



The Magnolia Chronicle

Pulaski County Master Gardener Newsletter

President's Report

June 2020

Thomas Cooper once said "A garden is never so good as it will be next year".

I don't know about you but I don't think my garden will ever look as good as it does this year. Between the rain and the coronavirus, I can't imagine it better. Not that there can't ever be room for improvement! I will now focus on some of the area outside the immediate garden. Wish me luck, it's a jungle out there.

As some of you already know, I have had some extra help with little people. No, I haven't lost my mind yet, the little people are my grandchildren. Having them around is such a great treasure. They are ages 11 and 9. Like my ducks, who knows when they will tire of being around. So for now I just enjoy the moments. Hopefully they learn to appreciate gardening and the peace and joy it can bring.

I planted Sunpatiens this year and like many plants, they are not meant for a lot of full sun. I have already transplanted some of them and hopefully they will thrive in their new home. Also, for the first time ever, I have a fungus in a couple of my flower boxes that are home to impatiens. They have been treated and hopefully will look better soon.

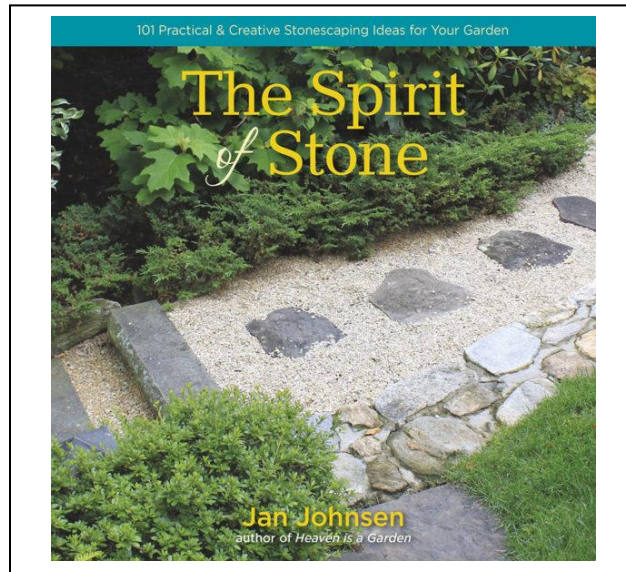
This has been an extraordinary year. Please continue to support the frontline workers. Looks like they may be in for another peak of covid-19. Now that things have opened up some, it's more important than ever to wear a mask, wash your hands and social distance. Remember the PCMG Zoom mtg June 16th at 11:30. Randy will send an invite so you can register.

Sharon Priest, PCMG President

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The Spirit of Stone: 101 Practical and Creative Stonescaping Ideas for your Garden

Author: Jan Johnsen

Book Review: Debra Redding

Natural stone, that most ancient of materials, adds an authentic touch to an outdoor space that nothing else can match. While plants may temporarily steal the show, a low stonewall, solitary standing stone or dry stream remains unwavering through the years. Isamu Noguchi, the designer and artist, summed it up best, "**Any gardener will tell you that it is the rocks that make a garden. They call them the 'bones' of the garden.**"

In *The Spirit of Stone*, award-winning landscape designer Jan Johnsen presents a richly photographed guide to the many creative ways that durable stone and gravel can be used in a garden. The chapters address rock gardens, walls, stone accents, walks and more. There is a chapter on sustainable stone that shows how to capitalize on stone's functional qualities in a beautiful way. And a last chapter highlights plants and stones together, natural companions in a garden.

The Spirit of Stone is an essential idea book for anyone looking to add dimension and resilience to their landscape - the tips and photos will inspire designers, homeowners, gardeners and stonemasons alike.

GARDENING CHECKLIST FOR JUNE

By Carol Randle

We have had a good spring. Lots of rain so our plants are doing well.

If you have plants that are not growing to their potential, assess their location and consider replacing them. A gradual decline of large shrubs and trees is often an indication of serious problems that may not be correctible. With trees, it is usually a slow death, trees do not die overnight. This means that we need to take inventory of our plants. If you have to replace a plant, try a different plant instead of replacing it with the same plant you had. Think about what time of year you would like to have more color and choose something that blooms in that season. One application of fertilizer each year is all that is needed on trees and shrubs so fertilize and water as needed. A pest you should look for is the Asian Ambrosia Beetle. It bores into thin skinned trees, such as Japanese maple, dogwood, etc. When it bores into the trunk, it leaves waste that looks like a toothpick sticking out of the tree.

VEGETABLES AND HERBS

Harvest your lettuce, peas, carrots, radishes and onions now. The time of day vegetables are harvested can make a difference in the taste and texture. For sweetest, pick peas and corn late in the day. That's when they contain the most sugar. Other vegetables, such as lettuce and cucumbers, are crisper and tastier if you harvest them early in the morning before the day's heat has a chance to wilt and shrivel them. Tomatoes are the number one vegetable grown by home gardeners, typically we start harvesting this month. This is also the month for blossom end rot to rear its ugly head. This black, rotted area on the base of the tomato is not a disease, but a calcium deficiency, often caused by major fluctuations in the moisture -we often see it when we have a dry period followed by heavy rain. This deficiency can be treated with "Stop Rot". Try to keep the garden mulched and evenly watered to avoid the problem. Tomato fruit worms and hornworms are also out and can quickly devour tomatoes. Larger worms should be picked and destroyed and smaller ones can be controlled organically with BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*). Also, remember that tomatoes do not set fruit well when the temperatures stay above 75 degrees F.

If you have not planted any vegetables or herbs yet, there is still time. The time is ideal to plant winter squash and pumpkins. These long season plants take up room in the garden but give great results in the fall. Southern peas and okra love the heat as well and do nicely all summer.



Blossom end rot

BULBS

In early June, divide narcissus bulb clumps. If you decide to store bulbs rather than leaving them in the ground, remember to replant in late summer or early fall. Wait until the foliage of spring-flowering bulbs turns yellow before removing. Lift and replant lycoris as foliage yellows. This prevents it from getting too deep as it multiplies. Iris should be left alone for 6 weeks after blooming. Lift and divide and cut back foliage to 3 inches. Divide grape hyacinth bulbs to increase next year's production. These bulbs increase rapidly. Squirrels consider these bulbs a delicacy. If they are planted with daffodil bulbs, the squirrels will leave them alone. Plant gladioli in early June. These bulbs will flower in about three months. To deter thrips, soak the bulbs in a mixture of two tablespoons of disinfectant to a gallon of water for 3 hours before planting them. (Good luck at finding any disinfectant.)

ROSES

Feed roses with a complete fertilizer in June. Weed well. Remove faded blooms and clean up around the plant. Watch out for aphids, mildew and blackspot and spray when necessary. Cut roses above a five-leaf cluster to encourage growth. Plant chives or garlic in between roses to discourage aphids.

ANNUALS

Keep your annuals deadheaded. Especially in the heat of summer, your annuals (and all plants) need to be watched for signs of wilting. Be sure your plants get enough water. Plants in containers will need watering daily to maintain their good looks. Mulching flower beds will help to conserve moisture and keep your plants looking pretty. Water early in the morning, so your plants will be fresh in the hot afternoon sun. Fertilize annuals, peonies and camellias early in June.

PERENNIALS

Perennials plants are those that come back for at least two seasons. Many are in full bloom now, including purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), daylilies (*Hemerocallis*), gaillardia, hardy hibiscus (*H. mascheutos*) and lilies (*lilium app.*). Deadheading long season bloomers encourages more flowers and less seed production. Deadheading is simply pinching or cutting off flowers as they fade so that they don't set seeds. When a plant sets seeds, it puts energy into seed production rather than producing more blooms. Fertilize hostas at least two or three times during the growing season and keep them watered. They are not drought tolerant. Watch for slugs. If slugs are a problem, consider mulching your plants with sweet gum balls. This spiny mulch works well at deterring slugs and cats, keeping them away from the garden.



Yellow Asiatic lilies

COMPOST

Pick up all leaves and faded flowers and add them to the compost pile. They are a favorite spot for slugs and snails to hide. Turn and dampen your compost often. Flies will breed in the grass clippings if you do not turn it regularly.

LAWNS

Water lawns regularly. Deep water lawns, trees and shrubs to encourage deep rooting and avoid heat stress. Watch for yellow patches, leaf curl, or poor growth. Increase watering if you notice any of these signs. Set your lawnmower at a higher level. Taller grass will shade the roots from heat. Don't forget to save your clippings for the compost pile. Never add your clippings after a weed treatment. Install new edging after storms. Don't install edging after long periods of rain because the ground will swell and once it dries the edging will move.

PREVENTION

Mulch plants to keep moisture constant and protect against weeds and soil borne diseases. Watch for chinch bugs and lawn fungi in your lawn. Fireblight is a bacteria spread by bees and rain. Prune below infected parts. Streptomycin sprays will reduce damage.

Use insecticidal soap to control aphids, whiteflies and lacebugs. Cut strips of bright yellow plastic, coat with petroleum jelly and hang to make a trap for whiteflies. Use aluminum foil around tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants to reflect more light and confuse aphids. (Unfortunately, flea beetles thrive in bright hot spots.)

FRUITS

Make sure that grass around your fruit trees is kept short. Grass deprives the trees of nitrogen. Pick strawberries as soon as they ripen for fullest flavor. Don't be alarmed if immature apple trees lose some of their fruit. This is known as "June-drop". Thin the fruit even more when it is a little smaller than the size of a golf ball. Leave one apple from each cluster and you'll get a better quality fruit.

During this period of quarantine, we have more time to work in our gardens. Nothing makes me feel as good as working in our flower beds. I feel closer to God when I am in my flower beds than anywhere else. It always amazes me how many different plants there are and how many different kinds of each species God gave us!

FREE PLANTS

This is a photo of the mums blooming last October, the mums came from the garden of our Master Gardener Becky Kennedy. These are about 5 years old. The mums tend to spread so I have lots to dig up that I am happy to share. It is recommended to cut the new growth 2 to 3 times each spring up to July 4th to promote a fuller plant. Call Master Gardener Carolyn Turner, 501-680-4550, if you would like some of the plants for your garden.



Golden rain tree – in large pot. Needs new home. Please email Susan at:
Daffodilsrose555@gmail.com

AT least 10 feet tall now.
Will grow up to 30 feet tall
and spread. Yellow blooms
in the spring. Picture at
right.



Rose of Sharon plants – some three feet tall but most smaller. White or blue variety. Small redbud trees, and a few native dogwood trees.

Chinese indigo – spreads quickly in shade. Pink wisteria type blooms twice a year. About 8 inches in height.

Contact Susan for these plants: daffodilsrose555@gmail.com



Chinese indigo



Rose of Sharon

PASS ALONG PLANT ALERT

Two years ago at their annual spring plant sale, Pathfinder Greenhouse Committee began offering a variety of pass along plants as well as plants they started from seeds and plugs. Many of the pass along plants have come from committee members and their friends. Last year a couple of other committees offered the greenhouse plants from their projects that needed to be thinned out. These pass along plants have benefitted the final sales amount.

We are now accepting pass along plant donations from other PCMG committees and Master Gardeners. Please be aware that, after greenhouse expenses are met, all proceeds go to the general PCMG fund to benefit all PCMG committees.

If you or your committee has pass along plants that have no home to go to, call Theresa Funkhouser, 501-766-1395.

The Magnolia Chronicle is always in need of articles for each issue. If you have interesting garden related articles to share with all our MG please forward to me. If you are redoing your garden and want to offer plants to other MG let us know as well. Gardening is a fun hobby but we all know our garden is going to change and mature. We may have picked a plant that is not doing well for us or even a plant that is multiplying more than we expected. All plants need a home!

Please email me: daffodilsrose555@gmail.com

Thanks for all your support!

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