In 2011, a group was formed to review and develop future goals and a mission statement for our Washington County Master Gardener organization. The mission statement was approved by the WCMG membership and reads like this: To provide horticultural information and improve the quality of life of residents of Washington County through volunteer horticultural activities. During 2012, WCMGs donated 15,089 volunteer hours through sanctioned projects and committees. WAY TO GO WASHINGTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS!! Sometimes we fail to realize and appreciate all the lives we touch and how much we really do.

At the same time, we set goals and objectives that we want to fulfill. If you review the front section of your Master Gardener notebook, you will find the page with goals and objectives. I challenge you to take a minute and review them. We are great with beautification efforts and committee work but are lacking in some of the other areas. With all the many talented and dedicated people in our organization we are very capable of sharing our knowledge with the entire county.

A Community Outreach Committee was formed to help guide membership in fulfilling these goals and objectives. At the committees’ organizational meeting every sanctioned project chair was challenged to plan some “Community Outreach” special educational events, seminars, tours etc. related to horticultural activities involving that project. Of course, Washington County Master Gardeners “arose to the cause.” At our February meeting we will view the Washington County premier of a musical video, “A Musical Tribute to Aerobic Decomposition of Organic Matter” presented by our very own compost team, starring Steve Skattebo. And other projects have plans in the works.

This is all very exciting! During this coming year, please take time to get involved in any way you can. Not only will you be gaining knowledge, you will be contributing to the education of others. Gardeners are such “great people.”

Do you want to learn about how you can protect our water quality and collect Master Gardener education hours? If so, the Greening Your Life’ online course may be a great fit for you.

This course will cover aspects of water quality in Arkansas, minimizing pollution of water, and getting involved in voluntary community efforts to protect water quality.

Visit COURSES.UAEX.EDU to create an account, click on the name of the course and get started!
PRESENT: 67 Members

Outgoing President, Judie Branson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She introduced, Washington County Extension Agent, Berni Kurz. Berni called the outgoing 2012 Executive Committee to the front and explained what the Executive Committee does.

He then introduced the 2013 Executive Committee one by one and presented each with a different herb relating to their office. This was all part of his installation of officers. Judie Branson, Immediate Past President, was presented with sage for esteem. Sally Harms, Member at Large, was presented basil for optimism. Patsy Louk, Secretary, was presented rosemary for remembrance. Dolores Stamps, Vice-President, was presented oregano for thoughts and Gloria McIntosh, President, was presented thyme for courage. Kitty Sanders and Phyllis Wilkins, the other two Members at Large and Marty Gray, Treasurer, were not present.

2013 President, Gloria McIntosh, continued on with the rest of the business meeting. Motions were made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the November meeting and the Treasurer’s Report as printed in the December Garden Thyme.

OLD BUSINESS:
None

NEW BUSINESS:
Projects Committee Chair, Vande Sutherland, explained that since Sanctioned Projects, Fayetteville City Hospital no longer existed and Fayetteville Public Library had grown into a large project and no longer had a chair, the two projects needed to be de-sanctioned by the members. The motioned was made and seconded to de-sanction the two projects. The members voted in favor of de-sanctioning the two projects.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:
Three more mentors are needed for the 2013 MG Class. Contact Judy Smith or Jayne Laster if you are interested.

The Publicity Committee has been formed to educate the general public about the Washington County Master Gardeners. Give your event info to Twania Pinnell, Susan Young or photographer, Judie Branson.

Upcoming Master Composter Training for WCMG is:
Saturday, March 9th 8 a.m.-12 noon,
Saturday, March 16th 8 a.m.-12 noon,
Sunday, March 17th 12 noon – 6 p.m.
Cost is $25.00 for all three classes.

Washington County premier unveiling presented before the February MG meeting.
“A Musical Tribute to Aerobic Decomposition of Organic Matter” presented by the Master Composter Team.

BGO Events:
Jan. 17 through Feb. 9 Arkansas Champion Trees mini exhibit daily 9 - 5
Members Free/Non Members 5.00/2.50
Feb. 9 Building Birdhouses for BGO
Feb. 16 & Feb. 23 Susan’s Mosaic Planter

Joyce Mendenhall announced that she had brochures with information on the online class “Greening Your Life”.

At 6:54 p.m. Vice-President, Dolores Stamps, introduced our speaker Dr. John Clark, U of A Professor of Horticulture. He presented a wonderful program on, “Small Fruit Varieties for the Landscape”.

His program ended at 8:23 p.m.
CONFEDERATE CEMETERY PLANTING
by Judie Branson, Publicity Committee

Cindi Cope, Master Gardener and Fayetteville in Bloom (FIB) Chair, arranged to have residents from the Department of Community Corrections Women’s Unit plant bulbs at the Confederate Cemetery which overlooks the historic part of downtown Fayetteville. Brent and Becky Heath donated 40-60 crates of bulbs which are being planted at several other locations in Fayetteville as well; all being part of the beautification project of FIB.

Before the planting at the Confederate Cemetery, Donna Schwieder, President of the Southern Memorial Association, caretakers of the cemetery, relayed how the cemetery came to be – how the bodies were buried in mass graves before being moved to the cemetery; so most of the 300 soldiers buried there are unknown. They have four burial plots to distinguish the different states from which the bodies were moved – Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, and Louisiana.

The Confederate Cemetery is located at the top of East Rock Street; if you get a chance to visit it this spring while the flowers are in bloom, I am sure you will not be disappointed.

Fayetteville in Bloom Helpers planting spring bulbs

RICHARDSON CENTER PROJECT
by Jean Cosgrove

Linda Auman, WCMG Class of 2012, is a gifted curriculum writer and teacher; her talents benefit the residents of the Richardson Center. Recently, she created a lesson plan for watering the plants in the greenhouse and then followed that for the next class by buying a watering can for each resident and helping them decorate the can with stencils and paint. The cans are beautiful and so are the smiles of the developmentally challenged adults as they work at the tables in the greenhouse – watering and tending ferns, herbs, and flowers that will over-winter there.

Thanks to Linda and our other WCMG Volunteers – Judith Combs, Jean Cosgrove and Bill Ross.
Now is a great time to prune most trees and shrubs. However, do not prune azalea, dogwood, forsythia, redbud and rhododendron – they should be pruned after they bloom, since they set blooms in the fall. Almost anything that blooms after June 1 (except oakleaf hydrangea and late-flowering azalea cultivars) can be pruned safely now.

Prune fruit trees and spray with Lime Sulphur and Dormant Oil to reduce insect and disease potential this summer.

If you have peaches consider making an application of Copper (Hi-Yield Bordeaux Mix or Bonide Liquid Copper) and a fungicide containing chlorothalonil to prevent Peach Leaf Curl. Once buds have swollen (late Feb to early March), infection will have occurred and prevention management is too late.

If you had terrible insect problems in your vegetable garden this year, particularly grubs, squash vine borers, and other soil insects, tilling your garden in the winter can help to control them. Many of these insects burrow down in the ground and spend the winter in a larval stage. Tilling can bring them closer to the surface and low temperatures can help to kill them. Don’t do this if the ground is too wet, but if the soil is workable, this can help to start the season off clean.

Use wood ashes on your vegetable garden, bulb beds, lawn and non-acid loving plants if the pH of the soil is below 6.0. Apply very sparingly, 1 cup per square yard.

Hardwood cuttings of many landscape plants like forsythia (yellow bells), flowering quince, weigela, crape myrtle, juniper, spirea and hydrangea can be taken this month.

When doing winter cleanup in overgrown areas of the landscape, watch out for poison ivy. It will cause the same irritating rash even when handling dormant vines and roots. Never burn anything containing poison ivy material.
JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM UPDATE
by Mary Crumley & Joyce Mendenhall

Our Junior Master Gardener program is a very successful 4-H club--now it is time to take it to the next level! We will now be offering our members the opportunity to become "Official" Junior Master Gardeners by following the program guides put forth by the national organization. Youth can become certified JMG Junior Master Gardeners by completing one group and one individual activity for each teaching concept in the eight chapters of the JMG Handbook and by participating in one leadership/service learning project per chapter.

We will use our monthly meeting times to help the Jr MG’s achieve the group activity and the service learning project. It will be up to them to complete the individual project and report back to the Master Gardener leaders. After completing a chapter they will receive a certificate of completion and the opportunity to receive special pins.

Saturday, January 12th began their education about the program and the first topic “Plant Growth and Development” was covered. Joyce Mendenhall coordinated the first lesson plans and the Extension Water Quality staff will be teaching the February program. We may send out notices to other Master Gardeners for help on things needed to have for each month’s project; i.e., the request for the aloe vera plants and baby food jars. They made their own hand lotion in January.

Washington County Junior Master Gardener program will be the first one to work on this project and will help other Arkansas counties by offering more details to other clubs.

JACOBSEN TOURS for 2013

Last Weekend of April - “Botanical Gardens and More” at St. Louis, Missouri


JULY 23-29 - “FABULOUS MYSTERY TOUR” (Price goes after March 1st)

Contact Jean & Tom Jacobsen at (479) 251-7002 jacobsentours@hotmail.com for Details

Master Composter Training Classes

Saturday, Mar. 9th - 8 a.m. - 12n
Saturday, Mar. 16th - 8 a.m. - 12n
Sunday, Mar. 17th - 12n - 6 p.m.

Price: $25 for all 3 sessions.

Location:
Washington Co Extension Office

Contact Joyce Mendenhall by March 1st
© (479) 444-1755 for registration

Training for Master Gardeners Only
by Steve Skattebo

(2013 Class Trainees are welcome).
Students must attend all three sessions.

Fee of $25 includes a name tag, T-shirt, notebook, and snacks. Students should buy the textbook on their own: The Complete Compost Gardening Guide by Pleasant and Martin, Storey Publishing 2008. Speakers will present in-depth information on a variety of topics related to composting. There will also be some hands-on experience at the compost demonstration site, weather permitting. Students who complete this training will also be required to dedicate 10 hours of volunteer work to the compost project during the next year.
IS THIS REALLY WINTER?

by Pam Johnson

Somber naked branches
Sway in the frigid breeze
Sky gray, damp, and threatening
Rain drops crackling as they freeze

Errant leaves not raked and bagged
Tumble helplessly 'cross the street
As if to escape the coming cold
Freezing rain turning into sleet

Pin Oaks hang onto their leaves
As a reminder that just before
This wicked wind and winter chill
Came whistling through the door

The days were long and shaded
With tree boughs fully loaded
Without a care to think about
What the Almanac had foreboded

It seemed that another winter
With mercury's higher range
Would return to us again this year
As the result of climate change

But this snap of cold is likely
To remind us of the days
When snow stayed on the ground for weeks
Through the clouds there were no rays

Perhaps we have our winter back
Killing bugs that we don't need
As well as plants that we don't like
In the garden known as "weeds"

Whether cold or warmer temps,
The question now or past
Seems to always be the same
"How long's this going to last?"

ASK A MASTER PROJECT UPDATE
by Joyce Mendenhall

Ask A Master is a very important part of the Master Gardener program. In fact, it is why Master Gardeners were organized in the first place. County Agents are very busy people, answering questions about everything from farming to food preservation and water quality to backyard chickens and much more, not to mention horticulture! Having Master Gardeners available in the office to help answer the horticulture questions is a huge help.

Please consider signing up for one of the ten two-hour shifts each week (10 a.m. – 12n and 1-3 p.m.)
Call Joyce 444-1755 or email her at jmendenhall@uaex.edu to schedule a time.

This project will start March 1 and run through October 31.

Botanical Garden of the Ozarks
Calendar of Events
by Judy Smith

Fri. – Feb. 1st -9th, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Arkansas Champion Trees: An Artist’s Journey. Exhibit of 4 champion tree panels rendered in colored pencil by Hot Springs artist, Linda Williams Palmer.

Sat. – Feb 9th, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Building Bird Houses for BGO, $15/$20 – Participants will build bluebird houses for the south meadow and receive plans to take home. Register and pay in advance at www.bgozarks.org.

Sat. /Sun. – Mar. 2nd, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Mar. 3rd, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., Orchid Society Show and Sale.

Sat. – Mar. 9th, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Arranging a Bundle of Flowers with Julie Sanders, $25/$30. Register and pay in advance at www.bgozarks.org.

Blooming in December!

Lynn Rogers shared her flowering apricot ‘Peggy Clarke’ prunus mume blooming in December instead of the usual Jan. or Feb.

The Membership Committee reminds all members that in order to retain your status as a Master Gardener, you must record at least 20 hours of continuing education each year in addition to your 20 hours (or more) of volunteer work.

Education Hours may include:
#50 - MG Meeting/ Programs – our regular monthly meeting counts as 2 hours of education!

#51 - Program Prep. – research of information to present at a meeting or presentation.

#52 - Gardening Workshops/ Programs - attending programs at the BGO, Garden Clubs, etc.

#53 - Garden Tours–visiting a botanical garden, garden show, etc.

#54 - Reading books/ Magazines – this would also include reading done on the internet. (you may enter a monthly total at the end of each month for #54 and #56).

#55 – This was removed (Journalistic Endeavors). Members who write articles for publication in magazines, gardening newsletters or the newspaper may now count those hours under #62 - Community Outreach which is a new sanctioned work project. Members who write an article for the Garden Thyme should count those hours under #11 Newsletter Committee.

We encourage all members to keep recording your hours in the online database as they occur or at least once a month. We are no longer hand-counting & reporting hours twice a year as in the past.

If you have any questions about recording your hours please call: Annette Pianalto at 361-2007, Judy Hammond at 306-4349 or Judie Branson at 841-6173.

Thanks to everyone for making the transition to the on-line recording so successful!!!
Welcome New Master Gardeners. I look forward to greeting each of you and hope that you enjoy being a MG. The quote, “Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe,” is good advice. Part of the MG program involves sharpening the axe, i.e. learning about gardening from professionals and each other. Keep that in the forefront as you become a MG.

Natural Gardening. I very much endorse the natural gardening systems, and encourage you and others to do the same. My personal stewardship values dictate that I care for nature as the Designer intended. As a rule, chemical fertilizers, GMO seeds, and pesticides scream “in-your-face defiance” and “control,” to the wholesomeness of Nature. In natural systems, plants have evolved in the direction of being healthy, and so too should our practices of intervention.

Howard Garrett, from Dallas, is a good source of information on organic gardening. Go to www.dirtdoctor.com for information on problems from ‘a to z’. If you have a desire to switch to a more natural system of gardening, and you want help, I will be teaching classes again this spring, and I will have garden tours. Another good site regarding seeds and information is www.southernexposure.com.

Gardening practices that follow natural processes often go by different names, and will vary in approach. Some recommend no turning of the soil. Others, like the John Jeavon’s Biointensive approach which I use, recommends double-digging and raised beds, plus using compost and natural fertilizers discretely.

In addition to the Biointensive approach, I emphasize the importance of growing vegetables that are nutrient dense. This becomes the real test of success and one of the most complex aspects of gardening. It is critical because it is the element of gardening that deals with the health of all consumers.

Late Fall Harvest. It is wise to learn fall gardening techniques. I just dug my last winter carrots (Jan 17), and still have cabbage in refrigerator, plus lots of fall squash and sweet potatoes on hand.

Spring Planting. I am getting ready now for spring planting. A general garden plan has been developed. Seed orders have all arrived. Soil tests are already back and I know what fertilizers to add. Throughout it all, I am developing visions of vegetables and fruits that are sweet and nutritious.

Timing. Perhaps like me, at this time of the year you are anxious to get into the garden. Some measure of patience is necessary. In the spring and throughout the year, I see failures and reduced production because of bad timing. Weather is not fully predictable and we are not going to get it right every time. However, if you are new to the area or inexperienced in vegetable gardening, it pays to get advice on this from several sources.

For those who want more information regarding natural gardening systems, please contact me. For those who are taking my class, I will be sending out information twice a month, and it will include dealing with timing issues.

Natural (Organic) Gardening Course

Saturday, Feb 9 or Mar 2, 2013
Time: 8:30am – 5:00pm,
Ozark Electric Community Room
3641 Wedington Dr., Fayetteville, AR

Pre-registration is required.
Call Calvin at 479-527-6951, or email: cfbey1936@cox.net for more information.
Also see my web site: www.harmonygardens.blogspot.com

The course includes gardening concepts and practices with emphasis on growing NUTRIENT DENSE vegetables.
**Who’s Who in Master Gardeners’**

*Jane-Ellen Ross*

*by Terry Smyers*

**Place of Birth:** Conway, AR  
**Places I have lived:** Conway, Little Rock and Fayetteville

**Why and when you became a Master Gardener:**  
2009, I wanted to learn more about gardening.

**My favorite thing about being a Master Gardener:**  
Getting to volunteer at Prairie Grove Battlefield Heritage Gardens.

**Tell us about your garden:**  
My garden is organic, sustainable agriculture; if it is not edible or medicinal, I do not grow it.

**My favorite plants to grow:** Herbs, especially Rosemary, Sage, Basil. Vegetables of all kinds and I like to grow gourds.

**My favorite thing about being a Master Gardener is:** Getting to volunteer at Prairie Grove Battlefield Heritage Gardens.

**The gardening books I refer to all the time and I like to tell my friends about:** Anything authored by John Jeavons.

**Favorite gardening TV show:** Victory Garden

**The best gardening advice I have ever received:**  
Keep it simple, Sweetie!

**Something you learned about gardening that you like to share:** TIGER POOP, from Turpentine Creek Sanctuary. It keeps the deer away. Just scatter it around the perimeter of your garden. (Jane let me know that it really, really stinks and that she has plans to try making a tiger poop tea.)

**A gardening mistake I made:** Trying to grow Irish potatoes in tire stacks. The tires get too hot for the potatoes.

**A gardening triumph I have had:** I grew some very lovely gourds, the summer before last.

**I would describe my garden as...** wild, messy and fun.

**A favorite garden quote of mine:** "No one is uncheered by a garden". Eeyore the Donkey

**Tell us about other interests you have:** I like to perform living history at Prairie Grove Battle Park with Janice Neighbors. We cook at the cabin garden and play Civil War farm wife.

**My dream garden would be:** Four, four foot by twenty five foot raised beds in my front yard.

---

**Greening Your Life Online Course from Cooperative Extension Service**

*by Jane Maginot, Program Associate – Water Quality  
University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, Fayetteville, AR*

Gardeners, landscapers, homeowners and others concerned about protecting local water quality can take advantage of “Greening Your Life,” a self-paced online course being offered by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. This FREE online course uses a combination of videos, books, activities and fun quizzes. This course is open to anyone in the state that is looking to increase their knowledge of water quality issues and BMPs in Arkansas.

**Go to courses.uaex.edu to log in and begin!**

The course modules include:

- Water Quality in Arkansas
- Nutrient Management
- Yard Waste Management
- Lawn and Garden Integrated Pest Management
- Water Conservation/Runoff Management
- Household Hazardous Waste Management
- Pet Waste Management
- Riparian Buffers
- Getting Involved in Community Efforts
DATES TO REMEMBER

February
Tue., Feb 7 @ 6:30 p.m.
WCMG Mtg. –
“Greeing Your Life”
by John Pennington

Fri. – Feb. 1st -9th, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Arkansas Champion Trees: An Artist’s Journey. Exhibit of 4 champion tree panels rendered in colored pencil by Hot Springs artist, Linda Williams Palmer, BGO Lobby

Sat. – Feb 9th, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Building Bird Houses for BGO, $15/$20 – BGO

Sat. – Feb 16th @9:30a.m. – FGNS Mtg. –
“Plants That Can Take the Heat” by Steve Owen of Bustani Plant Farm in Stillwater, OK–Springdale

Fri-Sat-Sun- Feb. 22nd -24th – 2013 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show – Little Rock

March
Tue., Mar 6 @ 6:30 p.m.
WCMG Mtg. –
“Water Features+Plants”
by Hurlbut’s Landscaping

Sat./Sun. – Mar. 2nd, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Mar. 3rd
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.,
Orchid Society Show and Sale - BGO

Sat. – Mar. 9th, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.,
Arranging a Bundle of Flowers with Julie Sanders, $25/$30 - BGO

Mon. – Mar. 18th – Arkansas Arbor Day

Sat. – Mar. 16th @9:30a.m. - FGNS Mtg. -
“Vegetable Gardening for Extreme Conditions”
by Andy Lowry, WCMG- Springdale

April
Tue., April 3 @ 6:30 p.m.
WCMG Mtg. –
“Garden Excellence”
by Scott Lanning

Sat. – April 20th @9:30a.m. - FGNS Mtg. -
Two talks ”The Joy of Gardening” at 10 a.m. and ”Designing a Garden for Year Around Pleasure” at 2 p.m. by Erica Glasener, Horticulturist and Author – Location to be Announced.