Jump into spring with plethora of plant sales & seminars

The plant sales and garden seminars your county MG organization holds present the perfect opportunity for recruiting future Master Gardeners. You have an audience already interested in learning and buying, so engage your visitors in a conversation about what interests them most about gardening.

Set up a table for customers to “Ask a Master” questions about gardening. Have a few reference books as well as your recruitment brochures. If your county doesn’t have a MG recruitment brochure, now’s the time to develop one! Use them at your public events and also place them in the Cooperative Extension office and at local nurseries.

Include in this brochure self-assessment questions for the prospective member aimed at volunteerism (i.e. Do you like to garden? Do you have 4-6 hours per month to volunteer to work on Master Gardener projects?)

Make sure the local newspaper photographer is notified of MG events and special projects. Information on press releases is in your Volunteer Manual in the chapter on Training. Many local newspapers also accept submitted photos, so make sure you have at least one MG taking photos of MG activities for publicity.

What are your ideas for MG recruitment? Send them to ArkansasGardenVoice@gmail.com.

Upcoming Plant Sales

| April | 5 – Franklin County MG Plant Sale, Ozark, AR | 5 & 6 - Arkansas Orchid Society Show & Sale at the Benton Events Center in the Hickory Square Shopping Center near Tinseltown |
| 11 & 12 – Fulton County MG Plant Sale |
| 19 – Saline County MG Plant Sale, Benton, AR |
| 25 – Botanical Garden of the Ozarks Plant Sale, Fayetteville, AR |
| 26 – Baxter County MG Plant Sale, Baxter County Fairgrounds, 1507 Fairgrounds Dr., Mountain Home, AR 72653, 9:00 am until plants are gone, usually by 11:00 am. For more information contact Mary Michael at 870-492-2303/earthsong1@suddenlink.net or Anne Carriere at 870-424-3939/jacarriere@suddenlink.net |
| 26 – Craighead County MG Plant Sale |
| 26 – Garland County MG Plant Sale |
| 26 - Montgomery County MG Plant Sale |

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.
President’s Message:  MG tasks heat up chilly spring

As I sit here in Florida, where the temperature is 39 this morning, it looks like spring may never come. Regardless, things in Arkansas will heat up quickly with all the volunteer work in the counties. Numerous projects and spring seminars/plant sales are coming at us all. It will be, however, a relief to get back outside and do something that we joined the master gardeners for. Along with that comes opportunities to attend our state meeting in late May, which looks like a real winner again this year. A number of people have signed up to help with the silent auction and the fund raising booth at the state meeting. Thank you! We still need some help with these areas. If you can volunteer a couple of hours during the meeting to help out, give me a shout and I will get you on the list. These two activities allow us to have the needed funds for the Leadership-PNG conference and other activities that the Master Gardeners do in our state.

The County 76 Leadership Team will be working early next month with the project leads to find ways to improve the outcome for each project team. To make that happen the group needs to understand what things should be reviewed. I think we have a pretty good handle on most but am sure that we will miss some. If there are things you feel need addressing with the various projects or anything you have questions or concerns about, let me or someone on the Leadership Team know. We want to help make this the best Master Gardener program anywhere.

Don't forget the Southern Regional Master Gardener Conference in Baton Rouge is coming up October 21 - 24. And if you like Monet and the French gardens, get on the 2015 Gardening tour that Janet has sent several notes out on. Great opportunities!

The next County 76 meeting is April 29. 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

Plant Sales from page 1

or touchstone@wildblue.net.
26 – River Valley MG Plant Sale, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the parking lot of the First Christian Church, 3501 Rogers Avenue, Fort Smith, Arkansas. For more information contact Leta Caplinger at caplaw@valuelinx.net or 479-459-8756.

May
2 & 3 – Polk County MG Plant Sale, Polk County Fairgrounds, 156 Polk 43, Mena, 71953. Friday, May 2, noon - 6 p.m. Saturday, May 3, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. We will feature speakers, demos, kid's crafts, vendors large and small, garden crafts, and lots of plants for sale. For more information contact Patricia Roberts at 479-394-3999.
3 – Pope County MG Plant Sale, Russellville, AR
3 – Union County MG Plant Sale, El Dorado, AR
3 – Hot Spring County MG Plant Sale, Malvern, AR. 8:30 am till Noon at the HSC Fairgrounds Building, MLK Blvd., (next to Cotija Mexican Restaurant). For further information, please call 501 332-5267.
3 – Benton County Plant Sale and Master Gardener Lawn & Garden Expo, Benton County Extension Office, 1204 SW 14th St., Bentonville, AR. 7:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. For more information call Becky Elliott at 479-936-0598.

10 – Conway County MG Plant Sale
10 – Faulkner County MG Plant Sale
10 – Johnson County MG Plant Sale
10 – Van Buren County MG Plant Sale, held in conjunction with “Bloomin in the Bay”, 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Ed Leamon Park on Dave Creek Parkway in Fairfield Bay, Arkansas. Shop for plants, garden related items and enjoy music, presentations, including one from Janet Carson, and food. The event is free and there will be door prizes. For more information contact: Verna Hicks, President VBC Master Gardeners 501-884-3164 or Van Buren County Extension Office 501-745-7117.
9 & 10 – Crittenden County Plant Sale, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Crittenden County Courthouse complex, 114 Center Street in Marion, AR. Contact Ron Baker @ 870-514-3531 or ronaldt37@gmail.com.
Saving the Monarch butterfly depends on us

By Barbie Luther, Union County MG

Monarch Population Status
The overwintering numbers are in from Mexico and once again it's bad news. The numbers are not a surprise; as early as May, experts predicted that the population would be lower this winter. The total area occupied by monarch colonies at overwintering sites in Mexico this winter was a mere 1.65 acres, down from the previous all-time low of 2.94 acres reported in 2012. In comparison, these beauties in 1995 covered 51.8 acres in the pine and fir forests west of Mexico City.

Monarch numbers will rebound but only if the weather allows and there is enough milkweed to increase the population. While we will never get back to the large populations of the 1990s, there is still enough milkweed to produce monarchs in sufficient numbers to colonize 3-4 hectares (7-10 acres) of the forests in Mexico. However, given the current size of the overwintering population it is likely that it will take 2-3 years with relatively favorable breeding conditions for the population to attain such numbers.

Gardeners appreciate beneficial insects, we observe, nurture, and provide sanctuary for the Monarch butterfly as we know how precious they are in our gardens. They are having a tough time with the changes in weather and their food source. There is speculation that the decline is due to genetically modified "herbicide-resistant" corn and soybean crops along with herbicides in the USA. Extreme weather; severe cold snaps, unusually heavy rains and droughts, have also played a role in the decline. All this leads to the killing of the monarch's principal food plant, the common milkweed.

Promote growing milkweed at every opportunity.

• Promote general awareness in your community.

• Plant and grow more milkweed in your gardens. Many butterflies have a single plant required as a food source for their larval stage, called a host plant. Milkweed is the host plant for the Monarch butterfly. Without milkweed, the larva would not be able to develop into a butterfly. Adult monarchs feed on the nectar of many flowers, but they breed only where milkweeds are found. Monarchs use a variety of milkweeds, found in the fields, along the roads and even in wet areas.


(Statistics were released by the World Wildlife Fund, Mexico's Environment Department, and the Natural Protected Areas Commission. For a more detailed discussion of the monarch population status, visit http://monarchwatch.org/blog/.

Are YOU ready to take the CHALLENGE?
Read and Learn about Monarch Butterflies. US Forest Service Website
The Extension Service weathered post-WW I challenges

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.

Many Arkansas farmers faced financial ruin in the months following “The War to End All Wars.” Almost immediately there was no place to sell their surplus food and fiber. The worldwide market for cotton, grown on about 40 percent of the state’s crop acreage, collapsed. Demand for livestock also shrank, leaving many producers with no regular sources of income.

Many farmers lost their land along with their built-up equity. Some had to refinance their debts into long-term mortgages with low interest rates. Farm credit was greatly expanded, in part because many families were willing to go into debt rather than give up the higher standard of living they had become accustomed to during the war.

Post-war inflation and the loss of markets for their crops left farm families with less buying power. Farm wives, in particular, had to use their ingenuity to maintain their standard of living. Instead of buying new clothes and time-saving appliances or paying someone to update their homes and landscapes, they had to learn to repair, remodel and modernize.

Because there was no money to hire professional home demonstration agents, the Extension Service increasingly called on volunteers to help with training, a trend that stimulated rural leadership development in the state.

The number of county agricultural agents eventually returned to pre-war levels, but their focus changed to meet changing economic conditions. The agents switched much of their attention from the production side of farming to the business side. Throughout the 1920s, agents’ plans of work emphasized record keeping and analysis, cooperative marketing and economic production of crops and livestock.

In the early 1920s, several prominent figures battled for control of Extension programs in Arkansas. Bradford Knapp, the son of Seaman Knapp, began vying for control of the Extension Service as soon as he became dean of the College of Agriculture and the Experiment Station in January 1920. Knapp wanted to merge the three divisions and relocate Extension headquarters to the Fayetteville campus.

Around the time of the 1922 general elections, Knapp declared that teaching and research work were in “splendid shape,” but he described the Extension Service, and in particular Milton Payne, as the weak link in the agricultural triangle.

Knapp grew tired of battling political forces, including the increasingly powerful anti-progressive Ku Klux Klan, and the removal advocates, including leaders of the Farmers Union, who wanted the College of Agriculture moved from the Fayetteville campus, preferably to Little Rock or Russellville. The final straw for Knapp was a June 1923 showdown with the Extension Service director.

Knapp called publicly for Payne’s resignation and for the Extension Service headquarters to be moved to Fayetteville, or else he would resign. After a two-day meeting, the Board of Trustees decided to keep Extension headquarters in Little Rock, and the Board did not ask for Payne’s resignation. Payne did resign on July 31, but by then it was too late. On September 7, 1923, Knapp resigned to become president of Oklahoma A&M College at Stillwater, now Oklahoma State University.

Ironically, many of the changes Knapp had requested came to pass just months after he resigned. In an effort to improve the professionalism of county agents, the new administrators required that all future Extension Service appointees be college graduates.

From our perspective of history, the Roaring Twenties conjure up images of flappers dancing the Charleston and Babe Ruth hitting home runs. 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. Nationwide, real average net income per farm fell almost 73 percent between 1920 and 1921. While average net income per farm rose after 1921, it never recovered to the relatively high levels of 1918 and 1919. 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.

UAEX continued on page 7
If you have been reading the State Conference newsletter or if you’ve already registered and selected your seminars, you may already be familiar with these folks. But whether a refresher or an enticement to encourage you to register, here are brief bios about the keynote speakers.

**On Friday, May 30, Neil Sperry “Steps to Successful Home Landscaping.”** Long-time synonymous with Texas Gardening since 1970, Sperry broadcasts weekly gardening radio show, is a weekly newspaper columnist, and author of Complete Guide to Texas Gardening, fourth-best selling hardback on gardening in US history. Sperry will discuss and illustrate how to design and implement a home landscape plan for each of the “rooms” in your outdoor living space.

Kicking the program into gear on **Saturday, May 31, Greg Grant offers “Heirloom Gardening in the South: Yesterday’s Plants for Today’s Gardens.”** An instructor and lecturer in the School of Horticulture at Stephen F. Austin State, a weekly garden columnist, and popular TV and radio-show guest, Grant will explain the role of heirloom plants in our gardens. Later on Saturday, **Howard Garrett explains “Why Natural Organic Products and Programs Work Better in Every Way.”** Author of The Organic Manual, Texas Gardening the Natural Way, Howard Garrett’s Texas, Garrett delivers ideas on how to feed the soil and plants instead of poisoning them, handling pests and diseases with non-toxic, effective controls, how to cut irrigation costs in half, and natural living advice. will demonstrate SLR cameras and point and shoot cameras.

**10 am, 11 am, 2 pm and 3 pm “Classic Cooking” Convention Center, Chef James King. See the chef in action and taste his creations. Yum. “Heirloom Tomatoes”, Alyssa Elliott . Secrets and tips of growing your very own Heritage tomatoes.**

**Seminars continued on page 6**

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**UAEX from page 6**

The major problem facing Arkansas farmers during the 1920s was finding markets for their crops and livestock. Commodity specialists were hired to help county agents develop marketing strategies for the different products such as livestock and cotton. 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.

Doing business collectively earned farmers profits on 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.

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 experienced breeders were getting for yearling bulls. The 4-H demonstrations continued for another 10 years and established confidence in purebred cattle.

In coming years, county agents would stress the importance of providing livestock with high feeding quality hay and pasture as well as the use of high-quality breeding stock.

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.

Arkansas’ vast acreage of farm timberland offered farmers great potential for income at a time when prices for crops such as cotton were falling. 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. In recognition of a job well done in Arkansas, Williams was named Extension forester for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in July 1929.
March

21 - 23  **River Valley Lawn & Garden Show**, Fort Smith Convention Center, Fort Smith, AR. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free admission to Master Gardeners on Friday, March 21. For more information contact Cathie Greene at 479-650-3634 or catherinep Greene@gmail.com Or visit their website at the link below http://www.fslawngardenshow.com/

22  **Beyond the Garden Gate Seminar**, Inn of the Ozarks Convention Center, 207 W. Van Buren, Eureka Springs, AR. $35 cost. Speakers include Cody George, Randy Forst, David Bell, Janet Carson, and Karen Wall. (No refunds after March 8.) For more information call 870-423-2958 or email swhiteley@uaex.edu

26 - 30  **American Daffodil Society Conference**, Double Tree Hotel, Little Rock, AR. Find more info at website: www.arkansasdaffodilsociety.org/ or find it on Facebook.

April

5  **Franklin County MG Plant Sale**, Ozark, AR

Spring…A Time to Till Seminar and Plant Sale, Central Baptist Church, Stokes Center, 605 East 2nd Street, Prescott, AR. Plant Sale 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Seminar 8:30 a.m. to noon. Featured speaker – Janet Carson. Hypertufa container demonstration, leaf casting demo and more. Cost is $15. Lunch $8 (must be purchased in advance.) For more information contact Jan Huett at 870-887-5148 or email jlhhuett@gmail.com

5 & 6  **Arkansas Orchid Society Show & Sale** at the Benton Events Center in the Hickory Square Shopping Center near Tinseltown Theatre in Benton (Exit 118 off of I-30). Open Saturday from 12-4 p.m. & Sunday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free admission. Demonstrations & lectures from 1-3:30 p.m. on Saturday. For more information call or email Yvonne Becker, 501-922-3296, ylbecker@sbcglobal.net

10  **Planting Your Bloomers Garden Seminar**, First United Methodist Church, Martha Murray Hall, 800 North Falls Blvd, Wynne, AR. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. $15 fee (includes lunch) Speakers include Janet Carson, Lucinda Reynolds and Dr. Kim Pittcock. Registration deadline is March 28. For more information contact the Cross County Extension Office at 870-238-5745.

26  **Central Arkansas Iris Society’s 49th Annual Iris Show**, Grace Lutheran Church, 124 Hillcrest Ave. (off Kavanaugh), Little Rock, AR. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. FREE. Form more information, contact Barbara Atwood at 501-455-1478 or www.centralarkansasiris.org


29  **County 76 Quarterly meeting** at state extension office in Little Rock. More details in April Garden Voice.

State Conference from page 5

“Endless Gardening”. Carla Hadley-Haney

Body-friendly less-stress ways to work in the garden

Friday, May 30, 2014 – Seminars

#1 “Establishing Landscape Pecan Trees”, John Turner – 1 hr

#2 “Nutrients in Streams and Lakes,” Dr. Mike Buttram – 1 hr

#3 “Berry Delicious Bugs & Other Ughs: Why Birds Need Native Plants”, Belinda McLaughlin – 1 hr

#4 “Floral Design from Your Flowerbed”, Michelle Farland & Gina Reed – 1 hour

#5 “Landscape Daffodils: From the Horse & Buggy Days to Facebook/Twitter”, Keith Kridler – 1.5 hr

#6 “Keyhole Gardening: Meeting Today’s Gardening Challenges”, Aaron Harding – 1.5 hr

#7 “How What Goes on Underground and Affects What Goes Above Ground”, Dr. Vic Ford - 1.5 hr

#8 “Invasive Ornamental Species and Native Alternatives”, Dr. Jon Barry - 1.5 hr

Says conference-chairman, Sue Ellen Letterman, “The 2014 conference has given us the opportunity to raise community awareness of our Master Gardener Program. Come join us in the “Twin Cities” where we “Garden on the Edge!”

COMMITTEES: 2014 State Conference Chairpersons

Pre-tour, Speakers, Special Events, Sponsorship, Sue Ellen Letterman and Peggy Burson

Decorations, Kathy Boyles
Food, Pam Williamson
Goody Bags, Una Mae
Hospitality, Melanie Thornton & Jan Lavender
Silent Auction, Una Mae Presley
Garden Tours, Judith White
Trade Show, Tommie Ayers.