

Pulaski County Master Minutes

April, 2007 <http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>, <http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/> Volume 17, Issue 4



Robins and Camellias

Just when I think winter will never end and that we will be living in dark gloomy days and cold winds and rain forever, I glance out my window and see a Robin hopping around looking for food to eat, just the little boost I need get through another sunless day, and then I spy it! The pink camellia is just beginning to show its beautiful color. Now I can feel assured that spring is just around the next cloudy day. Oh there may be a few cold nights and cloudy days, but sunshine is on its way!

I am fortunate indeed to live in an area where a mild winter climate allows the camellia to grow in the landscape. The dark-green evergreen foliage alone is a beautiful addition to the landscape, then during the late winter months or early spring the beautiful floral display begins. The Camellia japonica has a wide range of colors from beautiful white to lovely shades of pink to the deepest red, and some striped like a candy cane!

Now is a good time to visit local nurseries to see these lovely plants in bloom and choose the color that is wanted for that special spot in the garden.

Camellias prefer partial shade to part sun, about four to six hours of direct sun with shade in the afternoon. They will thrive in the light shade cast by tall pine trees, but are not happy planted in the deep shade of a large oak. When planted in full sun, especially in my area the hot afternoon sun will most often cause yellow leaves and flowers will not open properly.

Drainage can be a problem with camellias. They do not like to be in a place with poor drainage or standing water. If drainage is a problem, consider mounding the plants or planting in raised beds. Adding organic compost, peat moss and rotted manure to the planting area can help improve the drainage problem.

Camellias do not like being planted too deep. Make sure they are planted with the upper surface of the root ball even with or slightly above the planting area. Apply mulch several inches thick around the newly planted prize. Mulch will help maintain moisture and prevent growth of weeds. Just be sure to pull mulch back slightly from the base of the trunk.

Tea scale is the most serious pest of camellias. They will be seen on the underside of the leaves, but heavy infestation can also be seen on the upper surfaces. Tea scale will not go away by itself. Dimethoate (commonly sold as Cygon) is a systemic insecticide. As always follow the label on the bottle for best results.

I hope you will enjoy these beautiful plants as I do and next winter, be on the look out for the beautiful Robins and Camellia to give your heart a lift in the mist of a cold dreary day.

Happy Gardening!
Susie Gillihan

The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day.
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
a cloud come over the sunlit arch,
And wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of

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March.
- Robert Frost
The Unveiling Of Spring

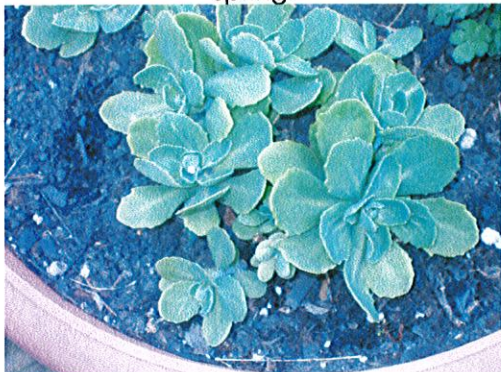
By Debra Redding



Is anything more wonderful than the emergence of Spring? Spring is so precious to us here in Arkansas because we realize how very swiftly it will pass.

As a Gardener, nothing gives me more pleasure than seeing my perennials make their debut each Spring. In fact, that is how I became interested in gardening. I planted four red Hollyhocks one Spring and they were stunning. When Spring rolled around again and I saw my Hollyhocks appear, I was hooked. I guess the old saying is true "Gardening is best caught, not taught". It sure caught me and I will never cease to be amazed by the beauty of Spring.

I hope you will recall how you became hooked on gardening. If you would like to share your story with us please email me at debredding@hotmail.com. Go out and enjoy Spring!



Photos by Jerry Redding

**AELC Classes
Offered by Mary Evans**

Green Thumb Gardener (Basics) April 3, 10, 17,24,May 1st
repeat for summer May 31, June 7,14,21,28

Spring Planting Frenzy March 20

Sunny Workshop (Advanced) 3 hours- April 21

Shady Workshop (Advanced) 3 hours April 28

Herbs As Ornamentals April 12

Patios-Containers April 26

Summer Survivors May 22

Water in The Garden (Advanced) May 17

Finishing Details (Advanced) May 24

**Greenhouse Sale - Sat., April 14th
8:00 a.m. - Noon.**





Pulaski County MG Board for 2007:
 Seated Left to Right: Marilyn Tilley – President, Jackie Wright – Secretary, Jet Cuffman – Board Member at Large, Judy Woodard – Assistant Treasurer
 Standing Left to Right: Jim Silva – Board Member at Large, Don Davis – 2nd Vice President, Beth Phelps, Mary Freeman – Treasurer, Sandy Harrison – Past President, Jim Dyer, 1st Vice President

Flower Preservation

By Lorraine Hensley

Most of us understand how easy it is to purchase either plastic or fiber flowers to use as colorful and tasteful bursts of color in our homes. With little or no effort involved, you have acquired beautiful plant arrangements to accent areas that need just that little something. There are, however, a number of people who won't use anything other than plants of the more home-grown variety for that purpose. These folks, using whichever method best suits their personal needs, dry some of their garden plants. Considered a hobby, which requires time, effort, patience, and an eye for esthetics, they wouldn't have it any other way. And, we are going to talk about several methods for flower preservation. We'll do foliage methods another time.

Other than microwave drying most methods involve slowly drying freshly cut flowers using a method that allows bloom preservation with realistic color, form, and texture to remain intact.

Pressing: is probably the most used and most familiar method of preserving flowers. It is exactly

what the name implies. Flowers are placed between book pages -- the book is then closed and a heavy object is placed on the closed book. This effectively "presses" the plant. There are a number of special "plant presses" available which give good results. Violets and pansies are among the blooms that are well preserved with this method. Results can be suitable for framing.

Air Drying: is pretty much the easiest way to preserve your chosen plants. Sometimes termed the "hang and dry" method which can be somewhat misleading for it all depends on which plants you plan to air dry. Plant material should be cut just prior to fully opening. Collect them, tie in bunches and hang upside down in a warm, dark, and dry place. When the drying process is complete the plants are really stiff but generally retain their color well. You might want to try celosia, dock, heather and baby's breath. Peonies are different and are dried on wire racks.

Desiccants: is another method of drying plant materials. Plants are embedded in a granular, desiccating material and many consider this the best all-round method. Different materials may be used and they vary in cost and effectiveness and care must be used to maintain the plants' form. Some desiccants are borax, silica gel, oolitic sand and, common sand. Specific methods of use vary so don't just dump any desiccant on your plant material and expect quality results.

Water Drying: is a method used for drying hydrangeas, yarrow, and celosia dry quite well using this method. Stems are placed in about 2 inches of water and the water is allowed to evaporate as it is taken up by the plant material. As with air drying, the plants are placed in a dry, dark, and warm location.

You may want to research your area for hobby groups currently involved in drying plants for that's probably the best place to begin. You can then enjoy learning more about your new hobby from those that have been, and still are, in the process.

Dedication of Carl Hunter's Memorial at the Pinnacle Mountain Wildflower Project - April 20th at 1:30 p.m. at the Wildflower Meadow by the visitor's Center Pinnacle Mountain State Park.

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society

By Libby Thalheimer

Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, a peasant born in Guangdong, was educated in Hawaii, providing his first exposure to Western culture. He left his medical career to become a professional revolutionary, traveling the world promoting democracy and raising funds in the early 1900s. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen visited Vancouver three times to raise support for the Chinese revolution. After leading the 1911 revolution to overthrow the Qing dynasty, he became the first president of the Republic of China in 1912. He resigned the presidency to devote himself to China's economic development. He is known as Guo Fu, the Father of the Country.

The Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society in Vancouver, incorporated in 1981, is a not-for-profit organization whose goals are to further the understanding between Chinese and Western cultures, promote Chinese culture generally and be an integral part of the local community. Funding for the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, an impressive \$5.3 million dollars, came from all levels of the Canadian government, private individuals, corporations and the Chinese government. It is the first full-scale classical Chinese garden, modeled after private classical scholar's gardens in the city of Suzhou, constructed outside of China. The Garden opened on April 24, 1986. In June 2004, the Hall of One Hundred Rivers, a \$1.9 million dollar new wing, was opened.

Vancouver's Chinese Garden was built by fifty-two master craftsmen from Suzhou, China and their Canadian counterparts. It was completed within one year using the time honored principles and techniques of the original Ming dynasty (1368-1644) garden. The intricate halls and walkways are constructed with precise joinery and without nails, screws or glue. Most of the architectural components (hand-fired roof tiles, carved woodwork, lattice windows, limestone, and even the courtyard pebbles) were shipped in from China.

Classical Chinese gardens reflect the Taoist philosophy of yin and yang: opposites must be in balance to create harmony. Light balances dark; and small balances large. The gardens represent nature and man's place within nature.

They are designed with four main elements: rock, water, plants, and architecture.

Water-worn limestone rocks, (Tai Hu imported from Lake Tai near Suzhou), are placed throughout the garden. Chosen for their rough beauty, these rocks appear to change with light and position, as their crevices reveal a variety of textures and colors. There is a false mountain of Tai Hu at the centre of the garden. Tai Hu rocks are thought to evoke supernatural powers and entice lucky spirits into a scholar's garden.

The rugged and hard Tai Hu rocks are balanced by the soft and flowing of water. The jade green color of the water, symbolizing wealth and purity, is created by clay liners on the bottom of the pond. The clouding of the waters is intentional for better reflection of the garden's elements.



Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, Vancouver, BC

Mystical and symbolic plants have a special role in the Garden. Wide-open spaces use strong plants like pine and cypress, while confined courtyards contain delicate bamboo and miniature rhododendron. The three friends of winter, pine (symbolizing strength and eternity), bamboo (resiliency amid diversity), and winter-flowering plum (renewal), are found throughout the Garden. While many of the plants are Chinese natives, local plants are also included to reinforce the bridging of cultures.

The architecture of a scholar's garden is meant to blend with nature rather than stand apart. A main hall is a "tang" representing yin or female; while a gazebo or pavilion is a "ting" representing yang or male. The Yun Wei Ting (Colorful and Cloudy Pavilion) at the peak of the false mountain represents man in his natural setting. Other architectural aspects, like the

zigzagging double corridor and the Han Bi Xie (Jade Water Pavilion), slow visitors in their exploration of the garden by both dividing and linking the classical garden and the adjoining park. The Hua Feng Tang (China Maple Hall) is a formal reception hall commemorating the East-West partnership. The Bai Chuan Tang (Hall of One Hundred Rivers), the newest addition, was built as an exhibition hall.

All information for this article and the picture were obtained from: The Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden, 578 Carrall Street, Chinatown Vancouver, BC V6B 5K2
604-299-9000 #7133

And the official website of The Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden,
<http://www.vancouverchinesegarden.com/index.htm>, which includes a slide show of the garden.

Calendar by Laurie Pierce



April

The Gov. Mike Huckabee Delta Rivers Nature Center, Pine Bluff, will host a plant swap 10 a.m.-noon April 21. Bring labeled plants, cuttings, seeds or bulbs to trade with other plant lovers. There will also be a presentation about Arkansas native plants. Free. (870) 534-0011 or deltarivers.com

May

The International Master Gardener Conference will be hosted at Peabody Hotel/Statehouse Convention Center in downtown Little Rock, May 2-5.

Blooms-a-Brewing, a tea party on the veranda will be at 3 p.m. May 8 at Garvan Woodland Gardens, 550 Arkrigde Road, Hot Springs. Azaleas, iris, early spring perennials, wildflowers, flowering shrubs will be in bloom. The tea party costs \$13 for GWG members, \$16 for non-members. Reservations at (800) 366-4664 or garvangardens.org.



Fort Worth Botanic Garden, Fort Worth, will host the Fort Worth Herb Society Herb Festival 9 a.m.-4 p.m. May 19. The Botanic Garden Center will be filled with the aroma of live herbs plus displays of organic soaps, herbal concoctions and a variety of tasty snacks. Admission is \$5, free for ages 6 and younger. (817) 871-7686 or fwbg.org.

The Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, will present "Complete Shade Gardening" 9 a.m.-3 p.m. May 16. Register at (314) 577-9400 or (800) 642-8842.

June

Janet Carson will conduct a workshop titled, "Low Maintenance Gardening" June 8 and 9 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Center, University of Arkansas System, atop Petit Jean Mountain. Preregistration is required. Details at wrcenter.net or (501) 727-5435.

The Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, will present Pruning in the Japanese Fashion 9 a.m.-noon June 9. Register at (314) 577-9400 or (800) 642-8842.

Correction:
For Iris Society Tour
The June 17th tour at Wendell's has been
changed to June 10th.

What's in a Name?

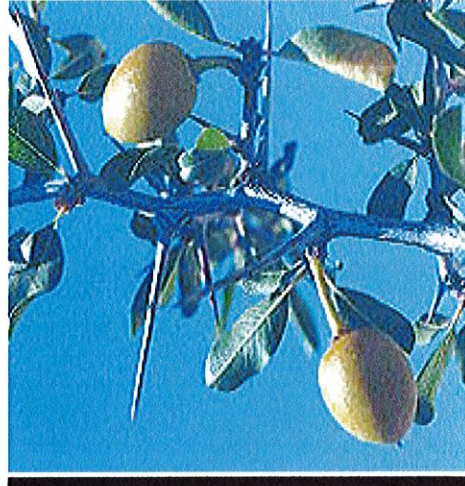
William R. Bowen

Avocados often are associated with our meals, especially Mexican meals. But have you as a Master Gardener ever considered the source of its name. You might be surprised to learn that it is derived from the Aztec Indian description of the plant it grows on: the testicle tree.

How did the avocado get its name? The plant originated from the forests of central America where it was the size of an olive. The Aztecs manipulated it into today's large, oily green magnificence and called it *ahuacacuahitl*. After some linguistic mangling by the Spanish, this name was recorded as "avocado" by the British plant collector Sir Hans Sloan when he recorded the first full description of the plant in 1699.

The name "testicle tree", which is what *ahuacacuahitl* means, is a particularly apt description of the original wild species whose fruit tends to dangle more than those on domesticated varieties. This facilitated better seed dispersion since birds could grab it on a flyby.

The avocado's name and shape ensured that the fruit enjoyed a salacious reputation among the Spanish conquistadores, so much so that the local monks deemed the tree to be a promoter of lust and banned it from their monastery gardens. The idea that avocados were aphrodisiac was revived in the 1990s when a US importer was stuck with a huge shipment of the fruit in danger of rotting in the warehouse. He rang various newspapers and adamantly denied the non-existent "rumors" that avocados raised sexual potency. The result was a massive public demand that emptied the warehouse. Other plant names have similar genital associations. The orchid got its name from the Greek word for testicle because of the shape and wrinkled surfaces of the pseudo-bulbs of Greek orchids and many of the other 20,000 species belonging to this plant family.



Then there are the fungi. Several individual specimens, each with a tubular, erect structure 4-5 inches tall not unlike the human penis, appeared one morning in our backyard where the soil was laden with wood chips from the removal of a tree. They had just emerged that from an underground egg, the smell they generated was rather foul due to a "glans" that was odiferous to say the least. By afternoon, the glans had been consumed by numerous flies who subsequently spread the spores contained therein throughout the environment. The fungus' Latin name? None other than *Phallus!*

Also, one should look at the flower of violets. Note the organization of the petals and let your imagination go!



Low Maintenance Gardening Workshop at The Winthrop Rockefeller Institute

June 8-9, 2007
The Winthrop Rockefeller Institute of U of A
System on Petit Jean Mountain
38 Winrock Dr.
Morrilton , AR 72110

8th- 7pm dinner speech
9th- 9am - 3pm

Cost varies with options (See attached
registration form below)

Register by June 1, 2007.

Speakers include:

David E. Benner - Using Mosses in the Landscape
Janet Carson - A Walk on the Dry Side
Chris Olsen - What's New, Chic and Easy to Grow
Liz Frasier - The Right Plant for the Right Place
Stephen Vann - Preventing Diseases in the
Garden

Contact Sandy Davies for more information at
501-215-7990 or sdavies@uawri.org



Project Spotlight

The River market Clinic Project By Carol Randle

The River Market Pavillion is the site for the River
Market Clinic on the second and fourth
Saturdays of each month during the months of
May, June, July, August, and September. The
Clinic begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 11:00 a.m.
Co Chairmen of the Committee are Claudia
Barone and Helen Simpson. They are assisted by
committee members: Eugene Seavers; Meg Fox;
Steve Lopata; Jane Baldwin; Dana Dixon;
Connie Prewitt; Shari Hill; and Judy Gregory.

The project was begun in 1996 . . . soon after the
River Market opened. At that time the Master
Gardener board decided that it would
be a good project. A committee was formed to
conduct the clinic twice a month.

The committee members provide: free plants;
free printed materials; horticultural advice; and
information about the Master Gardener program
and projects.

The goals for the project are: to increase visibility
for the Master Gardener program and to
provide a service to the community.

Committee members interface with about 150-
200 people each Saturday they are there.
Do you have plant related questions? Go to the
River market Clinic between 8:00 a.m. and 11:00
a.m. on the second or fourth Saturday of
the month . . . May through September.

ARKANSAS UNIT HERB SOCIETY of AMERICA

HERBFEST 2007:

'Antique Roses in Your Garden'

features

MICHAEL SHOUP

founder of the Antique Rose Emporium,
Brenham, Texas
presenting

"LESSONS FROM A ROSE RUSTLER"
&

A SPECIAL HERB LUNCH

with opportunities for herbal socializing, shopping
&
a stroll through The Garden of Exploration

Saturday, May 19, 2007 at 10:00 A.M.

Woolly Auditorium

Arkansas School for the Blind

2600 West Markham, Little Rock, AR

TICKETS:

Program & Lunch - \$35 (secured by 15 May)

Program Only - \$25

For Tickets or more information phone:

Mary Roark (501) 868-6004

Beverly Fennell (501) 221-3144

Fran Ables (501) 663-6100

Pulaski County Master Gardener Meetings' Highlights By Jackie Wright

PULASKI COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS Board Meeting Tuesday, March 20, 2007 10:00 a.m.

The Pulaski County Master Gardener Board met on Tuesday, March 20, 2007, at 10 a.m. at St. James Methodist Church. Present were Jet Cuffman, Mary Freeman, Sandy Harrison, Beth Phelps, Jim Dyer, Don Davis, Jim Silvi, Jackie Wright, Judy Woodard, and Merilyn Tilley. Chair, Merilyn Tilley presided.

The minutes of the February meeting were accepted as circulated. The Treasurer's Report was given by Treasurer, Mary Freeman. Our bank account was moved to the Bank of the Ozarks from Regions Bank. We now earn a small amount of interest. Most members have paid their dues, only 14% are outstanding. Because of a problem at the State Extension Headquarters we will have a large invoice to pay this month, \$1,950 for the training notebooks for the 2005 class. We have not yet received a bill or paid for the books for the 2006 class. The balance in our bank accounts is \$21,738.06. Of this amount, the total of the funds on reserve is \$15,530.22. The bill for the pictorial directory was \$1,312.22. The financial report was accepted.

Old Business

Beth reported that there will be a training meeting for IMGC volunteers on April 10, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Merilyn reported that Bob Bumgardner agreed to chair the audit committee and will recruit two others to assist. Today is our workday at St. James.

New Business

Pathfinders Greenhouse needs \$150 for supplies – potting soil, etc. They have started 250 flats for the Spring sale. The request for funds was approved.

Announcements

Nancy Leonhardt will bring leftover Flower & Garden Show t-shirts and canvas bags to sell to members. Ray Sarmiento had a stroke a few days ago. His prognosis is satisfactory. Don Davis discussed future programs. In April there will be two PowerPoint programs. One will be given by Gina Norris about Parkhill Water Works Project, and one by Judy Woodard about the Old Mill Project. The May program will be given by Larry Avril on Coleus; the June program will be a Master Gardener Panel.

PULASKI COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS Special Board Meeting Tuesday, March 20, 2007 11:30 a.m.

The Pinnacle Mountain Project committee requested a \$250 additional appropriation to fund purchase of wild flowers. After the regular board meeting and before the membership meeting, Chair, Merilyn Tilley, polled all board members except Jim Silvi, who could not be immediately found, and each board member voted to approve the request.

The Pulaski County Master Gardeners met on Tuesday, March 20, 2007 at 11:30 a.m. at St. James Methodist Church. Chair, Merilyn Tilley presided.

Beth Phelps made the following announcements:

- She has CDs for those who ordered them.
- The deadline to register for the International meeting is April 1. Volunteer assignments will be made in a few weeks.
- There will be two training sessions for IMGC volunteers. Volunteers may attend on April 10 at 9:30 a.m. or at 1:30 p.m. This is an opportunity to get your volunteer T-shirt and learn where everything is.
- 1,200 are registered for the IMGC meeting.
- New members please check calendars for the telephone time signed up for because the phones are ringing at the County Extension office.
- There will be a shuttle for IMGC from War Memorial. The trolley is also available from North Little Rock

Merilyn made the following announcements:

- A copy of the budget is on the sticky board.
- Today is our work day for St. James. There are all sorts of little jobs that need to be done.

Other reports are as follows:

- Nancy Leonhardt brought leftover Flower & Garden Show t-shirts and canvas bags to sell to members. The AR Flower & Garden Show donated \$1,000 to IMGCC.
- Lols Corley announced the greenhouse sale will be April 14, 8 a.m. to 12 noon. They need used pots and trays. No 6-packs please.
- Don Ford reported that the Pinnacle Mountain Committee will go to Pine Ridge Gardens on March 30. Meet at the northwest corner of St. James parking lot. Also, the Carl Hunter Memorial will be dedicated April 20 at 1:30 p.m.
- Bob Bray reported for the Travel Committee. A number of ideas are on a handout on each chair in the meeting room. The first is on Thursday, April 26, carpool to an iris and peony farm in Cabot. Departure is 9 a.m. from the McCain Plaza. Another outing is scheduled for May 31, leaving McCain Plaza at 8 a.m. to travel to Ann Woods' spectacular garden near Searcy, then after lunch to Jeb Leggett's Custom Landscape and Design in Mt. Vernon, then to Joel Stout's Cricket Hill Nursery.
- Judy Bradsher, speaking for Mary Evans, thanked the volunteers who worked at the Flower & Garden Show.
- Mary Wildgen reported on the plans for the Taste of Arkansas event at IMGCC. Members are asked to suggest contributors.
- Dick Blankenbeker announced that Ray Sarmiento sends thanks to the volunteers at the Flower & Garden Show. Attendance was 10,675. Ray had a stroke a few days ago and is now progressing well at rehab.
- Carolyn Newbern still needs guides for tours. Bus docent orientation will also be on April 10

between the morning and afternoon programs at the State House Convention Center.

PROGRAM

Don Davis Introduced Sabrina Childs, from Ball Seeds, who told us where and how they grow their seeds, and about some of her favorite plants.



Sabrina Childs

Photo Courtesy of Lynn Winningham

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE MASTER GARDENERS WHO VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME AT ST JAMES AFTER OUR MARCH MEETING. WE REALLY HAD SOME GOOD WORKERS AND THE GROUNDS WERE GREATLY IMPROVED!



Need education hours?
Research a new plant
for your garden, and
then submit your
research to the Master
Minutes. We will write the
article; or if you write it
up, you earn education
hours as well as
volunteer hours.

Master Minutes Staff



Dig In Here...

For answers to your gardening
and horticultural problems, try
these helpful resources:

Master Gardener Website:

<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org/mastergardener/mastergardeneronly>

Username: mastergardener,
password: compost

PC Cooperative Extension
Website:

<http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/mastergardeners/default.asp>

U of A Cooperative Extension
Website:

<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>

Pulaski County Cooperative
Extension Service

2901 W. Roosevelt Road,
Little Rock, Ark. 72204
340-6650



Pulaski County Master
Gardeners are trained
volunteers working with the
University of Arkansas
Cooperative Service and
Pulaski County Government
to provide demonstration
gardens and horticultural –
related information to the
residents of the county. In
2006, these volunteers gave
23,418 hours of service.
Elisabeth J. Phelps, County
Extension Agent, Staff Chair

**Don't forget to report
yours hours to the
extension office every
month!**

News & Notes

Everyone is encouraged to
submit interesting information,
committee reports, newsworthy
photos, etc. to the newsletter.
Bring your information to the
Master Gardener meeting, or
send it to:

Jennice Ratley

22 Cobble Hill Road
Little Rock, Ark. 72211

jenniceratley@sbglobal.net
661-1677

The deadline is the second
Friday of each month.

For late breaking news after the
deadline, send information to:

Beth Phelps

Pulaski County CES
2901 W. Roosevelt Road
Little Rock, Ark. 72204

bphelps@uaex.edu
340-6650



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