



## Pulaski County Master Minutes

March 2013

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

Volume 23 Issue 2



Dr. Susan Weinstein who is doing our March program and the title of her presentation will be "Skeeters & Ticks, Vector Borne Diseases in AR". Dr. Susan Weinstein is the State Public Health Veterinarian at the Arkansas Department of Health and heads up the Zoonotic Section of Infectious Diseases.

2012 Pulaski County Master Gardeners contributed 12,478 hours of service which is valued at \$278,900!!

We have two major ways we, as Master Gardeners, interact with the public. One, we have personal, one on one contact with a few individuals through some of our programs such as the telephone hot line, River Market Clinic, etc. Second, we have untold numbers of people viewing our projects throughout the county. How each of our projects looks is critically important to how our Master Gardener organization is perceived. Each Master Gardener is assigned to a project, and shares responsibility for contributing to its maintenance and success. We know that there are certain individuals who contribute substantially more than the minimum requirement of 20 hours to make sure our projects look as good as possible. Therefore, we are recognizing the following individuals for their significant contributions of time and effort

above and beyond the minimum to their work project. These individuals have contributed over 40 hours to their work project which is twice the 20 hour minimum work requirement for 2012.

PCMG who worked 40 hours or more on their assigned WORK project:

Glenda Arledge	Dixie Atkins
Joellen Beard	Dick Blankenkemper
Warren Boop	Judy Bradsher
Carol Carlan	Bonnie Clough
Pat Davidson	Elisabeth Dillon
Dana Downes	Ron Esch
Mary Evans	Donald Ford
Pat Freeman	Linda Fulbright
Theresa Funkhouser	Marylea Gazette
Marjem Gill	Betty Glasscock
Jane Gulley	Lois Hall
Georgia Harris	Sandy Harrison
Joan Howard	Mary Ingle
Marianne Ligon	Steve Lopata
Francis Lopata	Coralie Maxwell
Carolyn Newbern	Paul Nolte
Jan Partain	Marita Perkins
Paul Pilkington	Joseph R Reed
Margaret Schulz	Valerie Smith
Georgiana Soderberg	Claudia Stallings
Howard Stephens	Tom Stramel
Debbie Stults	Nell Teague
Clark Trim	Karie Wallace
Joyce Watson	

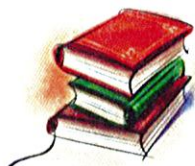


### Arkansas Is Our Campus

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.

## What's New at the Library?

By Phyllis Barrier



### "Fruit Trees in Small Spaces - Abundant Harvests from Your Own Backyard"

By Colby Eierman

The author is a landscape designer and consultant. This 263-page book is divided into parts, which are color-coded for easy reference.

- Part One guides the reader through a full calendar's worth of care, from planting the tree to harvesting the fruit and end-of-year cleanup. It includes design decisions to consider before planning, such as your area's macro and microclimate and hardiness zone. There are case studies and drawings that show ideas for including fruit trees in small gardens.
- Part Two introduces the fruit tree family album, with nearly 300 different fruit varieties available to the small space fruit grower. There's information about choosing plants, rootstocks, and three major fruit groups: stone fruits, pome fruits, and citrus. In-depth recommendations follow on how to meet your chosen tree's every need, from planting, to pruning, to pest control and fertilizing.
- Part Three covers orchard planning and care, including a variety of soil amendments and cover crops, instructions for planting in group and in containers, irrigation considerations, how to deal with pests and diseases, and pruning and training methods.
- Part Four contains recipes for fruit with the home gardener in mind. Whether you grow fruit or not, you might be interested in making Apple Chips or Candied Citrus

Peel. If you have a 'Meyer' lemon tree in a container, you might be interested in the recipes for 'Meyer' Lemon and Roasted Almond Relish or Preserved Lemons.

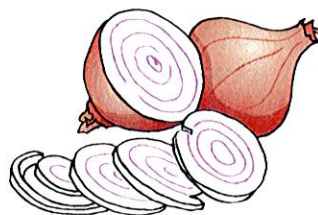
The color photography throughout the book is outstanding. The photos include gardens, various fruit specimens, espalier designs, trees in blossom and with fruit, as well as the finished recipes.

There are helpful drawn design plans included in each chapter. I thought the "Potted Orchard Plan" was particularly practical and interesting.

---

## The "A" List

By Lorraine Hensley



The gift of knowing a good thing when we see it can be pretty elusive.

That elusiveness may be where something called the "A" list originated. Someone(s) created a list of "good things" and shared it with everybody they could reach. And the more useful the item the more value it had. Useful in terms of how the item filled specific needs at the time.

Centuries upon centuries ago our predecessors, the Hunter-Gatherers, knew they had a good thing going when they were able to identify plants that wouldn't make them sick or kill them. Onions were part of their diet whenever they found them: good food and easily recognizable for all they had to do was pull them up and sniff. That rotten egg smell was powerful even then.

Onions bring with them an intriguing history that includes a Moslem legend that loosely dates onions and garlic from Adam and Eve. Seems, according to the author, as Satan was chased from the Garden of Eden by the "angel with a flaming sword onions are said to have sprung from his right foot and garlic from his left." They've been around and deemed useful for an awfully long time.



Eaten primarily by the lower classes both Greeks and Romans were well acquainted with onions, leeks and garlic. Onions went to war with the Roman military for a very good reason. Dedicated to Mars, the god of war, it was believed they increased strength and courage. Roman soldiers had an "easy carry" food that was also a pretty effective motivator when in battle. Soldiers brought their onions to and spread their use everywhere Rome fought.

People of Pompeii believed they served yet another purpose for a basket of onions was found in the ruins of that city in the biggest and best of the town brothels said to "serve no other thing" but as an aphrodisiac. In the Middle Ages onions were recommended for "...dog bites, cystitis, and stings from venomous worms." The Elizabethan period gets fairly specific concerning the medicinal uses for the juice of an onion. It was believed to relieve pain and discomfort from hemorrhoids and heal blisters as well. During the Civil War doctors in the Union Army "routinely" used onion juice as an antiseptic for gunshot wounds.

Further, General Grant actually refused to move his troops without a good supply of onions. American cowboys of the early west had their own name for onions—they called them "skunk eggs" though they likely ate them just the same.

Fast forward to the twenty-first century and onions haven't changed all that much. Generally divided into two categories, storage and sweet, each has its own best use.

Storage onions have a stronger taste than the sweet that includes Spanish, Vidalia and Bermuda varieties. Onions are now considered a "vegetable medical chest" for in addition to containing vitamins, Potassium, and Phosphorus that "medical chest" provides powerful antioxidants. Seems the Hunters/Gatherers had it right the first time and the onion remains firmly on the "A" list.

More information on this pungent vegetable is readily available in the book listed below. I found it to be a delightful and informative read.

All of the factual information used in "The A" List is from *How Carrots Won the Trojan War* by Rebecca Rupp.

---

## Book Review

By Jan Gauntt



*Waterwise Plants for Sustainable Gardens: 200 Drought-Tolerant Choices for All Climates*, by Lauren Springer Ogden and Scott Ogden; 247 pp.; \$24.95. Are you considering drought-tolerant plants to replace those you lost last summer? You might like to check out this book for its interesting recommendations. The beauty of it for me is that the authors carefully distinguish between plants that are reliable in dry vs. humid areas of the U.S. In contrast, many books and articles on drought gardening recommend plants that are long-lived in areas with dry soil AND DRY AIR, but which succumb to Southeastern humidity. In Central Arkansas summers, plants' roots contend with parched earth while their leaves sit in a virtual steam bath. The Ogdens reliably note which drought-tolerant plants struggle in humid areas. They offer plant guidance like "short-lived in humid heat" and my favorite, "resents humid heat." Their recommendations jibe well with my gardening experiences over the years. The "short-lived in humid heat" varieties mostly bit the dust on me. Several that the Ogdens recommend for many humidity levels, such as hardy plumbago and Turkish veronica, have been long-term stalwart performers in even difficult corners of my yard.

The book covers many types of plants, from trees to annuals. Each of the 200 selections includes a color photo, culture instructions, and recommendations for companion plantings. Names are given of similar varieties and species which also tend to survive with just 1" of water every two weeks.

Searching thru the entries to find those that thrive in our climate takes some effort, but for me is a treasure hunt. I only wish more perennials had been included, especially perennials for dry shade. Of the 600+ plants mentioned, most prefer full sun. "Waterwise Plants for Sustainable Gardens" Is available through the Central Arkansas Library System. Just remember - even if a plant is listed as drought-tolerant, it still may need careful watering for the first year or so while it grows its roots down deep.



## MG March 2013 Calendar

By Phyllis Barrier

### PG Master Gardener Meeting

March 19

### First Day of Spring

March 20

### Slow Gardening - No Stress Philosophy for All Senses and Seasons

By Felder Rushing

April 3 - 7 pm

University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service  
Auditorium

2301 South University, Little Rock

(Pre-registration recommended as seating is limited)

Cost \$10.00

Information: 501-758-0169 or

[carol88c@swbell.net](mailto:carol88c@swbell.net); [jw@shotgundans.com](mailto:jw@shotgundans.com)

### Native Plants - Our Natural State

#### Continuing Education

April 4

Registration 8:00 - 8:30 a.m.

Class Time 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Cost \$15.00 (training and breaks are included)

State Cooperative Extension Building Auditorium

2300 S. University Avenue, Little Rock

Information: 501-758-0169 or

[carol88c@swbell.net](mailto:carol88c@swbell.net); [jw@shotgundans.com](mailto:jw@shotgundans.com)

### Bernice Garden

#### Plant Swap

April 14

### Bernice Garden Farmers Market

April 14 - mid November

Sundays, 10-2 pm (rain or shine)

### PG Master Gardener Meeting

April 16

### Backyard Poultry Workshop at Moss Mountain with P. Allan Smith

Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

\$90.00 per person includes lunch. Space is limited.

Visit [www.PAllenSmith.com](http://www.PAllenSmith.com), email

[gardenhome@pallensmith.com](mailto:gardenhome@pallensmith.com)

or call Joyce at 501.519.5793 to make reservations

### Bridging Trails to Art and Nature 2013 State Master Gardener Conference

John Q. Hammonds Convention Center

Rogers, Arkansas

May 16-18

Wednesday, May 15 - Optional Pre conference tour (\$45  
additional fee)

[www.meetingsintherock.com/iebms/reg/reg\\_p1\\_form.asp  
x?oc=20&ct=WEBREG&eventid=5302](http://www.meetingsintherock.com/iebms/reg/reg_p1_form.asp?oc=20&ct=WEBREG&eventid=5302)

### 2013 International Master Gardener Conference

"Alaska Flowers, Fjords and Friends"

September 7 - 14

<http://www.uaex.edu/imgc2013/>



"The word 'March' comes from the Roman 'Martius'.

This was originally the first month of the Roman  
calendar and was named after Mars, the god of war.

March was the beginning of our calendar year. We  
changed to the 'New Style' or 'Gregorian calendar in  
1752, and it is only since then when we the year began on  
1st January. The Anglo-Saxons called the month *Hlyd  
monath* which means Stormy month, or *Hraed monath*  
which means Rugged month. All through Lent the  
traditional games played are marbles and skipping. The  
games were stopped on the stroke of twelve noon on  
Good Friday, which in some places was called Marble Day  
or Long Rope Day. The game of marbles has been played  
for hundreds of years and some historians say that it  
might have been started by rolling eggs. In the past,  
round stones, hazelnuts, round balls of baked clay and  
even cherry stones have been used."





## Checklist by Carol Randle

Janet says, "The Persimmon seeds got it right. They had spoons in them this past fall, which meant snow, and snow it did in central Arkansas. The tree and evergreen shrub damage was astonishing and plant recovery will definitely take time. This is a tricky month in the garden. Warm days can get gardeners excited and some plants begin to move as well. But late frosts are not unusual this month. Monitor plants that are showing signs of life and try to protect them, if needed. Cardboard boxes inverted over a sprouting Hydrangea can help, and many gardeners use sheets or frost blankets, but keep in mind, they only give you a few degrees of protection, and sodden cloth can weigh down branches even more if it is raining."

### VEGETABLES

Vegetable gardens are up and running. It is a great time to plant cool season crops of lettuce, broccoli, potatoes, onions, Radishes, Turnips, Kale, Cabbage, and Spinach. Cabbage, Broccoli, and Cauliflower are planted as transplants . . . small plants, not seeds. Onions are planted using sets or transplants, rarely as seed. Most feed stores sell them in bundles of small plants, which are then set out in the garden. Janet usually plants them two inches apart, and, as they grow she uses every other plant for green onions, giving the remaining Onions plenty of room to grow. Remember to fertilize at planting and then side-dress six weeks later. Cool season gardens are the easiest to grow. Cool season vegetables have less disease and insect issues and give you a great start to the gardening season. We tend to have more energy now and we often have ample moisture. Diseases and insects have not become firmly entrenched yet, so grab your shovel and start planting. If you don't have space for a large garden, plant some vegetables in pots or among your flowers. A minimum of six hours of sunlight is all you need. If you want to grow your own tomato transplants, they should be started. You can't get quality transplants in an ordinary home window. You need either a greenhouse or a supplemental light. The light source needs to be on for up to 12 hours per day. It typically takes 8-10 weeks before a transplant can safely be planted outdoors. Tomato planting time shouldn't happen before mid-April anyway. If you didn't prepare your beds in January, do it as soon as possible. Cool season crops, from Carrots to Turnips, can be planted until mid-April. Sweet Corn can be planted about the middle of the month. Seeds for warm weather crops, such as Tomatoes and Peppers can be started in the greenhouse or your windowsills. It takes six to eight weeks to get good size transplants. Our last frost date is March 20 to April 1, depending on what part of the county you live in. Get the "Year Round Home Garden Planting Chart" from the county extension

office. It tells you when to plant and gives the first and last frost dates.

### PERENNIALS

When choosing new plants, you don't have to plant exactly the same thing that died. If weather trends continue, you may want to opt for more drought tolerant plants. Even the most drought tolerant plants need water during establishment, and would benefit from supplemental irrigation when we have miserable seasons. Soil preparation can go a long way in building a stronger root system, which will in the long term give you a stronger plant. Many Perennials are up and growing. Hellebores are in full bloom, along with Bleeding Heart, Columbine, and Foxglove. Peonies are up and growing and you may even see the beginning of flower buds. Now is a great time to put some Perennial stakes around your Peonies. These wire rings need to be in place before the plant gets much size. That way, the foliage grows up into the rings and is supported when heavy rains try to topple the blooms. Spring ephemerals, like Bloodroot, Trilliums and Trout Lilies are a great addition to the early spring garden. They are called ephemerals because they are here today and gone tomorrow. They often complete their life cycle before the trees have fully leafed out. If you have many early season Perennials in your garden that do go dormant quickly, consider some method of marking where they are planted so that you don't disturb them during the growing season when planting other plants. You might try using old golf tees, just put a tee next to the crown of the plant, and move on. As you are gardening throughout the spring and summer and you come across a golf tee, just move over a foot or so. Summer and fall blooming Perennials can be divided now, if needed. Divide established Perennials and replant at their depth in an enlarged area with organic matter and fertilizer. Keep mulch handy for a late freeze.

### ANNUALS

Winter Annuals fared okay this winter. Some better than others, but for the most part we still have blooms on Pansies and Violas. The Snapdragons we have enjoyed for the past few years took a hit, but are rebounding now. Fertilization and dead-heading of all these Winter Annuals will give them a boost and help them rebound. If you lost your winter color, or you never got around to planting any, buy some Geraniums, English Primroses, and Ranunculas now. They make great transitional color for the garden and can tolerate light freezes with ease. Start planning your summer color, but don't actually plant any until mid-April.

### BULBS

Spring blooming bulbs also got started early and foliage was up for some plants in the fall. Now, bulbs are blooming and extra care is needed to replenish them for another season. Fertilize your bulbs with a complete fertilizer and let the foliage remain healthy and growing for at least six weeks after bloom. Summer bulbs are popping up at nurseries and garden centers all over the state. You can buy these bulbs, but don't plant them. They like warm soils, and if planted in such cool soils, they could



rot or deteriorate. I would not plant Caladiums until at least May.

### HOUSEPLANTS

Houseplants don't look all that perky indoors, and many gardeners think they would benefit from some sunshine on a mild March day. While it is a nice thought, it isn't a good idea. Plants should stay put where they are now and make their move outside in late April. Now that the days are getting longer and temperatures are warming up, you will see some new growth appearing. If you have tropical flowering plants inside, you can give them a haircut now, but hold off on repotting when you move them outdoors.

### PRUNING

While we often think that February is the "must prune" month, all of those chores that could have been done in February can still be done in March. Crape Myrtles, Althea, summer blooming Spirea and other summer bloomers can still be pruned. While plants are growing, late pruning will simply delay the first flowers. Think back to how early our spring was last year. Many gardeners didn't prune because the plants were actively growing, and they had some pretty unruly plants in the garden. So, even if your plants are growing, you still want to prune them now if you didn't get it done earlier. Hybrid Roses need severe pruning every year. If you haven't pruned, do it immediately. The same applies to Buddleia. These plants bloom on the new growth and heavy pruning encourages plenty of new growth, and therefore, more blooms. All of these plants will get woody and gangly if they are not pruned hard each season. Other summer bloomers that can still be pruned include Althea, Vitex and Crape Myrtles. (CAUTION: PLEASE DON'T COMMIT CRAPE MYRTLE MURDER.) They don't have to have severe pruning every year . . . it is dependent on the shape and size you want in your landscape. Ornamental Grasses should be cut back to 4-6 inches before they start growing again. Prune Wisteria roots about two feet from the main trunk. Pull or cut away sprouts of Lilac and Forsythia and transplant. Root cuttings from Azaleas, Camellias, Chrysanthemums, Shasta Daisies, Roses and other flowering shrubs (8" with two buds underground) in a cold frame. Color is appearing back into our landscapes. The first harbingers of spring are the bright yellow Winter Jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*). Many people mistake it for early Forsythia, but that usually follows by a couple of weeks. Flowering Quince (*Chaenomeles speciosa*), Bridalwreath Spirea (*Spiraea Prunifolia*) and Camellia Japonica are all blooming now. Some early Azaleas are kicking in and more will follow, along with Dogwoods (*Cornus Florida*), Redbuds (*cercis Species*) and Service Berry (*Amelanchier Arborea*). Spring is a great time to enjoy your garden, but also to plant. Visit your local nursery and see what is new. There are new cultivars every year, so your garden should be evolving and changing.

### LAWNS

Winter weeds were growing long before winter weather arrived this year. The weeds got an early start and multiplied quickly. Now they are blooming their hearts out, and many have set seeds and are ending their season. It is too late to worry with herbicides. In lawns, try to keep the weeds mown to prevent seed set, and in the landscape and vegetable garden, get a sharp hoe and take care of them. If you ignore them, a minor problem can become a major one. Mulch your ornamental beds and vegetable gardens. If your lawn is showing signs of green, it is from winter weeds. Spray with a broad leaf weed killer, if you have an abundance of them, or spot spray or pull them. A few clumps of wild Onions (or Garlic) can easily be dug. Pre-emergent herbicides come as a weed and feed combo. Applying fertilizer now before the grass is fully awake will be a waste. You will actually end up fertilizing all those winter weeds that are in your lawn now. There is still time to use a pre-emergent herbicide, but do so very soon, and try to find a stand-alone product without fertilizer. Your first fertilizer application should be no sooner than mid-April, when the lawn is totally green. Waiting until May is not a bad idea, either. Winter weeds got an early start and seem to be prolific this year. The larger they are, and the more they are flowering, the harder they are to kill. Try to keep them mowed to prevent seed set.

### MARCH BLOOMS

Anise Florida, Azaleas, Camellias, Glory of the Snow, Crabapples, Daffodils, Forsythia, Hyacinths, Early Iris, Carolina Jasmine, Kerria, Star Magnolia, Maple, Virginia Bluebells, Grape Hyacinth, Oxalis, Pansies, Flowering Peach, Phlox, Photinia, English Primrose, Flowering Quince, Redbud, Spirea, Tulips, Burkwood Viburnum, Violets, Chinese Wisteria, and Woodbine.



The afternoon is bright,  
with spring in the air,  
a mild March afternoon,  
with the breath of April stirring,  
I am alone in the quiet patio  
looking for some old untried illusion -  
some shadow on the whiteness of the wall  
some memory asleep  
on the stone rim of the fountain,  
perhaps in the air  
the light swish of some trailing gown."  
- Antonio Machado, 1875-1939



## 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 Extensions Website:  
<http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/mastergardeners/default.asp>
- U of A Cooperative Extension Website:  
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>



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 2012, these volunteers gave **12,478** 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  
[bp Phelps@uaex.edu](mailto:bp Phelps@uaex.edu)  
340-6650

## Master Minutes Staff



Betty Deere  
Lorraine Hensley  
Jeffrey McKinley  
Deborah Doyle-West  
Kate Lincourt

Jennice Ratley  
Carol Randle  
Phyllis Barrier  
Sherree DeWitt

## Photographers



Cheryl Kennedy  
David Werling  
Bonnie Wells  
Kathy Ratcliffe  
Nina Collins

Herb Dicker  
Don Gephardt  
Bill Harris  
Jane Heaton  
Katherine Ramm  
Glenda Woods