

Taney & Stone County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



The impact of the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks based in Stone and Taney Counties was significant. For 2023, the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks fulfilled their commitment to take on high-impact and ambitious projects. **A total of 4,062 hours were reported** in 2023 by fifty-seven master gardeners who served the entire year and reported. The first-year Master Gardeners are expected to provide 30 hours of service and seasoned master gardeners are only expected to provide 20 hours. This year the master gardeners who submitted hours each averaged 69 hours of service! According to the latest figures from the Independent Sector organization, the hourly wage value for Missouri volunteer hours currently is \$28.66. If you put a value on the education and service hours provided to the community, the amount totals over \$145,000 worth of volunteer time! Continuing education is an important part of volunteer service. The master gardeners reported 1,008 hours of continued education this year. This averages to 17 hours per person. They are expected to submit a minimum of 6 hours of continuing education each year.



As of year-end, **there were 103 master gardeners in the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks chapter**. Of these, there are 57 who reside in Stone County, 37 in Taney County, three in Christian County, four in Barry County and two who reside in Boone County, Arkansas. The master gardeners were led this year by Wanda Nicol, president, Tonya Lewis, vice-president, Ann Symington, secretary, and Stacey Fracol, treasurer. Tim Schnakenberg served as advisor for the master gardener activities in the Stone and Taney County area. The chapter met monthly, alternating between locations in Stone and Taney County and the executive committee met monthly between meetings. The chapter is very proud to report 46 Emeritus members who have served at least ten years in the program. Six of these members have at least twenty years of service. Four members were honored this year for ten years of service.



Seven new master gardeners were trained through the statewide on-line master gardener courses. A graduation ceremony was conducted at a Master Gardener meeting in December.

Taney & Stone County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



The **Spring Garden Workshop in Branson brought in 216 participants** in March from 15 counties. “Spring Forward” was the theme. Ninety-seven percent of participants reported that they plan to make changes in their gardening as a result of attending. A raffle, fundraiser and plant sale fetched \$3,520, providing funds for grant projects and scholarships. Mary O'Brien served as chair.

***“Learned a lot today. Great information”
“Your program was enjoyable and fun! Thank you all”
“Very well organized. Great speakers”***



The **Fall Gardening Workshop in Reeds Spring attracted 140 Participants** in September from 13 counties. The gardening public enjoys participating in the fall workshop for reliable advice on gardening in the Ozarks. “Hello Fall” was the theme. \$2,600 was raised for grant and scholarship projects through the plant sale, raffle and sales. Joanne Anderson served as chair of this project.

***“It was a great workshop this year” “This is the best group of people to spend time with. Very positive and friendly”
“Spring and fall workshops are always great. Well organized in every way. Good speakers, lunches, snacks and coffee. Thank you everyone!”***



The **internal grant program funded nine special projects**. The grant committee in 2023 allocated \$4,547.50 for Ozark Lake Country Senior Center, Kimberling Area Library Children's Garden, Bonniebrook, Pregnancy Life Line, Faith Lutheran Church, Forsyth Demonstration Garden, Taneyhills Library Gardens, Veterans Memorial Garden and Cape Fair Community Center. The committee was chaired by Sharon Nance. Funds for projects originated from local educational program activities and fundraisers.

Taney & Stone County

Agriculture and Environment

Local Impact



Twenty-one garden programs were offered on a regular basis during the growing season in Stone and Taney Counties. These were offered in at Kimberling Area Library in Kimberling City (Kathryn Kufahl – Chair), Taneyhills Library in Branson (Mary O'Brien – Chair), and at the Taney County Extension Center Demonstration Garden in Forsyth (Marie Ewing – Chair). Master gardeners were the presenters at each of these events. We have a lot of talent in our membership. At the Kimberling Area Library, there were 189 participants. Some of the topics covered this year included vermicomposting, seed starting, perennials for fall planting, vertical gardens, Japanese maples, attracting butterflies in your garden, salsa gardening, container gardening, berries in the Ozarks, garden structures, tropical plants and nighttime pollinators and xeriscaping.



Education and improved landscape emphasis in our communities is at the core of the Master Gardeners of the Ozarks. There are many ongoing projects that made a significant impact in local communities included the Speaker's Bureau, Bonniebrook Homestead landscaping, Forsyth Demonstration Garden, Corps of Engineers Project Office Landscaping, Central Crossing Senior Center landscaping, Cape Fair Community Center landscaping, Ozarks Lake Country Senior Center garden, Kimberling Area Library Children's Garden, Harvest Community Garden in Shell Knob, Broiler Festival booth and the Stone County courthouse landscaping. There were many more smaller projects that are too innumerable to cover, but combined they make a startling impact throughout our region.



Five Master Gardener Scholarships were given to high school students in 2023. Education is the primary function of master gardeners and many proceeds from educational events go toward scholarships for college students majoring in horticulture or a similar field. For 2023, there were five recipients who received between \$500 and \$1000 each toward their college education. A total of \$3,500 was allocated. Recipients were Tiffany Criner of Merriam Woods, Avery Fulkerson of Kirbyville, Aaron Gross of Forsyth, Madison Sieg of Galena and Charley Smith of Galena. Tonya Lewis coordinated this effort.