

County 76 Garden Voice

July 2014

A newsletter to inform and inspire Arkansas Master Gardeners

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Photo by Margaret Shulz, Pulaski County

County 76 quarterly meeting set for July 22 in Little Rock

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.

When you connect with the MG program at the state level, you can share your county's successful programs and projects. You also take new ideas back for your county program to consider.

What's it all about?

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: Advanced Training-Walter Jennings (Pulaski); PNG Leadership Conference-Lin Johnson (Garland), co-chair Phyllis Perkins (Union); R-R-R Mimi Cox (Craighead); Communications-Glenda Bell (Faulkner); and Fundraising-Marcella Grimmett (Pulaski), co-chair Ouida Wright (Faulkner).

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.

RSVP Required for Lunch

The quarterly meetings start at 10 a.m. and conclude by 3 p.m. and include lunch. To be included in the complimentary lunch count, please contact Holly Beason at 501) 671-2237 hbeason@uaex.edu by Tuesday, July 15.

What are you waiting for?

Let your voice –your county's voice – be heard at the state level.



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President's Message: Teamwork = Success

For the 500 MGs who attended the State Conference in Texarkana, thanks for your support of County 76 fundraising. We raised nearly \$5,000 at the silent auction and another \$2,000 in the fund raising booth. These two activities allow us to have the needed funds for the Leadership-PNG conference and other activities that the Master Gardeners do.

It takes a lot of hard work to collect the dozens of great items in the auction, and kudos to the silent auction team led by Glenda Bell and Jane Burrow.

And while the Pro hoes can nearly sell themselves because of their quality, Fundraising project chair Marcella Grimmett and her team work hard to make sure we have enough product to meet demand. These leaders, along with a group of excellent volunteers, made it happen.

These monies go long way toward making the PNG

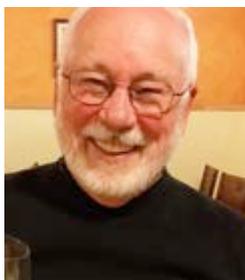
conference and other statewide MG activities happen. Thanks again.



I look forward to seeing everyone at the PNG conference on October 6-7 in Little Rock.

The first recipient of the Janet Carson Scholarship came to the state meeting. If you missed the event, he is Justin Ballard of Harmony Grove. He will study forestry at UAM this fall.

The next County 76 meeting is July 22. We would love to see you there. As always if you have input, comments or questions, give me a shout at jtrich2@hotmail.com or anyone else on the County 76 team.



John Richardson,
County 76 President

Did You Know...

The Master Gardener title is earned through our individual hard work and hours put in each year. As such, we should take care to use this title and our MG badges only when working on MG projects and business.

Use of the Master Gardener title is not allowed in any commercial situation. We must also be cautious in allowing the use of this title to promote, recommend, or authorize products or organizations without approval at the state level. When in doubt, err on the side of caution.

Advanced Training classes planned for 2014

In addition to the recent advanced training on Integrated Pest Management hosted by County 76, two additional training classes are scheduled for later this year.

On August 16, Boone County will host "Dealing with Drought in the Urban Landscape." The one-day training will be held in Harrison.

Craighead County will host an advanced training class on "Grasses" in October. The date will be announced later.

Registrations will be first come/first serve.

According to the County 76 Training Project chair Walter Jennings (walterjennings@prodigy.net), this group is working on a revised checklist for use by counties planning to host Advanced Training.

If your county is interested in hosting an Advanced Training class, the state office has a list of topics suggested by past training class participants. The County 76 Training committee can work with you.

Updates from the State Office

On-line reporting: As of first quarter, 1,834 MGs have reported 26,928 sanctioned work hours and 16,162 education hours! Maintaining an accurate count of hours allows the Extension Service to quantify the value of MG service in dollars: what it would cost to replace the irreplaceable Master Gardeners. Are you up-to-date in your online time reports?

New uaex.edu web site: Have you checked out the new website? Once you work your way around it, you should find that the links we use most often are easier to find. If you can't find something, please let Julie or Janet know so they can get the tech folks to fix it!

Arkansas MG Program Facebook: It's up, so check it out! Does your county program have a Facebook page? It's a great way to promote your program to the community. The state office requests that your county FB page include uaex and the logo on these local pages. To ensure that you have frequent updates, it's recommended to have more than one person acting as administrator. And when you attend the PNG Conference in October, you can learn even more FB tips (like how to advertise) in one of the scheduled seminars!

Saturday Basic Training: This trial training is at the halfway mark and will finish August 9. Trainees will be expected to be active in their local county program.

Did You Know...
If you would like to have County 76 merchandise sold at your county events, let Marcella Grimmett know the date as soon as it's scheduled. She'll work with you to get the product to your event, and you'll have information on how to record sales at your events.

Have you registered yet for the PLANT NURTURE GROW Conference?



The PNG Conference scheduled for October 6 & 7 in Little Rock will offer a Grant Writing workshop just prior to the conference opening. There is a \$15 fee and a limit of 30 participants.

Some of the topics being scheduled are: grant writing, Parliamentary Procedure, Facebook, Pinterest, dealing with difficult people, and positive influences are contagious. You'll also find ideas on effective project leadership, marketing your county program, and tips on the three Rs: Recruit, Retain, and Recognize.

The PNG Conference is one of the two state conferences where you can get ideas about leadership at all levels of your organization and brainstorm with tablemates on what's working in their county programs.

Recruiting, Recognition & Recognition

Project Chair Mimi Cox reported at the April County 76 meeting that the team is working on a new Perennial Award for lifetime (15year) Master Gardeners who continue to be very active in their county program, someone who is the heart, soul, and face of Master Gardener's in their county.

The group is working on developing:

1. a template for a new recruiting brochure
2. Frequently Asked Questions sheet (questions often asked by new MG's which the county will be able to plug in their county specific answers)
3. Sample recruiting news/press release
4. Mentoring evaluation form
5. One sheet guidelines for hosting a "Meet the Master Gardeners" event
6. Mentor/Mentee agreement.

All of these are projected to be available online or will be handed out at the July quarterly meeting.

Farm agents and volunteers key to 1920s' leadership

Editor's Note: With the USCES 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.

The Roaring Twenties conjure up images of flappers dancing the Charleston, Babe Ruth hitting home runs and Rudolph Valentino stealing hearts on the silver screen. It was the Jazz Age, and if you watch the flickering film clips, seemingly a good time for all. Unfortunately, the good times seldom reached rural America.

For the first time in American history, farmers cultivated fewer acres as they withdrew from the marginal land they had farmed during the war years. Those farmers who avoided foreclosure were forced to focus on the business side of farming.

The major problem facing Arkansas farmers during the 1920s was finding markets for their crops and livestock.

Extension specialists and county agents helped stimulate farmers' interest in crop and livestock marketing associations. With passage of the Arkansas Cooperative Marketing Act during the 1921 session of the state's General Assembly, farmers could legally charter cooperatives through which they could "market, store or otherwise handle farm products."

The act also permitted cooperatives to borrow money to finance business ventures for the mutual benefit of its members.

Arkansas now has commodity marketing organizations for the selling of cotton, sweet potatoes, rice, strawberries and dairy products. However, there are various products grown locally which must be marketed wisely if farmers are to secure a profit from them. It falls upon the county agent to solve this problem. County agents assisted farmers in marketing sweet potatoes, fruit and truck crops, dairy and poultry products, fertilizers, seeds and plants, feed and livestock.

Most of the early marketing associations were short-lived, primarily because of the farmers' independent nature and reluctance to work together, even if it was for the common good. County agents, too, lacked experience organizing cooperatives. However, as farmers began to see the financial benefits of

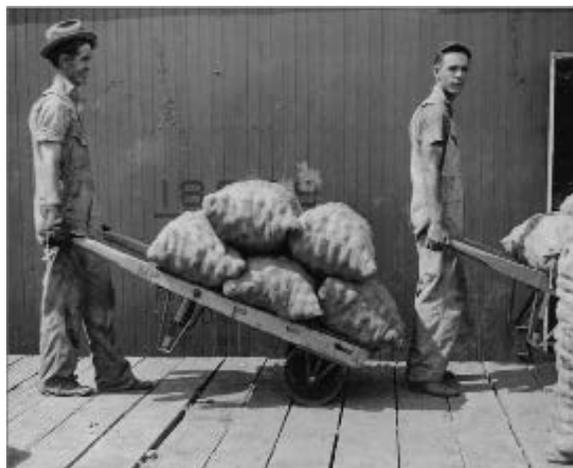
working together, the marketing cooperatives gained support.

After the collapse of cotton prices in the early 1920s, county agents in the northern counties of Arkansas began encouraging farmers to switch to livestock production. Even though measures had been in place since 1914 to control cholera and the Texas fever tick, most farmers were still reluctant to invest in livestock. Only a few years earlier, many had lost money investing in high-priced breeding stock.

The solution, county agents decided, was to reach out to the younger generation. In 1922 county agents began establishing demonstrations with 4-H club members to show that baby purebred calves could be profitably fed out to finished steers at a year old. The 4-H'ers earned twice the money that experienced breeders were getting for yearling bulls. The 4-H demonstrations continued for another 10 years and established confidence in purebred cattle.

Extension dairyman Paul Carruth quoted C.B. Barber, district director of the Arkansas Jersey Cattle Club of Van Buren, as saying, "A carload of purebred Jersey heifers brought into Crawford County for 4-H club boys in 1922 did more to improve the quality of dairy stock than any other piece of dairy work we've ever done. Today our foundation herds are offsprings from the 4-H club heifers."

When W.H. Woodley was appointed



Extension county agents and specialists helped organize marketing cooperatives to help farmers sell their crops to local buyers.

Extension dairyman in 1918, the goal was to have "one good milk cow on each farm in Arkansas." By 1920, dairy farmers were concerned about having enough quality feed for their cattle. County agents encouraged the farmers to build silos. The state Extension report for 1920 showed that there were 761 silos in Arkansas, most of them built from stone and cement.

One of the more interesting services offered to livestock producers by the Extension Service was varmint control. Extension hired R.L. Anderson to destroy predatory animals in the mountainous areas of the state. The hunter killed 20 wolves, five foxes and two bobcats in 1923. The Bureau of Biological Survey estimated that an adult wolf could destroy \$1,000 worth of property in a year, and that foxes and bobcats could annually do up to \$100 worth of damage to poultry, lambs and pigs. The Bureau estimated that almost \$21,000 was saved by destroying the 27 animals.

The Extension Service did not overlook the state's field crop producers. In 1923, county farm agents conducted 2,013 field crop demonstrations covering 20,809 acres. The major crops were corn and cotton, but on-farm demonstrations were also conducted with wheat, oats, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, peanuts, alfalfa, soybeans, clover, cowpeas, velvet beans and lespedeza.

Arkansas' vast acreage of farm timberland offered farmers great potential for income at a time when prices for crops such as cotton were falling. Unfortunately, much of the state's farm timberland was mismanaged. While commercial firms used selective cutting on their land, farmers seldom did. Some farmers set their woods on fire believing that yearly burning was necessary to control tick fever or that the pasture value of wood-land was increased by burning. Careless hunters also set the woods on fire.

The net result was a loss of millions of dollars in marketable income.

County agents began teaching good forestry practices during the early 1920s. The agents were so successful that in 1926 the Extension Service hired a full-time forester, W.K. Williams. Williams visited 18 counties his first year on the job, observing the landowners' problems. In coming years, he taught the principles of selective harvesting, reforestation and timber marketing.

When the war and emergency funding for home demonstration projects ended in 1918, valuable workers had to be let go. The Extension Service didn't have the money to hire more professionals, so the home demonstration agents turned to volunteers to sustain their programs.

By 1923 there were more than 600 volunteers, called project leaders. In 1925 there were 1,045 leaders "actively engaged in forwarding Extension programs in Arkansas."

By 1923 home demonstration clubs had been organized in 220 Arkansas communities. Club membership had grown from 800 in 1915 to 4,526 in 1923. With so many clubs and members, leaders saw the need to coordinate the work of all clubs in the county. The first step was organizing county councils, advisory groups led by the county agent and the presidents of the county's home demonstration clubs.

The County Federation of Women's Clubs included all women's groups, rural and urban. Through county federations, home demonstration agents were able to link rural families with such agencies as the Illiteracy Commission, Red Cross and the Anti-Tuberculosis Association.

The county and state federations of women's clubs successfully lobbied quorum courts and the legislature for appropriations to hire more Extension specialists and county home demonstration agents and to expand home demonstration work.

The relationship between the Extension Service and the County Federation of Women's Clubs brought rural and city women together like never before. Farm women and their city sisters found they



Farm families sold their home-grown products like eggs and vegetables at curb markets established by Extension home demonstration agents and home demonstration club members.

had more similarities than differences. They realized they could work together to improve their lives.

By the mid-1920s Arkansas had become a model for other states. In April 1925, May Ellen Brown, state Extension agent for women's work in Nebraska, asked her director for permission to spend a week in Arkansas to study the relationship between Extension and the federated clubs.

The State Council of Home Demonstration Clubs was organized in 1929, with 27 charter counties. By 1933 there were 66 county councils with 26,000 members. By 1934 every county that had a home demonstration agent for a year or more had a county council.

County agents and home demonstration club members helped establish curb markets to help farm families sell produce and other home products such as eggs and canned food. Curb markets were set up in Little Rock, Newport and Marianna in 1924. During a six-month period, the Little Rock market sold 7,104 loads of produce to 174,000 buyers for \$144,544.

In coming years, county agents and club members would help farm families establish curb markets at Helena, Texarkana, El Dorado, Fort Smith, Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Harrison, Russellville, Pine Bluff and other communities. Some markets, including one on the Town Square in Fayetteville, were still going strong at the dawn of the 21st Century.

During the 1920s an alarming percentage of the rural population was found to be undernourished, not from the lack of food but from the lack of quality, nutritionally balanced food. County agents and home demonstration club members decided to attack child malnutrition by providing hot lunches at school.

Hot lunch programs were begun in 26 schools the first year. In one district, a survey at the beginning of the year revealed that 80 percent of the children were undernourished. Before the end of the year, the percentage had dropped to 20.

Arkansas Children's Hospital was one of many organizations that benefited from the work of home demonstration club members. From the beginning of the



County agents and home demonstration club members sponsored hot food programs in schools to feed malnourished children.

clubs, "Extension homemakers" provided the hospital, once an orphanage, with food, clothing, money and other charitable gifts.

Another, less publicized, group of Extension workers would make their mark in the 1920s – the Negro agents.



Master Gardener & Public Garden Event Calendar

July

- 15 Deadline to register for July County 76 Meeting
22 County 76 General Membership Meeting

August

- 1 Rice Expo, Grand Prairie Center, 28007 Hwy 165 South, Stuttgart. Shop at the Farmers' Market and hear from speakers. For more information, contact Richard Klerk at 870-238-5745.
16 Advanced Training "Drought in the Urban Landscape," Boone County MGs in Harrison

September

- 29 MG Appreciation Day at Garvan Woodland Gardens

October

- 6 & 7 Plant Nurture Grow Conference, Airport Holiday Inn in Little Rock
21-24 Southern Region Master Gardener Conference in Baton Rouge, LA
28 County 76 General Membership Meeting

November

- 4 Janet is holding a workshop at Garvan Gardens.

Looking Ahead

2015

- May 20-22 Mississippi State Master Gardener Conference
June 4-6 Arkansas State Master Gardener Conference, Saline County

2016

- Arkansas State Master Gardener Conference Eureka Springs