



# MASTER MINUTES

February 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 1

## Committee Spotlight: Arkansas Flower and Garden Show

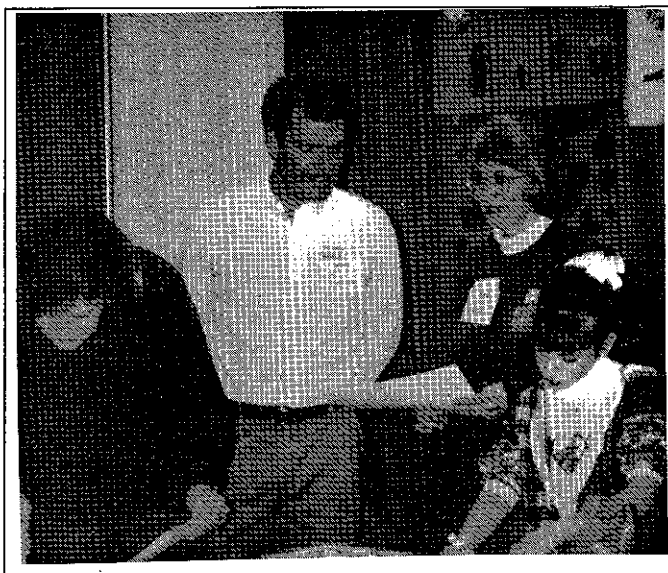
— Helen Hronas

The gloomy days of winter are slowly slipping away and rather than dreaming over our gardening catalogs, we can soon experience the Fifth Annual Arkansas Flower and Garden Show at the Statehouse Convention Center on February 23-25. Board president-elect Pat Green (chair of the 1996 show) is excited about Master Gardener involvement and the unique qualities of the Arkansas show. Whereas most flower shows are money-making endeavors, Pat explains that ours is both a flower *and* garden show and is primarily educational. The public can find useful ideas for the home landscape, helpful products and information for indoor and outdoor use while admiring the plants on display.

Pat graduated with the second MG group (1989), about the same time Master Gardeners and the Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs founded the show. While the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show Board sponsors the event, the Farm Bureau, Cooperative Extension Service, Association

of Florists, professional horticultural associations and other representatives of gardening, landscaping and horticultural interests are involved. And, of course, the show could not go on without the backbone volunteer effort provided by Master Gardeners.

On Thursday, exhibitors will transform the empty convention hall with truck-



MG Margaret Fizer works the Children's Activity Booth at the 1995 Arkansas Flower & Garden Show.

loads of mulch and plants. Exhibitors will create gardens, and exhibits will magically unfold. It's fun and fascinating, and Master Gardeners will be there selling tickets, answering questions, learning and participating at every level.

This year's theme is "Beyond the Garden Gate." Cecilia Buck, chair of the speaker committee, worked with Phoebe Stephens, a Little Rock Parks and Recreation Department horticulturist, and board members made suggestions during her search for interesting speakers. Cecilia has scheduled Holly Shimizu, assistant executive director of the U.S. Botanical Garden, Washington, D.C., as the main speaker. The assistant executive director has hosted the PBS show "Victory Garden," and her subject will center on herbs and edible landscapes. MG Jane Gulley will talk about antique roses, and Karen Yaich of the Arkansas Game & Fish

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# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

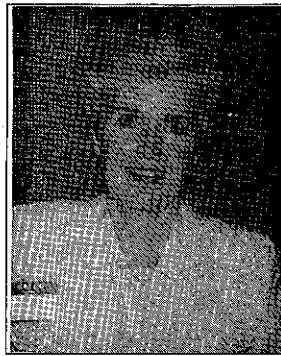


## Mary Lee McHenry

Mary Lee McHenry, who became a Master Gardener in 1992, is program chairman for the Old State House gardens. She enjoys Master Gardener trips and is looking forward to the spring tour through Texas. At Christmas, she received tree ornaments of gardening things

and a pair of goatskin gardening gloves. Her favorite plants are pansies and herbs, both of which she raises and sells under the name, "Fresh Herbs for Gourmets." White flies, especially in her basil, are frustrating to deal with, since chemical sprays cannot be used on edible herbs and flowers.

She has three daughters and one son-in-law. One daughter is an artist living in Little Rock, another is in development work at SMU in Dallas, and the third is a Washington, D.C., lobbyist. Mary Lee also snorkels, reads, travels and enjoys Razorback basketball. She tutors a boy in reading.



## Joan Zumwalt

Joan Zumwalt's major MG project is the landscaping at Jacksonville City Hall. Beginning three years ago, extensive beds have been developed incorporating four large berms and brick borders. The major display in the fall coordinates with the city's "Mums, Music and Muscadines" festival, so the committee plants and tends 600 chrysanthemums, in addition to the other flowers and plants. At home, Joan has up to 1,200 bulbs in her yard, including iris, tulips, daffodils and caladiums. She's involved with community activities, has a retail store and works on flower beds at two churches. Heavy mulching helps her keep up with her gardening chores. She is "bugged" mostly by aphids, lace bugs and white flies.

Her husband Mac is a retired military officer. She has two daughters in Arkansas and a son who is a NASA aerospace engineer in Langley, Va. Three grandchildren live in Virginia, and one lives in Little Rock.

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Commission will discuss backyard habitats. Lynn McMahon will cover tropical indoor plants, and Gerald Klingaman, a UA horticulture professor, will talk about hobby greenhouses. Other speakers include Mike Carter, who will discuss trees and new plants for home landscapes, and Janet Carson, who may do her radio show on location with a question-and-answer session.

Sunday's program will differ from previous years. Rather than formal speaking sessions, experts will demonstrate pruning, propagation, flower arranging, wildflower and herb sachet techniques. Observers may come and go as they wish, and they can obtain hands-on practice at the stations scattered around the exhibit hall. Books coinciding with each topic will be on sale.

Greenhouse committee chair Lois Corley, co-chair Phyllis Watson, Clark Taplin and other committee members are nurturing the "Pink Dream" azaleas that provide the show logo, and they're forcing tulips and daffodils, as well.

April Higgins, Dorothy Hobbs, Trudy Goolsby, Nan Jo Dubé, Jo Ann Janssen, Kristen Huddle, Julie Eckberg, Jeanne Lizar and chair Karen Vesole have been busy as bees as they plan "plantscape activities" for the 1,000 or more young people who will be looking for fun at the show. You can help by donating your dead-headed pansy blooms and other dried plant materials. Call Karen at

228-9704, if you have items to donate.

More show workers are needed during morning and afternoon all three days. Call Beth Phelps at 340-6650, or send in your form. No experience is necessary! Fledgling MGs can share the pride that yeoman MGs feel for the annual show.



Jackie Honea (left) and Pat Petkoff at the 1995 Garden Trivia Booth. Note the pink azaleas forced by MGs in the lower left corner.

# Plants Of the Month

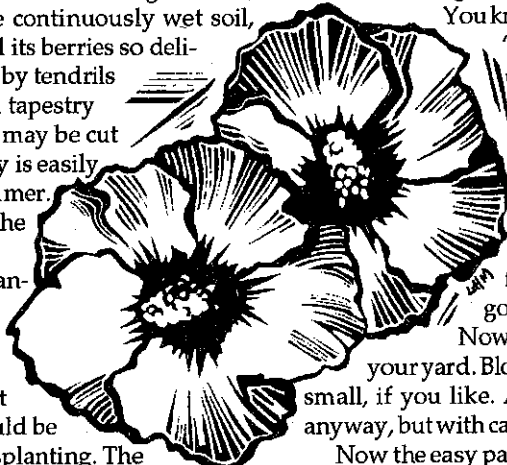
— Gladys Whitney

Since February is a great month for armchair gardening, it seems like a good time to look up a couple of not-so-common ornamental vines. Our MG tour of the Little Portion Monastery introduced some of us to the Porcelainberry Vine, *Ampelopsis Brevipedunculata Elegans*. This vine has a three-lobed, variegated leaf that is tinged with pink when young. The leaves are less than 2-1/2 inches and very delicate, but the fruit is spectacular! In September and October, there are clusters of yellow, aqua, purple and royal blue berries — all at the same time, and they may be used in arrangements.

*Ampelopsis* is not a bit fussy. It grows in sun or light shade, good soil or bad. Its only enemies are continuously wet soil, Japanese beetles and the birds that find its berries so delicious. The vine grows to 20 feet, clings by tendrils and may be used with other vines for a tapestry effect. Since it blooms on new wood, it may be cut to the ground each year. Porcelainberry is easily propagated from cuttings taken in summer.

Another vine worth considering is the Japanese Hydrangea, *Schizophragma hydrangeoides*. This is not a true hydrangea vine, but a first cousin with many of the same characteristics. It has a smoother, denser habit. This vine requires good, well-drained, moist soil. It grows slowly in sun or shade and should be treated as a container plant when transplanting. The vine may be reproduced by cuttings and should have good support to cling to with its rootlike holdfasts. The foliage of this vine is its gift (flowers are not fabulous), and the leaves of the "Moonlight" variety have a blue cast.

Both are available at Woodlanders, Inc., 1128 Colleton Ave., Aiken, SC 29801, or by calling 803-648-7522. (References: "Gardening with Groundcovers and Vines;" "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants.")



# Green Side Up

— Robert M. McGowan

The great thing about gardening is that it's not brain surgery, so the only thing you might hurt is your wallet. To protect that, do a little planning. Plan what you want — or don't want — and be realistic. Planning, whether small or grand, is a fine start to quickly attaining a well-maintained, landscaped yard. Even if you only make a mental plan, know what you are going to do before getting out in the yard. You'll be surprised at how executing your plans makes gardening easier.

February is a hard month to work (brrrr!). It's wet and sometimes everything is simply frozen. So, when it's not frozen, do some mulching. With a little planning, it's free.

You know the next word on the page — the dreaded "compost." It doesn't have to be terrible, and it's much better than dragging all the leaves and setting them on the curb for the city. By the way, the landfill folks have discovered they can make money in what others dispose of. They have a huge mulching machine that does a good job of blending. You pay \$35 for a long-wheel-base and \$25 for a short-wheel-base truck full. Ask for the good stuff — wink, wink — 888-5806.

Now back to the free stuff. Pick a discreet place in your yard. Blow, rake and push debris to the spot, and start small, if you like. All the potential mulch probably won't fit anyway, but with careful manipulation (stomp! stomp!) it might.

Now the easy part — wait one or two years. Stir, flip or rotate the leaves before and after good rains, and water every so often.

Remember, mulch is good; it doesn't matter how one chooses to obtain it, and I'd rather have too much than not enough.

Plus I haven't even mentioned all the wonderful elements mulch brings to existing soil.

So get fired up, make a great plan for your 1996 gardens, and then have some fun.

# Book Review — Jan Richardson

**Rodale's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Perennials** by Ellen Phillips and C. Colston Burrell, published by Rodale Press, 33 Minor Street, Emmaus, PA 18098, \$27.95, 9-12 x 7-1/2 inches, 532 pages

Even a casual reader of garden literature soon collects information on growing the common flowers, and a \$30 book that repeats that information with a few pictures is not a good buy. Although this is a relatively small book, it is encyclopedic in scope and should appeal to the novice, as well as the seasoned gardener. It's easy to read, beautifully illustrated, well written and well organized.

Part One, "Designing the Perennial Garden," covers the overall structure of the garden and the design of the flower beds, stressing the design within the beds. For instance, there is an admonition that "perennial islands should look like natural features. ... Avoid circular islands which look artificial unless you're planting around a pole." Suggested planting plans are included for all seasons, for sun and shade, with many plant materials that are suitable for growing here. Part Two covers "Perennial Gardening Basics." With only the detailed information provided, which includes many useful diagrams and charts, one could easily establish a perennial garden.

I'm thrilled when butterflies, birds and bees visit my garden. So, as a personal preference, I will not use most of the insecticides and fungicides; yet there are times when I long for roses with healthy green leaves or, in some years, simply with leaves. The chapter on perennial pest and disease control discusses biological and manual controls. Among many alternatives, there is a recipe for baking soda as a homemade spray on a wide range of fungal diseases, such as leaf spot, anthracnose and powdery mildew. The purchase of disease-resistant plants is stressed throughout the book.

The third and last section is an alphabetical listing of 157 plants with pictures, botanical names, pronunciations, common names, descriptions of the species, best cultivars and how to plant, maintain and propagate each. Detailed descriptions make selection of the best cultivar easy. The index is particularly useful in that common names are listed as well as botanical names.

# DiLemma's Desk

—David W. Landes

Refer your neighbors, friends and family to the following: A pound of pecans should produce about a half pound of kernels, depending on variety.

**Houseplants:** Winter months cause multiple problems, including low humidity from our dry heat, shorter daylight hours and overwatering (which is the biggest killer). Try clustering plants together in the bathroom or on a pebble tray filled with water. Place near a bright window away from drafts or use artificial lighting. Cut down the watering — this is the resting period for most plants. Suggested plants for the "growing impaired" are Sansevieria, Chinese evergreens and Nephthytis.

**Vegetables:** Average final frost date is April 8 for central Arkansas, 7-10 days earlier for southern counties and 7-10 days later for northern counties. Start tomato seeds 6 to 8 weeks prior to allow for maturity, and wait 7-10 days after frost danger is past and soil warms before transplanting. Irish potatoes are small, whole certified seed potatoes or seed pieces about 1.5-2 ounces. Plant between February 15 and March 15 for central Arkansas (this must be done before hot weather arrives).

**Lawns:** Wild onion digging is only for the most fit or organic gardeners. For the rest, there are several chemical controls. Please take time to thoroughly read the labels on any chemicals you use. Round-Up should *only* be used on Bermuda grass lawns and *only* during the dormant phase. Other options for the other turf grasses are the 2,4-D products, Trimec or 33 Plus. These require three applications for total control — now, next fall and next spring. Note that cold weather slows the herbicides, so be patient.

**Ornamentals:** Crepe myrtles should be pruned the last week of February, if needed, before new growth begins in the spring. Fertilizing should be done now, if needed. They do not need to be pruned unless there is a specific size or shape you want them to be. Prune spent bloom clusters before seed clusters begin to form, and your crepe myrtles will bloom again before frost.

**Trees:** Fruit trees should be sprayed with a dormant oil. Choose a mild day and apply thoroughly to smother overwintering insects and diseases. Remove any old fruit and debris. Prune in late February or early March — earlier pruning risks frost injury.

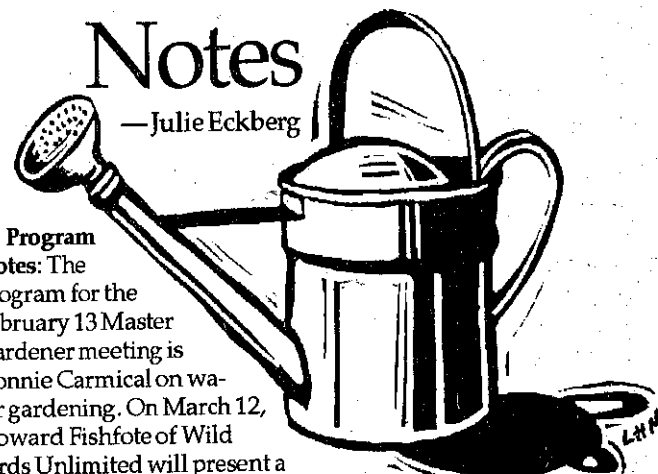
## Calendar Of Events — Gladys Whitney

- February 13,** MG Meeting, Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.  
**February 23-25,** Arkansas Flower & Garden Show, Statehouse Convention Center  
**March 2-3, 9-10,** Camden Jonquil Festival  
**March 12,** MG Meeting, Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.  
**March 18,** Arbor Day  
**March 23-24,** State Daffodil Show, Hulen Hall, Hendrix College, Conway  
**April 13,** Crash Bird Course, Audubon Society and Pinnacle Mountain State Park. Fee and reservations required. 868-5806  
**April 20,** Arkansas Unit of Herb Society of America presents an Herb Education Day at Trinity Methodist Church. 664-0559  
**April 25,** Trip to Texas Hill Country — A Janet Carson Tour

# Master Gardener

## Notes

—Julie Eckberg



### Program

**Notes:** The program for the February 13 Master Gardener meeting is Donnie Carmical on water gardening. On March 12, Howard Fishfote of Wild Birds Unlimited will present a program on nesting and how to feed birds.

**Dues:** It's time to pay your 1996 Master Gardener dues. (New MGs are not required to pay their first year.) Make your \$10 check payable to Master Gardeners of Pulaski County and mail it to our treasurer, Ann Cooper, 31 Rocky Valley Cove, Little Rock, AR 72212-3171. Or, you can pay your dues at the February meeting.

**Flower and Garden Show:** Remember to send your flower and garden show volunteer forms back to Beth as soon as possible, if you have not yet returned them!

MGs are now affiliated with the Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs, so come to the February 7 meeting at 10 a.m. at the club (corner of Lee and Kavanaugh) to "Look Ahead to the Flower Show." Norma Weems, a national horticultural judge, will give you pointers on entering the horticultural division of the flower show. Pre-registration for the flower show ends at 6 p.m., February 19. For more information, call Marjorie Van Egmond, 224-7632.

## Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

A great big thank you to the following businesses for the door prizes they gave the Pulaski County Master Gardeners for the Christmas Party:

- Arkansas Landscape and Garden Center
- Cantrell Gardens
- Capitol Wholesale Florist
- City Farmer
- Good Earth Nursery
- Green Tree Nursery
- Hocott's Nursery
- Lakewood Gardens
- Maumelle Nursery
- Mid-South Seeds
- North Hills Florist
- Rollins Nursery
- Tropical Wholesalers
- White Wagon Farms

Also a big thank you to the social committee for a wonderful Christmas Party. Chairman of the social committee for 1995 was Wincie Hughes. Members of the 1995 committee were: Dale Adcock, Anita Chamberlain, Sarah Clark, Linda Fitzhugh, Barbara Johnson, Jan King, Carolyn Newbern, Dana Nixon, Pat Petkoff and Maxine Ramage.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

# February Gardening Checklist

—Laura Lasiter

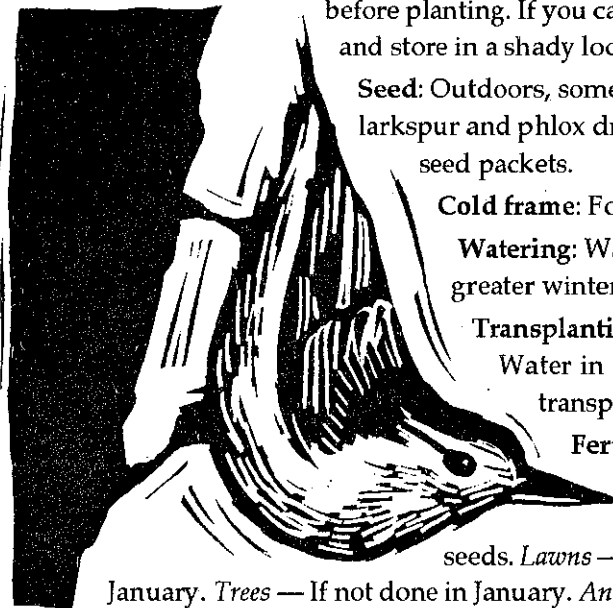
**Planning:** On paper, lay out and organize new designs for gardens and herbs; start construction of raised beds, borders and planter boxes.

**Mail Orders:** This is a good time to place seed orders to ensure availability. Order bare-root roses, perennials and shrubs.

**Soil:** For new planting sites, get your soil tested to determine the proper amendments to add. For existing sites, make it easy on yourself this year — what you do now will determine how much watering, cultivating and weeding you do later. Amend that soil (mulch, compost, etc.)! You'll be happy you did.

**Bulbs:** Purchase pre-chilled bulbs for indoor displays of color and fragrance. Some suggestions include hyacinths in glasses, paperwhites and daffodils.

**Planting:** Now is still a good time to plant balled and burlapped trees and shrubs and bare-root plant material. As soon after February 15 as possible is the ideal time to plant roses, dogwood and broad-leaved evergreens, especially magnolias and hollies. Notes on bare-rooted plants: only buy plants that are still dormant, and soak the roots in water overnight before planting. If you cannot plant right away, cover the roots with moist soil or compost and store in a shady location.



**Seed:** Outdoors, some seed that can be sowed now are annual candytuft, cornflowers, larkspur and phlox drummondii. There are others — check your reference materials or seed packets.

**Cold frame:** For early bloom, plant seeds as well as cuttings of shrubs.

**Watering:** Water if soil gets dry. Remember, if the soil is dry, plants will suffer greater winter damage.

**Transplanting:** While still dormant, transplant or relocate trees and shrubs. Water in with "Superthrive" or root stimulator for all newly planted or transplanted material to ensure success.

**Fertilizing:** *Roses* — Apply top dressing of cottonseed meal and bone meal under generous layer of compost or rotted manure.

Dehydrated manure eliminates danger of nut grass and weed seeds. *Lawns* — Apply lime, if needed and you have not done this in December or

January. *Trees* — If not done in January. *Annuals* — As the weather begins to warm, cool season annuals will begin to grow and bloom. Give them a boost by applying a slow-release fertilizer at the rate recommended on the label.

**Prune:** Crepe myrtles, roses, ornamental fruit trees, shrubs, liriope and ornamental grasses. Be sure to prune according to specific type of plant, i.e., (1) Wait as long as possible to prune fruit trees. If pruned too early, they can break dormancy early and might suffer damage from a late cold snap; (2) All roses are not pruned alike — hybrid teas differ from floribunda, etc. — and all shrubs are not pruned alike. Check the literature to be sure. Wait to prune your forsythia or flowering quince until after they bloom.

**Weeds:** Apply pre-emergence herbicides now. You can apply them to an established lawn as well as newly planted ground cover and shrub beds. Read the directions, and follow them carefully.

**Insect control:** Apply dormant oil spray such as "Sun Oil" to trees, shrubs, evergreens, roses and the perennial border for control of borers, mites, aphids and scale later in the year. Check the label for optimum temperature conditions — usually recommendations call for a calm day when the temperature is above 40 degrees and no rain is expected for 24 hours. Spray plants before leaf buds open to avoid burning them. Note: Do not use oil spray on sugar or Japanese maple, walnut, beech or magnolia trees. Inspect cool season annuals and vegetable plants for aphids — 'tis the season! Aphids can easily be controlled with insecticidal soap.

**Cold protection:** Still needed this month for those tender plants.

**Birds:** Don't forget our feathered friends — fill those feeders and provide a regular supply of fresh water. If possible, feed suet, doughnuts, cornmeal mixed with peanut butter and other fatty foods to help keep them warm.

# Favorite Recipe

Lots of people at the Christmas party asked for the following recipe. It was delicious!

## Easy Marble Bark

- 6 1-ounce squares semi-sweet chocolate
- 6 1-ounce squares white chocolate
- 1 cup toasted chopped nuts or coconut

Toast the nuts in a baking pan in a 350-degree oven for 7 to 12 minutes, stirring frequently.

Microwave the semi-sweet and white chocolates in separate bowls on high for 2 minutes, or until almost melted, stirring halfway through the heating time. Stir until completely melted.

Stir 1/2 cup of nuts or coconut into each bowl.

Alternately spoon melted chocolates onto waxed paper-lined cookie sheet or tray.

Swirl chocolates together with knife to marbelize.

Refrigerate one hour, or until firm.

Break into pieces.

Enjoy!

# Trading Post

— Julie Eckberg

Connie R. Smith wants rhubarb. 851-8234

Fred Henker wants tarragon and rosemary. 565-7260

Marie Flickinger wants flowering shrubs, perennials, small nandinas, etc. 758-4202

Martha Staples has angle-leaf begonias and aloe vera. She wants orchids. 663-5238

Stacy N. Coggins wants spearmint and other mints, such as hot peppermint or lemon mint. 225-2778.

David Dodson wants amaryllis. 228-1370

Jan King has four tomato cages, approximately 6 to 8 feet tall. 758-3446

## Master Minutes Staff

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# 1996 Master Gardener Officers And Chairmen

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Victorian Cottage .....	Marie Flickinger, Chairman
War Memorial Garden .....	Wini Carter, Chairman
Zoo Garden .....	currently inactive, due to construction

The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.



Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture



# MASTER MINUTES

March 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 2

## Committee Spotlight: Pinnacle Mountain State Park

—Helen Hronas



Many of the Pinnacle Mountain State Park committee members recently gathered at the garden for a workday.  
Photo by Ellen Kane

Goals and dreams are coming to fruition at the Pinnacle Mountain State Park project. Major changes are in store this spring for the Visitors' Center entrance and parking lot. Thanks to Pinnacle employees, terraces have been bulldozed to stabilize beds around the entrance gate. A large contingent of helpful and courteous youthful first-time offenders have moved tons of heavy rocks to accommodate plans, new committee chairperson, Martha Whitehurst says. (Martha became chair after Marie Jordan took a leave of absence because of her husband's illness.) Co-chairs are

Maxine Hamilton and Bonnie Cargile.

The unique challenge for the Pinnacle committee is the regulation that plantings are limited exclusively to flowers, plants and trees native to Arkansas. The committee is indebted to author Carl Hunter for the native plants he is furnishing — and thanks to committee member Jay Hill, for his helpful contact with Carl.

The committee has divided into groups for weekly maintenance. Work days are scheduled when all committee members will labor together. Beds will be maintained on either side of the Visitors' Center as well as the nearby butterfly garden. A large rip-rap area centered in the parking lot will become a lovely flower bed.

Committee member Kristin Huddle believes she has found her niche, at last, at the arboretum, a 71-acre site within the park. The arboretum came about through the

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Author and consultant, Carl Hunter

vision of long-time park interpreter Randy Johnson. In the center of the state, all of the six natural divisions of topography, surface geology and vegetation in Arkansas are represented, making it possible to grow plants native to each division in one microcosm, Kristin explains. The overall mission is to create an increased awareness and appreciation of the state's unique forest communities and their many benefits to the citizens of Arkansas. The Arkansas Trail is a paved, handicapped-accessible, .6-mile hiking trail within the arboretum. This year five benches will be installed by interested individuals and garden clubs.

The arboretum has mushroomed into such a large project for Partners for Pinnacle and other volunteers that responsibilities have been split, with Kristin in charge of the educational aspect and committee member Diane Tidwell responsible for site development.

All Master Gardeners are invited to attend a tour guide training workshop Thursday, May 28, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Visitors' Center. Lunch will be provided by Partners for Pinnacle. If you're interested, call Traci Guinee at 868-5806 by Monday, March 25. Leave a message if you miss her. Four hours CE credit will be given for the workshop; some credit will be given toward volunteer hours for guiding school groups.

Other hardworking Pinnacle committee members are: Wini Carter, Nancy Casey, Ann Cooper, April Higgins, Earl Hilliard, Jo Ann Janssen, Martha Jones, Ellen Kane, Peggy Leopoulos, Jeanne Lizar, Mary Lee McHenry, Arlee E. Pollard, Nancy Porter, Jan Richardson, Nancy Rorex, Cathy Sanders, Leslie Scott and Connie R. Smith.

A number of MGs also are involved in Partners for Pinnacle and as park volunteers.

Pinnacle is an ongoing, extensive project, but with the enthusiasm of these diligent committee members, it is fast becoming an impressive natural masterpiece.

## Green Side Up — Robert McGowan

March already, wow! Time is truly flying by! Grass! Everyone has grass, but few of us have a well-maintained lawn. Yes, we all know a well-maintained lawn enhances the landscape. Let's work together now and make our grasses a lawn.

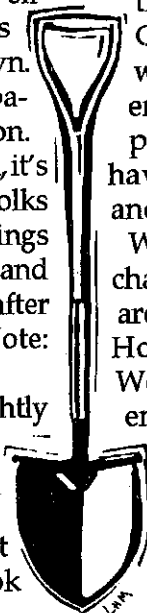
If you get on it early and do a little pre-preparation, you can enjoy a beautiful lawn all season. Get out there and get that soil sample. Come on, it's really not that bad. Besides, Beth and the nice folks at the Cooperative Extension need some more things to do. And it will help you get out on your lawn and look for trouble spots from last year's neglect, after you have followed your soil sample guide. Note: too much soil is better than not enough!

Now we move into prevention of those unsightly weeds like crabgrass. We have to kill when they are seed. This is called selective weed control. We need to find out the type of grass we have and the pre-emergent needed to work with that type of grass. You can look in our MG handbook or ask your nursery or agri store.

Also, be cautious when reading the label. Note: Always water after using a pre-emergent and check the weather — above 60 degrees is optimum.

Get everything ready now, so that when the weather turns nice, you are ready to use that pre-emergent. In my many trips across golf fairways, putting greens, courtyards and backyards, I haven't found that one brand is superior over another. The important thing is getting it done.

When your soil sample comes back, follow the chart to determine which nutrients and elements are needed. Typically in this region, lime is added. However, that's why soil samples are important. We don't want to guess what elements and nutrients need to be worked into the soil. We want to be accurate, and the soil test will tell us. A little prep sampling will get you *yards* down the road to a beautiful lawn. Have fun!



*Anyone who has a bulb has spring.*

— Anonymous



# Plant Of The Month

—Jackye Shipley Finch

If you're thinking of planting a tree on Arbor Day this month, you might want to consider something a little out of the ordinary — like the serviceberry tree. This tree has many good features — perhaps its best is the beauty of its blooms, which normally appear this month in Arkansas.

It's the first bloomer of spring — even earlier than the dogwood — and it is a startling vision, with its profusion of starry white blooms against the bare winter wood of surrounding trees. The five-petaled blooms appear before leaves do and measure nearly one inch across.

The leaves appear after the blooms and are similar to apple and pear except they are finer and more delicate. They're oval, pointed and two to four inches long. As they emerge from the bud, the leaves are a dullish purple-brown and have silky hairs. As they mature, the leaves turn deep green on top and pale green underneath. In autumn, the leaves turn yellow.

The serviceberry tree (amelanchier) is a member of the rose family, as are plums, cherries, apples, crabapples, hawthorns, peaches, pears, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries and dewberries. Considering these delicious cousins, it's no surprise the berries from the serviceberry tree are considered by one source as treats to "birds, boys and bears." And one writer of an earlier time claims serviceberry pie ranks in the first order of desserts.

The dark, purple-red berries appear in June (thus another of its common names, Juneberry), are approximately one-third inch long, have delicious juicy pulp and small seeds and taste like blueberries. One of the only drawbacks is that one tree seldom bears more than a quart of berries.

best time for planting, although it can be done any time. In the wild, the serviceberry tree is usually found like the dogwood, in the shade of surrounding trees. However, it also thrives in full sun. It is easily grown in any soil that does not dry out, and it needs no pruning.

Its trunk development seldom exceeds 18 inches; more commonly it grows to a range of six to 12 inches. The trunk is usually straight and sturdy, with a narrow, rounded top. Its smooth gray bark is sometimes marked with shallow fissures and black streaks.

Because it does not grow in abundance, the serviceberry tree has no commercial importance. Its dark brown wood is the fifth hardest. It's extremely dense, strong and close-grained, making it an ideal choice for handsome tools, and it takes a beautiful polish.

Already growing in Europe and northern Asia, the serviceberry tree was introduced to North America in 1746. The Romans called it "sorbus;" in Shakespearean English, it was "sarviss." Today's name has several explanations. One is that its bloom-laden limbs were cut to adorn church services in the early spring. Another claim is that the berries are of service to bird, man and beast (or "birds, boys and bears").

The serviceberry tree is also sometimes called the shadbush, for in the times of early settlers, the tree bloomed along the banks of tidal rivers about the time shad came up to spawn.

If you're thinking the serviceberry tree might be just what your garden needs, experts say it blends well at the edge of woodlands, ponds and stream banks. If your garden is not estate-size, blend the serviceberry into shrub borders or evergreen backgrounds. It is especially beau-

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Although it is not found anywhere in abundance — it usually grows singly as an undercover tree in wooded areas — it is hardy in zones 4 through 9, covering a range from Newfoundland and Ontario south to the Gulf and west to Kansas and Minnesota. In the south, the serviceberry tree is often no bigger than a bush or shrub, although it can grow to 30 feet. In the north, it can reach 70 feet.

According to Master Gardener Mike Carter, the serviceberry tree is a medium-growth tree, adding about one foot per year, and it can be planted at any size, from one- to five-gallon size to balled-in-burlap size. Winter is the

tiful when underplanted with spring-flowering bulbs.

Cultivars are Autumn Sunset, Ballerina, Cole, Forest Prince, Robin Hill and Springtime. There are three others, lately named, that perhaps give a modern-day meaning to the name service. They are Prince Charles, Princess Diana and Prince William.

Sources: "Trees of the South," Charlotte Hilton Green; "The Garden Trees Handbook," Alan Toogood; "A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America," Peattie; "A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs," Petrides; Master Gardener Mike Carter, Lakewood Gardens, North Little Rock; and Beth Phelps, County Extension Agent.

# Master Gardener Notes

— Julie Eckberg

Beth says the phones are beginning to ring at the extension office, so it would be a great time for new Master Gardeners to put in some of their required phone hours. There are experienced MGs who will work with new MGs requesting help in learning the telephone routine. (Some of the MGs actually like phone duty best of all the MG activities!)

Don't forget to pay your 1996 dues (experienced Master Gardeners only) of \$1 per family. Checks can be made payable to Pulaski County Master Gardeners and sent to our treasurer, Ann Cooper. If you would like to mail your check, her address is 31 Rocky Valley Cove, Little Rock, AR 72212-3171.

Please note these changes in the 1996 MG chairpeople: Martha Whitehurst is now chairperson for Pinnacle Mountain, with Maxine Hamilton and Bonnie Cargile as co-chairs. Ann Cooper is co-chair for War Memorial Garden and Ruth Owings and Francis Young are co-chairs for the State Hospital.

We have another change in our new MG roster. Connie Ruth Smith's new address is #6 Barber Cove, Maumelle, AR 72113. Her home phone number is 851-8234; her work number is unchanged.

Linda Dantzler and Jan King are planning a daffodil trip to Camden to tour the gardens of Thera Lou Adams and Roxanne Danielson Thursday, March 14. One of the gardens also has an oriental area. If we can get 30 to 40 people to sign up for the trip, Beth will try to get a bus — the five-hour round-trip should be fun, with lots of MG social time. (The cost would be about \$10 per person, nonrefundable, if 35 people sign up.) Call Beth or Mrs. McKinney (340-6650), or Linda Dantzler (771-0844) to register. There is a \$2 entrance fee for one of the gardens. We will leave at 8:30 a.m. from the 2nd Presbyterian Church parking lot. We will leave Camden about 3 or 3:30 p.m. and return between 5 and 5:30 p.m.

The Pinnacle Committee has announced Arboretum Tour Guide Training (which counts as recertification/education points) for March 28, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The class is limited to 30 people. Call the park by March 25 to sign up, so they can plan lunch.

There may be a "Horticulture Hotline" in the works at the Extension Office. Because of the volume of calls answered (more than 16,600 gardening questions last year), they are trying to set up an automatic answering system whereby callers are given a menu of numbers to select from. Pre-recorded answers would be provided to the callers. There will be access to the hotline in the evening also. If the plan works out, there will be lots of publicity beforehand, and Beth will probably need volunteers to help record scripts for answers.

Here are two new opportunities for MG volunteers:

Saturday, March 23, Southwest Branch Library Family Days

Saturday, May 4, Fletcher Library Family Days

MGs are needed to hand out soil sample paraphernalia, accept soil samples, speak on the MG program and answer gardening questions. Please call Beth if you can volunteer; she will need several people for each day.

The Garden Club of America Zone IX meeting will be in Little Rock March 26 through 28, hosted by the Little Rock Garden Club. The horticulture and conservation meetings will be available free of charge to interested persons, as theater capacities allow.

Reservations for these meetings are necessary, however, and will be accepted beginning March 1. For reservations, call Cita Cobb, 666-1995. Specify which event or events you will attend and leave your name, address, phone number and the organization you represent so that they may have the information for their records. There are three sections open to public participation:

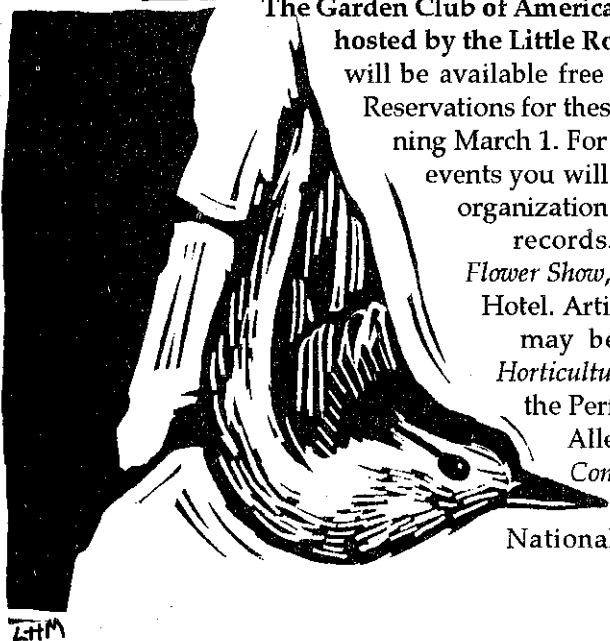
*Flower Show*, Wednesday, March 27, 1 to 5 p.m., East Lobby of the Excelsior Hotel. Artistic, horticultural, conservation and other educational exhibits may be viewed free of charge on that day from 1 to 5 p.m..

*Horticultural Meeting*, Wednesday, March 27, 1 p.m., Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts. The meeting features an illustrated lecture by P.

Allen Smith, landscape designer, of Birnam Woods Nursery, Ltd.

*Conservation Meeting*, Thursday, March 28, 10 a.m., Arkansas Arts Center theater. Dr. David Northerington, director of the new

National Wildlife Research Center in Austin, Texas, will speak.



# March Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**PRUNE:** Roses (the first week of the month), crape myrtles, evergreens (if not done in February), and ivy (cut back hard). For climbing roses that bloom once per year, prune after blooming and seal cuts with pruning paint or white glue.

**FERTILIZE:** All the garden, except acid-loving plants. A small amount of bone meal early will increase the size of tulip and daffodil flowers. Fertilize cool season grasses (rye, fescue, bluegrass). Warm season grasses should be fertilized after green-up. Trees may be fertilized now before green-up of lawn. This will help those trees that were damaged or stressed during the previous year.

**MULCH:** Replenish mulch on azaleas and camellias.

**INSECT AND DISEASE CONTROLS:** Apply final dormant oil roses leaf out, begin spraying every week to 10 days with disease. If fungus has been a problem in red-tip photinia, apply fresh mulch and spray with Daconil, Funginex and again two weeks later. (Consider eleagnus as evergreen planting.)

spray for roses; as Funginex to control remove mulch, or Bordeaux now an alternate

**ORNAMENTALS:** Still time to plant magnolias, hollies, etc. Divide and replant border plants. Flowering shrubs may be moved with ball of dirt, small plants bare-rooted. March is the best month to move crape myrtles.

**ANNUALS:** Sow seeds or plant seedlings. Several annuals can be planted now — snapdragons, dianthus, calendulas, sweet peas, alyssum, pansies and lobelia. New varieties of these plants are introduced every year and are worth trying.

**PERENNIALS AND HERBS:** Plant seedlings now for early root establishment. Note: Dipping temperatures this month are still very probable, so take precautions to protect newly planted seedlings. Many perennials do not bloom well or at all the first year, but purchasing full one-gallon plants now could remedy this problem. These larger plants were probably started last year, making them ready to perform well for you this year. Wait until danger of frost is past (after April 5 to 10) to set out herbs.

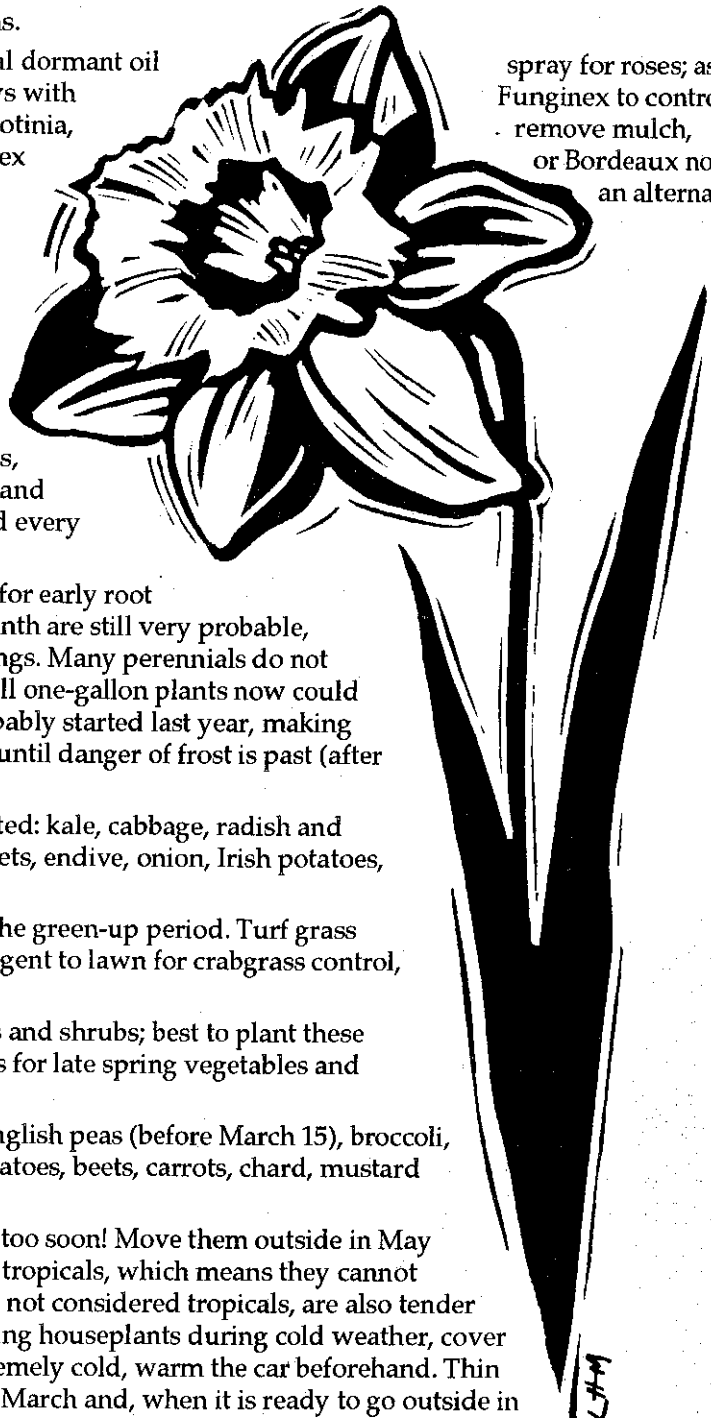
**VEGETABLES:** Seedlings of cole crops can be planted: kale, cabbage, radish and cauliflower. Other types include lettuce, turnips, beets, endive, onion, Irish potatoes, Swiss chard, snap beans and carrots.

**LAWNS:** Don't use herbicides on the lawn during the green-up period. Turf grass is very sensitive during this time. Apply a pre-emergent to lawn for crabgrass control, if needed, by March 15 in Central Arkansas.

**STILL OKAY TO:** Plant balled and burlapped trees and shrubs; best to plant these before they break dormancy. Start seedlings indoors for late spring vegetables and flowers.

**PLANT:** New roses (before March 15), tree roses, English peas (before March 15), broccoli, spinach, turnip greens, lettuce, cabbage, onions, potatoes, beets, carrots, chard, mustard greens, parsnips and radishes.

**HOUSEPLANTS:** Don't move houseplants outside too soon! Move them outside in May and then back inside in September. Some plants are tropicals, which means they cannot stand temperatures below 55 degrees. Others, while not considered tropicals, are also tender below 55 degrees. To ensure plant health when buying houseplants during cold weather, cover them before taking them out to your car and, if extremely cold, warm the car beforehand. Thin out hibiscus branches in winter, prune back hard in March and, when it is ready to go outside in May, fertilize it well.



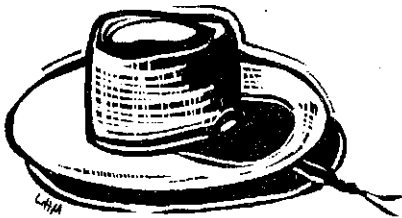
# DiLemma's Desk — David Landes

The following were answers given during March last year from the help desk. So pass them on to your neighbors, friends and family.

**Lawns:** Fescue lawns should be fertilized this month. March and April are the peak growing period, and you can use a high-nitrogen fertilizer to help grasses take off.

For bare spots, throw out a turf-type of fescue. Or use Fesc-Blue *sod*, which was recommended because it will have a better chance of surviving the summer than spring-seeded fescue.

Warm-season grasses (Bermuda, Zoysia, St. Augustine or Centipede) need to be de-thatched. Think about following up with a pre-emergent herbicide



to control weeds (apply before March 15 in Central Arkansas), since the lawn may be weak from the de-thatching. Hold

off on fertilizer until the lawn recovers, roughly in late April.

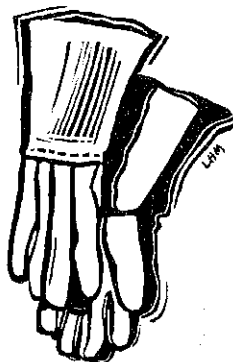
**Strawberries:** The most common answers to questions tell everyone to ensure that the garden bed has good drainage and plenty of sunlight.

During the first growing season, pick off any flower buds or fruits that form, to allow for strong runner production and thus more fruit next season.

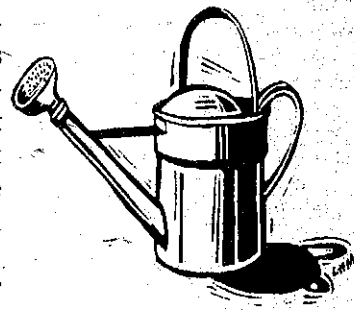
The best advice is to have people stop by the County Extension Office for the fact sheet.

**Ornamentals:** Reminder from *last* month's calendar: Bare root plants, those in a plastic sleeve, must be planted while they are *dormant*. If the trees have leafed out and are growing, avoid purchasing them. Although they may seem like bargains with their marked-down prices, the plants will not thrive.

March is a good month for you to plant balled-in burlap trees and shrubs. Common mistakes gardeners make are not removing all the wire or string, or leaving the burlap cover on and exposed to the surface, which acts as a wick, drawing the water away from the plant.



As for pruning outdoor evergreen shrubs such as photenias, hollies and boxwoods that need severe pruning, it should be done before new growth begins in late February or early March. This will cover up the cut edges.



Don't prune any spring-blooming shrubs until after the blooming, or you will remove the flowers.

**Houseplants:** As the days begin to lengthen, tropicals (including allemande, hibiscus and bougainvillea) are leggy or sparse in growth. Prune them as severely as you want.

Don't be lead into a false sense of security by the warm weather. Wait until April and warm nights (55 degrees or more) before moving any houseplant outdoors.

Also be careful of the bright sun during "airing." It can burn leaves or cause a drastic change to the most hardy plants, resulting in dropped leaves or unsightly scorched areas.

The key word for March is "wait."

## Trading Post

— Julie Eckberg

Linda Dantzler wants light, baby-pink poppy seeds or plants. 771-0844

Marie Flickinger wants hydrangeas, perennials, and blooming shrubs. 758-4202.

Marge Van Egmond has garlic chive seeds. 224-7632

Jack Singleton wants Mexican heather. 753-1325

Ray Robbins has Jerusalem artichokes. 227-6565

Annette Hurley has ivy; wants ajuga. 221-1878

Fred Henker has bird of paradise. 565-7260

Bill Burgin has sundrops, double orange day-lilies. 221-3559

Stacy Coggins wants spearmint. 225-2778

## Book Review — Jan Richardson

"The Romantic Garden," by Graham Rose, published by Penguin Books, 1988, price \$16.95, 167 pages. A new edition of this popular book will be released next month. The paperback will cost \$18.95 and hard cover \$27.50.

Romantic gardens have been prized for the past 300 years and continue to be extremely popular today. The purpose of "The Romantic Garden" is to "provide a guide to create a beautiful and private garden paradise."

The author, who is a gardening correspondent for the *Sunday Times* (London), defines his use of the adjective "romantic" as the practice of dealing in extravagant fictions — of producing a garden which makes one "ignore the world outside and believe that the impossible is readily attainable." Rose stresses that a garden can be produced which makes the observer ignore the eyesores next door, the noisy neighbors or the sounds of the highway a short distance away.

He focuses on the history of the "romantic garden," its appeal and its various types, such as: exotic, secluded, secret, moated, treasure and woodland. Although many suggestions are not practical for most of us, the book is informative and entertaining and serves to make the reader aware of a wide range of possible design solutions.

*Rose defines "romantic" as the practice of dealing in extravagant fictions.*

I first read this book when beginning my present garden on a rather narrow lot in the Heights, and it influenced many decisions and the result I achieved — although I haven't constructed a moat, caves or grottos and many of the other romantic elements discussed.

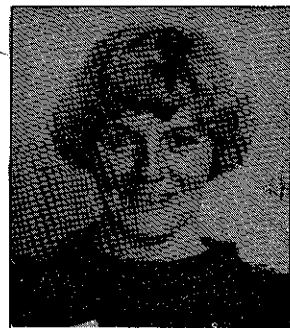
The author writes that size is no limitation on one's ability to construct a garden with romantic elements, since he has seen them used successfully in spaces of less than 200 square feet. He begins to create a sanctuary by excluding the extraneous world with walls or plantings which sometimes disguise the boundaries. Then he creates a memorable entrance into the garden — a door or gate. The garden is divided into internal "rooms" by screens, hedges and pergolas. He includes suggestions for inclusion of arbors, garlanded swings, pavilions, loggias and arcades.

Rose discusses creation of dramatic emphasis with vases, pots, urns, statues, temples, follies, ruins, mirrors, orbs, crystals, prisms, pools, basins, fountains, caves, grottos or outcrops. Of course, no one will include all of the elements presented unless you have a garden the size of Bellingrath. But becoming aware of the wide range of choices developed over hundreds of years — and how to achieve each — can result in a spectacular modern-day garden with romantic elements.

Various plants (scientific names only) are suggested, and there is a USDA hardiness zone rating for each. The color illustrations, entertaining style and wealth of information produce a charming book which makes a great addition to a gardening library.

## Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

### Janie Steele

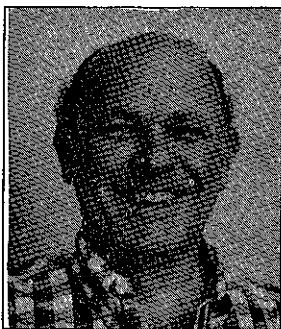


Janie Steele, who became a Master Gardener in 1994, was born and raised in Little Rock. Her husband, Leon, is with the agriculture department, and her daughter lives in Dallas.

She was a city girl until Leon introduced her to farming in the Huntsville area. Then they moved to Hot Springs, where she worked in a greenhouse and learned a great deal about propagating and growing plants. She even had her own greenhouse for a while.

Last summer she built a pond in her backyard, complete with a waterfall. She especially likes the new Stella de Oro daylily and the Achimenes which she uses in her window boxes.

Her major MG work activity is at the Old State House, where she makes use of her favorite tool, a short-handled Japanese hoe which she bought in San Francisco.



### Mike Sturdivant

Mike Sturdivant, who became a Master Gardener in 1995, grew up in Little Rock. He has a daughter and son living in Little Rock, and a son who lives in Kentucky. He was a manager for Wal-Mart in Missouri until he retired and returned to Little Rock.

Mike became interested in gardening when he mowed grass and weeded gardens for some neighbors — he got hooked and has been going strong ever since.

He likes all kinds of flowers, except roses. He thinks they're the prettiest plant but are the most time consuming to care for, so he doesn't grow them — or vegetables, which he likes to raise the least.

One of his favorite gardening tools is a mulching lawn mower with a bag that's really great for picking up leaves. His major MG work activities are the Old Mill and the State Hospital.

## Celebrate Arbor Day

Arkansans celebrate Arbor Day the third Monday of March, which is March 21 this year. Many committees throughout the state recognize Arbor Day with ceremonies involving tree planting, tree care education and free trees for planting. Get involved with your community celebration projects — they need your participation and ideas!

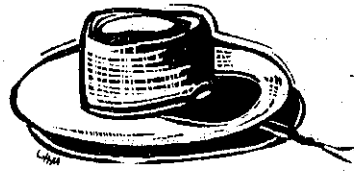
## Visit Daffodil Ridge On Your Own

Charlotte Roush of Daffodil Ridge has tentative set aside March 19 for those Master Gardeners who might want to visit her beautiful garden outside Sheridan. *This will not be a regularly scheduled Master Gardener trip.*

If you're interested in viewing her garden, you will need to make your own arrangements. Please call her at 942-7957 for directions and times. If you have additional questions, please call Linda Dantzler, 771-0844.

## Master Minutes Staff

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 Claude Epperson

The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
 County Extension Agent — Agriculture

# Calendar Of Events — Gladys Whitney

March 2-3, 9-10 Camden Jonquil Festival

March 8 Arkansas Beekeeper Association Meeting, 6 p.m., St. Vincent Infirmary Medical Center (The association meets the second Friday of the month at 6 p.m. Call MGs Ray Robbins (227-6565) or Aleta Newell (666-0991) for more information.

March 12 MG Meeting, Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.

March 14 Daffodil Tour to Camden to tour gardens (one oriental). (See MG Notes for details.)

March 18 Arbor Day

March 23 Southwest Branch Library Family Day. (See MG Notes for details.)

March 23-24 State Daffodil Show, Hulen Hall, Hendrix College, Conway.

March 26-28 Garden Club of America Zone IX Meeting, Little Rock (See MG Notes for details.)

March 28 Pinnacle Mountain Arboretum Tour Guide Training (See MG Notes for details.)

April 13 Crash Bird Course, Audubon Society and Pinnacle Mountain State Park. Fee and reservations required, 868-5806.

April 20 Arkansas Unit of Herb Society of America presents an Herb Education Day at Trinity Methodist Church. 664-0559

April 25 Trip to Texas Hill Country — A Janet Carson Tour

May 4 Fletcher Library Family Day (See MG Notes for details.)

May 6-8 Southeast Region Master Gardener Continued Training Conference, Pensacola Beach, Florida. For information, contact Escambia County Extension Service, c/o Continued Training, P.O. Box 7154, Pensacola, FL 32534.



# MASTER MINUTES

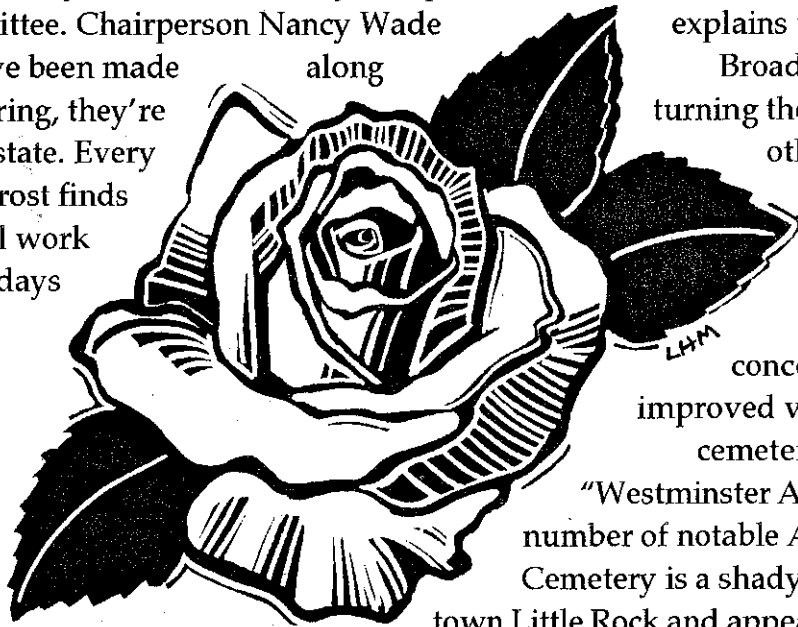
April 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 3

## Committee Spotlight: Mount Holly Cemetery

— Helen Hronas

Come by Mount Holly Cemetery anytime between the end of April and fall, but especially during the month of May, and be amazed by the spectacular old-fashioned rose display created by this small committee. Chairperson Nancy Wade explains that new plantings of antique roses have been made along Broadway over the past three years. This spring, they're turning the corners onto 13th Street and the Interstate. Every other Thursday from March 21 through frost finds the group hard at work, and special work sessions are scheduled on Saturdays from time to time, as well.



The committee is concentrating on "New Dawn" roses, an improved variety, for the four square block cemetery, which has been nicknamed the "Westminster Abbey" of Arkansas because of the large number of notable Arkansans interred there. Mount Holly Cemetery is a shady, park-like oasis in the midst of downtown Little Rock and appears on the National Register of Historic Places.

Latest committee plans are to do more propagation using the greenhouse and to work toward establishing more of the same hardy varieties found in the cemetery. The roses bloomed so beautifully last year that the committee received many complimentary calls, Nancy says.

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Congratulations to these hardworking committee members on a job well done: Virginia Johnson, Anthony Black, Ruth Parker, Pat Petkoff, Gladys Whitney, Molly Satterfield, Carolyn Stout, Sheila Mehaffy, Suzanne O'Donoghue, Carolyn Goettsch, Sally Sanderson, Jackye Finch, Karen Anderson, Kay Shurgar, and chair, Nancy Wade.

"If you are willing to learn, the rose will teach you. — Cynthia Westcott

# Plant Of The Month

— Gladys Whitney

Remember that old rose your mother had growing on the trellis? The one that always bloomed and that she said she got from your grandmother? The same rose that Grandmother carried all the way back to Arkansas from her mother's garden in Virginia? If you have taken a cutting from that rose, rooted it and planted it in your yard — or just wished you had — you have something in common with the Texas Rose Rustlers.

This organization scours the Texas countryside for roses. They search in old cemeteries, abandoned homesteads and ethnic neighborhoods, looking for roses that have stood up to the ravages of time and Texas summers.

In August 1969, Pam Puryear, an amateur historian from Texas, was exploring an abandoned, 19th-century log house and found two rose bushes blooming and thriving. She knew that the cabin had been abandoned in the 1940s and that her coddled hybrid teas had withered in the heat and drought.

Right then she decided she was planting the wrong flowers. She dug up those roses and planted them in her yard. (That is now considered bad rose

The Big Rustle is held during the fall, to ensure that roses gathered are perpetual bloomers. Armed with clippers, willow water and plastic bags, the rustlers caravan to bushes that have been found by earlier scouts. Some of the growers are waiting for them with cookies and lemonade. There, cuttings are taken from the new growth, dipped in the willow water and potted for rooting, or simply put in plastic bags for later rooting.

The rustlers say the willow water is better for rooting than a commercial compound. It is made by putting a one-inch cutting of willow into an inch of water and leaving overnight. Its shelf life is about three days.

Roses collected are given a "study name." This usually refers to the person from whom they take the cutting, where they found it, or some other pertinent information. My favorite study name is the "Hole Rose" — a rose found in a hole off the road that was later identified as 'Marie Van Houtte,' a lemon-yellow tea that dates to 1871.

The identification of the roses has not always been simple. Some rustlers have even gone so far as

*Remember that old rose your mother  
The same rose that Grandmother  
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you had — you*



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garden in Virginia?  
from that rose, rooted it  
yard — or just wished  
have something in common*

*with the Texas Rose Rustlers.*

rustling form, unless the rose is imperiled by a bulldozer or some equal danger.) After a little research, Puryear identified the rose as 'Old Blush,' a variety of a China rose that had first come to Europe in 1789 and later to Texas when it was still a province of Mexico.

She started looking around for other survivors. Other gardeners began hearing about her gatherings and started joining her. By 1979, rustling had become an organized event, and, two years later with the help of Bill Welch, a Texas A&M extension horticulturist, the Texas Old Rose Symposium was born.

ordering from European catalogs and growing those roses to see if they have a match.

The Texas Rose Rustlers have turned their gardening addiction into a social event, as well as an act of preservation. Their group has grown to a mailing list of well over 200. They not only trade cuttings but trade identifications as well.

And they could probably tell me that my mother's rose is a 'Silver Moon.'

*Resources: Horticulture, August 1987; Smithsonian, July 1982; Antique Roses for the South, William Welch; Heritage Rose Foundation.*



# Master Gardener Notes

— Julie Eckberg

*In giving advice, seek to help, not to please, your friend. — Solon*

Spring has sprung, and the phones are ringing at the extension office. This is a great opportunity for new Master Gardeners to put in some of their required phone hours. You will definitely not be bored! There are experienced MGs who will work with new MGs requesting help in learning the telephone routine. Some MGs actually like phone duty best of all the MG activities!

*Debt is the worst poverty. — Thomas Fuller, M.D.*

Don't forget to pay your 1996 dues (experienced Master Gardeners only) of \$10 per family. (Only half of the experienced MGs have paid so far.) Checks can be made payable to Pulaski County Master Gardeners and given to our treasurer, Ann Cooper. If you would like to mail your check, her address is 31 Rocky Valley Cove, Little Rock, AR 72212-3171.

*What is reading but silent conversation? — Walter Savage Landor*

We have added the following books to the MG library for reference:

Antique Roses for the South, by William Welch

Southern Heirloom Gardens, by William Welch and Greg Grant

Gardening with Native Plants of the South, by Sally Wasowski

Garden Bulbs for the South, by Scott Ogden

Southern Gardener's Book of Lists: The Best Plants for All Your Needs, Wants and Whims, by Lois Trigg Chaplin

Growing Fruits and Nuts in the South, by William Adams and Thomas Leroy.

Master Gardeners are welcome to look at these books, but please do not take them from the office, because they are needed for reference in answering telephone questions.

*Speak up now, or forever ...*

Speakers are needed for the National Conference in Sacramento, California. Topics include plant health care, horticulture technology, innovations in gardening, leadership and arts and crafts. Within these topics, the conference needs question-and-answer and hands-on sessions, demonstrations and research updates. Call Beth (340-6650) for speaker application forms. Beth must have the forms to the conference planners by June 1.

*Get ready to go walkin' in Memphis.*

Breck Campbell and Jay Hill are planning an MG bus trip to Memphis for May 17. It will be a one-day trip to tour the Memphis Botanical Gardens and the Dixon Gallery Gardens. A box lunch will be included.

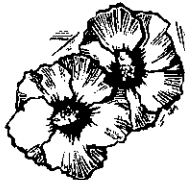
*Talk about a wild opportunity!*

Breck Campbell, MG, is working with Carl Hunter and the board of directors of the Aerospace Museum to develop a wildflower meadow to the east and west of the museum building. There will periodically be opportunities for Master Gardeners to get involved with the planting. Carl Hunter will be setting the dates, based on weather conditions. There will probably be an opportunity in May and again in the fall.

If you are interested in helping, give Breck a call at 666-9195. This will be a short-term MG project, rather than an ongoing Master Garden.

*Edible catalog, anyone?*

Cecilia Buck, MG, says Holly Shimizu had only a few copies of a catalog everyone wanted at the Flower and Garden Show. So Cecilia got the address and phone numbers for those who missed the opportunity. She says the catalog contains "many unusual selections not seen in other catalogs."



Edible Landscaping

361 Spirit Ridge Lane

P.O. Box 77

Afton, Virginia 22920

or phone 1-800-524-4156, or fax 804-361-1916.

Visit the Yellow Rose of Texas, April 22-25



Take an MG tour of the Tyler Rose Gardens (home of 38,000 plants), Blue Mountain Nursery (perennials and herbs), lunch at the National Wildflower Research Center with an escorted tour of a wildflower meadow in full bloom. Learn how to adapt wildflowers and native plants to your garden. Visit Zilker Botanical Gardens. (The oriental, butterfly and Umlauf sculpture gardens are included.)

Then lunch and tour with Madalene Hill, author of "Southern Herb Growing" and founder of the Herb House in Round Top, Texas. Visit the Antique Rose Emporium to see old garden roses, perennials and herbs; the Powell Plant Farm, which is the largest wholesale grower of bedding plants in the West; and the famous Marshall Pottery Factory at Marshall, Texas. Call 451-3552 or 821-3700 for reservations or information. — *Tour written by Helen Hronas*

# April Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**VEGETABLES:** All cool-season crops can be planted through the month of April. After April 10, plant seeds and transplants of warm-weather vegetables. Crops to sow include cucumbers, beans, melons, squash and sweet corn. You can set out young plants of tomatoes, peppers and eggplant.

*Note on tomatoes:* If an unexpected late freeze is forecast after you have planted, cover tomato plants with paper bags, baskets, straw or anything that will hold the warmth of the day around the plants. If you cover with plastic, support the covering so that it does not touch the leaves. Be sure to remove the plastic during the day or open a vent so it will not collect too much heat from the sun. Remove all covering as soon as the weather warms up again. Blossom-end rot was a problem last year (I fought it all summer, too). Try to prevent this by keeping plants evenly moist during periods of fluctuating weather and/or dry conditions. Ensure that pH conditions are ideal for tomatoes and that fertilizer contains important elements that tomatoes need, i.e., calcium and trace minerals. Mulch, mulch, mulch to keep soil evenly moist and to prevent spread of tomato diseases from the soil to the plant leaves.

**BULBS:** Remember to let the leaves of *spring-blooming bulbs* remain until they decline. The bulbs may then be left in the ground or dug and stored. The bulb coat should be a light brown before being dug. After digging, dry them in an airy, shaded spot. Then store them in a cool, dry, dimly lit area. *Summer bulbs*, such as cannas, caladiums (the strap-leaf type does well even in full sun), dahlias, gladioli and tuberose can be set out now. You can also grow agapanthus, calla lilies, caladiums and gloriosa lilies (vines) in the garden or in pots on a porch or terrace. Many of these will be winter hardy if mulched heavily.

**PRUNING:** All spring flowering shrubs may be pruned once they have finished blooming.

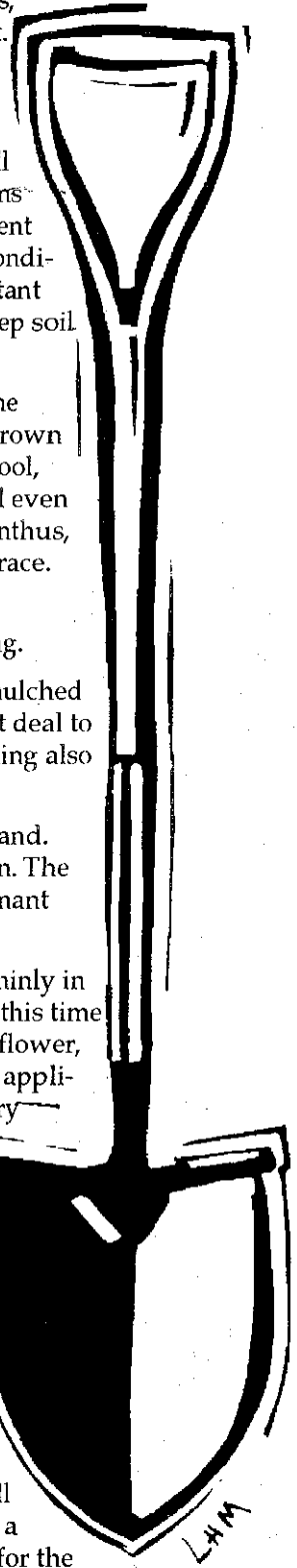
**MULCH:** It is very important that every newly planted flower, shrub or tree should be mulched when it is planted. Do it as a part of the planting routine, like watering. It will add a great deal to the plant's chance of success if you keep the ground around it from caking on top. Mulching also reduces the need to weed and hoe.

**ROSES:** Chemical control of black spot should begin in spring as the foliage starts to expand. Additional spray should be applied at two-week intervals throughout the growing season. The best fungicides for black-spot control are Benlate, Funginex or Daconil. Do not plant dormant roses after April 15. Potted roses can be planted until May 15.

**ANNUALS:** Many flowers can be sown directly into a prepared garden bed. Sow seeds thinly in a well-prepared bed and cover as directed on the seed packet. Seeds that perform well at this time include zinnia, gomphrena, cosmos, cleome, abelmoschus, marigold, melampodium, sunflower, tithonia and morning glory. For the pansies, calendula and other cool-season annuals, an application of foliar feed fertilizer will help prolong the vigor of your plants. Aphids are hungry for your pansies and other plants this time of year — inspect the buds and undersides of leaves for signs of them.

**PERENNIALS:** Divide and replant violets. Divide other perennials at this time also, making sure new shoots are present with each division. Replant at the depth they were originally growing, and water with "Superthrive." As shoots emerge from those unlabeled perennials, try to identify and label them now. Plant perennial phlox. Transplant seedlings of early planted perennials. Transplanted early, seedlings get off to a good start before it gets hot — but take care not to put tender bedding plants out too soon.

**HERBS:** You can grow flavorful herbs beside other garden plants as long as you avoid pesticides labeled "not for edible plants." *Basil* makes an upright plant about three feet tall and two feet across. (*Spicy globe basil* will stay about one foot tall.) It is an annual ideal for a bright green element among your flowers. *Creeping thyme* grows into a fine-textured mat for the front of a border or to trail over a wall. *Rosemary* is cold-hardy to 15 degrees and grows well in a pot. Place near a walk or terrace, it releases a piney fragrance whenever it is touched. Most herbs require full sun and sweet soil on



the limey side. A few, like bergamot, salad burnet, chervil, cress, lemon balm, marjoram, mints, pennyroyal and sweet woodruff, will tolerate light shade.

**HANGING BASKETS:** Consider planting a mixed basket using several kinds of flowers or foliage to give variety in color, texture and form. Two interesting combinations: narrow-leaf zinnia, white petunias and cape plumbago; purple-leafed wandering jew and ageratum, or ornamental kale and sweet alyssum. For a large, full basket, use wire instead of plastic. Begin by soaking sheets of sphagnum moss in a bucket of water. Then press the wet moss along the inside of the wire frame to form a lining. Wrap the moss over the rim, and fill the basket with sterile potting soil. Set transplants in the center of the basket. For extra fullness, cut slits in the moss and set transplants into the sides of the basket, as well.

**AZALEAS:** Feed after flowering with a fertilizer that contains iron and other elements. (Follow the package directions carefully.) Azalea roots are compact, fibrous and shallow, so granular or foliar feedings both work well. Because they grow near the surface of the soil, roots are very sensitive to drying. Water regularly during periods of drought and insulate them with a two- to three-inch layer of mulch before hot weather arrives.

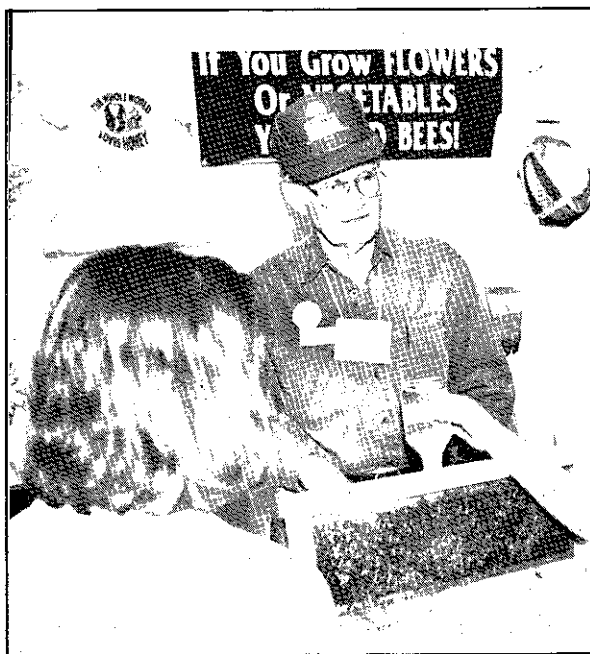
**EASTER LILIES:** After the lilies fade, plant the bulbs in a sunny, well-drained location. Let the foliage remain all summer, then cut it back with the perennials as they die in the fall. Next year, the bulbs will sprout again. Although they will not bloom for Easter, you will have flowers in late spring or early summer.

**LAWNS:** If centipede and bahia lawns yellow even after they have been fertilized, they probably need an extra shot of iron. To turn the grass green again, spread iron sulfate granules over the lawn at the rate of 10 pounds per 1,000 square feet. Use a fertilizer spreader to distribute the material, and water well after applying. Or you can spray the lawn with a solution of liquid iron, such as Greenol, at the rate recommended on the label. Start mowing this season with good, sharp blades on your machine. The quality of cut is much better, and it will eliminate the ragged, brown tips on the grass blades. This year, consider a mulching mower or a mulching kit for your old mower. Mulching your grass clippings is a big plus toward the overall health and appearance of your lawn.

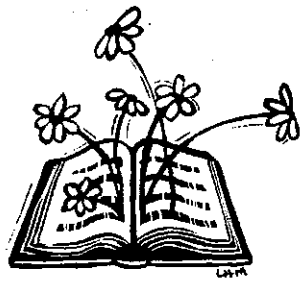
**WEEDS:** The appearance of dandelions, pennywort and other unwanted warm-season weeds begins. An early application of a postemergence herbicide can help control these weeds before they take over your lawn. Be sure to use chemicals specific to your type of lawn.

**PESTS:** If you didn't spray your shrubs with dormant oil last fall and early this spring, you may already be having problems with white flies, aphids, lacebugs and other "bugs." Control them with insecticidal soap or other appropriate measures as soon as you notice them and before they get out of control.

## 1996 Arkansas Flower And Garden Show — Kelly Quinn



# BOOK Review



— Jan Richardson

**"The Pond Doctor: Planning and Maintaining a Healthy Water Garden,"** by Helen Nash, Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., New York, N.Y., 1994, \$24.95.

Placing water features in home gardens is a popular garden project now that it is no longer necessary to build the ponds and fountains from concrete or packed clay. With preformed fiberglass and butyl liners, the average gardeners can build a pond quickly and easily — in fact so easily it's almost addictive.

While water adds an exciting dimension to a garden regardless of its size, oftentimes the water quality is marginal. This, in turn, does not produce healthy water lilies and other desirable aquatic plants, not to mention the miserable lives the fish must lead. All of which leads us to "The Pond Doctor," a book introducing such topics as pond siting, construction, waterfalls, safety, pumps and filtration, water quality, algae, plants, fish, insects and crustaceans, pests and cleaning and maintenance; however, the reader must look to other sources for specific instructions and methods to work with the various pond liners currently on the market.

The book provides some very helpful suggestions for solutions to all types of problems associated with garden ponds. Construction and maintenance are

activities where a little knowledge is indeed a dangerous thing. Before a wannabe water gardener rushes out to purchase a pump and filtration system, reading the chapter on algae illustrates that with the establishment of an "eco balance," it is quite possible to have fish and clear water with neither a pump nor a filter.

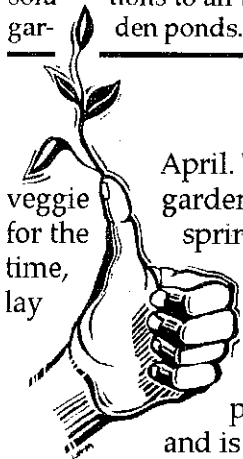
This is the type of project that goes much more smoothly if the builder has thoroughly researched the subject and made some critical decisions before picking up the shovel. "The Pond Doctor" covers the pitfalls. For instance, if I had read this book before my venture into water gardening, I wouldn't have rescued so many turtles from certain death on the highways for transfer to my garden. I'm now being forced to consider a turtle relocation program. Who could foresee that a turtle might not be a good addition to the pool — that the "pond doctor" suggests they be banished to keep them from eating fish and feasting on water lily buds and leaves? Well, it's all in this book and more. The reader learns that adult toads are good, and adult frogs and specifically bullfrogs are bad. Bullfrogs eat the fish — not just a few but probably all of them. One who had read the book would not purchase bullfrogs for 25 cents each from a local nursery, which, by the way, also sells some very expensive fish!

If the foregoing hasn't convinced the reader of the unusual treasure trove of information to be found in this book, there's a segment on fish euthanasia, and the guidelines for medicating fish are particularly useful. This section is for those of us with soft hearts, who suffer along with our sick fish.

In summary, this book is an excellent starting point for making good, informed choices before wading into an extremely popular garden project.

---

## Green Side Up — Robert McGowan



veggie  
for the  
time,  
lay

April. There's much one can do in April — and it ain't April Foolin'! Let's start with the garden. The winter veggies will be going to seed so we can get ready to prepare the soil for spring veggies. If you like to work your soil and apply herbicide at the proper rate and make sure you observe the table. Another way to control those garden weeds is to lay black plastic, cloth or newspaper. (The ink will not harm the soil.) Place it in the rows around what you have planted. This will save time tilling and tilling. The newspaper will rot like any other organic matter. I've heard (but haven't tried) that pantyhose makes a good tomato stake tie. It stretches while the tomato plant grows and is weather resistant — and you are recycling. (Editor's Opinion: Pantyhose work great; the color quickly fades to an unobtrusive shade, the material stays strong at least until the end of the season, and rain or sprinkler water does not linger around to help diseases flourish.)

Don't forget to label your garden. If not out in the field, make a blueprint of your garden on paper, and label the rows on paper. There is so much freedom in planting your garden. Experiment with a couple of rows. If you plant early and your crop fails or dies, you can always come back with something with a shorter growing period. So have fun planting some different stuff — and still keep your favorites. Just keep in mind the height of the plants. Row gardening isn't the only way. I'm sure you have all heard of square-foot gardening. This is a great way to save space for gardens in small city lots or close to building lots.

Now, get out there and plant your garden! Plant veggies, flowers or, the big trend this year, wildflowers. Ask your nursery for the best wildflowers or those native to Arkansas. Start planting now, so we can all enjoy those BLTs this summer. Yum, Yum! Have fun!

# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Ray Sarmiento

As chairman of the Travel Committee, Ray (and his crew) will soon publish a schedule of trips. He heard about Master Gardeners at the Spring Flower and garden Show and attended a training program in 1995. A highlight of the program was the session on garden design and the portion on flowers.

Ray became interested in gardening while working with his dad. He remembers selling seeds as a money-making project for his school. His dad would plant them in a cold frame and later transplant them in the garden.

Ray enjoys gardening and finds it therapeutic to dig in the ground. His wife, Anne, also is a gardener. They have a shady lot and so they grow mostly perennials such as iris and hosta. Favorite plants are iris and daylilies.

This Master Gardener grew up in Brooklyn and Queens in The Big Apple. He moved to Louisiana, where he met his wife. They decided to move to her home town, Little Rock. He enjoys the Southern climate and is especially glad he was not in New York this past winter.



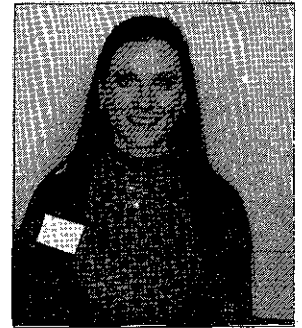
## Phyllis Watson

Phyllis became a Master Gardener in 1993 and is co-chairperson of the Greenhouse Committee. She was born in Dallas but moved to Little Rock while young. She attended school in Little Rock and graduated from Henderson State College.

She became interested in gardening when she bought a house in Southwest Little Rock, which the former owner had landscaped with lots of lowers and shrubs. Since Phyllis was interested in maintaining the beauty, she learned how to care for the plants. The former owner called every few weeks to ask how things were going and to give advice.

Phyllis and her husband now live on 40 acres in the country. They have landscaped their new yard and managed to deal with the fact that this part of Arkansas has a shortage of dirt and a surplus of stones and rock. Phyllis has a greenhouse at home, which she uses to grow her annuals. She also has a small vegetable garden, but flowers are her primary interest.

Phyllis and her husband, Mike, own the Star Stud-ded Honky Tonk and Grumpy's Bar and Grill. They are building a Grumpy's on the bay at Lake Hamilton in Hot Springs. They have one son, a student at the University of Arkansas.



## Trading Post — Julie Eckberg

Bonnie Cargile has cypress vine seed now. Will have plants later. 868-5404

Marie Flickinger wants hydrangeas, shade perennials, and blooming shrubs. 758-4202.

Jan King has siberian iris. She wants white or pale pink daisies. 224-7632

Jack Singleton wants porcelainberry vine seed. 753-1325

Joyce Bumgardner wants wildflowers, daylilies, digitalis and cleome seed. 758-9074

Fred Henker has bird of paradise, night-blooming cereus, thyme and philodendron. He wants tarragon and rosemary. 565-7260

Julie Eckberg wants purple or white coneflowers and flat rocks for building a flower bed. 225-6721

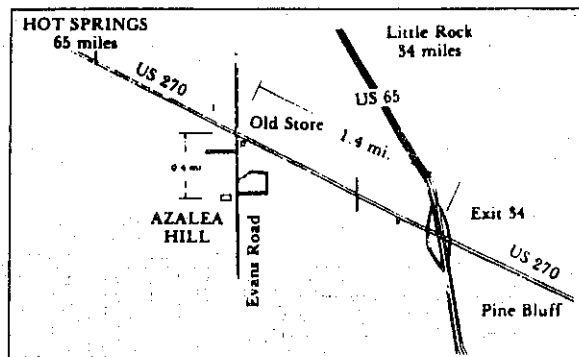
Stacy Coggins wants mint — wintergreen or spearmint. 225-2778

# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**April 9 — Regular MG Monthly Meeting —**  
Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.

**April 12 — MG trip to Azalea Hill Gardens & Nursery,** Route 8, Box 139, Pine Bluff (501-247-1574). Meet at Immanuel Baptist Church at 10th & Bishop Streets, Little Rock, at 9 a.m. Admission to the gardens is free, but bring your lunch. Azalea Hill is 35 miles south on Highway 65. Take Highway 65 to Exit 34, turn right onto Highway 270, go 1.4 miles and turn left (south) onto Evans Road. Go 1/2 mile. The gardens are on the right. Refer to the map, below.



**April 13 — Crash Bird Course,** Audubon Society and Pinnacle Mountain State Park. Fee and reservations required, 868-5806.

**April 20 — Earth Day**

Arkansas Unit of Herb Society of America presents an Herb Education Day at Trinity Methodist Church. 664-0559

**April 22-25 — Rose Tour to Texas.** The trip will include Tyler Rose Gardens, Blue Mountain Nursery, lunch at the National Wildflower Research Center, Zilker Botanical Gardens, Herb House in Round Top, Antique Rose Emporium, Powell Plant Farm and the famous Marshall Pottery factory. Call 451-3552 or 821-3700 for reservations and information. More information is in the Master Gardener Notes.

**April 25 — Trip to Texas Hill Country —** A Janet Carson Tour

**April 27 — American Rose Society Annual Antique Rose Symposium.** Shreveport, La. 318-938-5402.

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The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture

**April 27-May 5 — Spring Bloom Festival,** Shreveport, La.

**May 4 — Fletcher Library Family Day** (See last month's MG Notes for details.)

**North Central Arkansas Violet Society "Violets in the Natural State"** show and sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Jacksonville Community Center, #5 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville, Ark.

**May 6-8 — Southeast Region Master Gardener Continued Training Conference,** Pensacola Beach, Florida. For information, contact Escambia County Extension Service, c/o Continued Training, P.O. Box 7154, Pensacola, FL 32534.

**May 17 — Memphis in May Bus Trip to the Memphis Botanical Gardens and Dixon Gallery and Gardens** for the Flower Show. The \$25 fee includes the bus, box lunch and admission into each garden.

**June 25 — MG Bus Trip to Clarksville Experimental Station.** Bring lunch or eat all the fruit you want there. Cost is \$15; call Beth for reservations.



# MASTER MINUTES

May 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 4

## Committee Spotlight: Governor's Mansion Garden

— Helen Hronas

Despite the uncooperative weather this spring, the vegetable garden at the Governor's Mansion is growing nicely. Bill Burgin, chairman of the committee, reports that members recently enjoyed a picnic lunch and general meeting near the garden and also planted potatoes while they were there. The garden is pleasantly situated at the southeast corner of the mansion grounds and is surrounded by a neat white picket fence. There are convenient walkways within the 30 by 40-foot plot, and rich, black soil contributes to the success of the project.

Governor's Mansion workers willingly help with the heavier chores, such as tilling, keeping the garden watered and applying general fertilizer. The MG committee is most appreciative of their efforts — and for the cooperation of Tom Hunt, who is in charge of maintenance, and Becky Thompson, who is responsible for the shrubs, flowers and vegetable garden. Without their assistance, the garden could not be maintained.

The committee meets every Tuesday morning at 8 a.m. to plant and weed, and individuals drop by at critical times to check on the garden. Specific work-days are also scheduled. All Master Gardeners are welcome to come by and work. You may enter through the side gate to the mansion grounds, going through the security office and signing up as a Master Gardener.



Fred Henker, a perennially cheerful Master Gardener, has worked at the governor's garden for a number of years.

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Right now, Bill says onions, carrots, English peas and cabbage are coming along nicely. Corn, squash and tomatoes will be started as weather permits. The Greenhouse Committee is

growing vegetables to be planted later. Bill is furnishing tomato and pepper plants, which he grows in his own greenhouse.

Vegetables are harvested by the mansion kitchen staff and prepared and served to Governor Tucker and his family. The Tuckers, who visit the garden often and are particularly fond of vegetables, are most appreciative of the bountiful, delicious, fresh produce.

Other committee members active in this project are: Martha Allen, Anthony Black, Debbie Cummings, Karen Anderson, Fred Henker, Nancy Kumpuris, Molly Satterfield and Rita Hopkins Johnson.



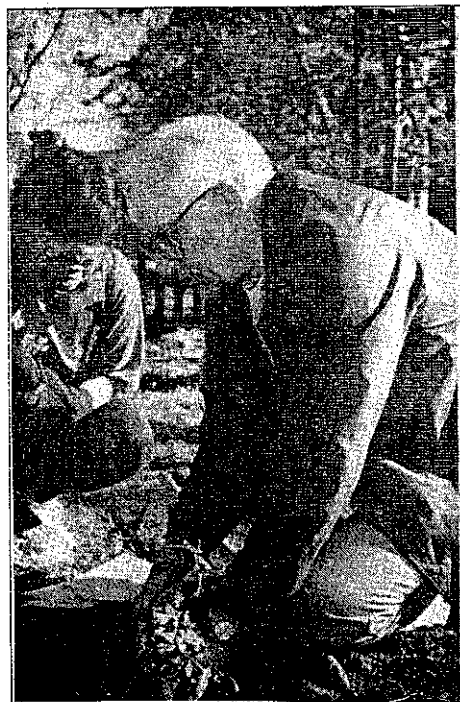
MGs Martha Allen, chairman Bill Burgin and Fred Henker do some housekeeping in the mansion garden.

*For every pound of us,  
there are 300 pounds  
of bugs.*

— BroadSides From  
The Other Orders

*Gardening is an  
exercise in optimism.*

— Marina Schinz



*Horticulturally, the month of May is open-  
ing night, homecoming and graduation day,  
all rolled into one!* — Tam Mossman



# Plant Of The Month — Jackye Shipley Finch

I grew up on a sandy farm in northeast Arkansas, surrounded by things that grew: cotton, soybeans, rye and vetch, pecan trees, crape myrtles, willows, mimosas, oaks, pear, vegetables in our garden and flowers in our yard. Not surprisingly, my first memory of flowers is the sunflowers that grew up against the smokehouse. From my child's perspective, these were trees with outrageously dramatic flower heads. You could almost see them grow as you stood there and watched. My mother would cut a stalk, and I'd carry it around all day, using it as a combination scepter/ceremonial sword/umbrella/baby doll.

Sunflowers seemed to disappear from popularity for a long time, until the recent bumper crop in decorator magazines. One local woman, whose house had been selected for a photo feature in one of these magazines, was told by the editor that she could use any cut flowers she wanted, except for sunflowers. "They've been done to death," the editor explained.

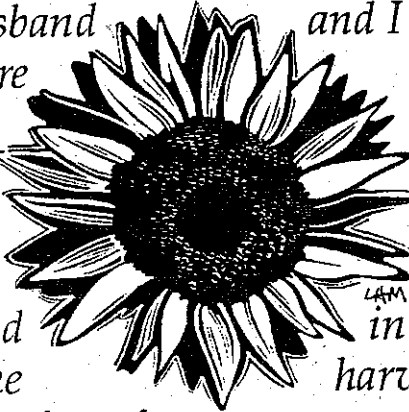
landscape was the spectacle of every sunflower head in the field drooping at the same angle in the same direction, like a field of camouflaged soldiers standing at attention. It brought back those childhood memories of carefree summers and my mother's sunflowers.

All of this is a very long way about to salute this plant of the month and get down to the particulars:

The sunflower's relatives in the Compositae family include the aster, marigold, dandelion, black-eyed Susan — and lettuce, of all things. There are 67 species in the sunflower's genus, *Helianthus*. Home garden sunflowers come in two categories: sunflowers and edible seed types. The first are grown for their decorative flowers and come in yellow, gold, bronze, mahogany red and bicolor blooms. They range in size from four to six feet. These sunflowers do produce seeds, but they're small and best left for wildlife. The most popular variety of sunflower for edible seed is "Mammoth," and it is one of the tallest.

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*Last September, my husband and I rented a farmhouse in Provence, France, a mere three miles from the asylum where Vincent Van Gogh (the man who may have done more to immortalize the sunflower than any other) retreated from his madness. The southern French countryside was covered in fields of commercially grown sunflowers in the harvest stage ... It brought back childhood memories of carefree summers and Mother's sunflowers.*



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Last September, my husband and I rented a farmhouse in Provence, France, a mere three miles from the asylum where Vincent Van Gogh (the man who may have done more to immortalize the sunflower than any other) retreated from his madness. The southern French countryside was covered in fields of commercially grown sunflowers in the harvest stage — dry, brown leaves and stalks that grated and rasped like brittle paper when the wind rustled through. Contributing to this dead brown

Six years ago, the "pollenless" class of sunflower was introduced. It solves the problem of stain-producing pollen, and its cut flowers last longer.

The National Garden Bureau advises you to start with good soil preparation, even though the sunflower is not picky — it will grow in every type of soil, but not in standing water. The sunflower needs lots of sun, of course.

Till the soil to eight inches, incorporating manure, compost, organic matter or a slow-release,

*Plant of the Month, continued from page 3*

general-purpose fertilizer. Plant seed according to package directions. Germination takes five to 10 days, making it the perfect plant to capture the interest of a child. Ideal soil temperature is 70 degrees, and, although the seeds and seedlings can take very light frosts, a hard freeze will probably kill them.

Tall plants (some plants soar to 18 feet) benefit from staking to hold up the seed head. Sunflowers thrive in hot dry weather, tolerate droughts, but benefit from large quantities of water applied as deep soakings.

Although there are few enemies of the sunflower, the ones that can give trouble are stem borer, stem maggot, rust and powdery mildew.

If you want to harvest the seeds, watch the birds. When they begin their harvest, cover the seed heads with cheesecloth. Wait until the back of the flower

is brown and dry, with no traces of green. Remove the seed heads with one to two feet of stem attached. Hang them in a warm, well-ventilated place (like an attic or garage) to cure. Then, when the backs are entirely brown and papery, remove the seeds by brushing the heads with your hand or a stiff brush. Do not wash the seeds before storage, since this may cause rot or mold. Store the seeds in airtight containers in the refrigerator. Seeds may be eaten raw or roasted.

Although high in calories, the seeds are 24 percent protein (equal to beef) and higher in iron than any other foods except egg yolks and liver. They're high in potassium, yet low in sodium, making them a diuretic, which, in turn, lowers blood pressure.

This information was provided by the National Garden Bureau, which has declared 1996 the "Year of the Sunflower." So go make a child happy this summer, and plant some sunflowers!

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# Master Gardener Notes

— Julie Eckberg

If you haven't signed up for the May 17 Master Gardener trip to the Memphis Botanical Gardens and Dixon Gallery and Gardens, be sure to turn in your \$25 as soon as possible — seating is limited!

Beth still needs help answering the phones at the extension office!

At the April MG meeting, Carl Hunter was thanked for all his contributions to the MG program by making him an honorary Master Gardener. He was presented with an official Master Gardener certificate and an MG cap at the meeting. Carl has done a tremendous amount of work with the Pinnacle project and has presented many programs for the MGs.

Mt. Holly Cemetery will be included in the annual Quapaw Quarter tour this year. The tour will be held May 4 and 5 from 1 to 5 p.m. both days. The MGs will probably have a booth for a few hours each day. Contact Carolyn Newbern (663-1222) or Nancy Wade (664-8460) for more information.

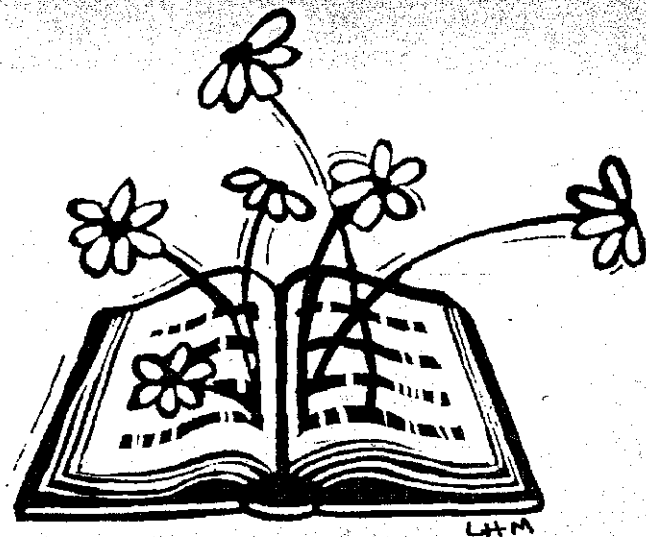
The Greenhouse Committee will be having plant sales on Tuesdays from 9 to 11 a.m. as long as there are plants to sell. There will be a variety of flower, herb and garden vegetable plants available. Call Lois Corley (666-2498) if you need more information.

May will be a great month to tour our MG projects!

Fifty-five of our best MGs still have not paid their 1996 dues (experienced Master Gardeners only) of \$10 per family. Checks can be made payable to Pulaski County Master Gardeners and given to our treasurer, Ann Cooper. If you would like to mail your check, her address is 31 Rocky Valley Cove, Little Rock, AR 72212-3171.

# BOOK

## Review — Jan Richardson



"Taylor's Guide to Ground Covers," published by Houghton Mifflin Company in 1987, sells for \$19.95. This book is one in a series of Taylor's Guides which include: "Natural Gardening," "Specialty Gardening," "Gardening Techniques," "Water-Saving Gardening," "Garden Design," "Gardening in the South," "Shade Gardening," "Container Gardening" and a number of other topics. The 495-page book contains comprehensive information and 454 color photographs on 316 ground covers, vines and ornamental grasses for sunny and shady locations.

The book is definitely user-friendly, and the ample color photographs are generally large and sharp enough to clearly show the flowers, foliage and main characteristics of the plant. Above the picture of the plant are the scientific and common names, height, when the plant is effective, conditions under which the plant thrives and its hardiness zone.

The plates are divided into four groups: foliage ground covers, flowering ground covers, vines and grasses. The photographs are arranged by flower color and shape. For example, color is the key to the arrangement of the

flowering ground covers. There is a division of deciduous and evergreen ground covers, wherein plants are included which are grown chiefly for their foliage — although in some cases the plants, too, exhibit striking flowers or fruit.

The second half of the book lists each plant, its full scientific name and pronunciation, physical description, how to grow the plant, information on cultivars and varieties, the plant's zone and a complete description of its flowers and size.

The plant chart in the appendix is provided to help the reader select plants and answer problems. The chart contains the scientific name, the page on which it is discussed, the zone and such information as whether the plant flowers, the season or season in which it is most effective, its rate of growth and ways to use the plant.

This book's logical organization, pictures, concise but thorough discussion of factors to consider when selecting a ground cover, glossary and excellent index make this an extremely valuable reference book for a gardener's library.

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### All I Need To Know About Life I Learned From Gardening — Author Unknown

☞ Weed out the annoyances in your life.  
☞ We've all got our own rows to hoe. ☞ Stay away from seedy characters. ☞ It's very prestigious to be in the Ivy League. ☞ Always call a spade a spade. ☞ It's okay to be a late bloomer. ☞ You always reap what you sow. ☞ The plot always thickens when it rains. ☞ Weeds never sleep. ☞ Some people are naturally corny. ☞ Always try to be outstanding in your field. ☞ Keep your hands

off your neighbor's peonies. ☞ Sow your wild oats with care. ☞ Some problems are perennial. ☞ It's best to keep mum about certain subjects. ☞ A little manure goes a long way. ☞ People with lawns have mow fun. ☞ It's important to branch out. ☞ There's nothing more refreshing than a morning shower. ☞ One man's garbage is another's compost. ☞ There are some things best left unfertilized.

# May Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**ANNUALS:** Set out transplants now. Choose those that will perform well in your particular garden area. *Good in full sun:* verbena, Madagascar periwinkle, ageratum, marigold, zinnia, petunia, celosia and wax begonia. *Best for shade:* impatiens, coleus and browallia. *In northern or eastern exposures with partial sun,* some of the early annuals will continue all summer. These include sweet alyssum, lobelia and annual dianthus.

**BULBS:** It's still okay to plant caladiums, cannas and other summer bulbs.

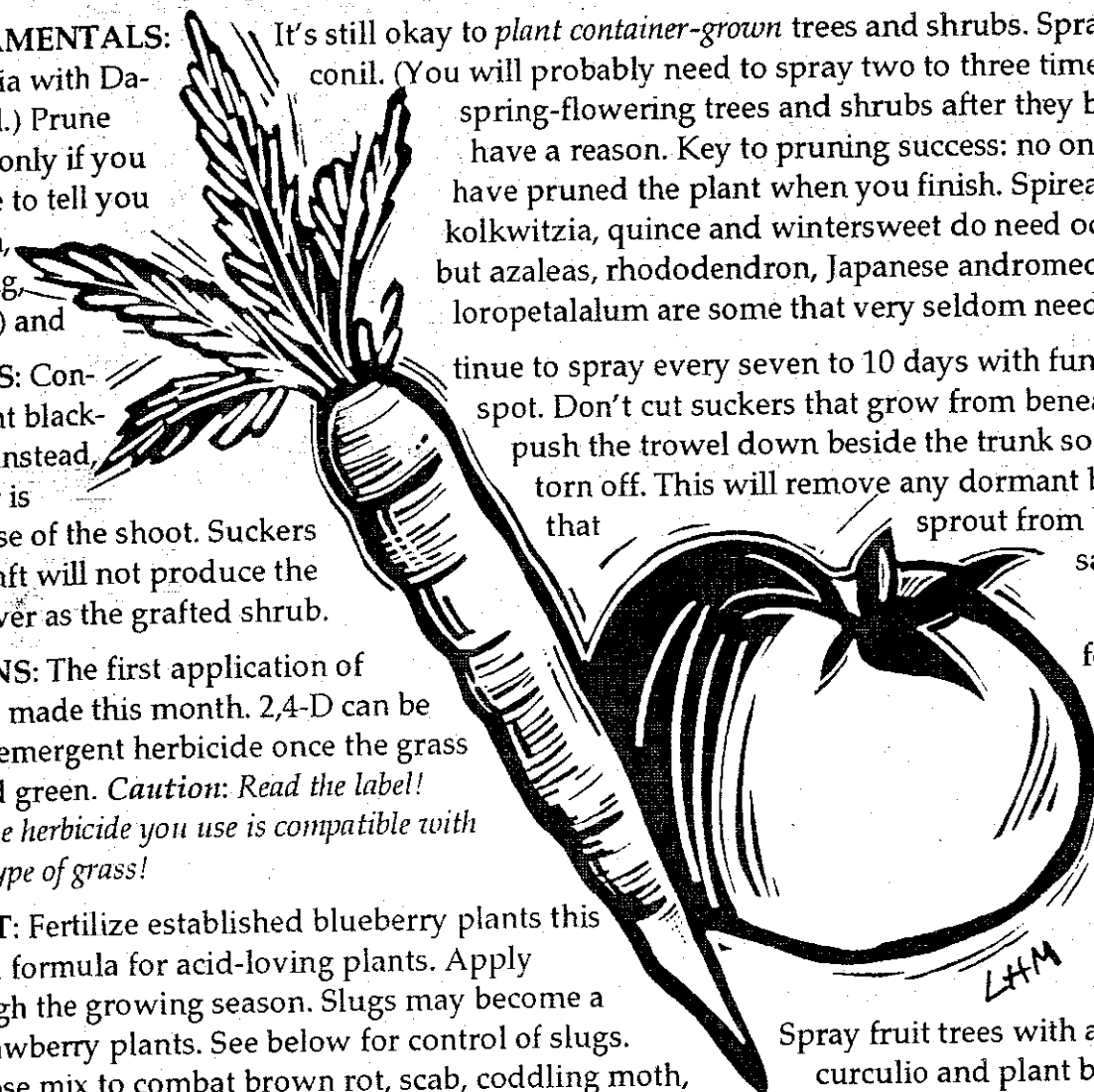
**ORNAMENTALS:** It's still okay to plant container-grown trees and shrubs. Spray red-tip photinia with Dactinonil. (You will probably need to spray two to three times for control.) Prune spring-flowering trees and shrubs after they bloom. Prune only if you have a reason. Key to pruning success: no one should be able to tell you you have pruned the plant when you finish. Spirea, weigela, kolkwitzia, quince and wintersweet do need occasional shaping, but azaleas, rhododendron, Japanese andromeda (pieris) and loropetalum are some that very seldom need shaping.

**ROSES:** Continue to spray every seven to 10 days with fungicide to prevent black spot. Don't cut suckers that grow from beneath the graft. Instead, push the trowel down beside the trunk so that the sucker is torn off. This will remove any dormant buds at the base of the shoot. Suckers that sprout from beneath the graft will not produce the same kind of flower as the grafted shrub.

**LAWNS:** The first application of fertilizer can be made this month. 2,4-D can be used as a postemergent herbicide once the grass has turned green. *Caution: Read the label! Make sure the herbicide you use is compatible with your type of grass!*

**FRUIT:** Fertilize established blueberry plants this month with a formula for acid-loving plants. Apply regularly through the growing season. Slugs may become a problem in strawberry plants. See below for control of slugs. purpose mix to combat brown rot, scab, codling moth, curculio and plant bugs. Spray every seven to 14 days from petal fall until harvest.

**VEGETABLES:** Cool weather crops can be harvested now. Begin planting green beans, lima beans, squash, melons, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplant and peppers (seeds or transplants). Soak okra seeds overnight before planting and sow on the north side of your vegetable garden so the tall stalks won't shade the other plants. Recommended selections include Clemson spineless, Annie Oakley, Lee and Blondy (dwarf plants), and Park's Candelabra Branching (more than one-stem per plant for higher yields in less space).



**MULCH:** Mulch to keep soil cooler, conserve moisture, contribute nutrients and to keep down weeds. Lawn clippings are good and readily available mulches. Don't mix wood chips with the soil, as they tie up available nitrogen for some time. Make sure that manures are thoroughly composted before using.

**INSECTS:** Watch for *spider mites and lacebugs* on your azaleas. Lacebug eggs hatch in May and produce tiny, sapsucking nymphs, which congregate on the underside of the leaf. As nymphs and adults feed, they leave a number of brownish specks caused by fecal deposits. Leaves of affected plants have a grayish or brownish cast at first, followed by yellow mottling. Control with Dursban or Orthene. Two or three applications beginning around the first of June and repeated at 10-day intervals may be necessary. Another way: try spraying with dormant oil to suffocate mites, lacebugs and their eggs without killing beneficial insects in the area. Carefully follow directions on the label (some dormant oil sprays have temperature restrictions) and be sure to spray the undersides of leaves. *Aphids:* Signs are distorted new growth and prevention of flowering and fruiting. Kill aphids with insecticidal soap. Be sure to spray the stems and undersides of leaves. *Slugs:* They strike at night, often stripping whole stems of leaves and eating into fruit and vegetables. Diatomaceous earth can be used to kill slugs, and commercial baits are effective but toxic to children and pets. Slugs are also attracted to beer: sink a margarine tub or the equivalent near the plants so the rim is at ground level. Fill the tub with at least an inch of beer. In the morning dispose of the drowned slugs. (Ugh!) *Thrips:* You will spot damage before you spot them. They are a common problem on roses. Signs of thrips are discolored blotches on petals, failure of buds to open properly and deformed blooms. If suspected, cut the affected flower and pull it apart or shake it over a white piece of paper. They move about quickly when disturbed. To avoid trouble, make sure plants are well irrigated; those under water stress are more susceptible to infestation. Also keep the garden clear of weedy patches and high grass in which thrips can breed. Remove infested flowers immediately and apply insecticidal soap, Orthene or Orthenex. Spray three times, allowing seven to 10 days to elapse between treatments.

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## Add Hours To Your Flowers — Cornell Cooperative Extension Service

Remove excess foliage and those leaves that will be below water. Excess foliage increases water loss, and submerged foliage decays and hastens cut flower fading.

Use a commercial flower food in the water. These foods combine sugars, acidifiers and a mild fungicide, all of which lengthen the life of cut flowers. Home remedies such as aspirin or copper pennies are not effective.

Avoid excessive heat. Do not place flowers in direct sunlight, over a radiator, on a television set or in a draft. Heat reduces flower life. Warm or moving air takes water from flowers faster than it is absorbed through the stems.

Do not mix flowers with fruits or vegetables. Many fresh fruits and vegetables produce enough ethylene gas to shorten flower life. For example, carnations die prematurely, and snapdragons drop florets.

# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

May 4—Fletcher Library Family Day (See March MG Notes for details.)

North Central Arkansas Violet Society "Violets in the Natural State" show and sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Jacksonville Community Center, #5 Municipal Drive, Jacksonville, Ark.

May 6-8 — Southeast Region Master Gardener Continued Training Conference, Pensacola Beach, Florida. For information, contact Escambia County Extension Service, c/o Continued Training, P.O. Box 7154, Pensacola, FL 32534.

May 14 — Master Gardener Meeting, Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.

May 17 — Memphis in May Bus Trip to the Memphis Botanical Gardens and Dixon Gallery and Gardens for the Flower Show. The \$25 fee includes the bus, box lunch and admission into each garden.

June 11 — Master Gardener Meeting and Tour of MG Member Gardens — stay tuned for details.

June 25 — MG Bus Trip to Clarksville Experimental Station. Bring lunch or eat all the fruit you want there. Cost is \$15; call Beth for reservations.

# Master Minutes Staff

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The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
 County Extension Agent — Agriculture

# Trading Post

— Julie Eckberg

Marie Flickinger wants hydrangeas and other blooming shrubs for the Victorian Cottage.

758-4202

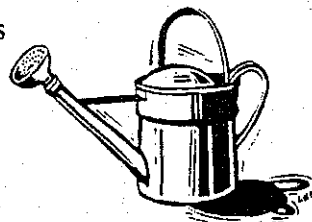
Fred Henker has bird of paradise, night-blooming cereus and Chinese evergreen.

He wants tarragon and oregano.

565-7260

Helen Hronas wants plain or variegated liriop.

228-5680



# Pesticide Notes

— Laura Lasiter

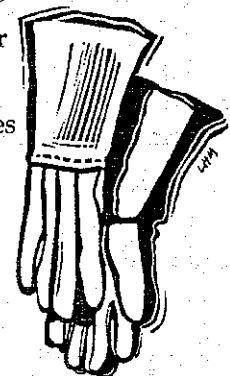
**Before you buy, read the label!**

Make sure what you buy is safe and effective for the plant(s) you will be spraying.

**Before you open the container to use, read the label!**

Mix at the recommended rates — not stronger; more damage can be done by too strong a solution, including killing your plants. Too weak a solution may not solve the problem.

Be sure to wear protective clothing, i.e., long sleeves, rubber gloves, boots, eyewear and an approved mask.





# MASTER MINUTES

June 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 5

## Committee Spotlight: Arkansas Arts Center And Contemplation Garden

— Helen Hronas

In the midst of busy downtown Little Rock lies a tiny place of tranquility and solitude near the Arkansas Arts Center in MacArthur Park. An old-fashioned park bench offers nostalgic comfort, where one may seek peace and renewal of spirit while gazing upon the lovely scene. A small pond is banked by a natural arrangement of boulders interspersed with and surrounded by shrubs and blooming plants. Dedicated in 1990 to victims of crimes and violence, the Contemplation Garden was created through the efforts of Master Gardeners and the City Parks and Recreation Department.

At one time, the Arkansas Arts Center Committee encompassed both the work at the center and the contemplation garden, but it became two separate entities last year. Lynn Coates, in her second year as chair of the AAC Committee and chair of the Contemplation Garden Committee since its inception, says the garden draws many visitors, a number of whom have been crime victims. When the committee had a workday recently, just by chance

several groups representing crime victims had been meeting in the park. Many of the people stopped by to thank the Master Gardeners for keeping up the garden, mentioning how important it is to them — heartwarming validation for hard work well done by committee members!

The City Parks and Recreation Department has been very supportive,



Myra Runyon helps create the peaceful atmosphere visitors enjoy in the Contemplation Garden.

providing fresh mulch, fertilizer, weed killer, plants, shrubs and major maintenance for both the Arts Center and the Contemplation gardens. A problem now being addressed by the city is replacing the "take-over" spicata liriopie with

See Spotlight, page 2

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the clumping muscari variety so that other plants can be added. Heavy rains have washed away much of the soil which the city filled in, and, sadly, the city must also replace the lovely weeping yaupon which someone cut down. Lynn says, "What a shame, since it was certainly appropriate for the garden."

On a lighter note, seven duck nests slowed work down a bit, but Lynn reports the eggs have hatched, and committee members have sighted many baby ducklings swimming on the lake. Nice bonus, and a successful habitat created.

Lynn is especially gratified that so many of last year's committee returned to serve again in 1996 — a measure of the meaningfulness of this garden to each of them. The committee organized into four weekly teams captained by Carolyn Newbern, Ann Loomis, Kelly Quinn and Frank Bauer. Other committee members are: Duncan Porter, Ray Sarmiento, Carolyn Henslee, Trudy Goolsby, Myra Runyon, Ginger Coggins and Ruth Jones. Eight committee members and one guest recently completed the spring planting.

But the committee is not *all* work and no play. At their Christmas get-together there was lots of cheer, especially for Ruth Jones (former AAC committee chair for many years), who won the drawing. Her prize was a couple of hours of work in her garden by the entire committee. A delighted Ruth chose to schedule her workday in the fall, when her iris beds need extra help.



Some committee members gathered on Memorial Day Weekend. Back row, left to right: Myra Runyon and Kelly Quinn, front row: Lisa Hanson Mantle and Trudy Goolsby





# June Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**ANNUALS:** Most annuals respond to cutting or dead-heading by producing new flowers. If your plants get leggy, cut them back and sprinkle a teaspoon of 5-10-10 under each plant. Mulch thickly to retain moisture during the hot summer months. Fertilize monthly.

**VEGETABLES AND FRUITS:** All seeds and seedlings should be planted by now. Be sure to keep up with the watering during dry weather.

Also add some lime to the soil around tomatoes about once a month. *Blossom-end rot* on **tomatoes** is not a disease: it's caused by a calcium deficiency. A product called "Stop Rot" may be sprayed on affected plants. Mulch tomato plants to keep the moisture level constant and to protect the plants from soil-borne diseases. Harvest at the peak of maturity. Watch for insects and diseases.

If you are growing **corn**, dust with Sevin or use mineral oil on the silks as soon as they appear, and continue until the silks turn brown. This will prevent the *corn ear-worm*.

Renovate **strawberries** after they've finished producing. Remove all grass and weeds and thin plants if necessary. Space plants six inches apart in rows not more than 18 inches wide.

**Blackberry** season starts late this month.

## ORNAMENTALS AND PERENNIALS:

Shrubs that are going to green up after being damaged in last winter's freezes should have done it by now, so it's probably okay to prune off the dead parts now. (Remember to keep things well watered next winter, if it's as dry as the last one!)

**Irises** should be left alone for six weeks after blooming; then they can be lifted and divided. **Peonies** and **roses** are heavy feeders. Be sure to fertilize them regularly and keep them watered.

Wait until the foliage of **spring-flowering bulbs** turns yellow before cleaning up the bulb bed. **Chrysanthemums** and **asters** repeatedly until mid-July. Fertilize monthly.

**LAWNS:** Lawns can be fertilized with a high-nitrogen fertilizer now. You may fertilize monthly. Watch for *chinch bugs* and *lawn fungi*.

**HERBS:** Pinch back annual herbs. Thin **basil**.

**WATERING:** Lawns, ornamentals, fruits and vegetables need one to one-and-a-half inches of water per week. If it doesn't rain, don't forget to water! Use soaker hoses where possible to conserve water and keep drops off foliage to prevent disease. Don't water in the heat of the day; early morning is best.

**PLANTING:** You can still plant **cannas** and **gladiolus**, quick-growing annuals (like **nasturtium**, **nicotiana**, **portulaca** and **zinnia**) in bare spots.

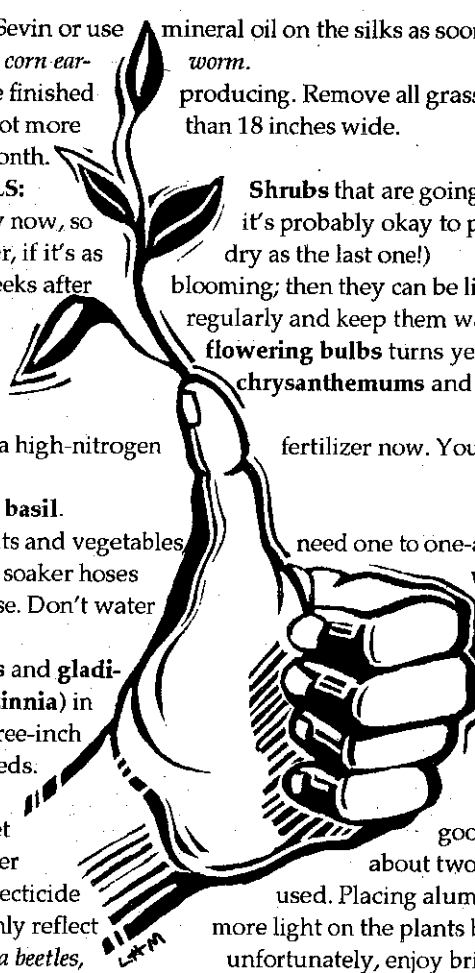
**INSECTS AND DISEASE:** Apply a three-inch layer of mulch around shrubs and in the vegetable garden to keep down weeds. **Aphids** and **lacebugs** are out in full force attacking everything from **azaleas** to **tomatoes**. Use insecticidal soap or Malathion. Be sure to read the label! Get good coverage on the underside of the leaves, and hose off any plant with water about two hours after application if it is not certain the plant cannot be damaged by the insecticide used. Placing aluminum foil around the base of the **tomatoes** more light on the plants but will also confuse **aphids** which seek out the darker underside of the leaf. **Flea beetles**, unfortunately, enjoy bright, dry and hot places, and the foil will encourage them.

**Whitefly** can be controlled by using insecticidal soap or a strong water spray. A trap can be made by cutting strips of a bright yellow plastic detergent bottle, coating them with petroleum jelly and suspending them around the gardenia bushes, etc. The whitefly is attracted to the color yellow and will get stuck. Clean strips and replenish the petroleum jelly periodically.

To control **blackspot**, keep up the spraying schedule on **roses** and **red-tip photinias**. Clean up and destroy any diseased foliage falling to the ground. Do not put it in the compost pile!

**Fireblight** of fruit trees is a bacteria spread by bees and windblown rain, causing affected parts of a tree to blacken and die. Make pruning cuts several inches below obviously infected parts and sterilize instruments between cuts. Sprays which include streptomycin may be used during the bloom period to reduce damage.

Watch for **aphids**, **bagworms**, **black vine weevils**, **chinch bugs**, **fungus**, **Japanese beetles** (Editor's Note: blue jays pursue these without mercy and clean up our yard every year within a few days!), **lace bugs**, **leaf miners**, **slugs** and **whiteflies**. Consult with the extension office or read your reference materials for proper and safe remedies.



*The only limit to your garden is at the boundaries of your imagination.* — Thomas D. Church

# Master Gardener Notes

— Julie Eckberg

If you need a new name tag, call Mrs. McKinney (340-6650) at the extension office. She will be placing another order soon. The tags will cost \$4.25 each.

Don't forget the annual Master Gardener Family Picnic, to be held June 4 at Pinnacle Mountain State Park. The cost is \$5 per person. Come to the Visitor Center at 6 p.m. for a tour of the wildflower gardens, or to the pavilion at the base of Pinnacle Mountain at 6:30 p.m. Remember to bring your labeled plants to participate in the plant swap.

Help is still needed on the phones, and this is one of the busiest times of the year. Please call Mrs. McKinney to schedule a time to work. You can schedule your time, or if you like spontaneity, tell Mrs. McKinney you can help fill in on the spur of the moment. You can help for a whole day or just a coupla hours.

Help is also needed on the newsletter committee. We have several people signed up to carry art boards to the printer and, a few days later, to the extension office, but we'd like to spread the workload out where each person would only need to help once or twice during the year. Also, several people are needed once a month to help fold the newsletters for mailing. Call Beth if you can help!

The deadline to sign up for the June 25 trip to the Clarksville Experimental Station is June 11. You can call Beth or sign up at Jan King's house, if you're going on the Master Gardener Tour June 11. The cost is \$15, and you need to bring a sack lunch. The trip is by bus. There will be a lot of fruit available, so bring a bag or baskets, if you want to take some home. Dessert will be fruit!

Beth told those present at the May Master Gardener meeting that she's a member of the City of Little Rock's "Litter Task Force." If you witness someone littering, get a license plate number and call it in to the "Litter Hot Line," 399-3488. A letter will be sent to the litterbug.

There will be no travel in July or August, but we're planning an overnight trip, September 25 to 26, to Hodges Gardens (outside Natchez, Miss.) and the Rose Gardens (outside Shreveport, La.). MGs will spend the night at a Holiday Inn or Comfort Inn.

Plans are to go by bus. The cost is \$175 for double accommodations and \$205 for single accommodations; this price includes bus, lodging, two lunches, one dinner, one breakfast and garden fees. That's all the travel for the rest of the year.

## Arkansas Arts Center —

Master Gardeners have kept the Arkansas Arts Center gardens in tiptop shape for many years.

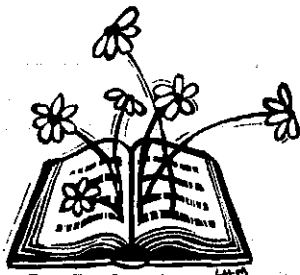


# MGs Tour Memphis In May

*Master Gardeners took advantage of a beautiful spring day to visit the Memphis Botanical Gardens and Dixon Gardens. During the tour, Kelly Quinn snapped a few photos for you to enjoy.*



# BOOK Review



— Jan Richardson

"The Small Garden Book," by Peter McHoy, Smithmark Publishers, Inc., 160 pages, \$15.98.

This book is definitely value for your money, but it has two drawbacks: it uses scientific names without a cross-reference to the common name, and it's written by an English gardener. However, McHoy has written a number of gardening books and currently writes a gardening column, and, with the exception of some plant materials, the suggestions and advice are as applicable here as in the English garden.

Furthermore, a number of books published in the United States virtually ignore our section of the country and include few plants that do exceptionally well in this area. As gardeners, that drawback is something we can learn to cope with. We can look at a picture of a plant that is unsuitable for our climate, make a mental note of its color, form and texture, and then locate a plant that may be substituted in the design, thus utilizing the pictures for an adaptation to Arkansas climate.

Unless you're a very new gardener, you've been introduced to the same plants over and over in 100 books. You've been told how they grow, their height and their requirements. So you begin to seek the unusual combinations, arrangements and placements in your readings — and this book fills the bill quite nicely.

It is large, with great photographs and illustrations, and, in the case of the garden design and layouts, the pictures are indispensable. The three sections, "Elements of Design," "Garden Features and Structures" and "Choosing Plants," are well integrated, and there is a wide range of options included for landscaping.

The premise of "The Small Garden Book" is that even a small garden can have a big impact. To make the most of a small space, design and planting are doubly important. McHoy points out that "design does not become easier with decreasing size; rather it becomes more difficult and demanding." He includes concepts to redesign a small garden, from initial ideas through execution. It's easier to incorporate suggestions for a small garden into a small portion of a larger garden than to do the reverse.

There's something here for you, whether you have a large spread, a postage-stamp-size lot, or an apartment or condo with only a balcony or patio.

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## Plant Of The Month — Gladys Whitney

The first grass to knock my socks off since the early '70s was *Pennisetum setaceum rubrum*, or purple fountain grass. The gardening monks planted it with a purple-leaved viburnum. It was a truly glorious combination that piqued an interest in ornamental grasses.

Ornamental grasses are having their biggest resurgence in popularity since what Allen Lacy calls "the Great Pampas Grass Plague" of the 1940s. Although few are totally devoted to them, many recent books give them significant attention. Many gardeners are finding that grasses can become a very interesting part of their gardens.

Some grasses can be used in most any situation. They make terrific hedges, background plants and noise barriers for busy streets, as well as specimen plants for perennial borders or rock gardens. Their grace and texture add an interesting component to the foliage garden and to the floral tribute.

Ornamental grasses, especially the fountain and maiden grasses, add an aspect to the fall and winter garden that cannot be found anywhere else. They usually

start flowering in August, turn a golden color during fall and then a light tan during winter, when everything else appears dead or sleeping.

Most grasses need to be cut back in late February. Some even need to be burned back. This allows for the planting of bulbs or spring annuals that can be covered up by the arching leaves.

When choosing a grass, take height and width into consideration. Many grasses grow to overbearing sizes. While the ornamental grasses are not invasive like their cousins the bamboos, they can become enormous. *Eulalia* (*Miscanthus sinensis*) can grow to almost 10 feet tall. "Gracillimus," whose leaves are only a quarter inch wide, grows to five or six feet, while purple-leaved fountain grass reaches four or five feet in height.

Most grasses are relatively pest-free and drought-tolerant, and they require full sun.

Louisiana Nursery publishes a catalog of bamboos and ornamental grasses. Write the nursery at Route 7, Box 43, Opelousas, LA 70570, phone 318-948-3696, or fax 318-942-6404.

# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Lynn Coates

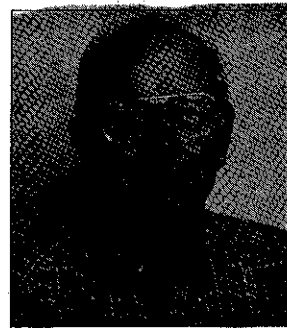


Lynn Coates came to Little Rock by a rather roundabout route. She grew up in Minnesota, married an Arkansas boy in California, moved to New York and then came to Arkansas. Her husband is with Smith Barney Shearson. They have three daughters. The oldest is a CPA here in Little Rock. Their second daughter is graduating from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville with degrees in architecture and landscape architecture. The third daughter is in school. Lynn's latest interest is learning how to use her new roller blades and in working out with a physical trainer.

She loves a shade garden with hostas and ferns, but her favorite flower is the peony. She remembers a hedge of them in her mother's yard in Minnesota. Although she's grown some in Little Rock, they don't thrive as well as they do in the colder climate.

Lynn became a Master Gardener in 1994. She is chairperson for the Art Center Committee and the Contemplation Garden Committee. She finds that having the two committees in MacArthur Park makes the work much easier to handle.

## Frank Bauer



Frank Bauer completed the Master Gardener training program in 1994. He thought that all parts of the program were excellent, although he's particularly interested in perennials and works on the Contemplation Garden Committee. He especially likes daylilies and has an extensive display in his garden.

Frank and his wife have four children. Cindy is a landscape architect. Mike is a cardiac surgeon. Julia, formerly chief financial officer for a company in Roanoke, Va., is now a housewife, and David is a plastic surgeon.

Following a heart attack, Frank retired as a general surgeon and developed his interest in gardening. Having built a new home near the marina on the river, Frank has been planting trees and developing gardens at his new place. His major frustration is nut grass in his zoysia. However, with selective control, this problem is kept manageable.

He has a lovely patio garden and another side-yard garden. As is the case with many of us, he lost a number of favorite plants to the severe winter. His peonies, however, have done very well, and provided a display which Frank describes as "awesome."

## Trading Post — Julie Eckberg

Ray Sarmiento wants bramble fern (*Hypolepis punctata*). 835-2890

Dick Butler has daylilies and irises. 661-9808

Leslie Scott wants ajuga. 225-5542

Billie Massey has some 4 o'clocks and irises; wants columbines. 753-7727

Kathleen Wesson has impatiens that reseed, which will be ready to share June 11 and 12. 663-9146

Mary Lee McHenry has scented geraniums; she wants bachelor buttons. 221-2590

Mary Russell Evans has orange daylilies (roadside variety). 664-7863

Dorothy Veirs has rose campion; she wants feverfew, lemon balm and ferns. 225-2106

Nancy Casey has spearmint and peppermint; she wants whatever. 227-7854

Jan King has cleome and irises. 758-3446



# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**June 4** — Picnic at Pinnacle Mountain State Park  
— Call Beth for reservations — 340-6650.\*

**June 11** — Tour of MG Gardens. Starts at Lakewood gardens at 9 a.m. (See article below.)

**June 25** — Trip to Clarksville Experimental Station.\*

**July** — No meeting.

**August** — No meeting.

**September 10** — Master Gardener Meeting, Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.

**October 10-12** — State Master Gardener Conference, Hot Springs. Details August 1.

\*See Master Gardener Notes for details.

# Tour Of MG Gardens For Master Gardeners

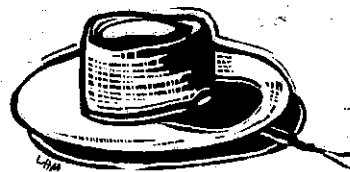
Instead of a June meeting, we're going to tour three Master Gardeners' gardens in North Little Rock. Max Thorn, Jan King and Billie Massey have graciously invited us, and we're looking forward to seeing their lovely gardens!

We'll meet at Lakewood Nursery on North Hills Boulevard at 9 a.m. At 9:30, we'll go to Max Thorn's, 2912 Justin Matthews Boulevard. At 10:30, we'll go to Jan King's, 4520 Valley Brook, and at 11:30, we'll go to Billie Massey's, 4501 Lakeview. At 12:30 p.m., we'll eat at the Old Mill. Bring a sack lunch — we'll have iced tea for you.

To get to Lakewood Nursery, take the Lakewood Exit off I-40 and go to your right (back over the freeway, north). Lakewood Nursery is on the left, very soon after you cross the overpass. We'll have maps for you at the nursery, and a lead car. Please park on the large gravel lot on the south side of the nursery.

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Art ..... Lisa Mantle  
Editorial Input ..... Laura Lasiter  
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Julie Eckberg  
Jackye Finch  
Helen Hronas  
David Landes  
Robert McGowan  
Jan Richardson  
Elmer Van Egmond  
Gladys Whitney

Photography ..... Kelly Quinn  
Courier ..... Stacy Coggins

Nan Jo Dubé  
Libby Thalheimer  
Patty Wingfield

Labels ..... David Dodson  
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*Beth*

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture

# Congratulations And Thanks!

The following Master Gardeners from the 1995-1996 class have already completed their telephone volunteer time:

Pat Furr	Lisa Mantle
Gayle Page	Suzanne O'Donoghue
Carolyn Goettsch	Kelly Quinn
April Higgins	Barbie Rushing
Helen Hronas	Ray Sarmiento
JoAnn Janssen	Jim West

# Letter To The Editor

What a great "Master Minutes! Thanks for doing a super job!

Suggestion: mention the "Home and Garden Channel," 49 in North Little Rock. I've seen some good programs — New England Flower and Garden Show, rose gardens of Europe, Holland tulip fields, and more.

—Pat Green, Master Gardener





# MASTER MINUTES

July 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 6

## Committee Spotlight: War Memorial Garden

— Helen Hronas

The cheerful garden gracing the corner of West Markham and Fair Park Boulevard (or Van Buren Street) always catches the eye of passersby. It stays fresh and well-kept through the efforts of Master Gardeners on the War Memorial Garden Committee. Recently, tired pansies and daffodils were replaced by a winning combination of red salvia and white begonias. The background of mounded shrubs, specimen trees and quaint rock wall enhances the colorful display. Inviting benches complete the vignette, lending an almost European flair to this small garden in one of Little Rock's oldest parks.

Wini Carter, chairman of the committee, says that, this spring, the city greenhouse exceeded all expectations with a huge bounty of the healthiest plants ever. Phoebe Stephens with the Little Rock Parks and Recreation Department (which furnishes the plants), works closely with the committee, and Beth Phelps lends her expertise, along with a frequent helping hand.

The committee keeps busy all summer, with two Master Gardeners responsible for each week's routine maintenance, such as weeding, deadheading, watering and litter pickup. Wini praises her committee, saying that each member dependably does his or her part to keep the garden

beautiful. She gives a special thanks to Mrs. McKinney for helping keep the committee organized with their master schedule and preprinted reminder post cards for members.

Thousands of people pass this corner every day, and committee members



Chairperson Wini Carter and co-chair Ann Cooper at the War Memorial Garden.

note that while they are working, people often take time to compliment and thanks them for their efforts.

Wini says it also made her feel the committee's work was appreciated when the city checked to be sure the plants would still be in place for a major concert at the stadium, when a huge number of visitors was expected.

Along with most of us, Wini and her husband, Dick, are big Razorback fans, and the committee is on alert to keep the corner especially nice when the Hogs are playing at the stadium. (How about that *red and white* landscaping theme!)

Ann Cooper cochairs the committee. Other faithful members are: Sharon Carr, Pat Furr, Jim West, Sidney Thom, Joy Rockenbach, Margaret Dorland, Shirley Garnett, Jo Ann Jernigan, Jo Ann Janssen, Roxie Adams, Martha Staples, Earl Hillard, Dick Carter. Kevin Allis, Patty Wingfield and Terry Eastin.

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# Plant Of The Month — Jackye Shipley Finch

If there is a plant made for Arkansas gardens, it's the four-o'clock, *mirabilis jalapa*, which has a centuries-old history. The flower can be traced back to the Aztecs, had spread to Europe by the 16th Century and was planted at Monticello by Thomas Jefferson, who called it the "marvel of Peru."

It's ideal for the night garden, because its blooms open in late afternoon (thus the name, four-o'clock), and they close by dawn. They give off a sweet, heady fragrance that can plunge you back into childhood memories of your grandmother's flower bed.

Four-o'clocks are virtually trouble-free (except for an occasional Japanese beetle that chews the leaves and buds). They're extremely heat- and drought-resistant. Although both extremes may cause them to wilt, they revive quickly with the first rain. They make a great filler for hot, dry sites and can even tolerate that blast furnace heat reflected off pavements and buildings in the throes of summer.

If planted by early spring, the four-o'clock will bloom by midsummer and continue into fall, attracting hummingbirds and moths. The four-o'clock — along with the crape myrtle — is one of the few plants that bloom through the hottest part of the summer.

The four-o'clock can be started by either seeds or tubers. It's a perennial in the South and easily and quickly reseeds itself. It's not fussy about the kind of soil it grows in, but it needs good drainage.

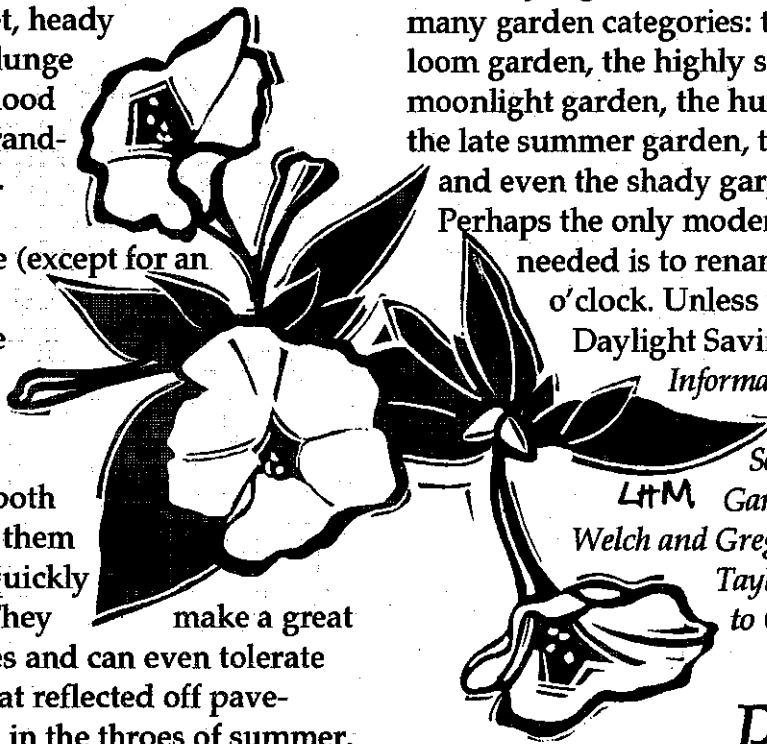
It grows to a height of three feet and will

spread out about three feet. The fleshy tubers can become enormous — up to 40 pounds. Blooming in sun or shade, the four-o'clock has erect, branching stems that form a leafy mound with one-inch round flowers in brilliant and vivid purples, reds, pinks, yellows and white.

This old-fashioned flower fits right into today's world: it's very low-maintenance with very high returns. And it qualifies for many garden categories: the Southern heirloom garden, the highly scented garden, the moonlight garden, the hummingbird garden, the late summer garden, the sunny garden and even the shady garden.

Perhaps the only modern-day concession needed is to rename it the five-o'clock. Unless we do away with Daylight Savings Time.

Information for this article comes from "The Southern Heirloom LHM Garden" by William C. Welch and Greg Grant, and "Taylor's Master Guide to Gardening."



Perhaps  
the only modern-  
day concession is  
to rename it  
the five-o'clock.



# BOOK

## Review

— Jan Richardson

"EUREKA, Daylily Reference Guide," by Ken and Kay Gregory, Volume 6, 5586 Quail Creek Drive, Granite Falls, NC 28630-9538, 260 pages, \$16.

After looking at my neighbor's gorgeous array of daylilies for two summers, I was ready to start my own collection. I wanted lilies that would perform well in Arkansas, which, to me, meant having lots of blooms and reblooming.

Eureka has provided all the answers. Daylilies can be bought for a few dollars each to hundreds of dollars apiece. The book lists the daylily awards presented annually by the American Hemerocallis Society and explains how the winners are chosen. An "Awards Guide: 1950-1995" lists all daylilies receiving each type award. There are awards for daylilies that perform well over a wide geographic area, those that are tetraploids, those that are double-flowering, etc. The guide contains a "96 Market Leaders Guide," which is the top 100 daylily cultivars commercially available. These are ranked from 1 to 100, giving the cultivar's name, the hybridizer and the year registered.

The guide contains the names, addresses and ordering and garden information on the

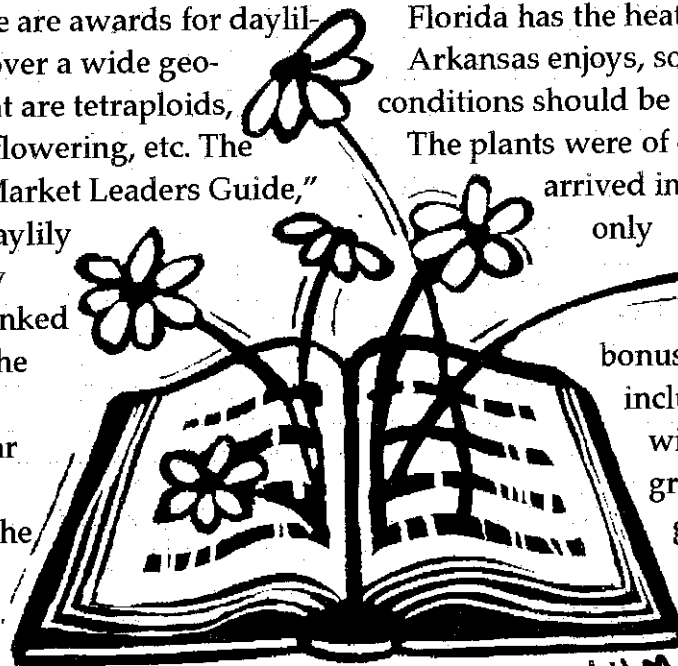
major growers. Most growers give a bonus, ranging from 10 to 50 percent, to the purchaser if they are allowed to substitute, and one generally sends a list of acceptable substitutes.

A descriptive code section explains the codes used by daylily growers.

The guide is extremely easy to use. For instance, in the award section, I located a lily named "Fairy Tale Pink," which won the highest honor awarded by the Hemerocallis Society in 1990 and had tied as number one in the "96 Market Leaders Guide." According to the guide, "Fairy Tale Pink" is a semi-evergreen diploid, 24 inches tall, a mid-season repeat bloomer with blossoms which are a single shade of pink and 5.5 inches across. The guide lists 51 commercial growers that have a double fan of "Fairy Tale Pink" for sale between \$4 and \$20, and the price each grower charges. Its average price is \$7.26.

Using the "Commercial Daylily Growers Guide," I located a grower, Johnson Daylily Garden, in Florida, which ships double fans and gives a bonus of 50 percent if substitutes are allowed and 25 percent if not. Also, Florida has the heat and humidity that Arkansas enjoys, so I thought the growing conditions should be somewhat the same.

The plants were of excellent quality and arrived in good condition. The only problem was where to plant the bonus shipment, which included very nice, award-winning lilies. This is a great guide to have — The guide has paid for itself many times over, even on my first order.



# July Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**ANNUALS:** Continue to deadhead spent blossoms to prevent seed production and ensure continued blooms. Mulch thickly to retain moisture during the hot summer months. Fertilize monthly.

**VEGETABLES:** Keep those tomatoes supplied with mulch, lime, calcium and ample water. Even moisture will help prevent *catfacing*, *fruit cracking* and *blossom-end rot*. If blossom-end rot is a problem, remember it is a calcium deficiency and can be controlled by keeping the moisture level constant and by spraying three times with Stop Rot. *Blossom drop* will be a problem as daytime temps soar into the upper 90s and night temperatures do not fall below 75. Cucurbits will be very susceptible to *vine borers* now. As a control, some people have had success with placing moth balls around the base of the plants, since the adult is a moth. Later in the month, plant **broccoli**, **cabbage**, **cauliflower** and other fall vegetables. **Tomatoes**, **Irish potatoes**, **summer squash**, **southern peas** and **sweet corn** can be planted for fall harvest. Check your "Vegetable Gardening for Arkansas" for more information. **Rabbiteye blueberries** are still in season. Contact the extension office for locations to pick. There is a new blueberry recently developed by the University of Arkansas; contact Beth for details, if you're interested.

**ORNAMENTALS AND PERENNIALS:** *Cannas* *thuringiensis* (Bt) as a control. Watch out and shrubs. Use a registered fungicide such control the mold, since it grows on the honey-throughout the summer to prevent *black spot*.

**LAWNS:** Control *crabgrass* and other grassy. Be sure to water well before application.

**HERBS:** Pinch back annual herbs. Thin

**WATERING:** If it quits raining before July, lawns, one to one-and-a-half inches of water per week. This beginning of the week and another a few days later. Do forget to water! Use soaker hoses where possible to Don't water in the heat of the day — early morning is overhead watering encourages diseases. **Container** ing and may need watering twice a day if located in plants more often also, since the frequent watering soil in containers more quickly than in the ground.

**INSECTS AND DISEASE:** Apply a three-inch and in the vegetable garden to keep down *borers* and the evil cousins of the ladybug *cucumber beetles*, *whitefly* and *lacebugs*, *chinch bugs*, *fungus*, *Japanese beetles*, *leaf* and will need vigilant control.

*Mildew* and *fungi* are taking over the world! **zinnia**, **roses**, **verbena**, **tomatoes** and other

spray with a registered fungicide such as Funginex or Daconil or any other fungicide appropriate for your ornamental or vegetable. Read the labels to be sure! Keep up the spraying schedule on **roses** and **red-tipped photinias** for *black spot*. Remember — fungicides will not undo damage already done by disease but they will help keep it from spreading, and killing your plants. You might also want to check out the home remedies for fungicides and insecticides that Beth provided, which are located elsewhere in this month's newsletter. Be sure to wear appropriate protective clothing and eye protection while doing battle with the pests and diseases.

can be attacked by *corn earworms*. Try *Bacillus* for *powdery mildew* and *black sooty mold* on foliage of plants as Funginex to control mildew; control *aphids* to dew secreted by the aphids. Spray your **roses** Continue to check **azaleas** for *lacebugs*.

weeds in **bermuda** and **zoysia** by spraying with MSMA.

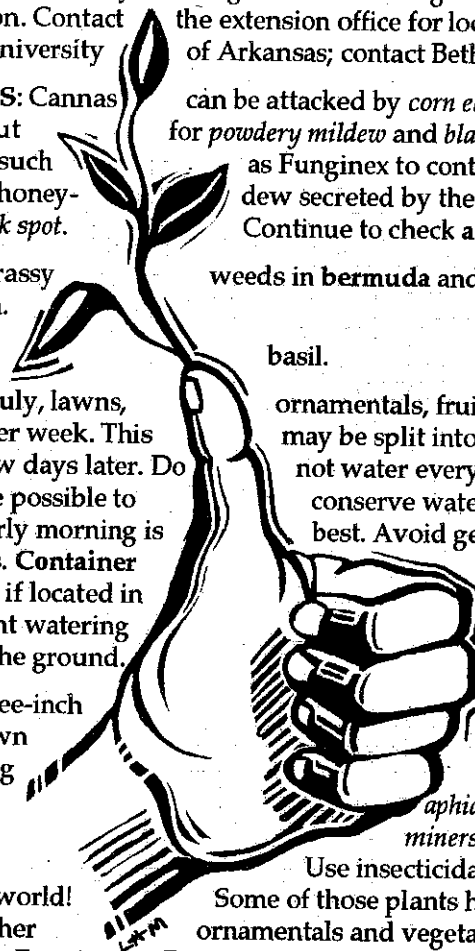
basil.

ornamentals, fruits and vegetables will require may be split into two applications, one at the not water every day. If it doesn't rain, don't conserve water and keep drops off foliage. best. Avoid getting water on foliage since plants will need closer monitor- a hot, sunny location. Feed tends to leach nutrients out of

layer of mulch around shrubs weeds. *Aphids*, *cutworms*, *corn* (*Mexican bean beetles* and *spotted aphids*, *bagworms*, *black vine weevils*, *miners* and *slugs* are all out in full force

Use insecticidal soap or Malathion.

Some of those plants hardest hit in our area are **phlox**, ornamentals and vegetables. Pray for dry weather, and



*Forgiveness is the fragrance a flower gives off when you step on it.*

# Beth's Helpful Garden Hints

For home garden use, here's the oil /detergent recipe devised by ARS researchers in Arizona for controlling whiteflies and other insect pests: Add one tablespoon of dishwashing detergent to one cup of vegetable oil — peanut, safflower, corn, soybean or sunflower. When ready to use, shake this solution well and mix 1 to 2 teaspoons of it into 1 cup water. Spray the mixture directly on insects, using a pump sprayer like the one that comes with plastic bottles of window cleaner. Check plants for insects every 7 to 10 days and spray again, as needed. The researchers sprayed the mixture to control pests on carrots, celery, cucumbers, eggplants, lettuce, peppers, Swiss chard and watermelon. **Note:** The oil may burn tender leaves of squash, cauliflower and red cabbage. Fresh garden produce should be washed well before use, to remove any residual spray or other unwanted matter.



WHAT ARE THOSE BLACK SPOTS ON THE BOTTOM OF MY TOMATOES?

IS IT O.K. TO PRUNE MY CHIA PLANT?

MY BONSAI TREE WON'T GROW. SHOULD I FERTILIZE IT?

The Cornell Fungicide Formula spray will help prevent and/or control blackspot and mildew on roses — as well as powdery mildew on summer squash, early blight on tomatoes and alternaria leaf blight on melons: Add one tablespoon each of baking soda and oil — either a light horticultural oil or regular vegetable oil — to one gallon of water. If you use vegetable oil, add a bit of insecticidal soap (the amount recommended for mixing with a gallon of water). Shake well before and during application. If the weather is humid or the threat of disease is high, spray every five to seven days. Spray both sides of the leaves thoroughly at the first sign of disease. **Remember:** Always test any spray on a small area before spraying your entire plant!

# Master Gardener Notes

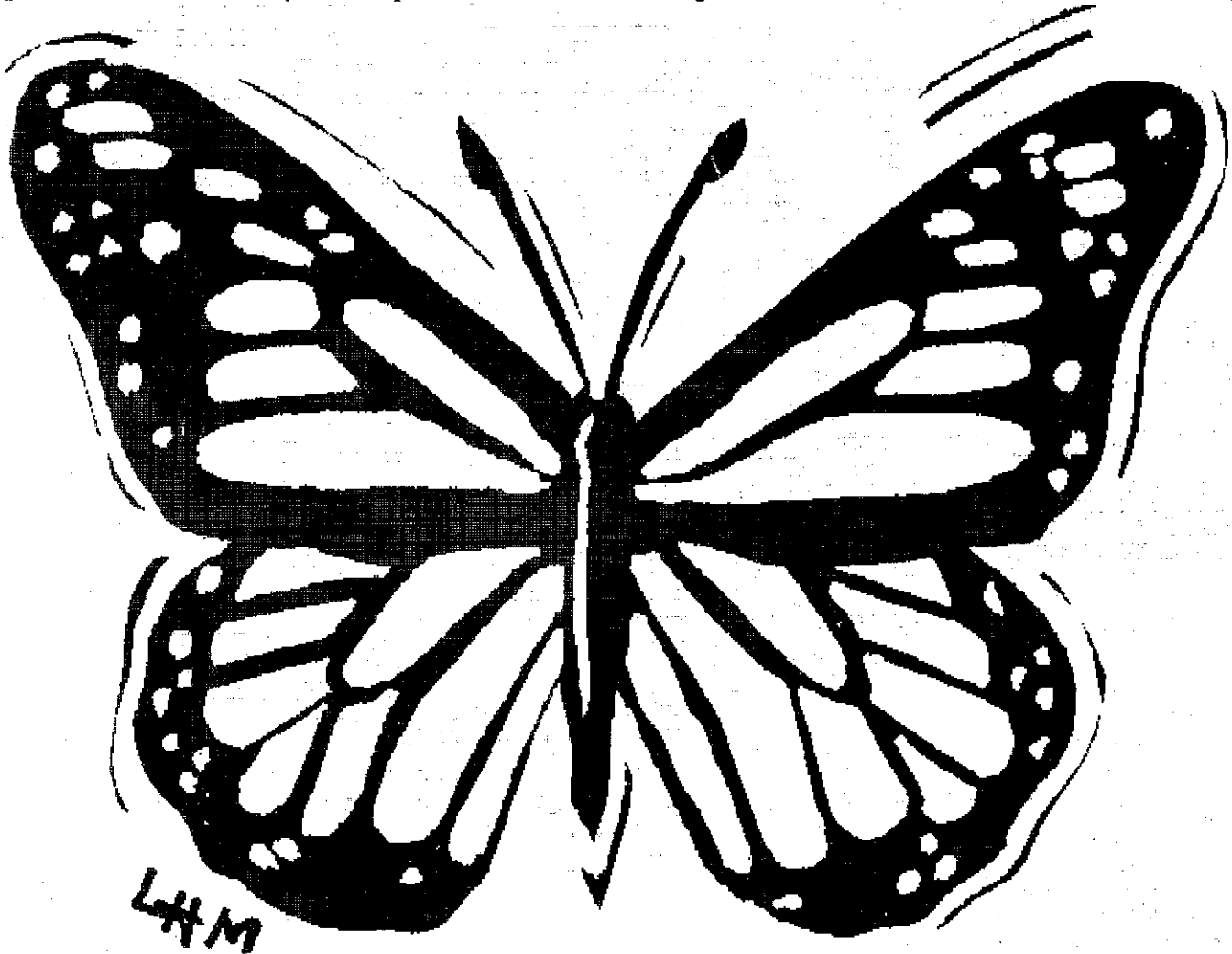
—Julie Eckberg

There will be no regular monthly Master Gardener meetings in July or August. The next regular monthly meeting will be Tuesday, September 10, 11:30 a.m.

The Central Arkansas Iris Society Rhizome Sale is Saturday, July 6, 1996, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. (The early bird gets the first pick!) The sale will be held at the Garden Center, Kavanaugh Boulevard at Lee Avenue, Little Rock.

Master Gardener applications for the 1996 class will go out about July 10. If you know someone who might be interested, have them call the Extension Office, 340-6650, to get on the mailing list. (Remind them about the volunteer commitment.)

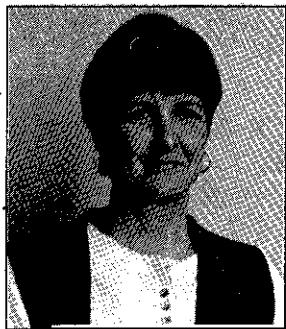
If you are interested in helping save some of the historic roses and other plants at the Tate residence or Curran Hall in downtown Little Rock (615 East Capitol), please let Beth know. The city is going to restore the house, and it will be used as a visitors/welcome center. The restoration will be a major project, and, if plants can be saved, they will be put back after the building restoration is finished.



There is no Trading Post this month due to our not having a meeting. If you wish to list something you need or something you want to give away in the August newsletter, call Julie Eckberg, 225-6721.

# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Cheryl Todd



Cheryl was born in Kansas City but really grew up in Warrensburg, Mo. (a small town about 40 miles southeast of KC). Having been married to a military man, she lived all over the world before coming to Little Rock. The favorite part of her world travels was living in the Mediterranean area, and she occasionally visits Greece, which she likes best of all.

Cheryl has three children and one grandson. Her oldest son lives in Muskegon, Mich. Another lives in Lonoke, and her youngest still lives at home. Her husband, Kevin, works at the Alltel Technological Center, where he is in charge of the computer tape library.

Becoming a Master Gardener with the 1994 class, Cheryl enjoyed the sessions and thought the panel of presenters was excellent. She has a garden in her backyard and grows mostly perennials and herbs, with some annuals. Vegetables are not prominent, although she does have a few peppers and tomatoes. She developed her interest in gardening by working with her great grandmother, who was an avid and knowledgeable gardener. Cheryl finds that gardening is a relaxing and soothing activity for her.

She had a spectacular show of peonies this spring. The plants date back to 1878 or 1879 — her great grandmother brought them from Dover, Del., to Kansas City. Then they were moved to Warrensburg and finally to Little Rock. Cheryl has five colors, ranging from white to several shades of pink.

Her work assignment is the Old State House. However, the site has not been active since work began to repair the building.

In addition to gardening, Cheryl finds relaxation in other hobbies, including sewing and oil painting, primarily wildlife and landscapes.

## Patty Wingfield



Patty became a Master Gardener in 1994. She thoroughly enjoyed the program, finding it most helpful and informative. She had a long-time interest in gardening, as she began doing the family's yard work when she was about 12 years old. She loves to be outdoors and to work outdoors.

Patty was born and raised in Little Rock. Her family has been here for more than 100 years. Her great grandparents moved here from Germany and set up a print shop in downtown Little Rock. Patty and her husband have four children, ranging in age from 9 to 16. Her husband is in the construction business and recently sold his company, Contact Construction, which was located in North Little Rock.

As they are building a new house, Patty is in the process of designing a garden with old Southern plants. Her present yard is very shady, so she has not been able to grow many of the plants she would like to have. She especially likes annuals such as petunias, as well as begonias and crape myrtles. Her major frustration is trying to grow grass where it doesn't want to grow and getting nut grass to stop growing where she doesn't want it to grow.

Patty's other interests are reading, doing volunteer work and going to the lake on weekends with the family, where they all enjoy their boat.

*Gardening  
is the purest  
of human pleasure!*

# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**July** — No meeting.

**July 6** — **The Central Arkansas Iris Society Rhizome Sale** is held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Garden Center, Kavanaugh at Lee, Little Rock.

**July 10** — **MG applications for 1996** will be mailed. Do you have a friend who should call the extension office to get on the mailing list? Please remind them about the volunteer commitment.

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**September 10** — **Regular MG Monthly Meeting** — Arkla Blue Flame Room, 11:30 a.m.

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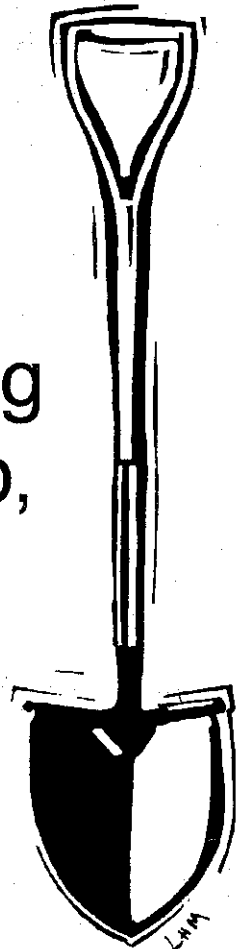
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Elizabeth J. Phelps  
 County Extension Agent — Agriculture

Don't  
 wait  
 for  
 something  
 to turn up,  
 get  
 a spade  
 and  
 dig for it!



*Summertime*

*And the Livin' is Easy*

— Ira Gershwin



# MASTER MINUTES

August 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 7

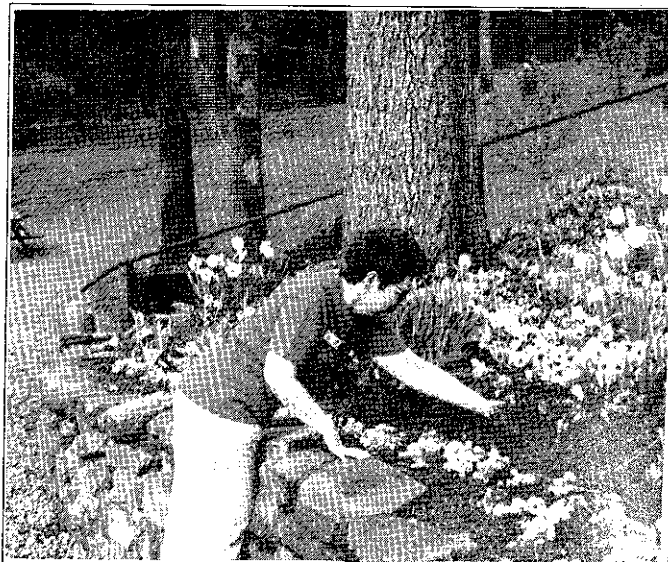
## Committee Spotlight: Old Mill Park

— Helen Hronas

Justin Matthews envisioned a memorial to the pioneer spirit when he commissioned Dionicio Rodriguez to create a free-form concrete sculpture in a ravine in the undeveloped wilds of Lakewood in 1932. Recognized as the foremost artisan of his time in this style of sculpture, Rodriguez did not disappoint — it is said that foresters can identify specific species of wood, so true to nature is his work.

Over the past 60 years, his twisted-branch bridges and mill in this quiet North Little Rock subdivision have become known far and wide. The classic '30s movie, "Gone With the Wind," opened with a lovely shot of the Old Mill. The structure has become a national tourist attraction, and an estimated 100,000 visitors see the park each year.

Master Gardeners are on-call to meet sightseers who arrive in buses from all over the country. MGs conduct tours, giving historical background and discussing and identifying plants if the group has an interest in horticulture. Occasionally, garden clubs tour as well. The Old Mill also is a popular setting for outdoor weddings — about 200 take place in the gardens each year.



Chairman Linda Hubbell checks begonias near a rock wall at The Old Mill in North Little Rock.

Old Mill Committee photos courtesy of Linda Hubbell

house in Burns Park furnishes plants seasonally, while the committee plants, weeds and maintains the gardens. Workdays are held four to five times a year, and Master Gardeners check the grounds weekly.

"This spring at Eastertime, Old Mill Park was the most beautiful I have ever seen it, with tulips, jonquils, azaleas and dogwoods all flowering at once," Linda says.

"Everyone is so appreciative of Master Gardeners' work at the Old Mill," adds co-chair Joe Dickens (who served as chair for the past three years). His enjoyment in working there is evident: "It's such a pleasant place to be, and it looks better than ever." Water quality at the site was a concern that Joe, Max Thorn and Charles Worden concentrated on. At their urging, the city installed a recirculating pump and fountain, which, although not fully resolving the problem, have alleviated it considerably.

See Spotlight, page 3

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Linda Hubbell, serving her first year as committee chairman, says the Old Mill committee works closely with the North Little Rock Landscape Division since there is more work than could possibly be done by volunteers. The project has grown with the passage of time, and the city has invested more funds and personnel. The NLR green-

# August Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**LAWNS:** Let your lawn grow about 1/2 to 1 inch taller during the hottest part of summer. Grass is under stress this time of year and needs the extra leaf surface for photosynthesis. The turf will stay thick enough to slow evaporation from soil. Water only when needed, water well and water deep to encourage deep roots that will sustain the turf during drought.

**WATERING:** Check container plants daily and water as needed. Water deeply twice a week or use a soaker hose or drip irrigation to reduce runoff and evaporation. Mulch well.

**ANNUALS:** Cut back leggy plants and fertilize with a water-soluble product. You still have time to replant a second crop of **zinnias, marigolds** and several other bedding plants if you choose to pull the diseased or bad ones. Some easier to grow, later summer "fill-in" plants are: **cosmos** (rapid grower — heat lover — variety of colors), **sanvitalias** (daisy-type, tolerates heat/dry), **zinnia** (linearis (rugged heat lover — blooms constantly — fine-texture leaf) and **melampodium** (star-shaped, golden flower — tolerates heat and blooms all season).

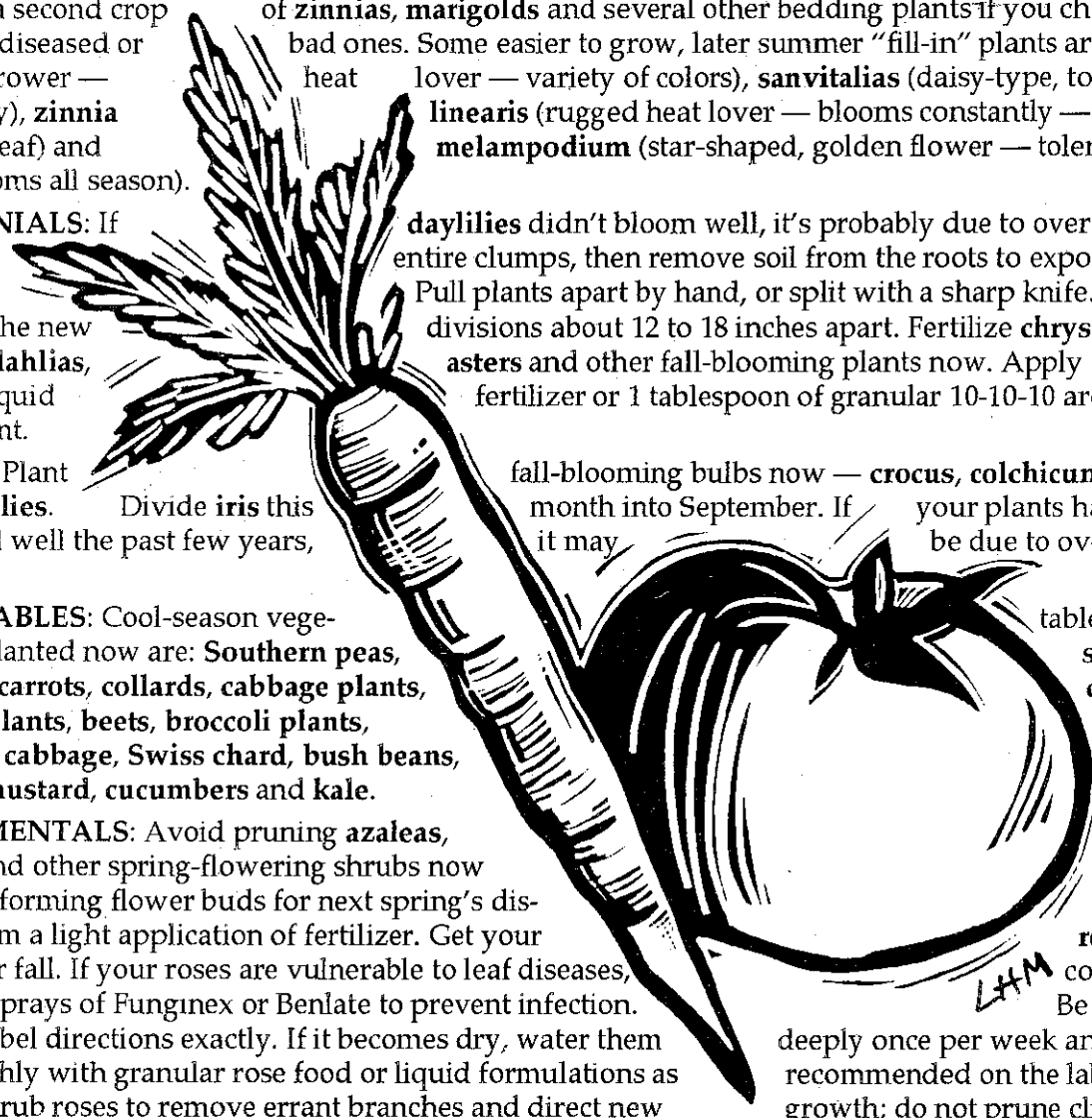
**PERENNIALS:** If **daylilies** didn't bloom well, it's probably due to overcrowding. Dig up entire clumps, then remove soil from the roots to expose the crown. Pull plants apart by hand, or split with a sharp knife. Then replant the new divisions about 12 to 18 inches apart. Fertilize **chrysanthemums, dahlias, asters** and other fall-blooming plants now. Apply about 1 cup of liquid fertilizer or 1 tablespoon of granular 10-10-10 around each plant.

**BULBS:** Plant **spider lilies**. Divide **iris** this fall-blooming bulbs now — **crocus, colchicums** and **month** into September. If your plants haven't bloomed well the past few years, it may be due to overcrowding.

**VEGETABLES:** Cool-season vegetables that can be planted now are: **Southern peas, squash, carrots, collards, cabbage plants, flower plants, beets, broccoli plants, Chinese cabbage, Swiss chard, bush beans, beans, mustard, cucumbers and kale.**

**ORNAMENTALS:** Avoid pruning **azaleas, sythia** and other spring-flowering shrubs now they are forming flower buds for next spring's display. Give them a light application of fertilizer. Get your shrubs in shape for fall. If your roses are vulnerable to leaf diseases, regular sprays of Funginex or Benlate to prevent infection. Follow label directions exactly. If it becomes dry, water them deeply once per week and fertilize monthly with granular rose food or liquid formulations as recommended on the label. Prune shrub roses to remove errant branches and direct new growth; do not prune climbers at this time. Mulch to insulate rose roots.

**HERBS:** If you get started now, you can have an indoor herb garden this winter. Divide **mint, sweet marjoram** and **oregano** growing in the garden. Cut back divisions, pot them and place in a sunny window. Pot **chives** as well, but leave them outside for a month of frost to encourage fresh shoots when you bring them indoors. Sow seeds of **dwarf basil** and **parsley** directly into pots. Although **rosemary** is evergreen, it may be killed by cold temperatures. **Thyme** is hardy and evergreen, so leave it in the garden.



See "Checklist," continued on next page



*"Spotlight," continued from page 1*

Obviously the efforts of Master Gardeners have contributed a great deal to the improvement and beautification of this landmark park. Linda is proud of her diligent committee members and especially wants to recognize senior veteran Master Gardener Dorothy Hobbs, who has worked in the Burns Park greenhouse, never misses a maintenance day and always shows up on her work day. Linda also admires the energy of new Master Gardeners Nan Jo Dubé and Janeen Cushman. Other hardworking committee members are: Jerry Quick, Wincie Hughes, Cecelia Buck, Linda Dantzler, Roger Kordsmeier, Barbara Johnson, Mike Sturdivant, Jack Singleton, Billie Massey, Cheryl Overstreet, Gayle Page, Don Nutt, Dick Blankenbecker, Jan King, Anita Chamberlin and Amail Chudy.



Dorothy Hobbs takes a break from her work at The Old Mill.

*"Checklist," continued from previous page*

**INSECTS:** You may begin to notice *webs* on the limbs of **pecan, cherry, persimmon** and **sycamore** trees. These are the nests of *webworms* and they can do considerable damage to foliage if untreated. Recommended treatment is to remove and destroy webs and apply *Bacillus thuringiensis* spray to leaves the worms are feeding on. If you notice *yellowing foliage* on **azaleas, pyracantha, cotoneaster** or **hawthorn**, check for *lace bugs*. Black dots of excrement on the underside of leaves are a sure sign of their presence, as is a white, mottled appearance on the tops of the leaves. To control, spray with insecticidal soap or Malathion, according to directions.

**NOTE:** When using any kind of fungicide or insecticide, be sure plants to be treated contain plenty of moisture. If there is not enough moisture in the plants, too much of the chemical will be taken up, and there is a possibility of damaging the plants. Now is a good time to use herbicides to get rid of *grassy weeds*, as well as *poison ivy* and *honeysuckle*. Be sure to follow label directions! Before you use an herbicide, water well the surrounding plants you want to keep healthy. Since *poison ivy* and *honeysuckle* are perennials, applying Roundup now can keep them from storing nutrients for winter, and the chance of their surviving until spring decreases.

*Oh, let it go. Let the plants fight their own battle.* — Katharine F. White

## Water Quality And Proper Lawn Care

*We found the following excerpt to be very interesting — especially what is apparently a combination of overuse of pesticides by homeowners and undertesting by manufacturers of the chemicals.*

Grass-covered parks, yards and recreational areas are a common sight in many urban and suburban areas. However, widespread lawn chemical use may subject residential areas to higher levels of exposure, either through direct contact or indirectly through adjacent ground and surface water.

The potential for water contamination also may be high. According to the Lawn Institute:

- In The United States, lawns occupy more land than any single crop, including grains such as wheat or corn.

- Turfgrass occupies a land area equal in size to the state of Pennsylvania.

- As of 1993, only two of 34 major pesticides have been tested for their long-term effects on humans or the environment.

- Homeowners typically apply 10 times more chemical pesticides per acre than do farmers on agricultural land.

— "Water Impacts," Vol. 15, No. 9

*Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed.* — Francis Bacon

# Plant Of The Month

—Gladys Whitney

Our August Plant of the Month is one that grows in very few gardens in Arkansas, yet it's a plant that gives Arkansas world prominence.

The plant is the blackberry bush, and if you haven't seen one since your childhood days of picking wild berries along a country lane, you've got a lot of catching up to do.

Thanks to University of Arkansas' Dr. Jim Moore, the UA Fruit Substation at Clarksville has the world's largest blackberry breeding program in the world. Since 1974 Moore has developed or co-developed a virtual Indian nation of blackberry cultivars. All are named for Indian tribes — Cherokee, Comanche, Cheyenne, Shawnee, Choctaw, Navaho, Arapaho, and the latest — developed just last year — Kiowa.

The Kiowa is a very productive, thorny, erect

away with the thorns if you plant Navaho or Arapaho.

As with any plant, soil preparation is very important, as are fertilizing and care after planting. Once the planting is done, you should be vigilant about removing grasses and weeds. This includes wild blackberry plants, which can spread rosette or double blossom fungus, an untreatable disease.

Although the Arkansas cultivars are the erect-growing types, the first year's growth is semi-trailing. However, from the second year on, the plant is an erect bush. Winter pruning is recommended.

Average ripening dates start with the Choctaw on May 23 and run til June 15 for the Navaho. Once your bushes start bearing, fruit should be picked as often as every second or

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*The plant is the blackberry bush,  
and if you haven't seen one  
since your childhood days of picking  
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you've got a lot of catching up to do.*

---

blackberry bush with fruit 9 to 10 grams in weight, which is a *large* blackberry.

There are a lot of pluses to raising these Arkansas cultivars. They're all erect-growing and therefore require no trellises. Frost is usually not a problem; no irrigation is required; they're suited to all soil types (except for heavy, poorly drained soils); and for those of you who remember thorn-scratched arms and hands from those wild blackberries, you can even do

third day. Since some berries turn black before they are actually ripe, they should be left alone until they are easily separated from the pedicel.

Our county Cooperative Extension Office has plenty of detailed information on blackberries and can help you decide which to plant in your garden. And, if you really get involved with raising blackberries, it should be comforting to know that the world's experts are just down the road apiece.

# Beth's Helpful Garden Hints



LHM  
Both of the following recipes were enjoyed by the Master Gardeners on their recent tour of MG gardens. Hope you like them! — Beth Phelps

## Rosemary Punch — Jan King

2 cups rosemary infusion\*  
1 large can pineapple juice, strained  
1 12-ounce frozen lemonade mix, made up  
1 large bottle ginger ale

You can mix the infusion, pineapple juice and lemonade together ahead of time and add the ginger ale to the punchbowl just before serving.

\* **Rosemary Infusion** — Place 1 large can strained pineapple juice in glass pitcher and stuff with fresh rosemary, stems and all. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Next morning, put juice and rosemary in an enamel or glass pan. Heat to just before boiling. Remove from heat. Set aside, cover and steep for 30 minutes. Makes 5 cups, which can be frozen.

## Lavender Lemonade — Sarah Clark

Boil 3 tablespoons lavender in 2 cups of water. Cool, pour through strainer and collect the lavender water. Add the lavender water to 2 quarts of lemonade.\*

\* **Old-Fashioned Lemonade** — Cut 8 lemons into *thin* slices. Remove seeds. Place in large non-metal bowl or pitcher. Sprinkle with 1-1/2 cups sugar. Let stand for 1 hour, periodically pressing lemons with the back of a wooden spoon. Add 8 cups of water. Refrigerate overnight. Serve with ice, and garnish.

*Oops! Last month, in "Meet Our Master Gardeners," photos of Cheryl Todd and Patty Wingfield were reversed.*



# BOOK REVIEW

— Jan Richardson

*"Great Garden Shortcuts," Joan Benjamin, Editor, published by Rodale Press, Inc., Emmaus, Penn., 1996, \$27.95.*

According to the editor, "Great Garden Shortcuts" is a collection of the most unique and useful gardening tips and techniques ever published — straight from the country's most successful experts and backyard gardeners. With 'Great Garden Shortcuts,' you'll save time and trouble, no matter what you want from your garden and yard: earlier tomatoes, gorgeous weed-free flowers, a quick low-maintenance hedge, or the simplest way to keep pests away."

This is not a book that requires reading by progressing from cover to cover, nor is it intended to be. It's arranged alphabetically so the reader can turn to the topic of interest. A current problem for many gardeners this time of year is keeping plants watered and, specifically, those in containers.

To test the book's usefulness, I turned to the section on "container gardening" and found an idea that should be very helpful — using parachute cord about 1/4-inch thick, stretching the cord throughout the soil when filling the pots and putting the long end of the cord into a water reservoir, such as a gallon milk jug or covered bucket, which is then hidden between the plant pots, in some leaves or mulch so as to be unobtrusive. Depending on the number of plants being watered and the weather, a gallon of water will serve from one to three weeks.

Half-strength fish emulsion is placed in the water supply for fertilizer. I can now leave on a trip without having to ask a friend to water my container plants daily!

The section on lawns has the following eye-catching titles: "Ecolawns Need Less Care — Cut Back on Mowing," "Proven Plants for Ecolawns," "Get Your New Lawn Off To A Great Start," "Pest-Proof Grasses," "Just Say 'No' to Mowing and Watering," "Why Buy A Mulching Mower," and "Double-Seed to Double-Cross Weeds."

I've always worried about whether my habit of planting winter rye to have a green winter lawn was damaging the St. Augustine.

The "Double-Seed to Double-Cross Weeds" suggestion explains that, since warm-season grasses don't begin to green up until the temperature is in the 80s, the weeds are getting a stronghold in the meantime, but that, by overseeding with annual rye in the fall, there will be fewer weeds. The lawn must be fertilized every eight weeks; otherwise the rye will take nutrients from the soil needed by the perennial grass.

Although the book's format is great for browsing, the writing style is so entertaining and the topics so useful that reading the entire book is a pleasure. This book truly lives up to its promises.

# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Dick Blankenbecker



Dick was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Penn., and he obtained a degree in forestry at Pennsylvania State. He has worked in Operations for a wood treatment plant which transferred him to several parts of the United States in the past. Now having lived in the Little Rock area for 14 years, he plans to stay after he retires.

Dick completed his Master Gardener training with the 1995 class. The opportunity to be with others interested in gardening is a pleasure added to learning about different aspects of gardening, and he enjoys the monthly meetings. Dick found the 20 hours of telephone duty which he just completed to be a challenging and worthwhile learning experience.

Since he is a forester, Dick's favorite plants are trees. As an MG, he works at The Old Mill, where he is placing name plates on the trees. He is on the North Little Rock Tree Board and is helping to place name plates on trees located within city right-of-ways.

He also gained an interest in vegetable gardening through helping his father grow a Victory Garden back in the '40s. The family had an acre or two which supplied their family's needs plus some extras for the neighbors. To indulge his love for growing vegetables today, Dick uses some land at the plant, since his own backyard is rather small and shady. Favorite crops are yellow Roma beans and tomatoes.

In addition to gardening, Dick enjoys scuba diving in local and Caribbean waters. He is an elder at the Park Hill Presbyterian Church. He and his wife, Elsie, have four children and six grandchildren.

## Nan Jo Dubé



Nan Jo completed the Master Gardener training program last year. She thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of the program, especially getting to know other MGs. She helps to maintain the plantings at The Old Mill.

Nan Jo grew up in Georgia and received her degree from Florida State University. Afterward, she obtained a position at Arkansas State University and has lived in North Little Rock ever since. Her recent retirement from her position as professor of English education has given her more free time to enjoy her garden.

Nan Jo's interest in landscaping is helpful in designing a garden layout to display her flowers to best advantage. While she was working, her backyard was primarily a lawn. Now she has a rose garden and many containers filled with plants. (Since her yard soil consists of the typical Arkansas mixture of four parts stones to one part dirt, containers seem a wise alternative.)

Nan Jo loves beautiful things and learning what makes plants grow. Her favorites are roses, four o'clocks and caladiums. Her vegetable garden consists of only four pepper plants, as there are too many squirrels, rabbits, birds and other animals in her neighborhood for vegetable gardening to be feasible. However, her cat, Dina, is a gardening companion, helping with chores and providing conversation while Nan Jo works.

A son is a Little Rock decorator interested in landscaping. A daughter (who shares her interest in gardening) and son-in-law live in Sheridan with Nan Jo's four grandchildren. Besides gardening, this Master Gardener enjoys reading, travel, swimming and collecting dolls.

# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**August — No meeting.**

**September 10 — Regular MG Monthly Meeting, 11:30 a.m.** — This meeting will be held in the auditorium at the new State Extension Office on University Avenue just north of UALR.

**September 25-26 — Louisiana in September.** Travel to Hodges Gardens in Natchitoches on Wednesday, and tour the American Rose Center in Shreveport on Saturday. Make your reservations now! Call Mrs. McKinney, 340-6650.

**October 10-12 — State Master Gardener Conference, Hot Springs.**

**December 12 — 1996 Master Gardener Christmas Party.** The party will be held at the Adult Center on 12th Street in Little Rock.

# Helpful Hints — Trudy Goolsby

Pantyhose are great to tie tomato plants and almost a must for tender vines like clematis.

Petunias make nice flower arrangements. When plants get leggy, snip off a long stem or two, and fill dishes. They last several days, and your petunia plants will get bushier!

# MG Notes — Julie Eckberg

If you know any friends or relatives interested in Master Gardener training, applications are now being mailed. Request an application from Mrs. McKinney at the Extension Office (340-6650). The training dates will be October 2, 9, 16 and 30, plus November 6 and 13, with a tour of Master Gardener projects September 25.

The next Master Gardener monthly meeting will be Tuesday, September 10, in the auditorium of the new Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Building. The building is on University Avenue just north of UALR. (There will be no monthly meeting in August..)

Mark your calendars for the 1996 Master Gardener Christmas party on December 12. The party will be held at the Adult Center on 12th Street in Little Rock.

# Master Minutes Staff

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The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture

# Notice To All Greenhouse

## Committee Members — Lois Corley

Please be on stand-by for a call to transplant pansies. All available help will be needed. Approximately two days will be required. Come and work the amount of time that you have to give. We will also need a watering crew — one person for each day of the week (seven), plus a few substitutes. You will receive your call around September 25, giving you the exact date and time to help.

If you have any items for the Trading Post (that is, plants to share or plants needed), call Julie Eckberg (225-6721) to get your listing in the newsletter.



# MASTER MINUTES

September 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 8

## Committee Spotlight: Victorian Cottage — Helen Hronas

As you approach the modest Victorian cottage on North Little Rock's Main Street, it is not difficult to imagine the rustle of petticoats as a parasol unfolds and the lady of the house descends the front steps, perhaps to walk to a nearby Argenta market. The house is painted in typical Victorian colors — blue-grey with cream and brick-red trim. An antique brick walk neatly laid out in herringbone-style is centered between segments of a sturdy white picket fence. Pale pink "Early Dawn" and an old-fashioned red climbing rose trail across the fence. "Sweet Autumn" clematis, salvaged by Master Gardeners from among the weeds, now climb a trellis at the corner porch columns and on the picket fence, promising sweet-smelling blossoms in the weeks to come.

An ancient magnolia fills one side of the tiny front yard, spreading over the walk. MGs are experimenting to find what grows best in its shade. So far, hostas, thrift and violets do well. A patch of old lilies remains, having proven too deep-growing and resisting all efforts to transplant them. The committee rescued an antique bush rose from the brambles and moved it to the backyard.

Master Gardeners began this project in April 1995, says

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project chairman Marie Flickinger, and she and her hard-working committee have accomplished much in the ensuing 17 months. The 110-year-old cottage had been restored and was being used daily for offices, but the yard was an untouched, unsightly patch



Master Gardeners Marie Flickinger (committee chair), Jayne Mann and Joyce Bumgardner at the Victorian Cottage

of weeds and dirt when this enthusiastic group began working towards a goal of transforming it into their vision of a Victorian garden.

Authentic plants of the Victorian era are used as much as possible. The Daffodil Society supplied 16 varieties of antique bulbs dating from the 1600s. Gardeners planted them in a round bed in back, and purple pansies cover this bed each fall. Perennial beds line a fence on the south, and annuals fill other beds. Near the "kitchen" door, Master Gardeners planted a handy herb garden and thoughtfully inscribed smooth white rocks with the name of each plant. An enormous pecan tree both shades and dominates most of the backyard, and Marie reports that it was very productive last fall.

Unlike the rocky soil in most elevated areas of North Little Rock, the downtown neighborhood has wonderful, See Spotlight, page 2

rich black soil. Jim Wilson advised MGs not to till the soil but favors laying 12 sheets of black-and-white newsprint on the ground, covered by four to six inches of compost and rich soil.

The cottage, next door to the historic Baker House, serves as offices and/or a meeting place for the Argenta Community Development Corporation, North Little Rock History Commission and North Little Rock Main Street Project. The house is privately owned and leased to the city. Marie is intrigued by tales of a secret cellar under the house, probably used for wine-making. One day she hopes to see if it's still there.

The Community Development Commission has given the project committee funds to purchase azaleas and roses, and our Master Gardeners organization has also contributed. Pansies are from the MG greenhouse. Several committee members have generously donated plants from their homes, including lilac bushes and Asiatic jasmine. Other donations include the antique bricks used to line the beds.

Marie is very upbeat about the future of this old downtown neighborhood, and the committee members feel that their efforts are contributing towards its restoration. Busy MGs on this committee are: Jayne Mann, Patricia Clark, Ruth Gibson, Margaret Fizer, Joyce Bumgardner, Kate Lynn, Sarah Henson, Peggy Gray, Patricia Pyron, Anne Jarrard, Rita Johnson, Dorothy Veirs, Jan King, Phillip Bullard and Pam Bredlow.

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## Master Gardener Notes — Julie Eckberg

The 1996 Master Gardener training will begin on September 25 at the Pulaski County Cooperative Extension Office on Roosevelt, with a tour of our projects. The training classes will be held October 2, 9, 16 and 30, and November 6 and 13 at the new state Cooperative Extension Building on University Avenue in Little Rock.

The September Master Gardener monthly meeting will be September 10 in the auditorium of the new Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service building. The new building is on the east side of University Avenue just north of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Annette Hurley of Positive Growth Organic Lawn Care will present the program about organic gardening and lawn care. (Annette is also a Master Gardener.)

A slate of officers for 1997 will be submitted for a vote at the September meeting. Jay Hill, chairman of the nominating committee, says the following members have been nominated:

Past President	Jane Gulley
President	David Dodson
1st Vice President	Bettye Jane Daugherty
2nd Vice President	Connie Smith
Secretary	Ann Ward
Treasurer	Ann Cooper

Remember to send your registration for the State Master Gardener Conference to be held October 10 and 11 in Hot

Springs. The early registration deadline is September 3, and the absolute registration deadline is September 30. (The state office must have your registration fees by these dates.)

Fall is upon us, and we will be tabulating all Master Gardener volunteer hours and recertification points. If you need more volunteer hours, call some of the project and committee chairpersons. Many of them will be scheduling planning and clean-up dates.

Mark your calendars for the 1996 Master Gardener Christmas party on December 12. The party will be held at the Adult Center on 12th Street in Little Rock.



Master Gardeners had a good time, got to taste-test the harvest and learned a lot on a recent trip to the UA fruit substation near Clarksville.



# Plant Of The Month — Gladys Whitney

I was hostile toward hostas. I did not want to like them. I like flash — I am a peony-and-iris sort of girl. I thought hostas were boring. I was ignorant.

When I moved to my very shady yard two years ago and saw all of those hostas, all I could think of was slug bait. (It brought back terrible childhood memories of walking down the dark-tiled floor at night and stepping on the slimy creatures.) I knew that I would have to get rid of the hostas.

I started by separating them in the fall. Some I gave away, and some I left all winter in plastic pots with very little dirt. The next spring, those that I left in the ground were glorious, and the abandoned ones that never made it to some slug-lover's yard were coming back. Getting rid of the hostas was not being to be easy. Total neglect was not working, and the slugs weren't eating as fast as the plants were producing

That winter, reading about some of the plants I had inherited was confirming my ignorance. Many real gardeners were touting them as the almost perfect plant. Allen Lacy, in "The Garden in Autumn," describes them as "foliage plants par excellence." A plant with more

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*Getting rid of the hostas was not going to be easy. Total neglect was not working, and the slugs weren't eating as fast as the plants were producing.*

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than 1,500 varieties ranging in color from yellow to blue and with all sorts of combinations thereof, and from three inches to four feet tall, deserved some respect.

Hostas have something for everyone and will grow in almost any yard. They grow best in the shade in average soil with about six inches of organic material. It seems that the only soils that they will not tolerate are pure sand and buckshot. They like to be fed in the spring and then left alone. Most cultivars take two to three years to become well established. After that time, one can get new

plants by simply dividing or by taking out a single new plant. Scott Meyer, writing for the April issue of *Organic Gardening*, suggests digging the soil away from the roots in the early spring and then slicing out two or three nodes with the roots attached.

In "The Hosta Book," Paul Aden divides hostas into five groups, primarily based on size. The *small* hostas are those eight inches or less. He suggests using them in difficult spaces, such as between rocks or tree roots. Just because they are small, don't think they are delicate. My favorite of the small varieties would have to be 'Charreuse Wiggles,' and not only because it has received a small hosta award. I love the name.

*Edgers* are 12 inches and under, have vigorous horizontal growth but do not tend to cover large areas. 'Gold Edger' has heart-shaped leaves, dense mounds and is pest-resistant and sun-tolerant.

*Groundcovers* are 18 inches or less and tend to be stoloniferous, reduce maintenance and bind the soil — thus helping in areas with erosion problems. Suggested groundcovers are 'Ground Master' and H. Gracillima 'Variegated.' 'Blue Wedgewood' is an edger that Aden suggests could also be used as a groundcover.

*Background* hostas are big — 24 inches or taller, with sculptural qualities. Aden suggests 'Blue Mammoth' and 'Green Wedge' as two reliable examples.

*Specimen* hostas can be any size and are used to show off the details of their texture, color, variegation, flowers or fragrance.

Master Gardener Joe Dickens of Cross Road Farms, his new nursery in Benton, says his personal favorite is 'Fragrant Bouquet,' with its lime-green leaves, white variegation and upright stance.

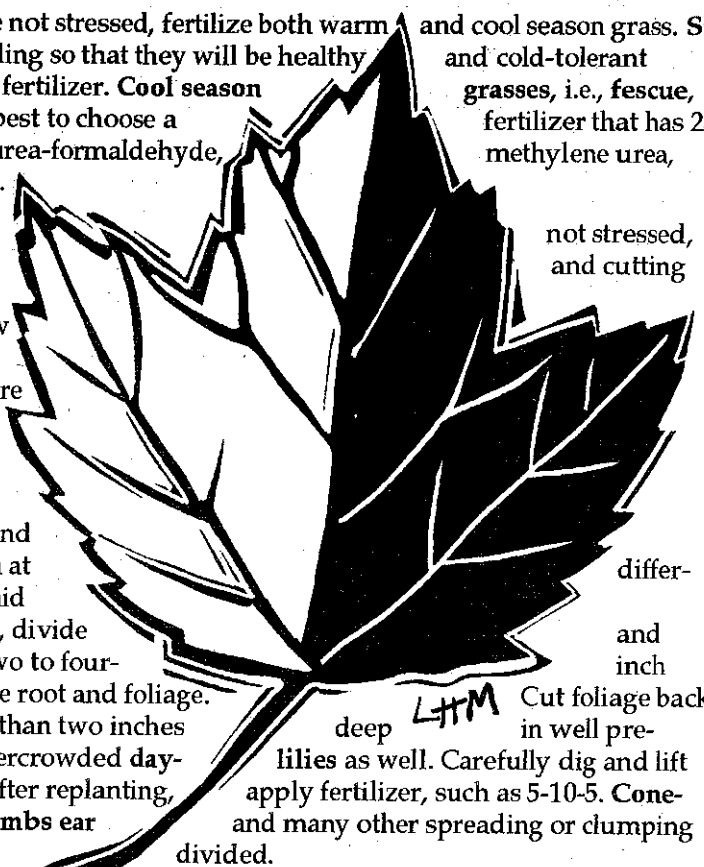
Hostas are available at most nurseries in central Arkansas. Dickens has a good supply of larger cultivars and suggests that gardeners in Arkansas try some — with the exception of the 'Tokadamas.' He says it is just too hot for them here except for 'Love Pal.' Dorothy Pellett, writing for the August 1995 issue of *Flower and Garden*, suggests trying the 'Tardiana' hybrids if you have a slug problem. But Dickens doesn't think they are especially resistant to slugs. He suggests trying diatomaceous earth — or just living with them. With my newfound information about hostas, total neglect may become my favorite kind of gardening.

# September Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**LAWNS:** This month when it cools off and lawns are not stressed, fertilize both warm and cool season grass. St. Augustine, bermuda and zoysia need one more feeding so that they will be healthy during the coming winter. The key is to use a low-N fertilizer. Cool season etc., need regular or higher N applications, and it is best to choose a fertilizer that has 25 to 30 percent of the N in a slow-release form such as urea-formaldehyde, sulfur-coated urea, or IBDU. Urea is not slow-release.

**ANNUALS:** When it cools off and if the plants are rejuvenate tired annuals by removing faded flowers back long, leggy stems. Feed with liquid 20-20-20 fertilizer and the plants will be back in bloom in a few weeks. If they are too far gone, pull them out and replace with new ones for fall. Although marigolds are usually considered a summer annual, they are becoming a popular alternative to mums and may actually bloom longer!

**PERENNIALS:** Mums and asters can be purchased and planted now. If you buy, try to get several that bloom at different times during the season, i.e., early (September), mid (October) and late (November). It's not too late to dig, divide and replant iris, if overcrowded. Make sure each two to four division contains a part of the rhizome, some root and foliage. replant not more than two inches deep in well prepared soil. You can still divide overcrowded day-lilies as well. Carefully dig and lift flowers, yarrow, perennials can be replanted similarly

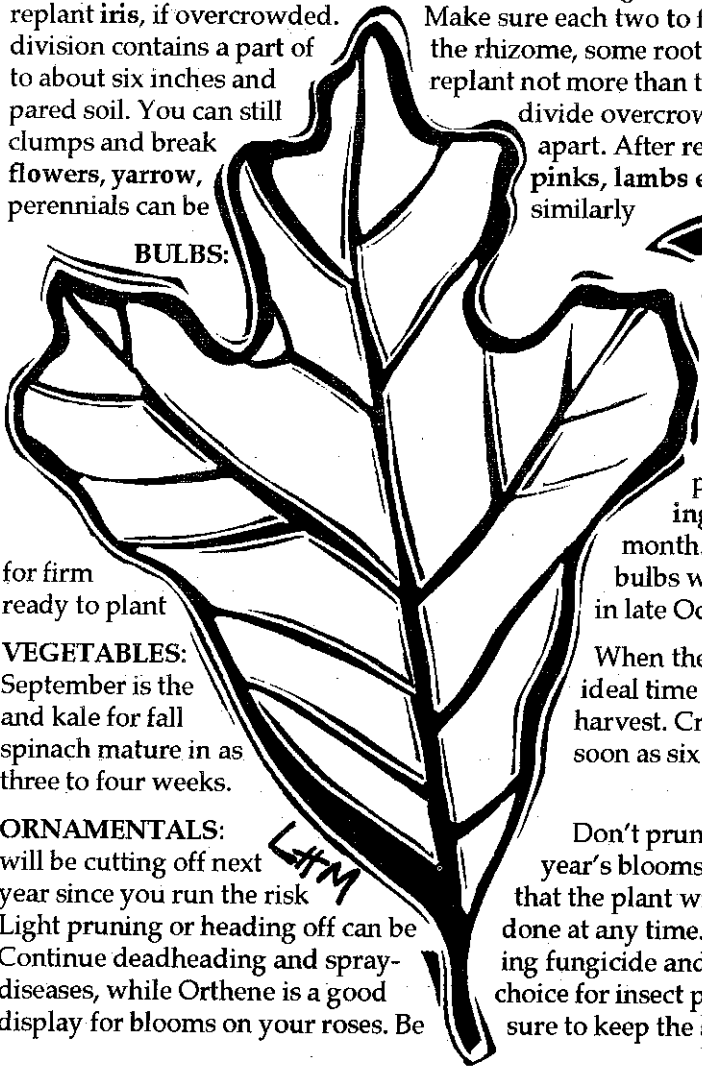


not stressed, and cutting

differ- and inch

deep **LHM** Cut foliage back in well prepared soil. You can still divide overcrowded day-lilies as well. Carefully dig and lift flowers, yarrow, perennials can be replanted similarly

**BULBS:**



for firm ready to plant

**VEGETABLES:** September is the ideal time to plant lettuce, radishes, mustard, turnips, spinach and kale for fall harvest. Cress matures in two to three weeks, leaf lettuce and soon as six weeks, mustard takes four to five weeks and radishes

**ORNAMENTALS:** Don't prune your spring-blooming plants at this time, as you will be cutting off next year's blooms. Avoid heavy pruning of others also at this time of year since you run the risk that the plant will not have sufficient time to harden off before frost. Light pruning or heading off can be done at any time. Fertilize roses for the last time six weeks before frost. Continue deadheading and spray-diseases, while Orthene is a good choice for insect problems. Fall can be the best time of year for the best display for blooms on your roses. Be sure to keep the soil evenly moist.

**Fall-flowering bulbs** should be set out immediately! If you wait too long, these eager bulbs may flower unnoticed in a paper bag. Good choices for fall color include colchicums, crocuses, baby cyclamen and white swamp lilies. For a fragrant surprise in late autumn, plant paperwhite narcissus outdoors now. They will bloom about six to 12 weeks after planting, depending on the selection. **Spring-flowering bulbs** should arrive at your garden center by mid month. For the best selection, go ahead and buy now. Look for firm bulbs with no signs of mold. Store in a cool, dry location until ready to plant in late October through November.

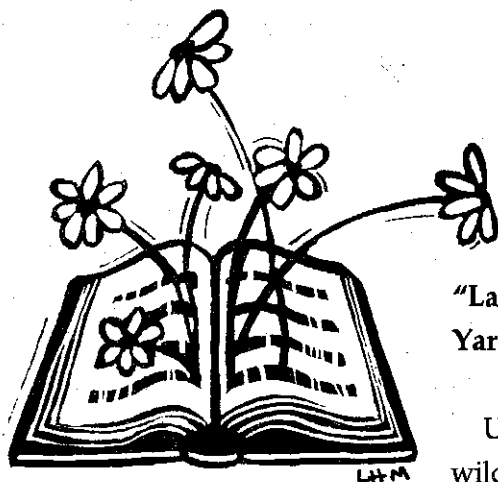
When the heat and drought have eased off, the first half of the year is ideal time to plant lettuce, radishes, mustard, turnips, spinach and kale for fall harvest. Cress matures in two to three weeks, leaf lettuce and soon as six weeks, mustard takes four to five weeks and radishes

Don't prune your spring-blooming plants at this time, as you will be cutting off next year's blooms. Avoid heavy pruning of others also at this time of year since you run the risk that the plant will not have sufficient time to harden off before frost. Light pruning or heading off can be done at any time. Fertilize roses for the last time six weeks before frost. Continue deadheading and spray-diseases, while Orthene is a good choice for insect problems. Fall can be the best time of year for the best display for blooms on your roses. Be sure to keep the soil evenly moist.

**HERBS:** Plant perennial herbs now to fill bare spots in beds. Sage, oregano, lemon balm, thyme and winter savory may not grow much this fall, but they will develop a good root system that will support growth next spring. You can also set out cloves of garlic for harvest in late spring and early summer. Allow four to six inches between plants. Clip off the flower stalk when it appears next spring to divert energy to the underground bulbs.

**HOUSEPLANTS:** Most houseplants are tropical so they can be damaged by temperatures we consider quite moderate. If you have taken your plants outdoors for the summer (and they haven't succumbed to the heat), bring them in when temperatures are predicted to drop below 55 degrees. Be sure to check for "pests" and take care of them before you bring them in. **Poinsettias:** Cut back to the desired height; leave three or four leaves per stem. To bloom between December 1 and Christmas, poinsettias must have total darkness from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. and bright light from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Continue fertilizing through December 1.

**INSECTS AND DISEASES:** Benlate can be used to control *powdery mildew* on crape myrtles, squash, lilacs and other plants, if needed. Malathion or Orthene can be sprayed to control *aphids*, which will control the *sooty mold* on crape myrtles also. *Note:* When using any kind of pesticide, whether fungicide, insecticide or herbicide, be sure plants to be treated contain plenty of moisture. If there is not enough moisture in the plants, too much of the chemical will be taken up, and there is a possibility of damaging the plants. Now is a good time to use herbicides to get rid of *grassy weeds*, as well as *poison ivy* and *honeysuckle*. Since poison ivy and honeysuckle are perennials, applying Roundup now can keep them from storing up nutrients for winter and the chance of their surviving until spring decreases.



# BOOK REVIEW

— Jan Richardson

"Landscaping With Nature, Using Nature's Designs To Plan Your Yard," by Jeff Cox, Rodale Press, Emmaus, Pa., 1991, \$15.99.

Unfortunately, according to Cox, "the American approach to the wilderness has devolved into one of two choices: Pave it or preserve it."

But Cox suggests there is a third choice — "to welcome nature back into our living areas, starting with our backyards. Fifty square feet of backyard ground is subject to the same wild energies and urges as 50 square miles of wilderness. ..."

The premise of this book is that by communion with nature, we can "join in her harmonies." It is not necessary to go to the mountains or the lakes to enjoy nature — we can incorporate the "wonderful wilderness feelings" into our home landscape.

Cox exhorts the reader not to attempt to bring home the plants and the rocks and other specifics which make up a particular area that we find beautiful or peaceful, but to determine what it is about the particular scene that invokes the feeling. According to the author, one can successfully recreate nature's pictures using substituted materials.

First he tells the reader how to learn from nature. Then he explores features in the landscape, with the desired goal of creating a natural garden. He outlines the elements of a natural garden and, finally, covers wildlife and water in the natural garden.

While the reader initially may not want to do his or her entire garden in a natural style, this book certainly makes it possible to experiment successfully with a smaller area. And there are plenty of colored pictures to fully illustrate the author's thesis.

# Beth's Helpful Garden Hints

This is the first section of a multi-part series on "Poison Ivy and Its Kin" by Walter Gloor, borrowed from the Benton County Master Gardeners' "The Green Thumb Print."

A large number of plants found throughout the world can cause allergic contact dermatitis in the hypersensitive individual. For those of us

who live in the United States and surrounding environs, the most important causative plants are poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), western poison oak (*T. diversilobum*), eastern poison oak (*T. quercifolium*) and poison sumac (*T. vernix*).

All of these noxious plants are placed in the family *Anacardiaceae*, which contains a number of useful plants such as the cashew nut tree (*Anacardium occidentale*), the mango tree (*Mangifera indica*) and the Japanese lacquer tree (*Rhus verniciflua*), along with their nasty cousins.

Poison ivy grows either as a trailing vine on the ground or climbing on posts or poles, or upright as a shrub or small tree. It is identified by its characteristic

clusters of three lobed-shaped leaves arranged on stalks, by its white berries that appear in the fall and its hair roots that appear when it is a climbing vine. Abundant in North America, the plant grows everywhere in the United States except Alaska, Hawaii, the desert areas of California and Nevada and at altitudes above 4,000 feet.

Poison oak has blunt-tipped leaflets, hairy on both sides, that cluster in threes. It commonly appears as either an unsupported erect bush or a vine, with the center leaf of the cluster resembling an oak leaf. Western poison oak grows along the Pacific coast from New Mexico to Canada, while eastern poison oak ranges from New Jersey to Florida and from Central Texas to Kansas, growing in sandy soil.

Poison sumac, also known as poison dogwood or poison elder, has pinnate compound leaves with pointed, pale-green leaflets of seven to 13 leaflets arranged on each side of a red-ribbed leaf stalk. It is a coarse, woody shrub or small tree commonly found in swamps and along ponds and streams in the southern and eastern United States. The plant closely resembles the staghorn sumac found in some of the same areas. The main difference is the color of the berries: poison sumac has white berries in the fall, while the staghorn sumac has the red seed heads at the tips of the branches.

These species were formerly assigned to the *Rhus* species. The term "rhus dermatitis" is used to describe the topical reactions caused by exposure to these plants. Poison ivy and poison oak are the main causes of rhus dermatitis in the United States. (In England and western Europe, primrose dermatitis is more common than poison ivy dermatitis.)

Next month, Gloor will explain causative agents, hypersensitivity, sensitization and antigens.



# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Sarah Clark

Sarah grew up in California and spent her summers in Colorado, where she learned about gardening from her grandmother. They also made excursions into the mountains to see wildflowers.

As a military family, she and her husband, Joe, moved around a good bit. They came to the Little Rock area on military assignment, liked the area and stayed on. Now retired from the Air Force, Joe works in training and communication; Sarah retired from teaching school two years ago.

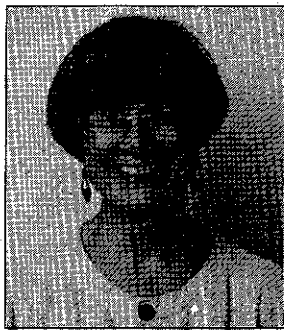
The couple has five children. One son lives in Little Rock, another lives in Bentonville and a third lives in Atlanta, while two daughters live in Nebraska. Sarah has passed the family love of gardening on to her children, as they all have gardens.

Sarah became a Master Gardener in 1994. She thought the program was excellent and provided a wonderful foundation for a gardener. She liked the emphasis on environmental issues, especially the reduced use of pesticides and other chemicals.

Her MG work assignment is the Victorian House in North Little Rock. Many people have donated perennials and rose bushes for the grounds, and it is vastly improved due to the work of the volunteers.

Sarah also works at Lakewood Gardens. Much gardening knowledge comes from both customers and other staff members at the nursery, where she is known as "the herb lady." Herbs are one of her favorite plants; she enjoys growing them and cooking with them.

At home, Sarah dug up her lawn and made raised beds which grow perennials and antique roses, in addition to the herbs. She also grows peppers and cucumbers, primarily so that her grandchildren can watch the bees at work, as she passes on the love of gardening to yet another generation of family.



## Jayne Mann

Jayne grew up in the North Little Rock area. Her grandfather had purchased 105 acres of wetlands about a mile from Prothro Junction. While working the farm, her father found many arrowheads, indicating that this area was frequented by Native Americans.

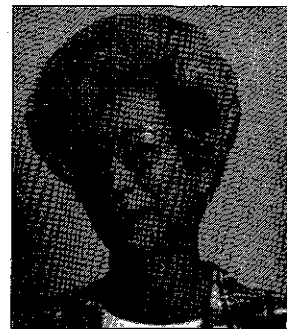
Eventually Jayne and her three sisters inherited the farm. In 1990, they donated all but five and a half acres to the Arkansas Wildlife Foundation, and the contributed portion is being restored to its original wetland status.

Jayne volunteers some of her time for the foundation and lives on the property. As her mother's flowers are still there, Jayne has started to restore the old flower beds and refurbish some new ones. There are lots of wildlife and birds at her place, and she wants the land returned to its natural state.

Jayne became a Master Gardener with the class of 1994 and found it to be a wonderful program, especially in providing knowledge of resources and contacts with other MGs. Her work project is the Victorian Cottage on Main Street in North Little Rock. She especially enjoys working there because it is similar to her own place.

Retired from the telephone company, this Master Gardener has time to devote to her gardening projects. She has one daughter, who married in May. She is a biology major and has worked at Columbia Hospital. She is planning to go back to school at UALR to obtain a master's degree.

Jayne's interest in gardening is inherited from her parents. Her mother worked in the flower beds, while her father grew vegetables. They also had many pots of flowers around the area. Her sister has gotten her involved with wildflowers, so she is now enjoying this new addition to her gardening interests.



*Living Nature and not dull Art/Shall plan my ways and rule my heart. — J.H.C. Newman*

# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**Tuesday, September 10 — Regular MG Monthly Meeting** — Monthly meeting to be held in the new extension office on University Avenue, 11:30 a.m. Annette Hurley speaks on organic fertilizer.

**Thursday, September 14 — Horticulture clinic** at the River Market, 10 a.m. until noon.

**Monday, September 23 — Pansies come to the greenhouse** this week.

**Wednesday, September 25 — New classes begin** with tour of projects. Meet at the county extension office on Roosevelt Road at 9 a.m.

**Wednesday and Thursday, September 25 and 26 — Master Gardeners travel to Shreveport.** Call Mrs. McKinney to register.

**Monday, September 30 — Last day to register** for October 10-11 state MG conference in Hot Springs.

**Wednesday, October 2 — MG training class** on plant science, soil and pesticide safety. State extension office.

**Tuesday, October 8 — MG meeting at state office.** Bill Burgin speaks on extending your garden season.

**Wednesday, October 9 — MG training class** on fruit.

**Thursday and Friday, October 10 and 11 — MG conference in Hot Springs.** Must register by September 30.

**Wednesday, October 16 — MG training class** on vegetables.

**Wednesday, October 23 — No class.**

**Wednesday, October 30 — MG training class** on ornamentals.

**Wednesday, November 6 — MG training class** covering miscellaneous subjects such as pruning and fire ants.

**Wednesday, November 13 — MG training class** on turf, with test and graduation.

**Thursday, December 12 — Christmas party.**

*Days decrease/And autumn grows,  
autumn in everything.* — Robert Browning

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The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture

## First Arkansas Blueberry

'Ozarkblue,' the first variety released from the UA blueberry breeding program conducted by Dr. James N. Moore and Dr. John Clark, is a "southern high-bush" variety adapted to the climate of the Upper South.

With a combination of genes from northern high-bush blueberries and southern rabbiteyes, it produces high yields of high quality berries that ripen later than midseason northern and southern highbush varieties but earlier than rabbiteye varieties.

Trials at the Southwest Research and Extension Center at Hope show that 'Ozarkblue' performs well in south Arkansas, where other southern varieties often suffer cold damage and northern varieties can't take the summer heat.

Most of the field work for variety development and other fruit research is conducted at the UA Fruit Substation near Clarksville.

— Arkansas Land and Life, Spring 1996



# MASTER MINUTES

October 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 9

## Committee Spotlight: Jacksonville City Hall – Helen Hronas

Jacksonville has become a busy, thriving small town, and one of its most attractive features is the well-designed City Hall and Community Center complex built in the early 1990s on Main Street. The lovely, bermed and brick flower beds surrounding the complex send a message of warm welcome to visitors. And the amazing thing about the well-kept grounds is that all this has been accomplished by only three or four Master Gardeners, with some help from the Jacksonville Beautification Department.

Understandably, Ken Milligan (who is in his second year as chairman and says he is really one of three “co-chairs”) indicates that their biggest need is *manpower*. The committee manages all the planting and year-round maintenance of the seven beds by holding spring workdays and each member tending a bed or two all year. Fortunately there is a sprinkler system, and the Jacksonville Beautification Department does a good job with the grass and trimming around the beds to keep them looking great.

Joan Zumwalt and Dottie Heckenbach, co-chairs with Ken, were involved in this work even before it became an MG project in 1993. Joan designed the landscaping and did a lot of the planting of background trees, shrubs and perennials along with Dottie. Both women work diligently



Master Gardener Joan Zumwalt, committee co-chair at Jacksonville throughout the hot, dry summer. Petunias were pretty, but MGs discovered they couldn't withstand the heat as summer progressed. The committee also had great success with deep pink crape myrtles and pink verbena, which complete a pleasing color scheme.

Rebecca Camp is the fourth committee member, serving her first year with the hardworking trio of Dottie, Joan and Ken.

The big event for this project is the annual “Mums, Music and Muscadines Festival” scheduled for October 5-6. Joan, who is active in civic affairs, was instrumental in creating this festival to highlight Jacksonville. She speaks proudly of the state-of-the-art community center, which includes many features such as an Olympic-sized pool, basketball court,  
See Spotlight, page 2

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keeping the neat beds lushly planted with annuals and perennials. Dottie is pleased with the staying power of the tall yellow marigolds, bright celosia and hardy zinnias she obtained from the MG greenhouse in May. The plants have been real trouper

gymnasium and meeting and kitchen facilities.

For the MG committee, the big push comes in mid-September, when a huge truckload of about 600 mums (all furnished by the city) is delivered. Master Gardeners have found that yellow ones work best, and they must prepare and groom them to be at their very best for the festival. Additional mums are sold to the public, and MGs distribute free literature on care of mums. The festival is very impressive, Joan says, and the project committee invites everyone to attend.

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# Master Gardener Notes

— Julie Eckberg

The 1996 Master Gardener training will be under way in October. Beth needs volunteers to help with the classes and lunches, so call her if you still need some more work hours or would like to help out. The training schedule is:

September 25	Tour of MG Projects
October 2	Plant Science, Soils, Pesticide Safety
October 9	Fruit Crops, Herbs
October 16	Vegetable Crops, Composting, Attracting Wildlife
October 23	No Class
October 30	Ornamentals
November 6	Pruning, Fire Ants, Plant Diseases
November 13	Turf, Graduation

Any of the present Master Gardeners are welcome to attend any of the above sessions. But, please let Beth know by the Monday before the session that you are coming so she can plan for the attendance, lunch, etc. All training will be in the new Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service building on University Avenue.

Jay Hill, chairman of the nominating committee, presented the slate of officers for 1997. The officers were approved as follows:

Past President	Jane Gulley
President	David Dodson
1st Vice President	Bettye Jane Daugherty
2nd Vice President	Connie Smith
Secretary	Ann Ward
Treasurer	Ann Cooper

Remember to turn in your Master Gardener time sheets! We are currently tabulating all Master Gardener volunteer hours and recertification points for end-of-year reporting. If you need more volunteer hours, many of the projects will

be scheduling fall planting and clean-up days. Also, Beth still needs volunteers to help answer the telephone through October. Call Beth or the project and committee chairpersons for more details.

Stay tuned for the annual greenhouse pansy sale, which will be held around the end of October or beginning of November.

Congratulations to the State Hospital Committee! Beth received a glowing thank-you letter from the assistant hospital administrator, Addie Morris, Ph.D. Dr. Morris says they have received many wonderful comments about the beautiful flower beds maintained by Master Gardeners. The hard work is greatly appreciated.

The Arkansas Beekeepers Association will be having another series of seminars over several weeks, beginning early March 1997. Call Ray Robbins (227-6565) for more information.

Don't forget the Master Gardener booth at the Little Rock Farmer's Market on Saturday, October 12. More volunteers will be needed from 9 a.m. until noon.

It is time to begin putting together the volunteer committees for 1997. Call Beth if you would like to change committees or join additional committees. (We are trying to save a little paperwork this year.)

Many thanks to MG Annette Hurley, who presented a great program at the September meeting. She provided lots of information on environmentally friendly, organic methods of lawn and garden care and maintenance and provided the members with lists of organic fertilizers, soil conditioners and other amendments. Her program was enjoyed very much by all present.

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*Once I had plants and no money — now what is money good for, without plants? — Linnaeus*



# Plant Of The Month — Jackye Shipley Finch

Now that the outdoor gardening year is beginning to slow down, the "armchair gardening" year is just getting started. This is the season when you can plant hundreds of flowers, shrubs and trees without paying a cent or getting your hands dirty or throwing your back out of whack.

This dormant period is when I bring out all the catalogues, gardening books and articles I've saved through the summer months when there was no time to browse.

One of the first articles to pop up in this parade is from the Perennial Plant Association, and it announces its Plant of the Year — *Penstemon digitalis* or "Husker Red."

The plant's large tubular lipped flowers look like white foxgloves and attract hummingbirds. Although it blooms up to a month in the summer, "Husker Red" is considered worth growing for its dark, reddish purple foliage alone.

"Husker Red" can grow up to 30 inches in height and has a spread of two feet. It can have

normally purchased in pots. It is best planted in early spring but can be planted as late as one month before a hard, killing frost.

"Husker Red" is usually propagated by division or from cuttings. Basal or shoot tip cuttings taken from new growth before flowering root within 15 days. Rooting hormones are not necessary — cuttings root easily just by sticking them in sand or in an equal volume mixture of peat moss and perlite

When planting from a pot, loosen the soil in an area two to three times the diameter of the pot. Work a complete fertilizer at the rate of two to three pounds/100 square feet into the top six to eight inches of soil. You may also spread four to six inches of leaf mold or other organic compost over the planting area and work it into the soil.

The Perennial Plant Association also advised that "Husker Red" makes a dramatic showing when combined with other plants, citing as

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*The plant's large tubular lipped flowers look like white foxgloves and attract hummingbirds. Although it blooms up to a month in the summer, "Husker Red" is considered worth growing for its dark, reddish purple foliage alone.*

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as many as 20 or more open, airy flower stalks with as many as 50 white flowers on each one. It prefers full sun and blooms in July and August. It can be used as an accent plant, massed in borders or as a specimen. It's also a good cut flower. The foliage is semi-evergreen in mild winters.

"Husker Red" likes slightly acidic, well-drained soil, although it tolerates moisture better than most penstemons. "Husker Red" is

examples the rich green foliage of *Veronica* "Sunny Border Blue" or the delicate pink of *Geranium* "Biokovo" or the open, airy texture of *Coreopsis* "Moonbeam," or the silver-foliaged plants like *Artemisia* "Power Castle" and *Achillea* "Moonshine."

Or, if you've got some time on your hands, you might want to just thumb through those catalogues and pick out some other combinations. During armchair season, anything goes.

# October Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**LAWNS:** Keep the leaves raked! (Start a compost heap.) A layer of leaves blocks the sunlight from reaching the turfgrass. Your turfgrass needs this sunlight to keep it healthy as growth slows before it goes dormant. If you have done a good job fertilizing your lawn this year, you do not need to use a winterizer fertilizer. This type of fertilizer has no nitrogen, only phosphorus and potash. However, if your lawn is severely damaged, or the lawn (such as St. Augustine) was stressed this year, or if you have not been fertilizing regularly, or if you have new sod, you do need winterizer fertilizer.

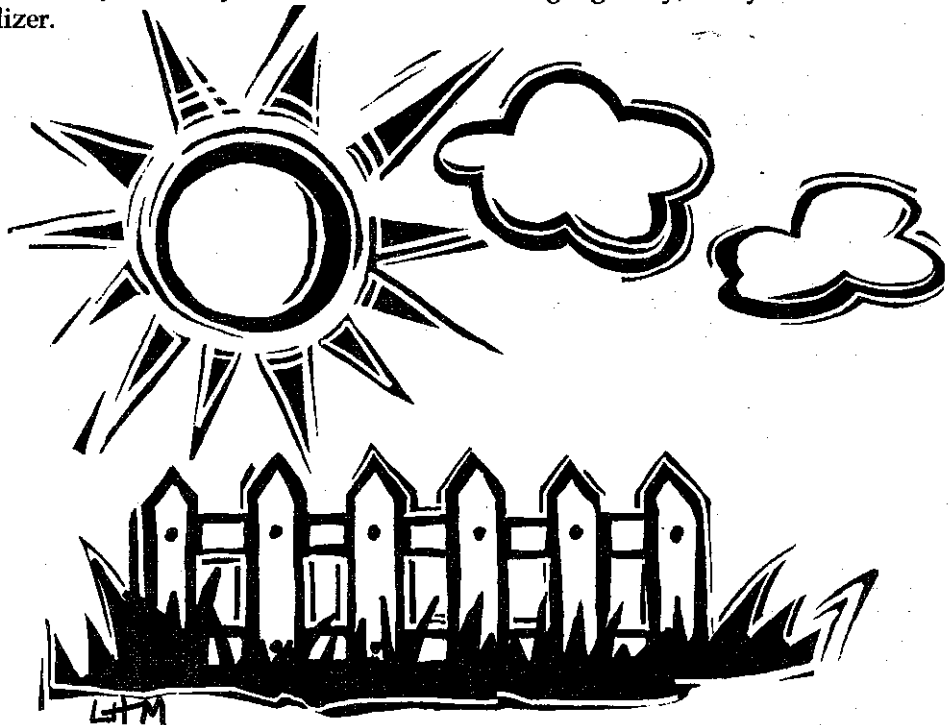
**ANNUALS:** It is time to plant pansies. Place 1 teaspoon of a slow-release fertilizer around each plant. Wait until hard freezes are forecast to mulch heavily. Remove faded blooms for continued flowering. Ornamental cabbage, kale, petunias and marigolds will continue to do well until freezing weather. Other flowering plants that will tolerate a light to moderate freeze include snapdragon, viola and calendula, larkspur, lobelia, nierembergia, poppies, scabiosa, stock, sweet alyssum and sweet peas.

**PERENNIALS:** Divide perennials to restore vigor to old and crowded plants. Phlox, coreopsis, black-eyes Susan and coneflowers need to be divided every three to four years. Fall is also a good time to plant new perennials!

**BULBS:** Dig tender bulbs such as caladiums and gladioli. Gently remove any soil clinging to the bulb. After drying the bulbs, store in a cool, dark, well-ventilated area. Old potato or onion sacks work well as storage containers. When selecting spring flowering bulbs, remember, the larger the bulb, the bigger the plant will be. With bulbs, you usually get what you pay for, so if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Bulbs can be planted any time from October through January. If you must store your bulbs before planting, keep them in the refrigerator, preferably away from fruits and vegetables.

**VEGETABLES:** Check the vegetable garden for cabbage loopers. They will be found on cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower or collards. These green caterpillars can be easily controlled using any Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) product. Plant fast-maturing vegetables such as garden cress, turnip greens and radishes. Spinach, rape, turnips, kale and winter peas can also be planted. To keep soils from drying out or washing away during winter, plant a cover crop now in unused parts of the vegetable or cut flower garden. Legumes such as hairy vetch, crimson clover and sweet clover trap nitrogen from the air, which then becomes available in subsequent crops after the legumes are turned under. Pumpkins are ready for harvest when they have a woody stem, hard rind and deep orange color. Cut (don't pull) them from the vine and leave a three inch piece of stem attached. Let them cure in the sun for about a week, then store them in a cool, dry place.

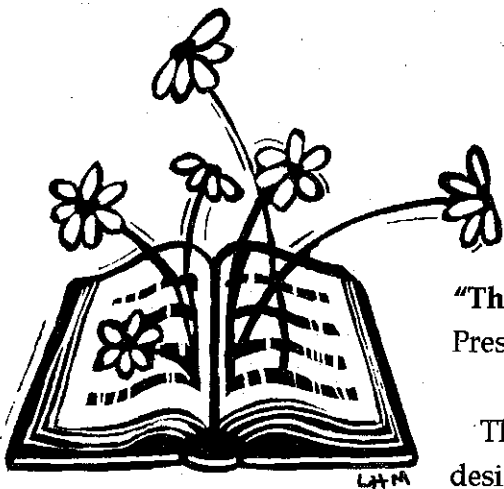
**ORNAMENTALS:** Fall is a good time to plant or transplant trees and shrubs. The latest research on planting techniques does not recommend adding soil amendments to the planting hole. If you are planting in a bed, it is a good idea to amend the soil in the whole bed. However, soil amendments such as peat moss, compost or other organic material added to the backfill for individual planting holes have been shown to be, at best, of no benefit and, at worst, detrimental to the establishment of trees and shrubs.



**HERBS:** Plant cilantro and coriander, but don't look for two kinds of seeds. They both come from the same plant. Coriander refers to the sweet spicy seeds, while cilantro is the named used for the leaves. Cilantro will remain green through winter, producing flowers and seeds in spring. Sow seeds on the surface of well-prepared soil and pat them into place. Do not cover. They will germinate in about two weeks. Transplanting is difficult because the plants have tap roots; sow seeds where you want plants to grow.

**HOUSEPLANTS:** Prepare your houseplants and tropical plants to be moved inside for the winter. Tropical plants should be moved in before night temperatures reach 45 degrees to prevent any damage. Remember to check for pests before doing so.

**INSECTS AND DISEASES:** Don't worry about fall *web worms*. They may look unsightly but do little damage to trees. As temperatures cool, horticultural oil can be sprayed to control *scale* on fruit trees, camellias or other ornamental shrubs. Control *white peach scale* with oil such as Volck, ornamentals with Cygon. Treat fruit trees again with a dormant oil after fall leaf drop. *Note:* Horticultural oil also helps control *leaf spot* on red-tipped photenia. Clean out old mulch before adding new to prevent fungal diseases next spring.



# BOOK REVIEW

— Jan Richardson

"The Best of *Fine Gardening*, Garden Design Ideas," The Taunton Press, Inc., 1994, \$14.95.

This 95-page book is actually a compilation of the 21 best garden-design articles printed in *Fine Gardening* magazine from July 1988 through July 1993, its initial five years of publication. It abounds with 120 illustrative colored pictures and designs.

According to the compilers, who sought to make the elements of the collection both practical and easy to emulate: "You'll find examples of how some of today's finest landscape architects, designers and home gardeners achieve stunning results in specific settings: a narrow side yard, an entryway, a large formal garden and many more."

An examination of the table of contents reveals the wide variety of articles: (a) Principles of Design, which is basically the five major rules of good designs — providing a visual path, constructing a background, controlling color and adding a focal point and texture.; (b) A Map for Garden Design — a thorough explanation of site analysis; (c) The First Step in Garden Design; (d) Getting Started on a Landscape Design; (e) Designing a Precocious Border and, (f) Beds and Borders.

This collection contains something for those of us who garden in rather small spaces. The article on garden rooms explains how to make a small yard "big" through variety. There is also an article on designing a small side yard and a courtyard garden, which through symmetry and lush plantings makes the most of a small space. For those who have larger areas, "Landscaping a Large Property" is an adaptation of ideas from great estates. Another article, "Paths to Beauty," explores four design principles related to paths.

*Fine Gardening* is a "fine" magazine, and this compilation and the three others in the series are truly useful.

# Beth's Helpful Garden Hints

*This is the second in a multi-part series on "Poison Ivy and Its Kin" by Walter Gloor, borrowed from the Benton County Master Gardeners' "The Green Thumb Print."*

The causative agent found in poison ivy and poison oak is a complex active ingredient, urushiol, a nonvolatile substance from which

researchers have identified four allergens. All of these allergens contain a pyrocatechol nucleus with a substituted side chain. Individuals sensitive to urushiol may also be sensitive to related com-

pounds found in some medications or foods. Urushiol is widely distributed in the roots, stems, leaves and fruit of the plant but not in the flowers, pollen or epidermis. However, the epidermis of these plants is very fragile and easily broken, exposing parts of the plant containing the poison. Because the flowers and pollen do not contain the toxin, bees can make nontoxic honey from the evil plant. Birds eat the fruit with no harmful effects and in this way help spread these plants quite readily. Herbivores, except man, eat the leaves



with apparent impunity.

The degree of hypersensitivity to the toxic agent varies from person to person. A few fortunate individuals appear to be complete immune to the allergenic effects of urushiol. Dark-skinned people seem less susceptible to the dermatitis. Young people are more susceptible than the elderly. Newborns, although not susceptible when first born, are readily sensitized when they come into contact with the sap from the plant. Once a person comes in contact with these allergens, the process of sensitization begins. An allergic reaction does not occur upon the first contact with the plant, but, as repeated contacts occur, the resultant reaction may become more severe, depending on the number and severity of contacts. The reaction time (the time between contact with the allergen and the first appearance of the rash) is usually two to three days, but not less than 12 hours. Dermatologic lesions may vary from reddened areas to vesicles or blisters to large spreading blisters. Contrary to the wide-spread belief, the fluid from the blisters is not antigenic and will not cause additional reactions. However, the blisters should not be broken because this action may lead to secondary bacterial infection.

Urushiol is a very persistent contaminant lasting for years in dead leaves and plants, in clothing that might have been stored without washing, or in sports equipment that may have become contaminated in the field. According to W.T. Gillis, herbarium specimens several centuries old have induced dermatitis in sensitive individuals who handled them. Although urushiol is nonvolatile, minute droplets of the substance may be carried by steam droplets or smoke particles and cause dermatitis in an unsuspecting individual.

*Next month, Gloor will further explain causative contact dermatitis*

# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Rebecca Camp

Rebecca and her husband have two children — a daughter who is a senior at the University of Central Arkansas and a son who is a senior in high school. An Air Force assignment brought the family to Arkansas. They liked the area so much that, after retirement, they decided to stay on. Rebecca was born in Seattle and has lived in Japan, Italy (where her daughter was born), Germany and Switzerland. She especially liked living in Switzerland.

After a friend recommended the Master Gardener program to her, she entered the training and completed the course in 1994. She enjoyed the program and appreciates the many opportunities to meet other gardeners and learn from them.

Rebecca and her husband are now home builders. He takes care of the building, and she does the landscaping. Her daughter, Kelley, has also developed an interest in gardening and is busy planning for flowers and planters around her home.

Both Rebecca and Ken give high praise to Dottie Heckenbach for her hard work and diligence in maintaining the plantings at the Jacksonville City Hall. Unfortunately, I was not able to contact Dottie for an interview, as she was out of town for vacation.

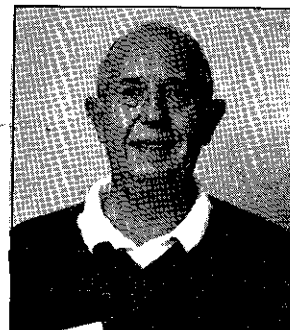


## Kenneth Milligan

Ken was sent to the Little Rock area with the Air Force. He and his wife, Stephanie, liked the area and decided to stay here in retirement. They have two children, a son and a daughter. Ken was born and grew up in Norman, Oklahoma. In his military career, he has lived in Texas, Florida, the Canal Zone, Vietnam and California.

Ken has been working with the team caring for the beds at the Jacksonville City Hall. He became a Master Gardener in 1994. In addition to an excellent training program, he feels that the contact with other gardeners has been a major payoff.

He has given up on vegetables, since the bugs and varmints managed to eat most of what he tried to grow. He now grows perennials in his home garden and has many azalea and nandina plants around the house. When he isn't busy gardening, he enjoys spending time on the golf course.



## Best Herbs For The Kitchen

**Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*).** Traditionally called the herb of love, basil is said to cause a young man to fall in love with any maiden who gives him a sprig. Basil is wonderful sprinkled over pasta with butter, in pesto, in stew and, especially, in any tomato sauce.

Basil grows anywhere that tomatoes or beans grow. The richer the soil, the lusher the basil. Its flavor is strongest in plants that grow in full sun. Basil can be started indoors in containers or sown in the garden after the last frost. It tolerates transplanting well when quite young, but older transplants tend to be stunted and go to seed prematurely. For a long harvest, plant basil every three weeks. To preserve the best flavor, freeze basil by placing the clean, dry leaves on a cookie sheet and putting the sheet in the freezer. When the leaves are frozen, store

them in jars in the freezer. The leaves turn gray and lose their texture when thawed, but the flavor is unimpaired and fine for soups, stews and sauces. Although you can easily hang and air-dry basil, it will not be as tasty as fresh or frozen basil.

**Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*).** Clumps of chives seem to last forever. These small members of the onion family are pretty enough to decorate the edge of a garden or sit on a windowsill. Start them from seeds or plant bulbs obtained from the nursery; divide the clumps to increase them. Use chives to flavor potatoes, cottage cheese, fish, pasta and salad dressing, or mix them with chervil, parsley and tarragon to make the classic French *fines herbes*. Chives freeze well, but lose a good deal of their flavor when dried.



## Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**Wednesday, October 2** — MG training class on plant science, soil and pesticide safety. State extension office.

**Tuesday, October 8** — MG meeting at state office. Bill Burgin speaks on extending your garden season.

**Wednesday, October 9** — MG training class on fruit.

**Thursday and Friday, October 10 and 11** — MG conference in Hot Springs. Must register by September 30.

**Wednesday, October 16** — MG training class on vegetables.

**Wednesday, October 23** — No class.

**Wednesday, October 30** — MG training class on ornamentals.

**Wednesday, November 6** — MG training class covering miscellaneous subjects such as pruning and fire ants.

**Tuesday, November 12** — MG meeting at the state office.

**Wednesday, November 13** — MG training class on turf, with test and graduation.

**Thursday, December 12** — Christmas party.

## Master Minutes Staff

Editor .....	Cheryl Kennedy
Art .....	Lisa Mantle
Editorial Input .....	Laura Lasiter
Staff Writers .....	Julie Eckberg
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	Nan Jo Dubé
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Courier .....	Lois Corley
Labels .....	David Dodson
	Claude Epperson



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Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture

## Trading Post — Julie Eckberg

Jane Gulley (225-2072) has old roses.

Ann Ward (340-6650) wants old roses.

Libby Thalheimer (663-1151) wants old roses and blue siberian iris.

Leslie Scott (225-5543) has blue siberian iris (had them with her at the meeting).

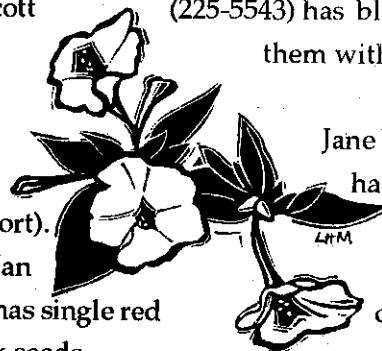
Bettye (221-2865) has bouncing bet (soapwort).

Marge Van (224-7632) has single red four o'clock seeds.

Rita Johnson (664-3008) has tarragon.

Mary Evans (664-7863) wants pine straw.

Marie Flickinger (758-4202) wants blooming shrubs and hydrangeas.





# MASTER MINUTES

November 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 10

## Committee Spotlight: Baptist Rehab Project – Helen Hronas

The Baptist Rehab project represents a novel concept among our Master Gardener projects. Baptist Rehab personnel first suggested the idea to Janet Carson, and the committee's first chair, Jaine Waldron, organized and implemented the plan.

The committee uses plants to help patients engage in hands-on activities and actually becomes part of their therapy. While other MG projects work with plants, this one works directly with people, says current chairman, Gail Roberson.

Here's how it works: At their first meeting of the year, the project committee divides into four groups, each consisting of both experienced and new committee members. The first two Saturdays of every month are work days, and each group is responsible for presenting the program at the Rehab Center every fourth time (about four to six times a year). Remarkably, everyone follows through without being reminded and finds substitutes if a problem arises.

All the presentations have a "plant" angle to them, but this is interpreted rather broadly. At one program, MGs helped patients do leaf rubbings which they made into greeting cards while one MG described different kinds of

leaves and their parts, etc. Not all the patients had two functioning hands, so they needed some assistance with the rubbings. At another program, patients stenciled flower pots and potted plants. Another Master Gardener grew gourds, cleaned and dried



Master Gardeners have given programs on a number of gardening topics, from making birdhouses to growing succulents.

them and helped patients make birdhouses with them. MGs have given other programs on making dried wreaths and potpourri, and growing amaryllis, pansies, mums and succulents. In each case, patients are encouraged to use their hands, and they seem to enjoy the programs very much.

Many patients are elderly and have had strokes; one group consisted of blind patients. However, all have physical limitations which must be taken into account. These are folks who are confined for significant periods for therapy; they're frequently far from home, family, friends and everything that is familiar to them. Some feel a little grumpy,  
See Spotlight, page 2

### In This Issue ...

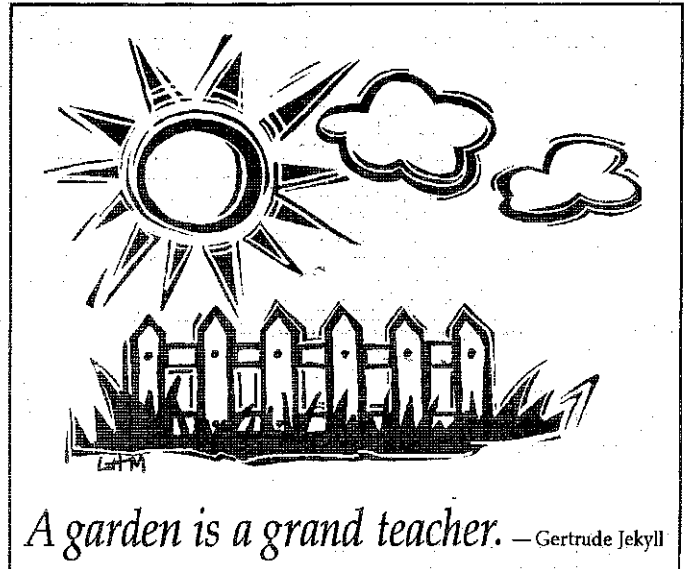


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too, but usually respond positively to the presentations by MGs and to the individual attention and interaction with them. Gail indicates that committee members find this very rewarding, and there is excellent participation and very little turnover on the committee each year. Rather than tending a lovely flower bed, MGs at the Rehab Center look forward to bringing smiles and animation to the sad, tired faces of the rehab patients.

- Hilda Boger serves as co-chair of the committee and Mary Ann Dillaha is a former chairperson. Other committee members are: Norma Parker, Pat Marchese, Lisa Mantle, Margaret Dorland, Aleta Newell, Mildred Walton, Lavon Spears, Jerry Quick, Dale Adcock, Kay Groce, Don Thompson, Ann Bridgers, Sandra Miller, Maxine Ramage, Jo Ann Janssen, Bill Freeman and Jaine Waldron.



## Master Gardener Notes — Julie Eckberg

Try the new Pulaski County Horticulture Hotline (671-2333) and tell Beth your opinions. She would like comments about sound quality, content, ease of use, topics, etc. The hotline needs to be tested and evaluated before the general public begins using it.

Watch your mail for a postcard announcing the dates and times for the annual Greenhouse Pansy Sale. The postcard should arrive around the end of October or the beginning of November.

The Master Gardener Christmas party will be Thursday, December 12, at the Adult Center on 12th Street.

Keep sending in those time sheets! If you have questions regarding your total number of work or continuing education hours, call Julie Eckberg (225-6721).

Remember to send garden/project committee sign-up sheets with changes to Beth (or call her) by November 10. If you do *not* return the form, you will be kept on the same committees as in 1996.

Have you been to a public garden on your travels across the United States and Canada that

you would like to include on a "don't miss" or a "do miss" list? If so, MG Kathleen Wesson would like to hear from you. She's going to give a Master Gardener program in February on some less famous but lovely gardens and arboretums, and she wants to include any that you've visited and can recommend — or not recommend. She says she would like to compile a reference handout on locations. If you can help, please drop her a note at 6720 Waverly Place, Little Rock, Arkansas 72207-3530, or give her a call at 663-9146 and leave a message.



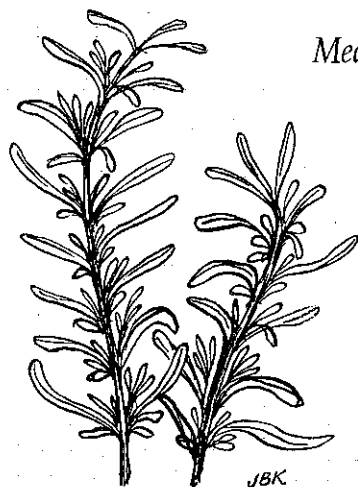
Pulaski County Master Gardeners (from left), Frances Young, Lois Corley, Mary R. Evans and Jay Hill had fun while learning at the recent state conference in Hot Springs.



# Plant Of The Month — Gladys Whitney

Ophelia said that rosemary was for remembrance. We could all use a little help to remember, but (lest we forget) rosemary is good for a whole lot of other things, such as ornamenting a garden, seasoning a meal, cleansing skin and conditioning hair.

In Central Arkansas, rosemary is a tender perennial shrub that can grow as tall as six feet. It has brown, woody stems with small, narrow, pointed, opposing, blue-green leaves that are gray-green on new growth. Most varieties have tiny blue flowers that appear in midspring and continue throughout the summer, although some have white, or even pink, flowers. While the plant is easy to identify by sight, few gardeners can resist touching it to get a little of the scent on their fingers.



A product of the  
Mediterranean coastlands,  
rosemary does best  
in well-drained soil  
in a sunny or  
semishady location.  
Its name comes from  
"ros" and maris" and  
means "dew of the sea."

A product of the Mediterranean coastlands, rosemary does best in well-drained soil in a sunny or semishady location. Its name comes from *ros* and *maris* and means "dew of the sea." I venture that the dew part also means that it cannot dry out — a sure-fire way of killing it. Rosemary should be planted in the spring and tipped to encourage side growth. It will withstand temperatures down to freezing, but not much lower. The easiest way to propagate rosemary is to take a six-inch cutting of new growth, strip the lower four inches of leaves, place the end in rooting

compound and then place the sprig in sand or vermiculite.

A member of the mint family, rosemary can be used as a shrub, hedge or container plant. Some magical people even train rosemary into topiaries. (I have tried this and found it impossible!) The prostrate form can be used to flop over garden walls and is great in a hanging basket. I first saw *Rosemarinus officinalis* prostratus draping over a wall at a garden in a California restaurant; it proved to be an omen for a wonderful meal!

Being a product of the Mediterranean, rosemary is naturally found in all kinds of food indigenous to that region. With a little garlic, rosemary is the perfect seasoning for lamb, and a good *poulet roti* oftentimes will have rosemary stuffed under its skin and in its cavity, along with some lemon halves and onion.

In early times, in addition to eating and smelling rosemary to promote a good memory, the herb was used as a symbol of constancy and woven into bridal bouquets. Today, its refreshing and calming scent is used in sachets for baths, and in insect repellants and candles.

While researching this article, I found recipes for cleansing creams for oily skin and rinses for dark hair:

## Cleansing Cream

- 4 ounces unscented cold cream
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary or
- 1 tablespoon infusion

Melt the cream slightly and add the rosemary.

## Rosemary Conditioner

Add one bunch fresh rosemary leaves to 1/2 pint boiling water. Let stand for one hour, then strain.

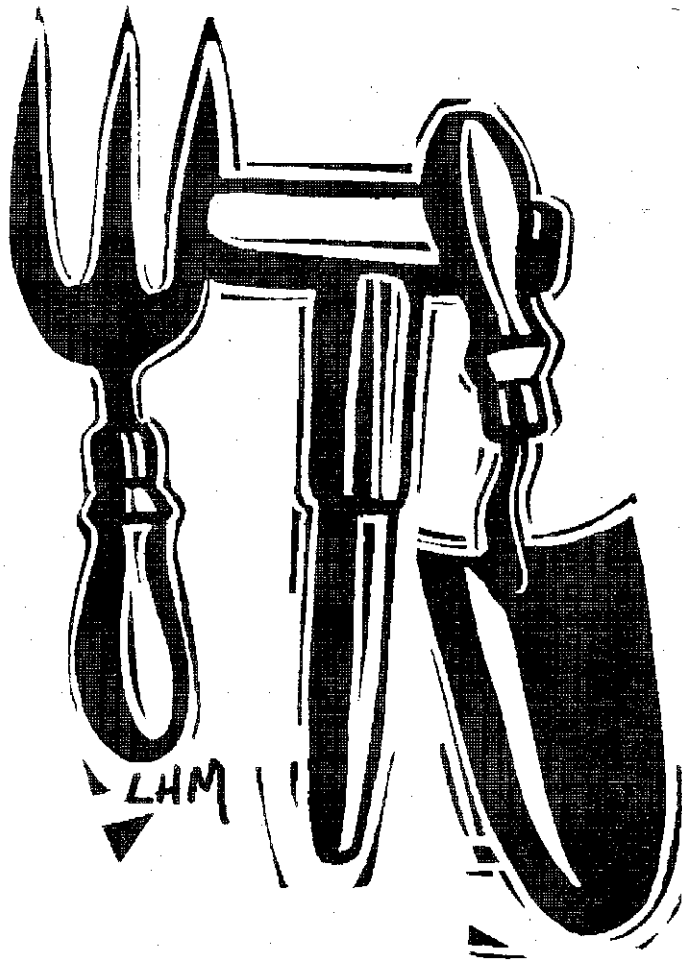
Use it for a final rinse after washing hair.

But there's always another good way to enjoy rosemary, as we found out on our tour of Jan King's garden last spring. That is her delicious Rosemary Punch (see recipe in August 1996 newsletter), which — even if it doesn't promote a good memory — is at least very memorable!

# October Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**LAWNS:** Keep the leaves raked! A layer of leaves blocks the sunlight from reaching the turfgrass. Your turfgrass needs this sunlight to keep it healthy as growth slows before grass goes dormant. Instead of spending hours raking or blowing your leaves this year, you might try mulching them with the mower and putting them around your garden. Mulching will add organic matter into your soil and eliminate the problem of disposing of the bags of leaves.

**ANNUALS:** Seeds of winter annuals can be sown now. Try bachelor's button, delphinium, larkspur, foxglove, sweet peas, Johnny-jump-ups, forget-me-nots, Shirley and California poppies and nasturtium. It's not too late to plant pansies.



**PERENNIALS:** Plant perennials such as coneflowers, crinum, shasta daisies, African irises, daylilies, lycoris and goldenrod. After chrysanthemums have finished blooming, cut them back to just a few inches above the ground.

**BULBS:** Generally, bulbs should be planted outdoors after the first killing frost. To ensure even flowering, dig out an entire bed to recommended depth and set them on the soil in a staggered grid pattern. Mix a slow-release fertilizer into the backfill soil, along with a generous portion of organic matter. Carefully refill the bed so you do not disturb the bulbs. Water well to settle the soil and add more soil to level the bed. Apply a mulch of pine needles or finely ground bark to keep out weeds. Dig tuberose and gladioli for winter storage.

**VEGETABLES:** Do not harvest cole crops such as cabbage, kohlrabi and broccoli until a hard freeze is forecast. They will withstand temperatures as low as 26 degrees, and collards and kale will tolerate 20 degrees. In fact, the flavor of greens seems to improve after they've been nipped by frost.

**ORNAMENTALS:** There's still time to plant or transplant trees and shrubs. However, protect newly planted young trees from winter and wildlife with paper or plastic trunk wraps which are available at garden centers or hardware stores. Deeply mulch gardenia plants after the first frost. They must also be covered with burlap or similar material when expecting ice and snow. Otherwise, the leaves will turn

brown, and the plant will die back to the ground. If the temperature stays below 20 degrees for an extended period, it may kill the entire plant.

**HOUSEPLANTS:** Houseplants don't need as much water during the winter months. Always check the moisture level, and water when the soil feels dry to the touch.

**GARDEN CLEANUP:** Dead stalks and other debris left in the garden provide choice locations for insects and diseases to overwinter. Remove and destroy any infested material; add the rest to your compost heap. Do not allow leaves to pile up on the lawn, as serious damage to the grass can occur (not to mention creating a fire hazard). This is a good time to take inventory of your tools and to clean, oil and sharpen them before storing them for the winter.

**SOIL SAMPLES:** If you had problems with anything growing this season, this is a good time to take your soil samples to the extension office for testing. When the results come back, you can treat the area and be all ready for spring planting next year. You will also beat the spring rush for soil samples.

# Trading Post — Julie Eckberg

Kathleen Wesson (663-9146) wants variegated (winter-hardy) ivy and variegated liriopse.

Martha Whitehurst (868-4517) wants jonquil bulbs.

Marie Flickinger (758-4202) wants hydrangea and other flowering shrubs.

Margaret Fizer (834-3217) wants pine needles.

Anne Ward (340-6650) wants old roses.

Ellen Kane (868-5035) wants pine straw.

Connie Panos (225-9420) has jonquil bulbs.

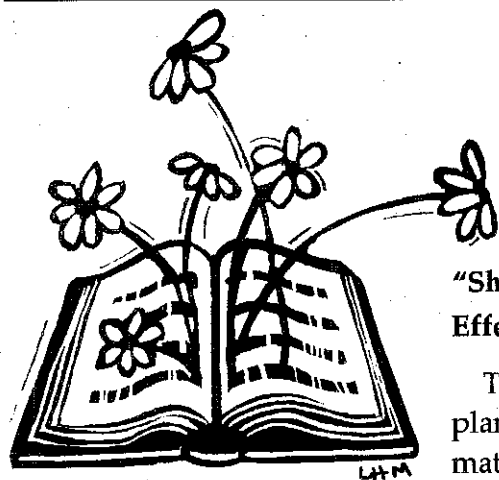
Jan King (758-3446) has monarda, anise hyssop, siberian iris.

Kathy Scheibner (225-7776) has yellow cannas.

Claude Epperson (753-8198) has about six dozen dafodil bulbs (yellow).

Suzanne O'Donoghue (661-9658) has iris.

Rita Johnson (664-3008) has tarragon.



## BOOK REVIEW

— Jan Richardson

**"Shortcuts to Great Gardens, Timesaving Strategies for Instant Effects,"** by Nigel Colborn, Little Brown and Company, 1993, \$19.95.

The main thrust of this book is to provide shortcuts with special planting and design strategies to give the garden an appearance of maturity and stature in a short period of time. The population of this country is very mobile, and even people who live in one home for many years find that, on retirement, a smaller house and yard are desirable. Waiting for a garden to fully mature can be maddening, so this is an extremely useful book.

Its purpose is to show ways to minimize the wait to maturity: "The only thing a gardener cannot find in a seed package or at the garden center is time," writes Colborn. "But, although you cannot buy time, there are plenty of ways in which you can reduce the lead time to maturity." Even if you are on a tight budget as well as a tight time schedule, there are ways to make a garden appear to be much more mature than it is. It is possible, according to Colborn, to create a great garden in a minimum of time.

The book is well illustrated with many 8 x 10 full-page and three-quarter-page color photographs. Colborn writes that the first step to "creating the dream garden" is to define the reader's "dream garden." The first section of the books leads the reader through the considerations of the possibilities offered by any garden. How will the garden be used? What purpose will it serve? How much maintenance is the gardener prepared to perform? Once the gardener makes the preliminary decisions with respect to the garden, there are basic design principles that apply to every garden, which are explored by the author. The different types of gardens, i.e., the formal garden, kitchen garden, woodland garden and cottage gardens are all discussed and specific shortcuts are given to achieve those types.

There are sections of shortcuts using: (1) Garden Boundaries — walls, fencing and trellis, furnishing boundaries and hedges; (2) Garden Outline — man-made features, trees and shrubs, pots and containers; (3) Layout Design — layout considerations, hard surfaces and soft surfaces; (4) Pools and Ponds — informal and formal water features; (5) Planting Schemes — hot-spot gardens, dry shade gardens, annuals, exposed gardens, bog and water gardens, container gardens and wild gardens; and (6) Specific Plants.

This is an excellent book with a wealth of information on gardening and design.

# Beth's Helpful Garden Hints

This is the next to last in a multi-part series on "Poison Ivy and Its Kin" by Walter Gloor, borrowed from the Benton County Master Gardeners' "The Green Thumb Print."

Many cases of rhus dermatitis appear in the fall when people stand in the smoke or burning leaves which contains poison ivy. Inhalation of smoke bearing the allergens may cause serious

systems reactions in susceptible individuals and may produce severe trauma to the oral and nasal mucosa and lung tissue. Man's "best friend," his dog, is sometimes responsible for the contamination by walking through a patch of the vile weed, and either rubbing

against his master's leg or being petted transfers the poison. Still other cases may arise when selecting firewood for the fireplace.

Sensitized individuals may develop the dermatitis from sources other than coming into contact with the poison ivy relatives of this country. Persons unpacking shipments of cashew nuts may come into contact with pieces of the cashew nut shell. The shell contains urushiol and can cause the dermatitis reaction in a susceptible person, especially around the fingernails. The cashew nut tree, a native of Brazil, is now cultivated through-

out the tropics. The tree is grown chiefly for its nuts, oil and gum. The nut is lightly attached to the "fruit" or the "cashew apple," technically a swollen peduncle. The "apple" with the attached nut falls to the ground when ripe. The nuts in their shells are dried in the sun and then roasted on an open fire, the fumes of which are extremely irritating. The nuts are shelled and shipped; the cashew "apple" is used to make a native beer.

Contact dermatitis from the lacquer of the Japanese lacquer tree has been reported rather frequently in North America and Western Europe because the sources are sometimes exotic and unexpected. Lacquered lamp shades from Japan have been reported as having caused reactions in sensitized persons. The lacquered Japanese rifles collected as souvenirs caused reactions in American soldiers, who apparently were sensitive to poison ivy. Contact with a lacquered bar in an American officers' club in Japan caused dermatitis in 12 officers. No determination was made if any of the officers were allergic to poison ivy.

In the case of the mango, the antigen is found in the wood, the stems, the leaves and the pericarp (peel) of the fruit. The flesh of the fruit and the juice appear to be free of the toxic material. However, cases have been reported in the literature describing the dermatologic lesions around the mouth of the person eating the fruit. It is thought that insufficient care was exercised in peeling the fruit, since stem sap may contaminate the peel during harvesting. Another reason put forward for the occurrence of this type of lesion in some persons and not others is that, due to the increased demand for this fruit, many hybrids have been created. The ability of any certain hybrid to cause a reaction has not been tested to any extent.

A rare source of poison ivy reaction is seen in the showy lady slipper, *Cypripedium reginae*. The stems and leaves of this and other *Cypripedium* species are covered with glandular hairs containing a fatty secretion which causes a skin reaction quite similar to that of poison ivy.

Next month, in the last of this series, Gloor will discuss old wives' tales, as well as treatment and prevention of the dermatitis.



# Meet Our Master Gardeners — Elmer Van Egmond

## Margaret Dorland



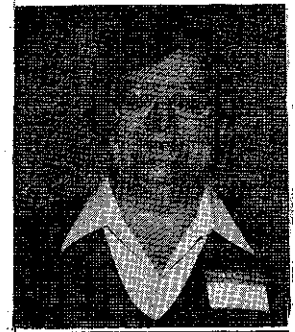
Margaret has worked with the Baptist Rehabilitation Center project for the past year. She also works at the War Memorial Park garden at Markham and Van Buren streets. She became an MG in 1995 and has enjoyed working with other Master Gardeners.

While growing up in Fayetteville, she learned from her parents how to raise vegetables and flowers. Unfortunately, she can't grow vegetables at her home now because her lot is too shady. So she grows flowers, especially impatiens. She also enjoys spring-flowering bulbs, which are some of her favorite plants.

Margaret has two children and two grandchildren. Her son's family, including the 4- and 6-year-old grandchildren, lives in Little Rock. Her daughter lives in Dallas.

At the latest rehab program, MGs showed patients how to stencil designs onto small flower pots. Then they placed small plants in the pots, which patients could take with them. In other programs, MGs and patients made bird feeders by rolling pine cones in a mixture of suet and peanut butter. One Master Gardener brought a number of gourds to make into birdhouses. MGs also provided a chart showing different kinds of birds, so patients could identify types that visited their gourd homes and pine-cone feeders.

## Jerry Quick



Jerry became a Master Gardener with the class of 1993. He works with committees at the Baptist Rehabilitation Center and the Old Mill. Jerry especially enjoys the rehab work, as patients obtain an immediate reward from their participation.

Jerry grew up on a farm in Colorado, so he learned about growing things from an early age. He and his wife, Jane, moved to Arkansas because of a job change and their desire to live in a warmer climate. They still schedule a trip back to Colorado each winter to get in some skiing. They have three children: a son who lives in Cabot, a daughter who also lives nearby, and a son who has two children and lives in Colorado.

Although Jerry has no formal training in landscape design, he has become interested in this art. A recent project of his at the rehab center used one-foot square blocks of foam to encourage patients to try their hand at landscape design. After he pointed out part of the design principles, patients developed some fine projects.

At his home in North Little Rock, Jerry had an opportunity to design his yard, since no landscaping had been done before. Because his yard is heavily shaded, he grows many caladiums, hostas and other shade-loving plants. He just completed planting pansies, and his mums have begun to bloom, so he has some nice color in the yard now. He also has been able to raise some raspberries, blueberries and blackberries. In addition, Jerry has created Oriental gardens and attractive waterfalls in the yard.

## Save The Bees! Save The Bees! Save The Bees! Save The Bees!

Bees, particularly honeybees, are greatly valued in American agriculture. They pollinate many important crops — from almonds to watermelons — and contribute to the overall environmental balance by pollinating many seeds, berries and fruits used in wildlife food chains.

While the dollar value of bee pollination is hard to determine, crops which rely partially or totally on bees for pollination equal approximately one-third of all agricultural

production in the United States each year.

Due to increased urbanization, changing farmland use patterns and increased herbicide use to control weeds, the total quantity of honey plants has been reduced. Help bees by reducing herbicide use for "cosmetic" weed control situations.

Also, pesticides take a great toll on bees. Always use extreme caution when using these products, especially such common pesticides as Sevin and Malathion.

# Calendar Of Events

— Gladys Whitney

**Wednesday, November 6** — MG training class covering miscellaneous subjects such as pruning and fire ants.

**Tuesday, November 12** — MG monthly meeting at the state extension office on University Avenue at 11:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, November 13** — MG training class on turf, with test and graduation.

**Thursday, December 12** — Christmas party at the Adult Center on 12th Street.

*A Little  
Manure  
Goes A  
Long Way!*



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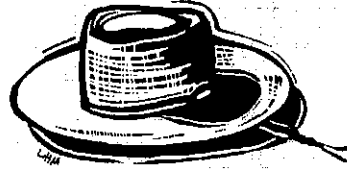
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Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture



Master Gardeners at the State Conference who received five-year pins. The following Pulaski County Master Gardeners received five-year certificates: Lois Corley, Bobbye Dennis, Julie Eckberg, Mary R. Evans, Fred Henker, Carolyn Henslee, Sarah Henson, Jay Hill, Virginia Johnson, Marie Jordan, Kate Lynn, Mary Lee McHenry, Robert H. Murray, Jerry Quick, Ray Robbins, Lavon Spears, Max Thorn, Jaine Waldron, Dorothy Wilks, James Wilks, Frances Young and Joan Zumwalt.



# MASTER MINUTES

December 1996

Volume 7 / Issue 11

## Committee Spotlight: The Greenhouse — Helen Hronas

Tucked into a remote corner of the State Hospital grounds is a veritable beehive of activity — the Master Gardener Greenhouse. An agreement made when Janet Carson was Pulaski County Extension Agent allows MGs the use of the greenhouse on the condition that MGs furnish plants for the flower garden in front of the State Hospital administrative building. And this busy committee makes very good use of the facility! Their Number One priority is the production of flowers and vegetables for most Master Gardener projects, but they do many other things as well.

Lois Corley, a five-year veteran MG who's been chairman of the committee since fall 1995, says the group begins its work each January when a shipment of azaleas arrives for the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show. MGs transplant the azaleas into six-inch pots and check them every day to keep moisture and temperature constant so they will be at peak bloom for the Flower Show in February. Last year, they also forced spring bulbs for the show.

Immediately after the "Pink Dream" azaleas are brought to perfection and moved out, the committee plants seeds for annuals, perennials, herbs and garden vegetables, as well as cuttings for several other flowers such as coleus,

kalanchoe and lantana. Flowers include these favorites: rudbeckia, morning glory, snapdragons, bachelor's buttons, basket flowers, marigolds, moon flowers, hyacinth beans, sunflowers, hollyhocks and gaillardia. MGs also produce Big Boy tomatoes,



Master Gardeners Frances Young and Dorothy Wilks, both class of '91, carefully transplant seedlings at the greenhouse.

squash (butternut, crookneck and zucchini), eggplant, bell peppers and all kinds of hot pepper. These too must be watered and checked on a daily basis, and Lois commented that she never has to worry about it because each committee member dependably visits the greenhouse at the appointed time without fail, or schedules a substitute.

When the plants reach adequate size, they are transferred into six-packs and prepared for the sale in early May. After the sale, the committee washes all the pots, sterilizes the greenhouse, treats it with insecticide and readies everything for the arrival of the pansies in September. This fall, the tiny pansy "plugs" arrived in 28 small trays containing about 400 plants each, or almost 11,000 pansies. It took two mornings of steady work for the crew to get all the plugs repotted into larger containers. Then they were watered every day and watched anxiously for tiny blooms. There

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were so many cloudy days, Lois says, that the pansies were very slow to bloom. (There are no artificial lights in the greenhouse to help things along.) Finally, one morning Lois was thrilled to find three tiny blooms, and the pansy crop was on its way!

The November pansy sale was a big success, and, once the plants are all sold or distributed to the projects, this hardworking committee will again sanitize the greenhouse in preparation for receiving the January azalea shipment, and the year's full cycle will have been completed. In the dead of winter, folks all over the county will be cheered by the lovely, bright pansy faces in the many MG project gardens which are supplied by the greenhouse.

Lois feels that *all* the committee members are co-chairs because they work together so well — everyone is so agreeable and helpful. "It's fun, and we have a real feeling of accomplishment at the end of each project. We just enjoy being together. We have some great conversations — solving all the problems of the world ... and we're like a bunch of kids making mud pies!"

Clark Taplin and Phyllis Watson are current co-chairs. Next year's co-chairs will be Jim and Dorothy Wilks. Other members are: Jill Bauman, Breck Campbell, Nancy Casey, James Christian, Julie Eckberg, Mary Evans, Caryl Heath, Marcia Holder, Jan King, Laura Lasiter, Peggy Leopoulos, Robert McGowan, Robert Murray, Tom Norman, Ray Robbins, Barbi Rushing, Libby Thalheimer, Ann Ward, Gladys Whitney and Frances Young.

Proceeds of the greenhouse sales are used for seeds, plants and supplies so that the greenhouse is self-supporting. Any MGs who wish to recycle flat trays and pots may do so by placing them in plastic bags and dropping them over the wooden fence at the greenhouse.

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# Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree

## *Christmas Tree History*

The Christmas tree gets its name from the Christian celebration, but trees and boughs were widely used for religious ceremonies centuries before the emergence of Christianity.

In ancient Egypt, people celebrated the beginning of the winter season by bringing green date palms into their homes. The plants symbolized "life triumphant over death," a theme that carries over into our present tradition.

Romans used evergreen boughs to celebrate their Feast of Saturn, which also occurred at the winter solstice, to mark the return of the sun. This feast was marked by eating, drinking, merrymaking, exchanging of gifts and decorating houses with candles and greenery.

Ways of displaying evergreen trees inside the home have changed quite a bit since Roman times. Evergreen trees are no longer displayed as they appear naturally — today's trees are lavishly decorated.

It has been suggested that the idea of decorating trees actually began with the very early forest dwellers. Gifts of food were often hung on tree branches as offerings. The oldest reference to a decorated tree in a home dates back to 1605 in Germany. Decorations included fruit, ribbons, nuts

and colored paper. These early trees were small tabletop specimens. The candles of the early years gave way to electric lights in 1879. And the decorated tree traditions gained in popularity.

## *Selection And Care Of Your Christmas Tree*

If you are purchasing a precut Christmas tree, check it for freshness. The needles should be supple and springy. If needles break, the tree is not fresh. Bounce the stump of the tree on the ground, and see how many needles fall. If more than a few fall, the tree is old and dry. Also, feel the stump. The sap should be sticky and moist, not hard and caked.

After selecting your Christmas tree, proper care will keep it green through the holiday season. When moving the tree indoors, make a fresh cut across the trunk at least an inch or two above the old cut to allow the tree to absorb water.

Place the tree in a tree stand or other suitable container which will hold water. In most homes, a tree can absorb up to a quart of water a day, so keep the container filled.

Adequate water will help ensure your Christmas tree will hold its needles throughout the holiday season and reduce the risk of fire by keeping the tree from becoming too dry.



# Plant Of The Month — Jackye Shipley Finch

Ogden Nash, on being surprised by a late-winter-blooming member of the ranunculaceae family:

"Well!" I swore,  
"It's the hellebore!"

Ogden Nash never said that. I just thought he *could* have, in the right situation. Or, as C.S. Lewis, in using one of his own book titles, might have said, "Surprised by joy."

Ranked as one of the top ten high-performance perennials, the hellebore surprises with joy in the dreary dregs of late winter with long-lasting blooms of pink, purple, maroon, dusky red, white, pale green, chartreuse and yellow.

The hellebore presents good foliage year round and does well in mature gardens because of its love of shade. This member of the buttercup family is low-spreading and has thick rhizomes and roots that are poisonous. Its leaves are mostly basal and palmately lobed. Although the leaves are evergreen, they become deciduous in cold winter. Remove these damaged leaves in spring when they'll be replaced by new ones.

Hellebores grow best in deep, fertile, slightly alkaline soil, moist but well-drained. They like partial shade, with shelter from cold winds.

stem— open as white and mature into blush pink or rose. The cup-shaped blooms are semi-erect or nodding and can measure up to four inches across. To make the cut flowers last, slit the stems. The Christmas rose grows to a height of 12 inches and a spread of 12 inches.

Although the Christmas rose needs a little winter cold to thrive, its leaves can still suffer from winter damage— one reason it's more temperamental than some other hellebores. However, you can help its temperament by top-dressing it with limestone chips to sweeten the soil and improve surface drainage.

The Lenten rose is thought by most to be the best choice of all hellebores. Its leaves take the cold better than the Christmas rose, and it has the widest range of flower colors, from the pinks and plums, through the greens and yellows, all the way to white. Its glossy basal leaves play an attractive foliage counterpoint to the small clusters of nodding two-inch blooms, which can last for weeks. The Lenten rose grows up to 18 inches and out 18 inches or more. Most are hybrids.

And just in case you want a hellebore with a little more, consider *Helleborus foetidus*. It's the hardiest and most versatile, with individual stalks about two feet tall and three feet across. The one-inch blooms appear in

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*Ogden Nash, on being surprised  
by a late-winter-blooming member  
of the ranunculaceae family:*

*"Well," I swore, "It's the hellebore!"*

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One of the nicest characteristics of the hellebore appeals to the lazy gardener (I speak from experience— or I suppose, in this case, inexperience)— it resents your attempts to divide it. If you insist on trying this means of propagation, you'll be rewarded at best with very slow progress. Do what the lazy gardener does instinctively— transplant volunteer seedlings when young.

The two best hellebores for gardeners in our region are *Helleborus niger* (Christmas rose) and *Helleborus orientalis* (Lenten rose).

The flowers of the Christmas rose — one to three per

large clusters of pale green, sometimes edged in purple. Its name translates into "stinking" hellebore because sometimes the flowers, as well as the crushed leaves and stems, emit a strange, unpleasant, cat-like odor, which no doubt could prompt the horticultural sage to muse, after attending a mysteriously fragrant garden party, "What *was* that smell that Stella wore?"

*\*With apologies to Ogden Nash, who never really said this!  
Correction: The August Plant of the Month, the blackberry,  
was also written by Jackye Shipley Finch.*

# December/January Gardening Checklist — Laura Lasiter

**PERENNIALS:** Clean up beds by cutting off dead foliage after frost. Rake or blow away fallen leaves that may smother mat-forming plants such as pinks and thyme. Cut back frost-nipped perennials now, but leave two- to three-inch stalks to help you find them. This will prevent accidental uprooting of dormant crowns when you plant in early spring. Wait until the first hard freeze to apply mulch. This will keep the soil an even temperature and prevent alternate thawing and freezing that can damage plants in the months to come. Divide plants when new growth appears. Mulch lilies if this was not done at the time of planting. Move perennials any time in late January, as soon as the soil is friable enough.

**BULBS:** The day after Christmas, stock up on amaryllis bulbs — the price plunges to as low as \$5 and often includes an attractive ceramic container. Put the potted bulbs in a warm, sunny spot and water sparingly until growth starts; then keep soil moist. The timing will be just right for a show of blooms on Valentine's Day!

**VEGETABLES:** Add a six- to eight-inch layer of leaves, pine needles or hay to beets, turnips, radishes, parsnips and other root crops. This will keep the soil from freezing so the vegetables can be harvested as needed. Kale and spinach also overwinter in most areas (mulch with pine straw to prolong your supply of greens). Although growth will stop in cold weather, it will resume in spring, producing greens into May. If you are growing cover crops, consider turning them into the soil with a fork or tiller during the middle of January. This will give the green materials time to break down and enrich the soil before planting time. Start broccoli and cabbage seeds indoors in January for transplanting six to eight weeks later.

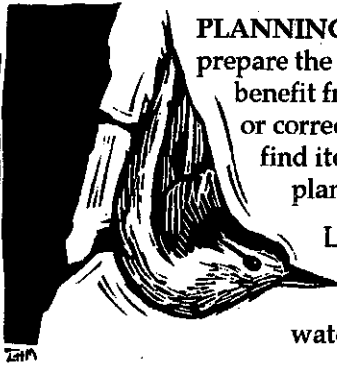
**ORNAMENTALS:** In mid-January, fertilize trees. Trees and shrubs may be moved in late January any time the soil is friable enough. Spray broad-leaved evergreens, especially hollies, photinia and euonymus if infested with scale; otherwise no spray is needed. January is a good time to plant winter-blooming shrubs like winter honey-suckle (*Lonicera fragrantissima*) or winter jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*). The latter part of January is an ideal time to plant sweet peas. Remember to fertilize pansies regularly all season during any warm spell. Water regularly, especially in cold weather and before a heavy freeze. Don't saturate; they just need to be moist.

**HOUSEPLANTS:** Rotate plants from dim locations to sunny ones so they will stay in good condition through winter. Remember to avoid placing them near vents where dry heated air will damage the leaves. Check plants weekly to ensure that the soil is moist.

**COLD PROTECTION:** To protect cold-sensitive plants from a freeze, cover them with a box or blanket (burlap or even a sheet will do). You can also use plastic, but only if it is supported in a tent-like fashion and doesn't come in contact with the leaves. Simply throwing plastic over a plant may cause even greater damage. Protect the grafts of tender young fruit trees by wrapping with towels or with newspaper about 10 sheets thick.

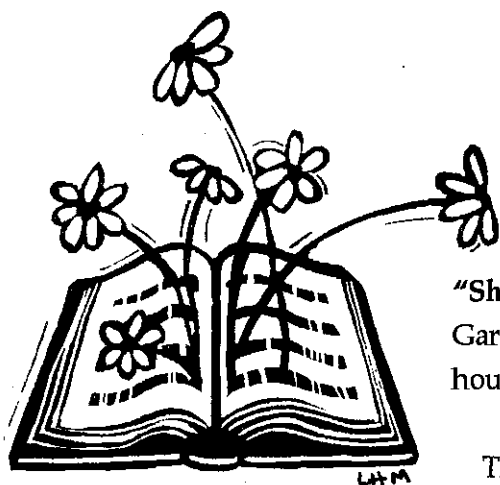
**GARDEN CLEANUP:** Dead stalks and other debris left in the garden provide choice locations for insects and diseases to overwinter. Remove and destroy any infested material; add the rest to your compost heap. Do not allow leaves to pile up on the lawn, as serious damage to the grass can occur (not to mention creating a fire hazard). This is a good time to take inventory of your tools and to clean, oil and sharpen. Check the condition of spraying equipment, hose attachments or pressure sprayer. Make an inventory of flats, stakes and labels, and replenish your supply if necessary. Make needed repairs to cold frames.

**COMPOST:** Keep adding debris and turning your compost piles. Pine needles do not break down as fast as leaves and other clippings. You may want to consider using the needles this year for a "top" mulch, that is, to cover tender plants and dress up any bare areas in your yard. Pine needles can be easily raked up in the spring.



**PLANNING:** If you can't garden now, you can plan for next season. Winter is a good time to prepare the soil for new beds or adding amendments. Whether your soil is clay or sand, it will benefit from the addition of compost, manure or other organic matter. Plan changes, additions or corrections to your garden. Garden catalogs and seed books are a good source for hard-to-find items, and they also pump you up to get out there and get started! Order seed for early planting.

Last year was dry, and lots of people (including me) lost valuable shrubs and trees because they did not water the plants, and the cold killed them. Remember to check your garden for dryness if a hard freeze, ice or snow is forecast. If dry, water before the freeze hits, so shrubs and trees will be able to survive.



# BOOK REVIEW

— Jan Richardson

**"Shortcuts for Accenting Your Garden,"** by Marianne Binetti, A Gardenway Publishing Book, Storey Communications, Inc., Schoolhouse Road, Pownal, VT 05261, 1993, \$9.95.

This is a book which, according to the jacket, tells you how to make the most of your landscape. Actually it's an exterior design book and an extremely useful one, containing more than 500 easy and inexpensive tips.

Chapter One is entitled "Organization: Make the Most of What You Have." The shortcut:

Get organized — or at least give others the illusion that there's a method to your planting madness.

The author suggests that you first determine what your garden type is, and she fully explains these types: formal/estate style, country/cottage style, contemporary/Oriental style, naturalistic/woodland style and Mediterranean style. She describes the characteristics of each, the overall effect, the type of plants used and the architectural style of house with which it is appropriate.

Chapter Two: "Porches, Pots, Paint and Courtyards: Quick Steps to a Showcase Welcome." The shortcut:

Focus on improving the front walkway and doorway garden, for a maximum return on your home improvement investment. This chapter explains what to do to your entry to improve it and how to do it. Just a few of the ideas presented: porch pots, window boxes, painting the front door a lively color, widening the walkway and adding a courtyard. She takes each of the garden types and lists ways to accent the entry that are suitable for each type.

Once the front entry area has been improved, the focus is on making your garden a scenic landscape. Optical illusions to make a small yard seem bigger, using color and trees to create a vista, and vistas to organize a cluttered yard are thoroughly explored. Once again, the author takes each garden style and gives specific suggestions for vistas suitable for that garden.

Each chapter covers a different aspect of improving your landscape and ties the suggestions to the particular type of garden that you wish to achieve. Focal points, features, accents, showcasing plants, walls, borders, paths, arches and, finally, the finishing touches are handled skillfully, leaving the reader with the belief that he or she can follow the suggestions and the end result will be a spectacular landscape.

The appendix lists by state the names, addresses, telephone numbers and brief descriptions of the largest and most well-known public gardens to visit for inspiration.

It would be hard to read this book and not follow through on at least some of the suggestions that it offers its readers.

**Q. What does Santa do in his garden all summer long?**

**A. Hoe, hoe hoe!**

— Contributed by Lynn Coates

There will be no "Meet Our Master Gardeners" column this month. We wish Elmer and Marge Van Egmond well; our thoughts are with you throughout the holiday season and new year.

# Beth's Helpful Garden Hints



This is the last in a multi-part series on "Poison Ivy and Its Kin" by Walter Gloor, borrowed from the Benton County Master Gardeners' "The Green Thumb Print."

W.T. Gillis states, "The idea that American Indians chewed a leaf of poison ivy to confer immunity is a myth that has never been documented." (However, some suspicions still exist that the Indians may have told the newcomers this tale as a bit of revenge for the white man's dastardly deeds.) Eating a leaf or any part of the poison ivy plant, contrary to many old wives' tales, does not confer immunity.

The early settlers used the sap of the jewelweed, *Impatiens capensis* and *I. pallida* for scalp disorders and for certain skin infections. As a result, the plant is still considered by some persons to be a remedy against poison ivy reactions. The jewelweed, also known as snapweed or touch-me-not (the seed explodes when ripe and touched lightly) does contain an antifungal

agent.

The person who desires to enjoy out-of-doors recreation and not worry about contracting rhus dermatitis now has a choice of two products that offer protection from the effects of poisonous foliage. Stoko Gard is marketed by Stockhausen, Inc., and Poison Oak-N-Ivy Armor is marketed by Tec Labs. Tecnu Poison Oak-N-Ivy (Tec Labs) will remove the toxic oils of poison ivy, oak and sumac if used within a short time after exposure.

A number of products are available for treating the dermatitis, but most of these items are of little use, especially if the outbreak is significant. A physician should be consulted in this case. If the lesions are somewhat tolerable and the individual wishes to treat the condition, use a product such as a 1% hydrocortisone cream (do not use an ointment) or a spray containing a local anesthetic such as 10% benzocaine.

The most important aspect of preventing dermatitis caused by these plants is to learn to recognize the "enemy." A case in point was reported in a medical journal some years ago. A middle-aged gardener appeared in her physician's office each spring with a rash on her arms and hands, and sometimes on her face, which the doctor promptly diagnosed as poison ivy dermatitis, and he treated her for such during the remainder of the growing season.

The woman insisted repeatedly that she knew what poison ivy was and that she had no poison ivy in her flower bed. Finally, on a hunch, the doctor drove by the woman's house on his way home from the office. There on the side of the lady's home was the most magnificent poison ivy vine the doctor had ever seen. Once the woman was convinced that the vine was the source of her medical problems and had it removed, her dermatitis disappeared.

# Master Gardener Notes

— Julie Eckberg

The Master Gardener Christmas party will be December 12 at the Adult Center on 12th Street beginning at 6:30 p.m. See the enclosed flyer for more details.

*There will be no regular monthly meeting in December. Come to the Christmas party! (We had terrific door prizes last year, too!)*

On January 24 and 25, the Arkansas State Horticultural Society will hold its annual meeting at the Springdale Holiday Inn. Call Beth or Mrs. McKinney (340-6650) for more details..

The Arkansas Nurserymen's Association will hold its annual meeting January 31 through February 1 at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs. Call Beth if you're interested in attending.

Make plans to attend the 1997 Arkansas Flower and Garden Show to be held February 21 through February 23. Remember to return your sign-up sheets to Beth as soon as possible. (Breck Campbell and Jay Hill will be assigning volunteer worker duties this year.)

Our next regular meeting will be 11:30 a.m. on January 14 at the State Cooperative Extension Office auditorium. The program will be presented by Jay Hill.

Mark your calendars! We are planning a trip to St. Louis on May 7, 8 and 9. The flight and double-occupancy rooms will cost \$399 per person. More details will follow in the coming months.

The 1997 International Master Gardener Conference will be July 7 through 11 in Sacramento, California. Watch our 1997 newsletters for more details.

Most of the Master Gardeners in time sheets this year. Keep be reviewing 1996 time sheets her (340-6650) if you have any you still need more volunteer or

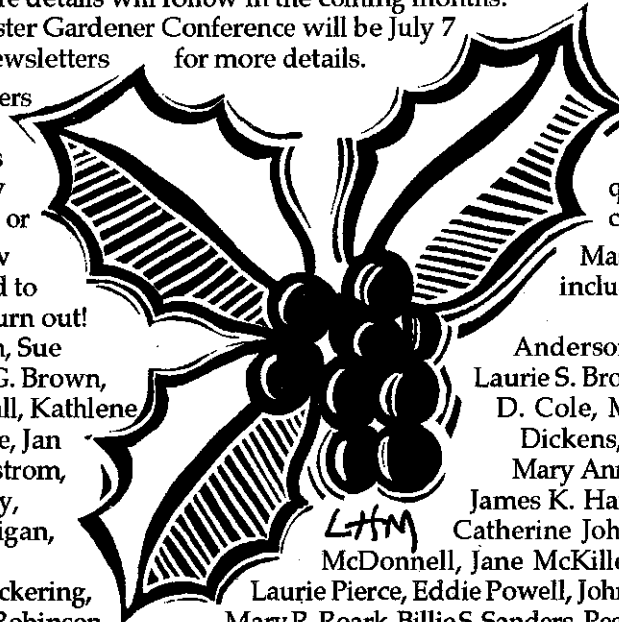
*Congratulations* to the new Lonoke counties! Beth wanted to letter, but the picture didn't turn out!

*Pulaski County:* Laura Allen, Sue Berry, Terri Bonner, Beverly G. Brown, A. Cherven, Martha Chisenhall, Kathlene Laverne Counts, Julia S. Dame, Jan Charles R. Emerson, Sue Engstrom, Gauntt, Judi Gordon, Jim Gray, Brendle Jackson, Charles Jernigan, Loyall, Charles J. Mase, Paul Moore, Wanda Pape, Mary Pickering, Suellen S. Roberts, Kristie C. Robinson, Michael S. Wahlgreen, Jane S. Watkins, Marilyn Wheeler, Judy White and Joanna Willson.

*Lonoke County:* Virginia Alexander, Sharon Baxter, Gina Chapman, Oletta Clark, Allison Davis, Nancy Kittler, Laura Nichols and Marianne Park.

Marilyn Dunavant, president, The Partners for Pinnacle, Inc., sent a very nice "thank-you" letter to Beth and the Pulaski County Master Gardeners on behalf of its board and members. They wanted to express their appreciation for the volunteer work that Master Gardeners have given to Pinnacle Mountain State Park for several years. At least 100 Master Gardeners have provided labor and expertise for a number of important projects, including designing and/or maintaining the front of the Visitor Information Center, the front gate, the wildflower meadow and working in the Arboretum. Ms. Dunavant said that the labor and expertise of the Pulaski County Master Gardeners have enhanced the park's natural attractions, and many visitors specifically mention the beauty of the Visitor Information Center's entrance. She also said that, without a doubt, the work of the Master Gardeners has contributed significantly to the natural allure of Pinnacle Mountain State Park. She extended their sincere gratitude for the excellent work the Pulaski County Master Gardener volunteers have provided.

*Nothing is a better lesson in the knowledge of plants than to ... look them over just as carefully as possible. — Gertrude Jekyll*



have done a great job sending up the good work! Beth will and totals in December, so call questions about your hours, or if continuing education hours.

Master Gardeners for Pulaski and include a group picture in the news-

Anderson, Hilda Baldrige, Gloria C. Laurie S. Brown, Shalah C. Brummett, James D. Cole, Mike Compton, Miriam Coots, Dickens, Jane Druff, Suzanne W. Earl, Mary Ann Francis, Cynthia J. Frost, Jan O. James K. Hamilton, Adam Hawkins, Dawn Catherine Johnson, Sherry Laymon, Julia F. McDonnell, Jane McKillen, Janee N. Miller, Beverly B. Laurie Pierce, Eddie Powell, John Prather Jr., Ardith Quaintance, Mary R. Roark, Billie S. Sanders, Peggy Smith, Brenda W. Veerhusen,

## Calendar Of Events — Gladys Whitney

Thursday, December 12 — Christmas party at the Adult Center on 12th Street.

Tuesday, January 14 — Master Gardener Monthly Meeting at the state extension office on University Avenue at 11:30 a.m. Jay Hill will present the program.

Friday and Saturday, January 24 and 25 — Arkansas State Horticulture Society will meet in Springdale. Call Beth for details, 340-6650.

Friday and Saturday, January 31 and February 1 — Arkansas Nurserymen's Association will meet in Hot Springs. Call Beth for details, 340-6650.

Friday-Sunday, February 21-23 — Arkansas Flower & Garden Show, Statehouse Convention Center.

## Trading Post — Julie Eckberg

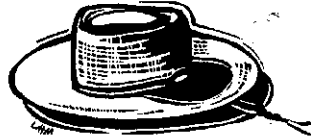
Dick Butler (661-9808) has daylilies and irises.

Marie Flickinger (758-4202) wants hydrangeas and blooming shrubs.

Karen Anderson (223-0307) wants shade-loving plants and wildflowers.

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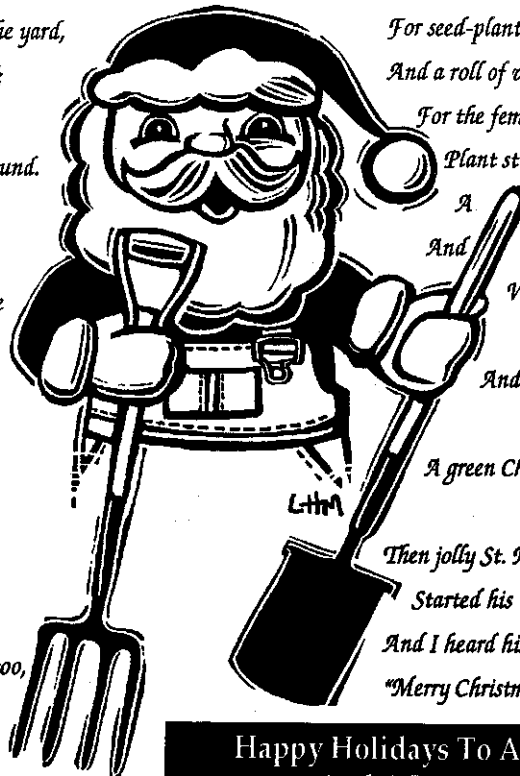


The Master Minutes newsletter is compiled by Master Gardeners to support the Pulaski County Master Gardener Volunteer Program. Pulaski County Master Gardeners have contributed more than 16,000 hours of service to the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service since 1989. In 1995, they answered 16,648 callers' questions about horticulture.

Elizabeth J. Phelps  
County Extension Agent — Agriculture

# A Gardener's Night Before Christmas

*'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the yard,  
The branches were bare and the ground frozen hard;  
The roses were dormant and mulched all around  
To protect them from damage if frost heaves the ground.  
The perennials were nestled all snug in their beds  
While visions of 5-10-5 danced in their heads.  
The new planted shrubs had been soaked by the hose  
To settle their roots for the long winter's doze;  
And out on the lawn, the new fallen snow  
protected the roots of the grasses below.  
When what to my wondering eyes should appear  
But a truck full of gifts of gardening gear.  
Saint Nick was the driver — the jolly old elf  
And he winked as he said, "I'm a gardener myself."  
I've brought Milorganite, Funginex and Volck Oil too,  
To help with the weeding, a sharp hoe will do.  
To seed your new lawn, I've a patented sower,  
In case it should grow, here's a new power mower.*



*For seed-planting days, I've a trowel and a dibble,  
And a roll of wire mesh, if the rabbits should nibble.  
For the feminine gardener, some gadgets she loves:  
Plant stakes, a sprinkler and waterproof gloves.  
A chemical agent for her compost pit,  
And for pH detecting, a soil-testing kit.  
With these colorful flagstones,  
lay a new garden path;  
And last but not least, some well-rotted  
manure!  
A green Christmas year 'round these gifts will  
ensure."  
Then jolly St. Nick, having emptied his load,  
Started his truck and took to the road.  
And I heard him exclaim o'er the motor's loud hum,  
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a green thumb!"*

Happy Holidays To All Master Gardeners,  
And A Very Green New Year!