

# The Magnolia Chronicle

The newsletter for Pulaski County Master Gardeners

Easter Fairy Garden at Maumelle Community Center



April 2017 Edition

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**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**

University of Arkansas System



## Presidents Corner

As Master Gardeners we are very fortunate to have many opportunities to learn and grow. Volunteering for the Horticulture Hotline is one way we learn and also provide an invaluable service to our community. This is a very busy time of the year and your assistance is needed in providing current research-based information to gardening questions received at the Pulaski County Cooperative Extension Office.

Please consider attending the Horticulture Hotline Training on Friday, April 21, 10am-12pm at the County Extension Office Conference Room. Contact Kathleen Reynolds at 501-920-9906 or Nancy Kirsch at 501-590-6488 to register for the class.

*Kathy Ratcliffe*

President, PCMG

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**The April meeting of the Pulaski County Master Gardeners is fortunate to have as its featured speaker, Madeline Samec who will speak to us about “Learning to Love Moss”. Our meeting starts at 11:30.**

Madeline was an army brat born to 2 gardeners, so everywhere her dad was stationed, they gardened. Previously, she has managed the St. Johns County, Florida Extension Community Gardens and the 200 St. Johns County Master Gardeners for 11 years, which ultimately included the landscape management of 54 acres.

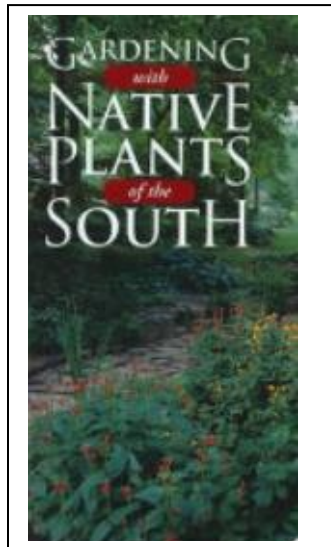
In 2016 Madeline became the Site Manager for Compton Gardens and Conference Center in Northwest Arkansas, with responsibility for 6.5 acres of a spectacular Ozark native garden. While her work there includes conducting tours and teaching gardening classes and workshops, it's her work there in designing and installing a moss garden that is of particular interest to us. Her presentation to the Pulaski County Master Gardeners monthly meeting on April 18<sup>th</sup> will be instructive as to how to grow your own moss garden and which mosses are best suited to that endeavor.

## **BOOK REVIEW**

**Gardening with Native Plants of the South** by Martha Coop

If you are interested in growing Plants of the South by Sally took an extended tour (2½ with gardeners. Sally's native plants will take you into You will come to understand as solitary entities unconnected community, just as they are in The yard seems more inviting towhees, and an increase of too, once established.

I give Sally's book a big part of yard. The first two chapters native garden. When I want a know borders on sin, this book is my go to because of the excellent plant profiles. She devoted an entire chapter to understanding and applying the information in the profiles. Criteria for selections which Sally included in this book are that they “had to be the showiest and easiest to grow and/or important to Southern habitat.”



native plants, I recommend Gardening with Native Wasowski with her husband, Andy. The couple years) of Southern gardens of all types and visited introduction declared that “to landscape with a wonderful new way of looking at your garden. that landscape plants should be looked upon, not to their surrounds, but as part of a greater the wild.” I am finding that to be true for me. and harmonious. And we have bluebirds and beneficial insects and toads. They're easy care

the credit for how much Dennis and I enjoy our offer help for establishing habitat and planting a plant for a space, or just have plant lust that I

The remaining chapters are organized around different kinds of plants. That makes it easier to find a suitable plant for your needs. Do you need a tree over 50 foot; or one smaller, 15 to 40 foot; tall shrubs, 5 to 15 foot? In Chapter 7, Accents and Low Shrubs, I found and fell in love with St. John's wort. I turned this plant in to Kathleen for the program in June! If you don't know it, be watching.

After the larger plants for layering, Sally covered chapters on vines, shady groundcovers, ferns, woodland flowers, garden flowers, ornamental grasses and water plants. It's all there. And woe is me, I want some of nearly all of them! I think I have to blame her husband, Andy, because of his photography. Each plant profile includes a picture at the top. Thankfully the profile pulls me back to reality. That information means the difference between selecting the wrong plant for the wrong space and success.

Give this book a look! You won't be wasting your time.

## Jess Odom Community Center

By Sara Jordan

The Jess Odom Community Center, frequently referred to as the Maumelle Community Center, is located at 1100 Edgewood Drive in Maumelle. As a vital education and recreation center, it provides services to enrich the quality of life for local citizens and economic value to create long-term community stability and growth.

The building, constructed in 1978, underwent a major renovation beginning in August 2000. It was completed and dedicated in August 2002. In March 2005, Master Gardener Volunteers submitted a proposal to begin a project that would add additional plants and shrubs to the existing landscape in the front portion of the building. The proposal was accepted and approved that summer. With support from host organization, the city of Maumelle and its Parks and Recreation Department, the goal was to enhance the beauty of the Community Center and serve to teach horticulture and environmental science concepts to interested citizens.

Today 17 project members meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month to improve, maintain and care for foundation, perennial and annual plantings. Efforts have focused on plants that will thrive in the unique growing conditions of each bed. Containing flowers, shrubs and/or trees these spaces provide a habitat for butterflies and bees as well as year round interest and color for the building. Inspired by Garvan Gardens Fairy Garden, several members worked to create a smaller version located in our Butterfly Garden. Logs located in an area park were transported by Parks and Recreation Staff to become buildings for the gardens fairies. These creative dedicated members maintain the fairy village by adding seasonal and holiday interest. This feature has proved a delight for children and adults alike (featured on page one of the newsletter).



### Beginning Beekeeping Class



Beginning Beekeeping classes will be held May 10, 17 and 24th from 6 pm until 9 pm at the Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library at 4800 W 10th St. in Little Rock. All classes taught by Jon Zawislak, UA Extension Apiculturist & EAS Certified Master Beekeeper. Different information will be presented in all three classes.

Classes are free and open to the public but seating is limited and registration is required to participate.

To register, call the Pulaski County Extension Service office at 501-340-6650.



# PassAlong Plants

Hello Master Gardeners!

Jane Gulley has agreed to do a presentation to us at our wonderful plants that are not seen often enough in our input. I'm assisting Jane by putting together a for her presentation. If there is a plant (or two or three) climate but you rarely see in other gardener's gardens, can be "pass-along" plants you don't see at the nursery, have seen, or plants new or old that you've discovered All our gardens would benefit from knowing about the options for our gardens that we aren't seeing enough. as possible and send us your reply to



June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting on gardens and we want your photograph array of the plants you love that thrives in our please tell us about it. These heirloom plants you rarely from non-local plant sources. lovely and interesting plant Please take a moment as soon [kathleenreynolds@att.net](mailto:kathleenreynolds@att.net)

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We would like to create a spot for "plants to trade" or even "plants to give away" in this spot of the newsletter each month. We all have plants we might be looking for to add to our gardens. Others might want to locate where to purchase plants for their gardens. So this is pretty much a "spot" to post these. Please email me at: [daffodilsrose555@gmail.com](mailto:daffodilsrose555@gmail.com) if you have items for this Trading Post.

FREE – English ivy and Needlepoint ivy (contact [daffodilsrose555@gmail.com](mailto:daffodilsrose555@gmail.com) for pick up)

## MAY CHECKLIST by Carol Randle

We have had a mild Winter. Let's hope our Summer growing season is as good. We have been lucky because we have had few signs of Winter damage. By now, many of our Spring blooming plants have finished blooming. After bloom is a great time to fertilize all the trees and shrubs in your garden.

### ANNUALS

Despite the old saying, "April showers bring May flowers", wise gardeners must still think about unpredictable heat and drought conditions when planting Spring gardens. With Winter annuals nearly finished, this is an excellent time to plant blocks of Summer annuals for a splashy impact. Start pulling out the Pansies and Violas and replace them with plants for the Summer. Whether you have sun or shade, there are so many options to choose from. Summer annuals arrive weekly at nurseries and garden centers. Impatiens reign supreme in the shade garden, but Caladiums, Elephant Ears, Begonias and Coleus are also good options. There are so many color choices these days for Coleus and they will grow in full sun to total shade. Angelonia (Summer Snapdragon) is a showstopper along with cupheas, Zaharia series zinnias and petunias. Heat lovers can go in, including Lantana and ornamental Sweet Potato Vine. When choosing annuals, mix in one to three colors and group plants in blocks to make the "wow" factor. Annuals need regular fertilization to get the most out of them. Start with a complete slow release fertilizer at planting, then use a water soluble form every two to three weeks throughout the season. If you want to try new Annuals, try the new Arkansas Diamond Plants. You can identify them by the blue diamond logo, they are grown in Arkansas by local growers and are tough performers statewide. I noticed that one of my Velvet Elvis plants from last year has new green growth at the base of the sticks, so I am eager to see if it is going to come back. I saved one of last year's Velvet Elvis plants in my portable greenhouse and it looks great. How it will do in the ground this year is anybody's guess.

### PERENNIALS

Perennials are looking great right now. Peonies are blooming beautifully along with Baptisia, Amsonia, and Foxglove (Digitalis spp.). Taller flowering Perennials often need a little extra support from stakes to help hold their blooms upright, especially in heavy rains. Know which of your plants need fertilizer and which don't. Most Spring bloomers will benefit from an application of fertilizer after bloom. Hosta plants need fertilization two or three times a season. My Caramel and Citronella Heucheras are looking great now and my Hellebores are still going strong.

### BULBS

You can remove the foliage from Spring bulbs approximately six weeks or so after they have bloomed. Lift and store bulbs that are not cold hardy in Central Arkansas; otherwise you will need to replace them the following year.

### VEGETABLES

Vegetable gardening is gaining in popularity every year. If you are a vegetable gardener and you planted an early garden, you are in the midst of harvest. May is a great month to plant vegetables. Harvesting of cool season crops is going on now, but all of the warm season vegetables can still be planted, from Snap Beans and Corn, to Tomatoes, Peppers, Squash and Eggplants. By May, our soil is warming up and we can begin to plant Okra, Southern Peas and even Watermelons and Cantaloupes. As temperatures heat up, so do pest problems. Monitor for insects and diseases and catch them early. Mulch your vegetables with shredded leaves, newspaper or a similar product. Not only does mulch maintain soil moisture and help to keep weeds away, but it also keeps soil from splashing on the stems which can impact diseases. As one plant finishes its life cycle, remove it and replace it with another. Utilize your space to get the most from your garden. Diseases and insects thrive in warmer temperatures so walk your garden daily and scout for problems, weeding as you go so they won't compete for water and nutrients.

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## HERBS

Fresh Herbs are a wonderful addition to your cooking talents, but they also make great ornamental plants. Herbs are easy to grow whether you are interspersing them with flowers in the vegetable garden or in a stand alone Herb planting. Perennial Rosemary, Sage, Oregano and Lemon Thyme do well year-round, while the annual Basil and Dill thrive in our Summers. Fennel, both green and bronze, is showy and adds great interest to cut flower displays.

## HOUSEPLANTS

Houseplants and heat-loving tropical flowering plants can all go outdoors safely now. Most tropical flowering plants need bright light to bloom well. If you are growing plants that you have kept for several years, repot them now and fertilize regularly or you won't see as many flowers this growing season. Tropicals such as Mandevilla, Hibiscus and others bloom on new growth and if they are old and root-bound, you won't see much new growth and you won't see as many flowers. If you overwintered last year's plants, make sure you have cut them back by at least 1/3 and repotted them. Other tropicals that do well in our gardens are Allemanda, Ixora, Plumerias and Bananas. As temperatures increase, watering needs increase. The more you water, the more fertilizer you need.

## BERRIES

Berry season is great. Strawberries, an easy perennial fruit for the home garden, need annual maintenance. Thin the dense mats of foliage after the Spring harvest to discourage fruit rot and increase fruit size and quality. Mulch, fertilize and water for the best production. Strawberries start in May and the berry season ends in October with Muscadines. These small fruits are easy to grow in a home garden, provided you have at least six hours of sunlight a day. Blueberries are another easy plant for the home gardener. They need at least six hours of sunlight. They have white flowers and exceptional red Fall foliage. Most Blueberries require two different varieties for cross-pollination, but the new small fruit container series are self fruitful. Thornless Blackberries produce abundant fruit with minimal care.

## LAWNS

Most of the weeks that were in our Winter and early Spring lawns now appear to be dead; however, they are simply dormant and will return with Fall's cooler temperatures. We currently have Summer weeds, such as Nutgrass and Crabgrass to manage. Lawn lovers also contend with moss that grows in areas with too much shade, which is a welcome treat in Arkansas Summers.

If you are not an "[Arkansas Gardener](#)" subscriber, you are missing a great treat.

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