

## Pulaski County Master Minutes

September, 2008

<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>, <http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/>

Volume 18, Issue 9



Jack Singleton will be the speaker at our September meeting. He served on the staff of Keep Arkansas Beautiful for several years, traveling the state helping cities, towns, counties and schools in three important natural resource areas: litter prevention, waste reduction/recycling and beautification - particularly butterfly gardening. He retired from KAB in 2006, but continues to assist schools, churches and community non-profits in the creation of butterfly habitat - so folks can learn about butterflies - up-close and personal! Many schools and non-profits across Arkansas have created butterfly gardens through Jack's guidance and support. Jack was also involved in helping begin a local chapter for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. .

Jack has been a Master Gardener for 14 years and conducts tours for groups at the Old Mill in North Little Rock, and helps at Wildwood.

He enjoys working with stained glass and piloting small airplanes, though not at the same time. He and Carolyn helped organize the Habitat for Humanity Chapter in Central Arkansas. Jack completed the Little Rock Half Marathon in March.

### TALKING YARD, NATURALLY!

By Betty Deere

If you want to say "goodbye to bugs" but not poison the birds, toad frogs, butterflies, and perhaps even your pets, then there is an easy and inexpensive way to do that. You can

bootleg your own (bug spray, that is) that won't harm your yard's natural environment. An-n-nd, homemade bug spray will actually encourage the above-mentioned and lots of the good insects to come right in and make themselves at home in your yard.

So, how does this work? Here's one good all-purpose spray that works on slugs and Japanese beetles, in addition to lots of other pests.

1 garlic bulb

1 small onion

1 tsp powdered cayenne pepper

1 qt water 1 Tb liquid dish soap

Chop the garlic and onion in your blender; add the cayenne and water and let it steep awhile, about an hour. Strain through cheesecloth and add the dish soap (which makes the spray stick to the leaves). Blend it up good, and spray it on. If you have any left-overs (I never do but FYI) you can pour it into a glass jar and store it in the fridge. You might want to make sure the lid is on tight so you don't stink up your fridge.

As to the animal kingdom, here's a good and easy Hot Pepper Spray that keeps foraging animals (like rabbits, deer, etc.) from eating your plants. I've also used it around the border of my lawn since a few dog owners in my neighborhood don't practice proper "poop etiquette" that is, don't pick up their dog's poop in a plastic bag. I spent \$10 for a store-bought can of repellent spray, and it repelled all right, but it also turned my grass brown. Not good.

Now I make my own:

½ cup hot peppers, seeds & all

2 cups water

Put in blender and puree it up! Strain through a cheesecloth (use rubber gloves, it is hot!) Apply about once a week, as it doesn't last forever.

Rain and sprinklers, you know.

### Arkansas Is Our Campus

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.





### Charleston Tea Plantation

By Deborah Streiffert Moore

On our vacation this summer to Hilton Head, SC, we had the opportunity to visit the Charleston Tea Plantation, America's only tea farm. The Tea Plantation was founded in 1960 on Wadmalaw Island, in the heart of the Lowcountry. This area has an ideal climate for growing tea: subtropical temperatures, frequent rain and high humidity. The plantation has several hundred thousand tea bushes, descendants of bushes originally brought here from China and India during the 1800s. The plantation produces American Classic Tea, a high quality black tea.

The Plantation offers public tours showing how the tea is grown and processed. Also, there is a gift shop where you can sample the tea.

#### Some Tea Facts:

Tea is the second most consumed beverage in the world. Water is the first.

Tea is one of the largest agricultural products in the world. Nearly 35 billion pounds of tealeaves are harvested per year, producing 7 billion pounds of tea.

Americans consumed more than 50 billion servings of tea in 2004.

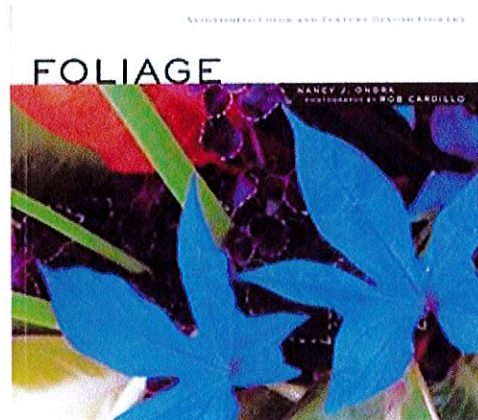
Information on Tea is provided by the Charleston Tea Plantation Tour and their website.

## Debra's Book Club

By Debra Redding

Foliage

Author: Nancy Ondra



I always thought that my garden was nothing without tons of blooms—I can't help it, I love blooms!

In recent years, I've come to realize how very important foliage is in our gardens. Flowers come and go, weather kills blooms prematurely or prevents them from ever appearing, but sturdy, reliable foliage is the garden's saving grace year after year.

This is a wonderful book that begs the gardener to experiment with all types of foliage. The book has five chapters and is organized by foliage texture types and color with detailed information and beautiful photos.

Nancy Ondra is the author of 10 gardening books. She currently lives and gardens on five acres in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

**The foliage has been losing its freshness through the month of August, and here and there a yellow leaf shows itself like the first gray hair amidst the locks of a beauty who has seen one season too many.**

— Oliver Wendell Holmes



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Located in Mac Arthur Park in Little Rock is the Contemplation Garden. It began in 1994 as a memorial to victims of violent crimes.

It has been a Master Gardener Project since its inception.

Project Chairman, Kathy Scheibner, is assisted by committee members: Teresa Crowson, Cheryl Fallis, Cindy Hancock, Murray Harding, Cindy Kane, Sandie Lubin, Mary McHenry, Debbie Moore, Connie Prewitt, Jennice Ratley, Kathy Sherwood, Colleen Vollman, and Anita Walters. The committee meets on Saturdays. They spend their time tending to the garden by weeding, mulching, and planting. The city of Little Rock donates the seasonal annuals used in the garden and donations from other sources are also used in the garden.



For more fun, the committee visits private gardens where they get even more ideas to help them reach their goal of beautifying the garden.

Their efforts result in a quiet, peaceful place of beauty where people can come to meditate and enjoy the serenity.

Another goal they have is that of having a real sprinkler system!

Enjoy the efforts of these Master Gardeners by sampling the quiet beauty of the Contemplation Garden.



## The Master Gardener Program in Arkansas is 20 years old. Join the celebration!

The MG 20th Birthday Celebration at the Arkansas 4-H Center will be October 13th.

This event is free to all Master Gardeners and County Agents, with a small fee for lunch if you choose to eat at the 4-H Center (\$8.00). Space is limited, and you must RSVP to let us know who is coming and which session you wish to attend.

You can register via email or phone



This event is only open to Active Master Gardeners, Sustainers and those on Leave of Absence, and County Agents. Non-Master Gardener spouses and/or guests are not eligible to attend unless space is available, which we will know after October 1. Spouses could drive down with you and hang out at the 4-H Center and go by the Governor's Mansion, but we are limited in the auditorium.



**CO-O-O-L CLEAR WATER**

(\*wa-der wa-der wa-der) (\*waDer is southern for waTer.)

By Betty Deere



Remember Eddie Arnold singing the old song Cool Clear Water? And the haunting echoing refrain wa-der, wa-der, wa-der? That song reminds me we are having a water problem here in the USA, and right here in River City. I'm thinking about the struggle going on between city and corporate powers-that-be concerning Lake Maumelle water. At this time in history, it seems cool clear water is in high demand.

And well it might be. This business of conserving and protecting our water supply has gotten really serious everywhere. My brother has a cabin on the Chattahoochee River in Georgia, and he has been president of the association battling for the rights and the purity of that river. Georgia, Alabama and Florida are all three fighting in the courts over Chattahoochee rights, because they all desperately need water, due to last summer's unprecedented long drought. Massachusetts is figuring out how to drink ocean water and California and Colorado are designing new systems for so-called "toilet to tap" water from sewage treatment to potable water.

Master Gardeners are well aware how much water it takes to nourish lawns, gardens, and flowerbeds and most of us are already trying to minimize our water usage and maximize the rainwater we get for free from the sky. Here are a few tips you might be able to use, both inside and outside the house.

**SAVE 3 GALLONS:** Turn off! Simply by shutting off the water while we brush our teeth can save three gallons a day. We can use 1-2 glasses of water to rinse both mouth and sink instead of letting the water flow right down the drain.

**SAVE 300 GALLONS:** Shower shorter. The average shower pours out 5-10 gallons a minute. Cutting your shower time even by 1 minute can add up to a savings of 300 gallons a month. Two minutes means 600 saved, etc.

**SAVE 1500 GALLONS:** Go native! The average landscape can drink as much as 1500 gallons of water a month. Grow native plants and trees, which are naturally adapted to our environment and therefore don't require as much nurturing. Think yuccas!

**SAVE 150 GALLONS:** Dump it! Put your kitchen garbage into a compost bin rather than down the disposal, which sucks up 50-150 gallons of water a month.

Facts for this article taken from Organic Gardening Magazine.

**Butterfly Family Adventure at Winthrop Rockefeller Institute**

Jack Singleton will lead a workshop to teach children and adults the importance of butterfly ecology and allow them to explore a Monarch Way Station at the Rockefeller Institute's butterfly garden on September 20th from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The cost is \$5 for children (16 & under) and \$10 for adults with a limit of no more than three children per adult. To register online for the Butterfly Family Adventure, visit [www.uawri.org](http://www.uawri.org) and click on the Register Now link under the Educational Program's drop-down menu. To register by phone, call (501) 727-5435, or call Sandy Davies at (501) 215-7990 for more information.

**Herb Harvest Fall Festival at the Ozark Folk Center State Park in Mountain View, Arkansas**

October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 2008

Thursday - October 2nd - The Herb Harvest Fall Festival at the Ozark Folk Center State Park will kick off with a bountiful feast on Thursday, October 2nd. The Heritage Herb Garden Committee will present a reception beginning at



6:30 p.m., followed by the feast at the Skillet Restaurant beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Registration information is located on the OFC website at [www.OzarkFolkCenter.com](http://www.OzarkFolkCenter.com) or by phone at 870-269-3851, or by e-mail at [ozarkfolkcenter@arkansas.com](mailto:ozarkfolkcenter@arkansas.com)

The Arkansas Unit of the Herb Society of America welcomes you to its 42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion featuring the sale of its new cookbook, Celebrating Herbs - Forty Plus Years in the Herbarium and Kitchen and Cooking Demonstration by Scott McGehee, Chef and Proprietor of Boulevard Bread and Jason Knapp, Executive Chef of the Arkansas Governor's Mansion.

The demonstration will be Saturday, November 8 at 10:30 a.m. and will feature a tasting of cookbook recipes. The cost is \$30 and includes a \$5 discount on one cookbook.

Scott McGehee, proprietor of Boulevard Bread and the recently opened, Zaza, trained with Alice Waters of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California. Chef James Knapp delights in using the herbarium's organic crop for meals and special events at the Mansion. They will prepare herbal recipes they contributed to the cookbook for tasting. Tasting will feature popular member recipes, too.

The new cookbook, with 500 herbal recipes and guides, features over 150 new recipes as well as introductions to preparing herbal recipes for home cleaning, pest control, bath and cosmetics.

For reservations and information about the Demonstration, Cookbooks or membership, please call President, Mary Roark at 501-868-6004. Seating is limited to 200, so early reservations are suggested.

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#### Fall Native Plant ID Workshop at WRI

The Winthrop Rockefeller Institute, located on Petit Jean Mountain near Morrilton, will offer a Fall Native Plant Workshop on Wednesday, October 8, 2008. During this day-long workshop, Dr. Eric Sundell will introduce participants to many of Arkansas' most common and important native plants and will teach them the basic skills needed to identify those species. Whether you are an

amateur outdoor person or a professional natural resources manager, you will find Eric Sundell's hands-on approach and engaging learning style entertaining as well as educational. Cost for the workshop is \$30 with a box lunch or \$15 without a box lunch.

Registration deadline is October 1.

To register online for the Fall Native Plant ID Workshop, visit [www.uawri.org](http://www.uawri.org) and click on the Register Now link under the Educational Programs drop-down menu. To register by phone, call (501) 727-5435, or call Sandy Davies at (501) 215-7990 for more information.

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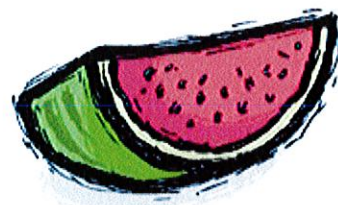
MASTER GARDENER DAY  
AT  
BOTANICAL GARDEN OF THE OZARKS  
4703 N. Crossover Road, Fayetteville  
OCTOBER 11, 2008  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Master Gardeners will be stationed at the Sensory Garden all day "Ask A Master" Information Table Master Gardener Project Displays and Hands-On Demonstrations

SPECIAL EVENTS INCLUDE:  
SENSORY GARDEN DEDICATION  
10 A.M.  
MARTHA BARTON MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN  
DEDICATION  
2 P.M.  
For more information:  
[www.bgozarks.org/location/directions](http://www.bgozarks.org/location/directions)

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A FUN FACTOID: The largest watermelon recorded was a 268.8-pounder grown by Lloyd Bright of Hope, Arkansas, in 2005. (I wonder, would he be a Master Gardener?)





A DON'T-FOOL-AROUND-WITH FACTOID: Cow manure is an excellent soil amendment, but be sure to let it compost for at least four months before applying it around any edible crops. Plus, "uncured" manure is phewey. AND draws flies. I know, I've done it.




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## CAPE PRIMROSE

By Helen Hronas

Some years ago a dear friend gave me a large, potted arrangement of plants, some noteworthy for their foliage and others for their flowers. As time passed on, the plants did too, and since the container was lovely and of good size, I moved a hosta that was getting a bit too much sun into its center on the shaded part of the patio. To my happy surprise, there shortly appeared tiny plants all around the rim of the pot, peeping out from the edges of the hosta. They proceeded to cascade over the rim and produced the unidentified but wonderful purple blooms I had enjoyed so much when I first received the gift pot.

So what are these pretty blooms? I searched the net for two sessions and consulted with my master gardener daughter and a landscape designer before discovering they are tropicals called *streptocarpus*, sounding more like an illness we'd like to avoid than a plant we'd enjoy in our garden. It's Greek, of course, meaning *twisted fruit*, which refers to the earlier versions, which bore some kind of fruits, and there are hundreds of cultivars now, some of which do still bear tiny fruits. The common name is Cape Primrose, which refers "to the nativity of several species to South Africa and their superficial resemblance to the genus *Primula*." (from Wikipedia) Cape Primrose is related to Saint Paulia (African violets), and their care and growing requirements are similar, at least according to the websites, but not so much in my own experience.

The blooms come in many beautiful colors, bi-colors and even *Picotee*, just as African violets, but I've found them to be much easier to grow, larger, and hardier than their cousins. The blooms are an elongated trumpet shape, about three inches in length, and have a kind of "flattened" look. They make wonderful houseplants, but I grow them exclusively outdoors on the patio. Several pots are in mostly shade while one has thrived in almost full sun. Slow release granular fertilizer applied about twice each season and monthly doses of liquid fertilizer keep them blooming. Any kind of good potting soil will do. They don't like wet feet, but getting really dry doesn't help either. In winter, I store the pot in my basement where the temperature stays above freezing.



In spring, the pot goes back out to the patio and by the time the hosta comes up, the tiny "strops" pop up too. The leaves of my particular variety are dark green, velvety on top and purple underneath, and the reddish-purple, 8-12 inch stems produce many blooms each. Other varieties have smooth leaves and some are variegated; some are annuals and others perennials. The tiny, bright green "fruits" which are produced by my purple variety are found in the soil after the plants die back and I use those to start new plants each spring, besides the ones that are self-sown. I've never seen the fruits actually grow on the plants, and thought they were rhizomes or corms, but found no mention of that in the websites I visited. Rather they indicated that the seeds were extremely tiny and numerous, so that still remains a mystery for me, since I have used the "fruit" to start new plants in other pots. I'm partial to easy-care plants, and this is one of my favorites.

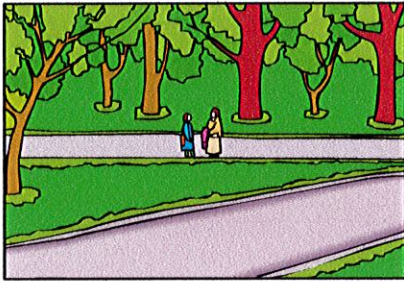
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**Believe it or not it is once again time to train a new class of Master Gardener Volunteers. We need experienced Master Gardeners to serve as mentors. If you are interested in getting to know one or two new Master Gardeners, welcoming them to the Pulaski County Master Gardener program and helping them get started on their Master Gardener "career" volunteer to serve as a mentor by contact Rochelle Greenwood, 753-7853 or [DFRCGREEN@aol.com](mailto:DFRCGREEN@aol.com) or Beth at [bphelps@uaex.edu](mailto:bphelps@uaex.edu) or 340-6650. Training starts Sept. 17th!**

## WALKS

By Lorraine Hensley



As we now should have a better understanding of the landscaper's context when the subject is drainage we are now ready to move up, out of the dirt and onto walkways. Walks, if both their design and practical function is understood, tie various parts of your property together. With walks, the opportunity is there to form a comprehensive and cohesive whole. So, out of the dirt and outside once again for it's time to identify basic traffic patterns.

Walks that carry the main traffic should be drawn on our plan as straight as possible. Later, as the plan is worked with, you may want to modify the starkness of a straight line. However, modify it only a little if it becomes necessary. The main walk to the front entrance should clearly indicate by design and width that it IS the main entrance. Visitors find it helpful to know where your front door is.

Note the traffic pattern, which would allow you to walk around your house and keep your feet dry. This is where a second walk should be

placed. Most of us walk around our house—all the way around—at one time or another. We don't just pop out one door and pop right back in. If parts of this walk can be formed by linking with the main walk, it's even better. Garden walks can be curved or as straight as you like.

Two factors need to be considered when contemplating walk placement. Determine which sections should be easily accessible and which should have walks because of design possibilities.

It is also necessary, in your planning phase, to go back and forth between your overlay and the areas where you have staked your walks. For, as planning progresses, changes of some degree may need to be made, make tentative decisions. Also remember while a little of something may be good a lot of the same thing is not necessarily better. Don't construct a 21<sup>st</sup> century maze. And remember, if your walk is straight it should be perfectly straight, if curved the curve must be defined, if parallel to a building then it must be perfectly parallel.

Walks are usually much too narrow, about 30" or less. Your main entrance walk should be wide enough so visitors can not only find the front door but also walk together if they like. It should also be wide enough so it is in scale with the entire façade of the house. Generally speaking, a 5-foot main walk is considered appropriate.

Secondary walks should be narrower than that of the main entrance. They lead to smaller doors and are visually measured against only a portion of the house. Secondary walks should be a little wider than 2 to 3 feet. Those walks that divide your garden or planting beds can be pretty narrow. Primarily garden size and spatial divisions within it determine width.

Check your future walks from every angle for practical use and visual impact. You may want to check traffic patterns one more time. Then stake it out and draw it on your overlay sheet.

Decisions made now are still considered tentative. Choices of walk materials pretty much depends on maintaining a cohesive whole within your landscape design, specific walk traffic, climate, and materials availability





## DIG IN HERE...

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

- Master Gardener Website:  
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org/mastergardener/mastergardenersonly>  
 Username: mastergardener  
 Password: compost
- PC Cooperative Extensions 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, AR 72204  
 501-340-6650

### Dividing Perennials this Fall? Have Extras?

If you have plants to share after dividing them, please consider donating them to a worthy cause....A Memorial Garden at Little Rock Christian Academy.

We are in need of plants to fill our new garden and would love to have any extras that you would be willing to share with us.

Please contact Debra Redding at 804-9750 or [debredding@hotmail.com](mailto:debredding@hotmail.com)



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 2007, these volunteers gave **22,160** hours of service.  
 Elisabeth J. Phelps, County Extension Agent,  
 Staff Chair



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  
[gardenrat@comcast.net](mailto:gardenrat@comcast.net)  
 412-8299

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](mailto:bphelps@uaex.edu)  
 340-6650

### Master Minutes Staff



Bren Coop  
 Bill Bowen  
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 Lorraine Hensley  
 Dave Hermanson  
 Helen Hronas

Julia Loyall  
 Linda Moyer  
 Laurie Pierce  
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 Carol Randle  
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 Libby Thalheimer

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Cheryl Kennedy  
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