

## 2020 Officers

President: Annette Lachowsky  
Vice-President – Jane Richards  
Secretary – Gayle Renfro  
Treasurer – Nick Auck



June & Wendi working in the flowerbeds.

August 2020

# Master Memos

A Newsletter for Red Dirt Master Gardeners

If you have any questions about anything in this newsletter, please call me at 870-779-3609 or email [jcaraway@uaex.edu](mailto:jcaraway@uaex.edu).

Sincerely,

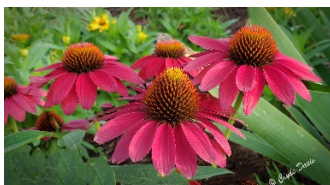
*Jennifer Caraway*  
Jennifer Caraway

County Extension Agent  
Agriculture

JC:jds

**Photo Above & Right:**  
“Busy bees” in the Miller County Courthouse pollinator bed.

Thanks to Clyde Davis for the photos.



Liz social distancing in a flowerbed



Thanks to Clyde Davis for the photo.



Can You Identify These Masked MGs at the Farmers Market?

## Contact Me

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Fax: 870-773-3471

E-Mail: [jcaraway@uaex.edu](mailto:jcaraway@uaex.edu)

MG Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Miller-County-Red-Dirt-Master-Gardeners](https://www.facebook.com/Miller-County-Red-Dirt-Master-Gardeners)

Ag Facebook: [www.facebook.com/millercountyuaex/](https://www.facebook.com/millercountyuaex/)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Miller CoAg>





## Get Well Wishes

We would like to wish a speedy recovery to the members of the Miller Co. Courthouse Team who are experiencing health issues (back, wrist, arm, & leg). Thank you for helping to make our community beautiful! T

*Thanks to Theresa Mitzler for the photo.*

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER —

Greetings to all! I sincerely hope you and your families are well! Living in a pandemic is something I never imagined. Our lives and world have been thrown off kilter by a tiny but ferocious virus.

Because of this virus and the public health advice we are given to stay home when possible, we, the Miller County Red Dirt Master Gardeners executive committee and our sponsor Jennifer Caraway, County Extension Agent, after discussions with the state officers have decided to have **no** requirement for hours this year. **If you are unable to get any project or education hours you will still be considered a member in good standing.**

I want to thank those who have been able to work on the court-house beds. They are beautiful! I also want to thank those who have been at the demonstration garden at Gateway Farmers' Market. These two projects are great at promoting MCRDMG.

I also know that all of us are not able to work on those projects. That being said, we still urge you to enter any hours you do have into the on-line system. There are so many things we can do at home that count for hours. If you are propagating plants for a future plant sale, count those hours. If you are studying ways to propagate a specific type of plant, count those hours. Educating ourselves is a very important part of what we do! Have you found a new pod cast on gardening or a new book on botany or a television or radio program? Count those hours. Also share with the group any new sources you find.

Another important thing we can be doing now while staying home is thinking of new projects and ways that we can engage with the public and each other. This is a great time to plan and think of ways we can come back renewed and invigorated to get mov'n and shak'n!

I miss you all!! Please feel free to contact me with any concerns or questions or good news!

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Lachowsky,  
MCRDMG president

## Have You Received Seeds from China?

You may have heard about the reports of unsolicited packages of seeds being mailed to people across the United States that appear to originate from China.

If you get seed that you did not purchase, contact the Arkansas Plant Industries Division at 501-225-1598, or email [Paul.shell@agriculture.arkansas.gov](mailto:Paul.shell@agriculture.arkansas.gov) or [Mark.stoll@agriculture.arkansas.gov](mailto:Mark.stoll@agriculture.arkansas.gov), or bring them, unopened, to the Miller County Extension Service. We are located inside of the Miller County Courthouse, 400 Laurel, Room 215, Texarkana, AR.

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture will advise what to do. Seeds should NOT be removed from their packaging and should NOT be planted. Investigators could be sent to retrieve the seed and will likely want to see the envelope and packing materials the seeds were sent in.

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture and other state departments of agriculture are working with USDA APHIS to determine what is going on and the risk. Per Paul Shell with the Arkansas Department of Agriculture, the concern is that there could be an introduction of a potential invasive weed, insect or plant disease associated with these shipments.



*We have received a couple of packages that members of the community have received in the mail. The Department of Agriculture has been contacted and will pick the packages up.*

## Zoom-Zoom-Zoom

### Plant-Nurture-Grow Leadership Conference via Zoom

Our PNG Leadership Conference will be held **August 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020**, and will be presented via Zoom. Register once and watch either one program or all programs.



Ua DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH & EXTENSION  
University of Arkansas System

Registration is required by clicking this link: <https://bit.ly/PNG-2020-Registration>. You will then receive a link to join the conference.

“Conflict Resolution” will be held Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, with Emily Smith and Julianne Dunn, presenters. Emily & Julianne will guide Master Gardeners in ways to run effective meetings and handle personality conflicts within group settings. Both have experience in conflict resolution and leadership.

#### Brown Bag Lecture Series

**12 – Made in the Shade – All About Shade Gardening**, 12 p.m. with Sherri Sanders

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://bit.ly/39DcNluShadeGardening>

**19 – Fire Ants, Fleas and Ticks in the Yard – Dr. Kelly Loftin**, Extension Entomologist – 12:00-1:00 PM

**20 - Growing Your Own Groceries: Sweet Corn** 12:00-1:00 PM

In this live Zoom presentation, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Faulkner County Extension Agents will teach you how to grow healthy, nutritious food in your own backyard and give tips for new ways to cook and prepare your harvest. This class will focus on growing and cooking sweet corn.

**26 - Growing a Vegetable Garden – Dr. Amanda McWhirt**, Extension Specialist, Hort. Crop – 12:00-1:00 PM

#### Master Gardener Mondays

MG Monday via Zoom, from 12:00-1:00 p.m. The meeting link will be sent out **August 17<sup>th</sup>**, the morning of the event. It will also be posted on the Master Gardener Facebook page.



I hope everyone is doing okay & staying safe. Here is an update of how we are doing right now. First, I have one request of you. **Please** place any volunteer hours you have into the system. Your hours are **really needed** this year, since we have had to scale back so much because of Covid. I find the longer we wait, the harder it is to remember when and how many hours we have earned. I also know there are some of you that have hours and have not placed them into the system.

Current membership is 80; of that 10 are Lifetimers, 59 regular members and 11 trainees. We are up to 100% of our membership as active. You may notice that you have an additional hour of education. I gave everyone 1 hour of education this month. The state wanted us (online managers) to activate all of our members. To be active, you must have at least one hour in the system. So, to be fair, everyone gets 1 hour of education.

I want to congratulate from our 2019 MG Trainee class Douglas Fant, Barbara McWilliams, and Wendi Merkel; they are now Certified Master Gardeners. BIG Congratulations to you all.

This month we add the following members that have enough volunteer hours in for recertification. Congratulations to Linda Emert, Peggy Groves, Annette Lackowsky, and Jane Richards. GREAT JOB.

So far this year, 1575.25 sanctioned hours, 67.25 non-sanctioned hours and 963.75 education hours have been placed into the online system. This is great.

Below are the normal requirements for Master Gardeners. Since this year is not normal, I believe the Executive Committee is going to make some changes to our yearly requirements.

**2019 Trainees (Annuals):** You need 20 Sanctioned, 20 Non-Sanctioned & 20 Education hours for recertification.

**Membership (Perennials):** You need 10 Sanctioned, 10 Non-Sanctioned & 20 Education hours for recertification.

**Lifetimers:** You need 10 Sanctioned hours to keep your years counting.

Remember, all hours are important & needed to keep the MG programs going, so please report all hours. To report hours, go to [www.uaex.edu](http://www.uaex.edu), then Yard & Garden. Click on Master Gardener Program, then Enter Volunteer Hours here and logon. This is the best way to ensure you are at the current version of the online reporting system.

#### Reporting Volunteer Hours

I know that the stay in place and social distancing order is making it more difficult to do volunteer hours, but there are still a few things you can do and still stay in place.





## Sanctioned Hours

**Mentoring** – time spent helping your trainee: calling, emailing, texting to remind them of upcoming events and making sure they understand what is required and where to find info about upcoming seminars & events.

**Fundraisers and Plant Sales** – propagating plants for future sales. Taking care of the plants you already have that were dedicated for our now postponed plant sale.

**Miller Co. Courthouse Flowerbeds** – doing needed tasks to keep flowerbeds beautiful while social distancing. If you wish to help this committee, contact Theresa Mitzler, committee chair, to find out how to help.

**Telephone/Communications** – calling members without computers & email to keep them updated.

Articles and photos for the newsletter.

## Education

MG Monday Zoom trainings. Watch live, watch recording or read pdf.

Read horticulture magazines/books. Reading articles on internet. Check out information the UofA has under Yard & Garden or Farm & Ranch. You can report 1 hour monthly for this.

Watch horticulture program on TV and/or the internet. There are lots of YouTube videos. Listen to horticulture program on the radio. Report 1 hour per month for this activity.

Brown Bag Lecture Series via Zoom, hosted by White Co., 2:05-12:50 p.m. This is a great program. It has been very popular & is continuing with more classes. Check your emails for the invitation to join. You must register to get a link & handout info. Count under seminars.

Everyone Take Care and Be Safe. I miss all of you.

Keeping you all in my prayers. Remember, if you have any questions on reporting your hours in the system or need a password reset, please call me at 903-832-8111 or email [at7550@yahoo.com](mailto:at7550@yahoo.com), and I will do my best to help.

*Andrea Thomas*

## Want to Grow Hops? Learn How on this Virtual Field Tour!

Come learn about growing and harvesting hops in Arkansas from University of Arkansas Horticulture and Food Science researchers!

**August 20th, 2020**

**7:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

Webinar will be held via ZOOM. To register please visit:

<http://bit.ly/39CnuEV>



featuring interviews with:



Ronnie Ledford  
River Valley Hops  
Logan County, Arkansas

&



Liz Preston  
Prestonrose Farm & Brewery Co  
Paris, Arkansas



Project funded with support from the Arkansas  
Department of Agriculture specialty crop block program

Join us for the upcoming Hops Virtual Field Tour Webinar on August 20th, from 7-8 pm.

We will tour our hop yard at the University of Arkansas Fruit Research Station and look at cultivar selection, trellising, pest management and harvest practices.

Registration is free but required to get the zoom link. Register at <http://bit.ly/39CnuEV>.

This project is supported by a grant from the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Program.

## When to Wear a Mask?

A question many MGs are asking is "Do we have to wear a mask if we are outside more than 6' apart while working on projects?"

Berni Kurz, MG State Coordinator, Instructor Consumer Horticulture, said: "We do not have to wear masks outside if we are social distanced at least 6 feet apart. If you are in a close group working on a flower bed (and not able to be six feet apart) for example, you might need to put a mask on."