



## President's Corner

Hello all! I just finished looking at the forecast for the next week and am hoping I can stay busy indoors! Although, I guess I would not be too upset if it snowed about a foot. I am not a big fan of frigid temps, but I do like a good snow!

Angie and I really enjoyed having you all over to our home for the January meeting. We had a good turnout and GREAT food! Our Master Gardeners sure do know how to cook.

As I mentioned at the meeting, we have a busy spring and summer ahead of us with our building project! We have all the estimates in and the basic building layout finalized. We still have to go through the review and bid process required by the county and state, but the timing should work out about right to start when the weather is nice. If you have not seen the building design, you can go to our website

[www.rheacomg.com](http://www.rheacomg.com) where Penie has posted the drawing. It is a 40' X 80' building with a 12' X 80' shed roof on one side and a 10' X 24' porch/old store front on the other. It will have a dedicated classroom and a multi-purpose room with storage and two bathrooms. There is ample room for raised beds and landscaping and

a greenhouse or two! As we discussed, it will be a three year project and there will be lots of opportunities for everyone to participate and log some volunteer hours. In any case, be sure and think about what you may want to assist with when we start the project.

Our next meeting will be in conjunction with the Thursday, February 19 Master Gardener Class at the Ag Center. The class this week is Herb Gardening by Ivana Patterson. Many of you asked for more from Ivana so we moved our meeting to coincide with the class. The class starts at 5:30 p.m. at the Ag Center. We will hold our business meeting at 7:00 p.m. during the class break. I encourage you all to come early, meet the new group of interns, and learn along with the class about herb gardening.

We are planning to have a presentation at our March meeting from Mr. Tidwell about strawberries! Yum!

Take a look at the Master Gardener class schedule in this month's newsletter and take advantage of the classes that interest you. It is a great way to learn and also show your support to the new interns!

*Larry*

Larry Bryant  
Master Gardener Association President

## February Master Gardener Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on **February 19 at 7:00 p.m.** at the **Ag Center in Evensville**. This meeting is being held in conjunction with the Master Gardener class on Herbs & Herb Gardening. If you would like to attend the class, please arrive at 5:30 p.m. If you only plan to come for the business session, please arrive at 6:30 p.m. **We will have a short business meeting at 7:00 p.m.**

## Agent's Corner

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Hello Everyone! I hope these cold February mornings aren't getting you down! Spring is just around the bend and before you know it we will all be busy planting, fertilizing and everyone's favorite—WEEDING! We have lots to talk about this month with the Rhea County Master Gardeners!

The first thing I would like to point out is our **AWSOME** intern class. We have 18 interns this year with experience in several different areas. They have already gained valuable knowledge from a great group of classes with so much more to learn.

Secondly, this year's class schedule is also new and improved. We have added classes on high tunnels, herb gardening, organic gardening and aquaponics. I would highly encourage all of you to come to the classes on Thursday nights at 5:30 p.m. at the Ag Center. I am sure you will learn something new or find something you missed the first time through. We have averaged having five members of the Master Gardener Association at each class. Remember, it is completely **FREE** to come to the classes as an Association member and you can count those classes toward your required CEU's. Below you will find a list of the dates, topics and presenters for the remaining classes.

And last but not least, I hope you all are as excited as I am about our new dedicated Master Gardener building project. We have an excellent building committee that is headed up by our current Master Gardener President, Larry Bryant, who is working diligently to ensure that the best interests of our program are being considered throughout the design and construction phase. We have high hopes for this project and our new state Master Gardener Coordinator, Dr. Natalie Bumgarner and I have been in touch about using this facility for educational events on the regional level upon its completion. If you have any questions about the status of the project, or would like to volunteer, please feel free to contact me or any member of the building committee.

DATE	TOPIC	PRESENTER
February 19	Herbs & Herb Gardening	Ivana Patterson
February 26	Small Fruit & Tree Fruit	Kim Frady
March 5	Organic Gardening	Patrick Sweatt
March 12	Insects & Diseases	Tom Stebbins
March 19	Beekeeping	Sheila Ray
March 26	Basic Botany	Dawn Booker
April 2	Roses	Jeff & Cindy Garrett
April 9	Urban Forestry	Gregg Upchurch
April 16	Aquaponics	Steve Mathis
April 23	Ornamentals	Maureen Thiessen

## Master Gardener Volunteer Service Hours

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You have the opportunity to get many of your service hours by helping maintain the Depot landscaping in Spring City, helping to maintain the courtyard garden at Rhea Medical Center, volunteering on the new Master Gardener Building project and working on/at the Rhea County Fair on August 15th and 20th-22nd.

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## January Master Gardener Meeting Minutes

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The Rhea County Master Gardener Association met for its January meeting at the home of Larry and Angie Bryant for a potluck meal. Those present included Kris & Judy Bancroft, Larry and Angie Bryant, Diane Bolt, Thomas Greenlee, Pennie and Jim Hendrick, John & Louise Kueck, Jerry and Lisa Lamb, Susan McKinnon, Sheila and Sam Ray, Bill and Caren Ruffner, Pat Vincent, Karen and Gary Winters and Faith Young.

President Larry Bryant presented information about the Master Gardener building plans to be built at the Ag Center and Fairgrounds. The building will be 40' X 80' with a dedicated classroom and a separate multi-purpose room. A greenhouse is planned as a later addition. Dozer work is starting the week of the 19th.

Master Gardeners will be able to help with most of the work, but the sheet rock and insulation will be hired out. The project time frame is three years with a projected cost of between \$35,000 and \$40,000 over those three years to complete the building, secure the furnishings, build the greenhouse and have it fully functional. This design includes a kitchen area in the classroom. The design will be a covered store front. Volunteer labor on the building procured by Master Gardener members will be clarified regarding counting volunteer hours. The corner of the land on which the building will sit is a planned area for education, training, etc. There will be green areas, walking paths and a future hydroponics site.

New Master Gardener classes will begin on January 22 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Ag Center & Fairgrounds in Evensville. There will be 14 classes and as of today, 16 people have signed up. A free scholarship is available but hasn't been awarded at this time.

The February Master Gardener Association meeting will be combined with the class and will meet February 19 at the Ag Center. Ivana Patterson is doing a class on culinary herbs so the meeting should last about 3 hours. Look on the Rhea County website for a schedule of classes. All Master Gardeners are invited to attend. This year's sessions will be recorded and made available for make-up sessions.

The Rhea County Master Gardener logo needs to be reviewed in light of changes in state logos. Shirts will be available and this will be determined at a later date.

A free short course on Beekeeping will be on February 7 at the Christina Church in Rockwood on Rockwood Road from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sheila encourages anyone interested in bees to attend.

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Faith*

Faith Young

Master Gardener Association Secretary

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