28th County 76 Quarterly meeting. As per the C76 by-laws Article 5b "However if the office of either the President or Vice President becomes vacant, it shall be filled by a special election of the general membership."

If you have questions, please contact Jane Burrow at jane.burrow@sbcglobal.net
Farm agents and volunteers key to 1920s’ leadership

Editor’s Note: With the USCE5 centennial anniversary in 2014, Garden Voice will mark this significant occasion with excerpts from “Farther Down the Road,” an e-book on the history of the UAEX by Richard Maples.

While a few of the state’s African-Americans were doing well at the turn of the 20th Century, most were trapped in poverty. One of the bright spots in their segregated world was the work of black county agents.

Arkansas’ first Negro county agent, Ralph Amos, was hired on June 1, 1912. Amos served the counties with the largest black populations, including Lee, Pulaski, Phillips, Lonoke, Arkansas, Crittenden, Monroe, St. Francis and Jefferson. The agent’s primary areas of work were food production and preservation. He also helped establish the first corn and tomato clubs for black youths.

A.B. Crump was named Negro club agent on December 1, 1913. Crump supervised boys’ and girls’ club work in 12 counties. On the same day he was hired, Della Vance began work as Negro club agent in Monroe County. Mary Sims had been appointed Negro club agent for Lafayette County a few months earlier, on April, 10 1913.

These four agents paved the way for Harvey C. Ray, who became Arkansas’ first Negro county agent on a federal appointment on February 1, 1915. A 1913 graduate of Tuskegee Institute and disciple of the Alabama school’s founder, Booker T. Washington, Ray worked two-and-a half years as assistant director of the agricultural department of Langston University in Oklahoma before coming to Arkansas. Here he served as an agent in Pulaski County for six months and then was named special agent in charge of Negro work for Pulaski, Arkansas, Crittenden, Jefferson, Lee, Monroe and Phillips counties.

On July 1, 1918, Ray’s title was changed to district agent. He would continue to serve black Arkansans until 1952.

Ray’s wife, Mary McCrary Ray, left her position as head of the home economics department at Langston University to join her husband in Arkansas. On March 16, 1916, she became Arkansas’ first Negro home demonstration agent and served Pulaski, Phillips and St. Francis counties. She was appointed district home demonstration agent for Negro work on July 1, 1918, a position she held until her death in 1934.

In Pulaski County, Ray often conferred with George C. Pye and George K. Lowe. The white agents offered Ray advice and program guidance, a pattern more or less adhered to for decades to come.

Demonstrations were the cornerstone of black agents’ work. The emphasis for farm men was on field and truck crops and livestock. Members of boys’ clubs planted one-acre plots of corn and girls planted one-tenth acre tomato plots and raised chickens, providing food and extra income to their families.

African-American families did very little canning until county agents introduced modern canning techniques. The men were often just as interested in food preservation as women. In fact, Harvey Ray credited a man, Wrightsville farmer Will Flowers, with sponsoring the first community get-together to can tomatoes.

Black Extension workers would set up simple but efficient hot water canneries consisting of “two zinc tubs, a zinc foundation and top, with an elbow and two joints of stovepipe.” A crude stove was rigged up under a grove of trees, usually on school or church grounds, and Mary Ray would

Negro county farm agents demonstrated the same technology, including insect control on cotton, as their white counterparts.
show families how to process their tomatoes for winter use. In 1917, six men and six women were employed as Negro county Extension agents. In 1918, spurred by emergency war programs, the Extension Service employed 12 women. In fact, Harvey Ray credited a man, Wrightsville farmer Will Flowers, with sponsoring the first community get-together to can tomatoes. Black county agents, in addition to helping farmers deal with the usual problems of drought, flood, insects and low crop prices, had to cope with the effects of racism, poverty and despair. The younger generation was showing its dissatisfaction by moving to the Northern industrial centers.

During the early years of Negro Extension work in the South, agents were often the products of Tuskegee and Hampton institutes. In Arkansas the Branch Normal College at Pine Bluff, later named the Agricultural Mechanical and Normal College, became a primary source of degreed Extension workers.

**Floods Ravage Arkansas**

No review of the 1920s is complete without a look at the state’s worst recorded natural disaster, the Great Flood of 1927. The rushing waters of the Mississippi River and its tributaries spread death and destruction from Cairo, Illinois, to the Gulf of Mexico; but it was citizens of the three southernmost states along the Big River—Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana—who suffered the most.

In Arkansas alone, it was reported, the flood claimed 98 lives, an estimated $38 million (in 1927 dollars) in property damage and $12.5 million in crop losses. Thirty-six of the state’s 75 counties were affected.

The flood, which resulted from heavy rains in the Mississippi River basin throughout the winter of 1926-27 and into late spring of 1927, destroyed 2,200 homes, 1,185 barns and nine cotton gins. More than 8,990 head of cattle, 5,800 mules and horses, 32,000 hogs and 215,000 chickens were lost to the water. Thousands more homes, barns, gins, stores, bridges and miles of railroad track were damaged.

The agents’ work was not only arduous, it was dangerous. J.E. Critz, farm agent for northern Mississippi County, wrote in his 1927 annual report that home demonstration agent Cora Lee Coleman and Ruby Mendenhall, state food preservation specialist, almost died when flood waters swept them off a paved road often traveled by agents.

The U.S. Congress appropriated $400,000 for Extension work in the areas affected by the 1927 and 1928 floods. Arkansas received $100,000 of that thanks to the work in Congress of Senator Joe T. Robinson. The funding became available on May 16, 1928, and continued until the end of the next fiscal year, June 30, 1929. A few months later, the world plunged into the Great Depression.
October 2014
21 to 24 - Southern Region Master Gardener Conference, Baton Rouge, LA. Website
22 - Deadline to register for the Advanced MG Class "The Many Faces of Ornamental Grasses".
23 - Deadline to RSVP for October County 76 General Membership Meeting, email lsoffer@gmail.com your name, county, address, phone number and email if you plan to attend. We need an RSVP if you plan to attend for food and meeting preparations. Thanks in advance for responding by the deadline.
28 - County 76 General Membership Meeting, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Little Rock State Extension Office. RSVP by October 23 to Linda Soffer at lsoffer@gmail.com

November 2014
1 - Advanced MG Class "The Many Faces of Ornamental Grasses", hosted by Craighead County. Cost is $50.00 per person. Held at Bono Church of Christ 101 Craftsbury, Bono AR 72416.
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Registration Deadline is October 22, 2014 No refunds will be given after the registration deadline of October 22. For more information please contact: Mimi Cox, 870-932-3661 or MLCOX@yahoo.com Peggy Lane, 870-935-7649 or wilsonandpeggy@yahoo.com
4 - Adding Color to Your Fall Garden Workshop at Garvan Woodland Gardens, Hot Springs, AR.
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Magnolia Room. Janet Carson of the U of A Cooperative Extension Service and Bob Byers of the Gardens will explain how to keep the color going until the first hard frosts and beyond. Registration fee includes lunch. $35 for GWG members and $45 for non-members. Advance reservations and pre-payment are required. Call the Gardens at 501.262.9300 to register. Space is limited. - See more at: Garvan Gardens Fall Workshop