



The Magnolia Chronicle

Pulaski County Master Gardener Newsletter

President's Report

In my opinion there should be something in your garden that makes you smile or even better giggle out loud. I have a good friend that lives in Maumelle and her husband is a wonderful gardener. He has old fashioned plants from his mother's garden and little interesting things everywhere, all with a story behind them. It is a delight to visit his garden. I recently had the opportunity to visit Carol Mendel's beautiful home. Carol has the most whimsical yard/garden with large sheep in her back yard (not real, probably concrete)! Her garden is a reflection of her charming personality. A couple of weeks ago I visited the beautiful Hays Senior Center MG project with the PEST committee. They have a fun feature that caught my eye and I wanted to share it with everyone. It is a large broken clay pot laying on its side with other small pots with plants tucked inside. It just made me smile. The Hays project chair Michele Wasson was kind enough to share a photo of her inspiration. If you have a fun, whimsical feature in your garden I wish you would share it. I am hoping my friend, Susan Rose, that puts together this wonderful publication will agree to a small spot in each issue to feature Garden Charm.

Go forth and garden with whimsy,

CINDY STRAUSS

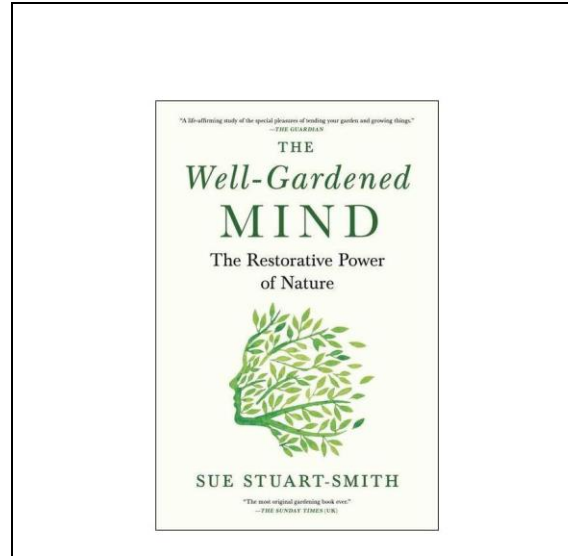
MG PRESIDENT

August 2022

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The Well-Gardened Mind: The Restorative Power of Nature

Author: Sue Stuart-Smith

Book Review: Debra Redding

One of *Garden & Gun*'s Favorite Books of 2020

A distinguished psychiatrist and avid gardener offers an inspiring and consoling work about the healing effects of gardening and its ability to decrease stress and foster mental well-being in our everyday lives.

The garden is often seen as a refuge, a place to forget worldly cares, removed from the “real” life that lies outside. But when we get our hands in the earth we connect with the cycle of life in nature through which destruction and decay are followed by regrowth and renewal. Gardening is one of the quintessential nurturing activities and yet we understand so little about it. **The Well-Gardened Mind** provides a new perspective on the power of gardening to change people’s lives. Here, Sue Stuart-Smith investigates the many ways in which mind and garden can interact and explores how the process of tending a plot can be a way of sustaining an innermost self.

Stuart-Smith’s own love of gardening developed as she studied to become a psychoanalytic psychotherapist. From her grandfather’s return from World War I to Freud’s obsession with flowers to case histories with her own patients to progressive gardening programs in such places as Rikers Island prison in New York City, Stuart-Smith weaves thoughtful yet powerful examples to argue that gardening is much more important to our cognition than we think. Recent research is showing how green nature has direct antidepressant effects on humans. Essential and pragmatic, **The Well-Gardened Mind** is a book for gardeners and the perfect read for people seeking healthier mental lives.

GARDENING CHECKLIST FOR AUGUST

By Carol Randle

Heat and humidity are not great gardening companions, but they are what we have to work with. Try to get your gardening chores done early in the day. With our 100° (real time) temperatures, it's too hot by 9:00 or 10:00 in the morning. Most fruits and vegetables taste better if harvested before the heat of the day has set in. Herbs are best harvested in the morning after any dew has dried, but before the heat of the day has set in.

VEGETABLES AND FRUIT

Tomatoes have started to slow down in production. When temperatures exceed 95 degrees during the day or stay above 75 degrees at night, they quit ripening and setting fruit. Harvesting in the cooler times of the day improves flavor on many herbs and vegetables. Keep picking your cucumbers as they mature because letting old fruit stay on the vines will slow down the future production. If your cucumbers are bitter, they are getting stressed by water. Keep picking your cucumbers as they mature because letting old fruit stay on the vines will slow down the future production. Knowing what to look for in your vegetable garden can ensure that you get the most from your garden. Sweet corn is ripe when the silks begin to turn brown and dry. Look at one or two of the ears by pulling back the shuck and pressing into a kernel or two. If it gives off a milky liquid and the ear is fully formed, it is time to harvest. The quicker you can go from garden to table, the sweeter the corn will be. Fresh okra is best if picked when they are small, no longer than two or three inches. The bigger they get, the tougher the pods are. Even though it isn't ideal gardening weather, this is the time to start replanting for a fall garden. Mulch well and water and you will be harvesting well into fall. Cantaloupes and watermelons tend to be at their sweetest if it is a bit on the dry side during harvest. Too much rain could dilute the sugars. When cantaloupes are ripe, the stems should easily separate from the vine. The fruits should develop a light tan webbing pattern and the blossom end should be slightly soft and smell like cantaloupe. Ripe watermelons will have a dry, curly brown tendril at the stem end, a dull sheen on the fruit and a white to yellow underbelly.

ROSES

If blackspot has reared its ugly head on your roses or if you have blackspot susceptible plants, continue to spray with fungicides. If your roses are looking a little leggy, try giving them a light pruning now and fertilize. Pruning may reduce some flowers in the short term, but most roses could use a bit of a nap right now, to regroup, fill out and be able to give you a great fall display. Of course, water is always important.

ANNUALS

There are so many outstanding summer annuals that we often have trouble picking the ones we want to plant. When we see new annuals in the stores, we want to try some of them in our own flower beds. Look at your flower beds and make notes on which ones are taking the heat. Lantana loves heat and seems to explode when it gets hot. If they have stopped blooming, give them a haircut, fertilize and water and they should rebound with flowers through frost. Our old faithful, sweet potato vine, is still a good choice and it comes in green and purple forms. The new *Arkansas Diamonds* plants for this summer include the *Color Blast* series of portulaca and caladium 'Postman Joiner'. The past *Arkansas Diamonds* are still good choices. I love my sunpatiens. The first year I had red ones and they were striking. The next year I had orange sunpatiens and they were stunning. I had a lady stop her car, get out and come up to the flower bed and take pictures of them. I've never had that happen before. This year, I am trying 'Compact Pink' sunpatiens. They are also beautiful. They get bigger as the summer goes on and last even into fall. Remember that annuals are usually around for only one season so keep watering and fertilizing. If they look bad, pinch them back or start over. Most nurseries today keep annuals

in stock almost year around, replanting is a possibility. Deadheading . . . removing the spent flowers after they bloom, pruning back leggy plants, fertilizing and watering can keep these plants lush and full of flowers. If you have annuals that are not doing anything and seem to not recover from the heat, pull them and replace them with plants that add to your fall color. Ornamental peppers can take the heat and give you colorful fruit up until frost. You can also find some great bargains at nurseries and garden centers with tropical foliage and flowers. They have months of color to give and can perk up a heat stressed landscape.

TROPICALS

Hand in hand with summer annuals are the summer tropicals. Hibiscus, bananas, mandevillas, and plumerias all make our yards look terrific whether they are in containers on the patio or porch or set out in the garden. A great trait they share is their like for the heat and humidity. They do, however, like to be watered and fertilized. If you are growing them in containers, you are constantly watering to keep them alive. Water leaches out the nutrition so, once every week or two, we need to fertilize with a water-soluble fertilizer. Keep a careful watch out for pests. Make sure there is ample water in the containers when using any pesticide or fertilizer when it is hot and dry. If the plants are stressed, they may get burned with any extra additions.

TREES AND SHRUBS

Trees and shrubs are setting their flower buds now for next year's blooms. Don't let them get too dry now, or it could impact your flowers next spring. To have great blooms next year, do not prune these plants anymore this season. For most trees and shrubs, all you should be doing now is making sure they have water when it is dry. Fertilizations should have occurred in the spring and we will be good to go until next spring. We have now entered into the period of watering as maintenance for our shrubs. The exception is gardenias and Bigleaf and Oakleaf hydrangeas (*Hydrangea Macrophylla* and *Hydrangea Quercifolia*, respectfully). These three summer bloomers set flower buds in late August and September. If they have overgrown their location or need some general shaping, early July is the LAST time to do it, as soon after flowering is best. Avoid any pruning on spring blooming shrubs. Deadhead spent flowers to ensure more blooms. Crape myrtles, althea, butterfly bush and summer spirea are blooming, along with clethra, hydrangeas and still some gardenias.

LAWNS

At this time of year, mowing the lawn is a chore that we don't enjoy. Keeping the lawn healthy with regular watering is important. You can often tell who is and isn't watering by the look of the lawn. Daily watering is never good, but do make sure that an inch to an inch and a half are put down weekly. In late August to September, one last application of fertilizer can be applied to bermuda, St. Augustine and zoysia lawns. Don't fertilize tall fescue or centipede at this time. The main thing we are concerned with in our lawns is mowing and watering. While we all may want a lush, bright green lawn, lawn grasses can get a bit dry in between watering and still survive. Many gardeners like to apply one last application of fertilizer in late August to early September. Pay attention to the weather. Applying fertilizer when it is extremely hot and dry can burn the grass.

If you are having problems in your garden and can't figure out what is causing the problem, take some good pictures and a plant sample to your local county extension office. If they can't identify it, they will send it to the disease diagnostic lab for a correct diagnosis.

HAPPY GARDENING!

PROJECT PROFILE

River Market Information/Education Clinic Arlene Jackson - Project Chairperson

By Betty Deere

This is probably the most FUN project on the Master Gardener (MG) list! I work on this project with six others, every other Saturday from at 8:00 to 12:00. I know two things: it's gonna be hot and it's gonna be fun.

It's fun because the downtown Farmers Market is chock full of vendors selling not only beautiful, fresh produce but a myriad of other colorful individually-created products. Artists abound! The energy of growth and creativity is palpable. Our MG Information booth is a natural for this environment and is quite popular.

Our booth is set up in the premier location, right at the entrance from the parking lot so we catch the eye of most everyone who strolls in. (There are literally many strollers--with babies! AND dogs on leashes too.) Most everyone is smiling already, attracted to the aliveness and authenticity of this space, the rows of vegetables, fruits, plants/flowers.

Our MG booth consists of 1-2 long white tables, well-shaded by a white awning, a few chairs and a large fan. The set-up/take-down/stow-away are all provided by the Farmers Market organizers. We show up with literature describing Master Gardening Projects and general gardening information; plus 8-10 containers of live plants (from our greenhouse) to give away. We educate visitors about the MG volunteer program and green gardening in general, and have fun doing it.

With a smile and greeting, there's no problem in gathering an audience to talk plants with us, pet the visiting dogs and ooh-and-ahhh over the babies in the crowd.

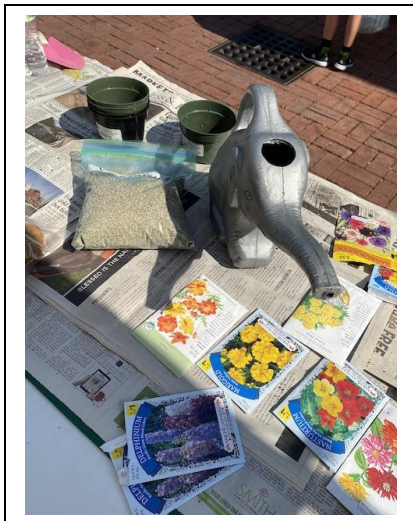
Sometimes we have hands-on educational projects. A recent example was Children's Education day. To entice the kids, one table was laid out with an array of small plastic containers, bags of soil, colorful packets of flower seeds, colored trowels, and an elephant-shaped jug of water. The children were invited to plant a flower of their own to take home. They each chose a container and seeds of their desire, added soil, pushed their chosen seeds into the dirt, and watered them in. Finally, they were encouraged to return on August 20 with their flower, to compete for the prize for the "most flourishing plant" plant. We are curious and excited to see how many return to compete for the prize. Join us if you like! You'll see lots of smiles and maybe even meet some future Master Gardeners among the children!

Editor's note: Special thanks to Paul Pilkington for providing the pictures in last month's article on the Governors' Vegetable Garden.





Counter Clockwise: Katie Mann, Connie Prewitt, Jan Bowen talking with a parent; young gardener with Jan Butenschoen





ARKANSAS FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

A F & G S Statistics & History **By: Mary Russell- Evans**

Among (many) other things, I was appointed garden show historian early on. Most have probably long since forgotten that. This month's article is simple data. This data would probably be boring, except for two things: One it reflects the very long history of the show and two- a good portion of these names are our fellow MGs! Directors Kathy Lynch (executive secretary), Nancy Leonhardt, Krista Quinn, Mary Beth Rogers & Cori Fetters.

Presidents

- 1992 Ken Scott (UAEX)
- 1993 Janet Carson (UAEX)
- 1994 Ernie Moix (Green Tree Nursery/ AR Greenhouse Grower's Assoc.)
- 1995-1999 unknown
- 2000 David Dodson (AR Farm Bureau/ PCMG)
- 2001 Beth Phelps (UAEX)
- 2002 Yvonne Becker (Garland County MG)
- 2003 Tom Flammang
- 2004 Robert Hunter (AR Dept of Environmental Quality)
- 2005 George Collins (AR Garden Center)
- 2006 Jeanne Spencer ((PCMG & LRCGC)
- 2007 Mark Tidwell
- 2008 Jennifer Gibson (The Good Earth)
- 2009 Marilyn Tilley (PCMG)
- 2010 Dick Blankenbeker (PCMG)
- 2011 Scott Smith (River Valley Horticultural Products/AR Green Industry)
- 2012 Shane Cranford (AR Florists Association)
- 2013 Clark Trim (PCMG)
- 2014 Ron Matlock (Saline County agent)
- 2015 Holly Morgan (governor's mansion)
- 2016 Jim Robbins (UAEX)
- 2017 Julie Kerr (Saline Co MG)
- 2018 Julie Kerr (Saline Co MG)
- 2019 David Munsey (AR Green Industry/ Better Lawns & Gardens)
- 2020 Randy Forst (UAEX)
- 2021 Patti Womble (PCMG)

Other early presidents- not sure where they go.... Gerald Klingaman (U of A); Linda Robinette (AR Florists Assoc). Janet and I think maybe Pat Green (PCMG); Jeff Rollins (AR Garden Center-Sherwood) were presidents also.

Volunteer of the Year Recipients

The biggest award, by far, was the Volunteer of the Year award.

1996 Cecelia Buck (PCMG)

1997

1998

1999

2000 Mary Evans (PCMG)

2001 Pat McDonald?? (PCMG- monarch lady- not sure year)

2002

2003 Bruce Stockbridge (train guy)

2004 Beth Phelps (UAEX)

2005 Yvonne Becker (Garland Co MG)

2006 Ray Sarmiento (PCMG)

2007 George Collins (Arkansas Garden Center)

2008 Jan King & Judy Bradsher (PCMGs)

2009 Pat Haering (AR Federation of Garden Clubs) and Raymon Caple (AR Florists Assoc)

2010 Karen Briscoe and Michael Strobel (PCMGs)

2011 Glenda Arledge (PCMG) and Hot Springs Men's Garden Club

2012 Marilyn Tilley (PCMG)

2013 Sharon Mayes (PCMG)

2014 Carol Mendel (PCMG)

2015 Betty Baxter

2016 Jane Gulley (PCMG)

2017 Clark Trim (PCMG) and Autumn Russell (volunteer)

2018 Mary Wells (PCMG)

2019 Kay Crutchfield (PCMG)

2020 Jane Gulley, Nancy Kirsch and Hilda Boger (PCMGs)

Breck Campbell, Jo Krallman (AR Federation of Garden Clubs) and Pat Green (PCMG)- don't know the years.

Top Secret List of Garden Judges Revealed here for the first time.

For about 10 years I was in charge of the judges/judging.

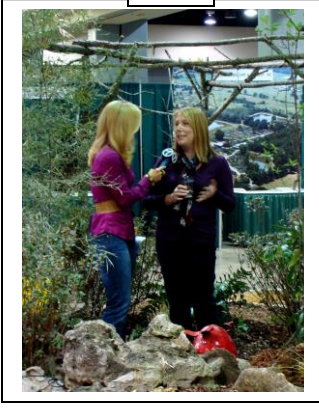
Landscape architects- Phyllis Byrum and Don Chambers; Holly Morgan- Governor's Mansion; Tanner Weeks; Leland Couch and Phoebe Stephens – City of LR; Nancy-Brillos- Henderson- City of NLR; Cinde Drilling and Lewis Jordan of Landscape Architects, Inc; And a special salute to my dear friend, James (Jay) Miller of BJ's Plants-and more- (1967- June 2022)

The American Horticultural Society Environmental award went mostly to Grand Designs with the Ozark Folk Center State Park in Second. Best Use of Water- almost always Grand Designs. Best Use of Color-mostly Botanica. Best Interpretation of the Theme- mostly The Ozark Folk Center State Park (That IS what they do- interpret.)

1



2



3



4



#1 Nancy Leonhardt at the Vendor Services booth. She was the first executive director. #2 Krista Quinn doing TV with Beth Hunt. She was the second executive director. She is the current extension agent in Faulkner County & produces the "Grow Your Own Groceries" ZOOM series. #3 Mary Beth Rogers was the third executive director. She inherited the move to the fairgrounds. She was also the Executive director for the turfgrass association. #4 Mary Evans with her special hand carved trophy with Ken Scott. She was the winner in 2000 for the butterfly house. As proud to have "another" one of Ken's woodcarvings as to have won the "coveted" "Volunteer of the Year" award.

JW MILLER, FEBRUARY 17 1967 - JUNE 17 2022

*James Wayman "Jay" Miller, born on February 17th, 1967, in Forrest City to George Wayman and Louise Watson Miller. The family moved to Stuttgart in May of 1967 and returned to Brinkley in September of 1972. At the age of nine, he decided to become a Horticulturist, and never changed his mind. JW attended the U of A, graduating in May of 1988 with a bachelor's degree in Agriculture, Landscape Design, and Urban Horticulture. He returned to Brinkley in 1989 and opened Seven Oaks Nursery. After an accident in 1990, he returned to the U of A and obtained his bachelor's degree in Secondary Education. JW was hired for Lion's World Services for the Blind in 1994 to create the Horticulture program. He moved to Little Rock in 1996 to pursue a career in the field he loved. He moved his business to Little Rock in January of 2004. JW was very passionate about people, pets, and those in need. His business world grew to include Seven Oaks Rental Properties. **In 2016 he opened BJ's Plants by Seven Oaks in Prothro Junction.** JW enjoyed music, plays, arts, cards with friends, and travel as time allowed. JW loved his "fur babies" that were his all-time companions. We lost a very special son, brother, uncle, and friend in a motor vehicle accident on June 17th, along with his friend, Alan Brewer, that ended their lives too soon.*

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