

# GARDEN VOICE



COUNTY 76 NEWSLETTER  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2022    October 2022  
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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

October marks many changes in the year – cooler temperatures, pumpkin patches full of pumpkins, leaves turning their fall colors, last projects in the garden getting done – and wrapping up the County 76 activities for 2022.

Throughout the year, new ideas have been tried and introduced into events for County 76:

- A new State Award – Mimi Cox Mentor of the Year
- Introduction of a field trip to a nursery
- Zoom and in-person Advanced Training classes
- A hybrid PNG Leadership Conference
- A virtual and in-person Silent Auction at the State Conference
- MG Appreciation Day after two years of COVID restraints
- Changing of the “guard” – retirement of Berni Kurz and welcome to Randy Forst
- An additional calendar format – Desktop Calendar



It is only through the dedication of Master Gardeners like you that County 76 has been able to continue the programs that are tried and true and bring to fruition new life to grow in the coming years.

I would like to especially thank all the chairs and co-chairs of the Projects for the volunteer hours that have been spent ensuring that all of the programs are supported and run smoothly. The leadership team of County 76 – Kay, Becky, Patsy, Debbie, Gail, and Darlene – have provided throughout the year the oversight and guidance to help bring to all Master Gardeners across the state the programs offered through County 76. The Little Rock Staff (Julie, Khaliah, Berni, and Randy) have advised us the entire year. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to be a part of this advisory group for the state. Well done, County 76!

2023 is just around the corner – and many new events and programs are underway in the planning.

Embrace each day – taking in all that it offers to spend time with family, friends, and helping those in need.



See you again in 2023!

*Susan Colles*

Susan Colles  
County 76 President

## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

### ~Business~

- Our president, Susan Colles, called the meeting to order. After mentioning our currently pleasant weather, Susan welcomed everyone. She welcomed our first-time visitors by name.
- Darlene McGuire, Secretary, shared that the minutes from our July meeting had been emailed to everyone. Susan asked for corrections to the minutes. There were none. The minutes were approved.
- Debbie Howell, Treasurer, presented financial information for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and the year-to-date balances of accounts. Our private account balance as of September 30, 2022, was \$43,996.21, and the CES account balance as of September 30, 2022, was \$57,470.99. The combined year-to-date balance was \$101,467.20. The financial report was approved as presented.
- Susan announced the members who will be working to review the financial reporting of our private account. They are Valerie Smith and Linda Soffer.
- Susan shared the success of our Master Gardener Appreciation Day Event at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View. Also exciting was the availability of our new Master Gardener 2023 calendar. For the first time, we will have a spiral-bound desk calendar available. This is our wall calendar in a 5-inch by 8-inch format. There are note pages between months and following the calendar. The cost is \$10.00. A Constant Contact will be sending out information for ordering them.
- Our past president, Patsy Louk, introduced the 2023 slate of officers for County 76 and held a vote. The slate was unanimously passed. (The list of officers appears below.)
- Our new State Master Gardener Coordinator, Randy Forst, introduced himself to us and gave an update on our organization. Randy began by asking us to remind all groups to report volunteer hours. There are 3,643 Master Gardeners in Arkansas. Our volunteer hours are important because they serve our counties as leverage in receiving funding. Randy shared that he grew up on a 1,000-acre farm in western Arkansas as one of a family of 12 children. He never intended to be a farmer – but he is:) His career began with 8 years in private industry as a landscape architect. Before coming to his current position, he worked as County Extension Agent for 3 counties – the last being Pulaski County. Pulaski County, as we know, is the largest county in the state and horticulture is huge there.
- When Randy Forst came to work at the State Extension Office, he brought a clear vision of his goals for the Master Gardener Program. He wants to encourage ALL Master Gardeners in the work as so many mature members contribute so much. He noted the *Lifetime Plus* members who contribute above and beyond the required hours. They add such a boost to the organization. He wants to see us reach out to *Extension Agents* who may not be familiar with our work. He will be active in promoting Master Gardeners through the County Extension Council. He wants us to share funding possibilities. Currently, we have \$60,000.00 dollars available in *The Greening of Arkansas Grant*. He wants Arkansas Extension to *increase participation on a national level* through the National Association County Agricultural Agents [NACAA]. He wants us to increase the availability of *statewide educational programs*. He would like to see us return to *Trial Gardens* in coordination with the Arkansas Green Industry Association. Previously done with Master Gardener volunteers and agents in annual plant trials. He wants us to *learn from each other* and mentioned the Pulaski County Program Evaluation & Support Team [PEST]. This is an activity to support county projects. He wants us to see all Master

Gardener project *plants correctly labeled*. The *Master Gardener Training Manual* should be revamped. We must look at the important *mentoring of our virtually trained Master Gardeners*.

- Randy encouraged communication within our organization. As we face challenges together, Randy asked if we contact him by email [rforst@uada.edu](mailto:rforst@uada.edu) to be sure to include Julie Treat [jtreat@uada.edu](mailto:jtreat@uada.edu) on the message. He will begin a new consumer Zoom component on the third Wednesday of every month, 9:30 to 10:30, with WHAT'S UP WEDNESDAY. He has a new blog, The Arkansas Garden with Randy Forst, which may be found through these links.

**Blog landing page link:**

<https://www.uaex.uada.edu/yard-garden/arkansas-garden-blog/>

**Blog intro post link:**

<https://www.uaex.uada.edu/yard-garden/arkansas-garden-blog/posts/welcome.aspx>

### ~Education~

We were pleasantly surprised with our guest presenters. Two young men, Rob Phillips and Josiah Lillard, who are part of the ARKANSAS 4-H CHANGEMAKERS team, brought us valuable information about using technology devices securely.

Arkansas 4-H is a part of the NATIONAL 4-H TECH CHANGEMAKERS PROGRAM sponsored by Microsoft, Verizon, Land O'Lakes, and Tractor Supply Co. This program utilizes the technology gurus of our 4-H members to teach adults in their community. This program focuses on improving employability skills for their community and closing the digital divide. Arkansas is one of twenty states with this grant-based program administered through twenty-four land-grant universities.

As adults we know about fishing in the lake, but we learned about phishing in the State Extension Office. You notice that phishing inside is spelled differently. Phishing is the practice of tricking Internet users with deceptive email messages or websites into revealing personal or confidential information which can then be used illegally.

We were told that these scams are everywhere. You can click on a link and get a virus on your phone or computer. The scammers have many common approaches. They may ask you to update payment details. They may write about a package that could not be delivered and ask you for information.

We received a nicely written flyer with important aspects of phishing. If an unknown contact sends you a message asking for money or to click a link, do not click or send money as it could be a scam. Look at the domain of the links you are clicking. Legitimate email addresses will end with .com, .gov, .edu, and others. Be sure you know how organizations and companies you deal with will contact you.

We had a good time playing a phishing game. Our presenters let us draw possible email or text messages, read them, and guess whether they were scams or not.

We were also given pointers on using passwords. We learned to keep all passwords different and unique to prevent a security breach. Also never give your private information such as credit card information, address, phone number and social security to strangers over the internet. Guidance was given on making strong passwords. Never reuse passwords on multiple websites. If there is a data leak, everywhere that password was used there is a breach. Passwords shouldn't include any guessable information or anything that could be easily found on social media. We were allowed to visit a website

which will rate the strength of a password you are using. We had a competition for the highest strength. The website is <https://cscan.org/PasswordStrength/>

How can we be anything but proud of the work being done by our Arkansas 4-H Program? We learned so much from our presenters! The future is bright with these young leaders.

## THE PROJECT PATCH

### Advanced Training

Reporting: John Hiegel

- Heather Cook is stepping down from the chair position at the end of 2022.
- John Hiegel, 2022 co-chair, will be chair in 2023.
- We are looking for a co-chair for 2023.
- Kate Spontak will continue as secretary in 2023.
- We are holding our first in person class in several years on October 27 and 28 in Madison County at the Ozark Natural Science Center in Huntsville, AR. About 50 master gardeners from across the state will learn how to make their gardens better for our declining bird population. During the course, members will construct a cedar birdhouse to take home.
- We are still planning a joint venture with the chapter of the National Garden Club next year in Crittenden County.

### Fundraising

Reporting: Nancy Cunningham

- Nancy Cunningham will continue as chair in 2023.
- Patsy Louk will serve as our co-chair.
- We look forward to continuing our annual activities of planning and implementing auctions during the state conference. Next year the conference will be in Russellville on June 8,9, and 10.

### Media Relations

Reporting: Susan Colles

- Our annual Master Gardener wall calendar is now available for \$1.25.
- New this year is our spiral-bound Desktop Calendar. It is 5" X 8" and has blank pages for notes. The cost is \$10.00.
- Constant Contact will be sent to share purchase information for both of these.

### Plant, Nurture, Grow Leadership [PNG]

Reporting: Rose Ann Houston

- Rose Ann Houston will continue as chair of PNG for 2023.
- Jan Hill will be stepping down as co-chair. We are looking for a co-chair.
- The PNG Conference was held on August 30 and 31, 2023. The first day was at the Vines 4-H Center in Ferndale. County 76 paid for three officers from each county to attend this in-person session. The attendance was approximately 105, including speakers and volunteers.
- PNG was held virtually on August 31. Cost for this session was \$10.00. We had three breakout sessions with 8 topics and a plenary speaker.
- 'Thank you' to all the volunteers that helped to make this conference a success.

- I ask if you are on the PNG Project to get more involved and help us with our PNG projects.

### Recruitment, Retention, Recognition [RRR]

Reporting: Liz Hale

- 2022 Arkansas Master Gardener Awards – due 1/15/2023. A Zoom help session will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. on 11/1/2022.
- We continue to work on the County Presidents' Contact Information and RRR Liaisons, Length of Service Pins and Name Badges.
- During the RRR Project Breakout Session Today: We discussed Annuals to Perennials (in summer 2023), and the RRR Liaison evaluation. We also talked about the State Awards Forms feedback.

## COUNTY 76 LEADERSHIP - 2023

### State Leadership

*Randy Forst*, Extension Educator Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Coordinator

*Julie Treat*, Horticulture Program Associate

### County 76 Officers

*Kay Roberts*, President (Lonoke County)

*Becky Gibson*, First Vice President (Pulaski County)

*Brenda Anderson*, Second Vice President (Benton County)

*Darlene McGuire*, Secretary (Pope County)

*Debbie Howell*, Treasurer (Faulkner County)

*Gail McClure*, Assistant Treasurer (Hot Spring/Garland County)

*Susan Colles*, Past President (Pope County)

### County 76 Project Leaders

*Advanced Training Project*

*John Hiegel*, Chair (Craighead County)

*Fundraising Project*

*Nancy Cunningham*, Chair (Benton County)

*Patsy Louk*, Co-Chair (Washington County)

*Plant, Nurture, Grow Leadership Training Project*

*Rose Ann Houston*, Chair (Independence/White County)

*Recruitment, Retention, Recognition Project*

*Liz Hale*, Chair (Washington County)

### County 76 Appointed Positions

*Mike Wilbanks*, Media Relations Coordinator (Craighead County)

*Becky Gibson*, Garden Voice Editor (Pulaski County)



## MASTER GARDENER AND HORTICULTURAL EVENTS

### November 2022

1 - Help Session for MG Award Nomination Form, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

2, 9, 16 – MG Basic Training Class on Zoom

14 - Master Gardener Monday (MGM); 12 to 1 p.m.

15 - Grow Your Own Groceries: Pruning Fruit Trees; 12 p.m. on Zoom – Register here:  
<https://uada.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlkcOigrzMiE9bPnWXeJXm47wb7LCQkqZiP#/registration>

24 - Thanksgiving Day - State Extension Office Closed

### December 2022

12 - Master Gardener Monday (MGM); 12 to 1 p.m.

15 - Deadline for recording volunteer hours for year 2022.

23 - January 1 - State Extension Office Closed



**County 76 Membership/Project Meeting**  
**State Extension Office**  
**2301 S. University Ave, Little Rock, AR 72204**  
**Tuesday, January 24, 2023, 10:00 am**  
**We look forward to seeing you there!**

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