

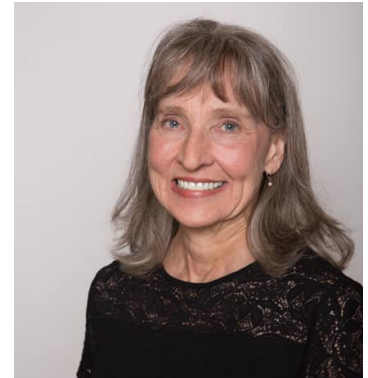


NLR Neighborhood News

#NLRStrong

Sandra Taylor Smith, North Little Rock Historian, Retires

In the 1980s and early 1990s the Argenta neighborhood was arguably the worst neighborhood in the city and one of the worst in Central Arkansas. The part of Argenta from 4th Street South to the Arkansas River had been torn down by Urban Renewal to remove blight. The Urban Renewal maps listed every house from 4th Street north to the railyard, meaning every house in Argenta, as “Unsalvageable” and they were all slated for destruction until Urban Renewal ran out of money.



During all this upheaval Sandra Taylor Smith, the city’s historian, started pushing for historic district status for Argenta. Sandra did the research on the neighborhood. A nomination was then sent to the state preservation people for approval to be followed by submission to the National Register. Argenta would be the state’s first working-class historic district. Argenta was listed on the National Register as a historic district in 1993. It included 258 residential and commercial properties. Over half of the structures in the district had to be considered contributing, which meant they were not substantially altered from the original state. The Argenta district was the first non-contiguous district in the state with both a residential and a separate commercial sector. Then legislation written by Sandra adopted by the City Council to make Argenta a local ordinance district. This required the formation of a Historic District Commission which would have to review and approve any major exterior changes to the contributing structures in the district.

In North Little Rock Sandra also did the architectural resource surveys for Park Hill, Edgemont, and the Baring Cross neighborhoods. Sandra surveyed Hillcrest, Central High, Downtown, and Capitol Zoning neighborhoods in Little Rock. Her reach across the state included surveys in Harrison, Fort Smith, Conway, Morrilton, Eureka Springs, El Dorado, Hot Springs, Osceola, Rogers, Hamburg, West Memphis, Huntsville, Heber Springs, Benton, Rector, Tyronza, Piggott, Mountain Home, DeWitt, Jonesboro, Lake Village, Mahony, and Boonville.

She presented National Trust of Historic Places nominations for sixty-two nominated sites in Arkansas. This includes Charles L. Thompson buildings state wide, Civilian Conservation

Continued on page 8.



The Root Connection

The Hidden Season of Growth: Winter Soil, Leaves, and Life in Zone 8a

Rachelle Kelly, North Little Rock Garden Program Manager

When the weather turns cold and our gardens start to quiet down, it is easy to think everything underground is taking a long winter nap. But here in Zone 8a, winter is actually one of the most important seasons for setting the stage for spring. While our plants take a break, the garden is still hard at work behind the scenes. Soil microbes keep chugging along, fall leaves begin turning into next seasons nutrients, and beneficial insects hunker down in the little pockets of habitat we leave for them. Winter is not the end of the gardening year it is the beginning of the next one.

Winter Soil Biology: Life Beneath the Surface

Even if your beds look bare, there is a lot happening underneath. Thanks to our mild winters and steady moisture, soil life stays active all season. Fungi keep breaking down organic matter, earthworms wiggle around just under the frost line, and beneficial bacteria thrive in the cool, damp soil. All of that quiet winter activity helps build structure, unlock nutrients, and prepare your beds for spring planting.

The best thing we can do for our soil right now is simply leave it alone. Try to avoid tilling, which disrupts that underground network of organisms. Instead, give your beds a gentle boost by adding compost, shredded leaves, or wood chips on top. Keeping the soil covered is one of the easiest ways to support the life happening below.

Leaf Gold: Turning Fall Leaves Into Spring Fertility

Instead of treating fall leaves like something to haul away, think of them as free fertilizer, because that is exactly what they are. In our climate, shredded leaves break down fairly quickly, especially with all the winter moisture we get. A layer of leaves protects the soil from heavy rain, reduces compaction, and gives your soil microbes plenty to munch on. You can make leaf mold by piling leaves in a corner and letting them sit, or you can skip the extra step and use them right in your beds as winter mulch. By spring, you will find a soft, crumbly material that helps your soil hold moisture and adds nutrients where your plants need them most.

Winter Habitat for Beneficial Insects

A lot of the insects we rely on, like native bees, ladybugs, lacewings, and predatory beetles, are overwintering right now. They tuck themselves into hollow stems, leaf piles, and clumps of ornamental grasses where they stay sheltered through cold snaps. One of the best things we can do for them is to leave a few messy areas in the garden. Keep seed heads, stems, and leaves in place until early spring. If you can, create a small wild zone where you will resist the urge to clean up. These overwintering spots help ensure we have pollinators and natural pest control ready to go when the weather warms up.

January/February Garden Checklist (Zone 8a)

Winter Tasks That Build a Strong Spring

Soil and Bed Prep

- Add a 1 to 2 inch layer of compost or shredded leaves to garden beds.
- Avoid tilling so winter microbes and worms can keep working undisturbed.
- Check for erosion after heavy rains and cover any bare soil as needed.

Leaf Mulch and Organic Matter

- Gather leftover fall leaves to top off mulch layers.
- Start a simple leaf mold pile for future soil enrichment.
- Use leaves to mulch garlic, onions, perennial herbs, and strawberries.



Continued on page 3.

Root Connection continued.

Plant and Habitat Care

- Leave dead stems, grasses, and seed heads standing for insects until March.
- Keep a dedicated wild corner for overwintering beneficial insects.
- Check perennials for frost heaving and gently press soil back around exposed roots.

Seeds and Starting Plants

- Winter sow native wildflowers and hardy ornamentals in outdoor containers.
- Inventory seeds and place orders early to avoid spring shortages.
- Start onions from seed indoors from late January through early February.



Happy Growing !

Community Garden Program (Text or call) 501-351-0184 - nlr.ar.gov/communitygardens

North Little Rock Board & Commission Meetings

Advertising & Promotion Commission

Quarterly-3rd Wednesday, 2:30 pm
600 Main Street, Suite 100

Airport Commission

3rd Thursday, 12:00 pm
City Services Bldg.
700 West 29th Street

Central Arkansas Water Commission

2nd Thursday, 2:00 pm
CAW Office
3rd Floor Board Room
221 East Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, AR

City Beautiful Commission

3rd Tuesday, 1:30 p.m.
Neighborhood Services Office
3427 North Magnolia Street

City Council

2nd & 4th Monday, 6:00 pm
NLR City Hall, 300 Main Street

Civil Service Commission

2nd Thursday, 6:00 pm
City Services, 700 W. 29th St.

Community Garden Manager

November 19, 5:00- 6:30 pm
North Heights Com. Ctr.
Contact: 501-791-8500

History Commission

2nd Tuesday, 5:30 pm
506 Main Street

Historic District Commission

2nd Thursday, 5:30 pm
506 Main Street

Housing Authority Board of Commissions

1st Monday, 5:00 pm
4901 Fairway Avenue, Suite A

Library Commission

3rd Monday, 5:30 pm
Laman Library, 28th & Orange Sts.

MEMS Board

4th Tuesday, 7:30 pm
MEMS Admin Bldg.,
1121 W. 7th, Little Rock

Parks & Recreation Commission

3rd Monday, 5:00 pm
2700 Willow Street

Planning Commission

2nd Tuesday, 4:00 pm
City Hall, 300 Main Street

Board of Zoning Adjustment

Last Thursday of each month,
1:30 p.m. / City Hall
300 Main Street

Residential Housing Facilities Board/Public Facilities Board

Meetings are held on an on-call basis.
For more information
call, 501-372-0110

Rock Region METRO

3rd Tuesday, 12 Noon
Rock Region METRO Bldg.
901 Maple Street

Senior Citizen Commission

Every 4th Monday, 3:00 p.m.
401 West Pershing

Thomas Cemetery Committee

3rd Monday, 6:15 pm
Levy Baptist Church,
3501 Pike Ave.

Tree Board

Meets Quarterly
300 Main Street

Waste Water Treatment Commission

2nd Tuesday, 12:15 p.m.
Waste Water Administration
Building, Conference Room
7400 Baucum Pike, Gate 1

Questions? Contact the Following

All dates are evening meetings unless otherwise noted.

Amboy Crime Watch

Every 1st Thursday, 6:30
Burns Park Hospitality House,
Military Drive & Joe Poch Road
Paula Lively, 501-350-7649
pkele@aol.com

Amboy Neighborhood Assn.

Every 1st Thursday, 6:30
Burns Park Hospitality House
Military Drive & Joe Poch Rd.
Samantha Floyd, 501-231-7240
Amboynanews@aol.com

Argenta Neighborhood Boosters

Call for meeting information
John Pflasterer, 501-553-8671
argentaboosters@yahoo.com

Baring Cross Neighborhood Assn.

Call for meeting information
ACTS Church
13th & Franklin Sts.
Harlan Hunter, 501-541-1591

Cobblestone Crime Watch

Call for meeting information
Suni Mc Clelland, 501-920-5330
sunimcclelland@gmail.com

Dark Hollow Community Development Corporation

Every 3rd Tuesday, 6:30
1400 Pine Street
Belinda Burney, 501-376-8144

Dixie Addition Community Development Corporation

Every 3rd Monday, 6:00
914 "H" Street
Lonnie Lucas, 501-952-6343

East Argenta Annex Neighborhood Watch Assn

Every 3rd Wednesday, 6:00
Sherman Park Rec. Center
624 North Beech Street
Rowney Torrance, 501-343-1960

Glenview Neighborhood Association Council

Every 1st Tuesday, 6:00
Glenview Rec. Ctr, 4800 E 19th St.
Linda Robinson, 501-945-8820

HOLT Neighborhood Assn.

Every 3rd Monday, 6:30
Gardner Memorial United Methodist
Joy Cameron, 501-374-9520

Keep North Little Rock Beautiful

Every 2nd Monday, 6:00
Randy Naylor, 501-350-8775 or
Lisa Smith, 501-791-2568;
KNLRB@aol.com
or www.Facebook.com/KNLRB

Meadow Park Neighborhood Assn.

Call for meeting information
Michael Davis, 501-442-0744
nlrhs2006@gmail.com
nerdgang@yahoo.com

Melrose Outreach

Every 3rd Wednesday, 7:00
Melrose Grocery, 807 Willow St.
Tammy Small, 501-541-3703
TammyRSmall@att.net

Military Heights Outreach Assn.

Every 2nd Thursday, 6:30
North Little Rock Community Center
Lorraine Chism, 501-519-5957
Karen Alford, 501-681-5233

NAACP

Every 1st Tuesday, 6:00
P.O. Box 5571
North Little Rock, AR 72119
Deborah F. Rhodes, Ph: 501-819-3890
nlrnaacp201@yahoo.com



Neighbors United for Levy

Every 1st Monday, 6:30
No. Heights Recreation, 4801 Allen
Jennifer Johansen, 501-772-0550

North Little Rock Landlords Assn

Every 3rd Monday, 7:00
NLR Community Ctr, 2700 Willow St.
Gail Blucker, 501-835-6679

Park Hill Neighborhood

Call for meeting information
John Gregan, 501-758-7159
johngregan@att.net

Ridge Road Village Neighborhood Watch

Every 4th Thursday, 5:00
4748 Ridge Rd, Phone : 501-771-7500

Rose City Neighborhood Assn.

No meeting in January & February
Every 3rd Monday, 6:00
Rose City Recreation Center
400 Rose Lane
Ken Abel, 501-791-8500, Lv message
Nlrrosecityneighborhood@gmail.com

Scenic Hill Neighborhood Assn.

Call for meeting information
Randy Naylor, 501-350-8775

Stone Links Neighborhood Assn.

Every 3rd Tuesday, 7:00
Stone Links Clubhouse
Marie Hollowell, 404-259-2957

Willow Beach Estates Property Owners Assn

2nd Tuesday in March & October, 6:30
Church at Willow Beach
John Santoro, 501-607-1755

**City of North Little Rock
City Hall 300 Main Street**

Elected Officials

Mayor Terry Hartwick 501-975-8601
City Clerk, Diane Whitbey 501-975-8617
City Attorney, Amy Fields 501-975-3755

Council Members

Ward 1

Debi Ross 501-753-0733
Nathan Hamilton 501-952-7679

Ward 2

Linda Robinson 501-945-8820
Nicole Hart 501-960-2461

Ward 3

Steve Baxter 501-804-0928
Ron Harris 501-758-2877

Ward 4

Scott Fowler 501-765-5868
Vince Insalaco III 501-951-0786

NLR Neighborhood News

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Fax: (501) 791-8516

Office Hours-

Monday-Friday

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Comments? We would like to hear from you. If you have neighborhood meetings or activities to be placed in the newsletter, please mail, fax, email or call the information to us. Are you reading someone else's copy? If you would like to be placed on our mailing list, contact our office.

North Little Rock Neighborhood News is a bi-monthly publication. Please note the following deadlines for information to be published:

Issue	Deadline Date
March/April	February 1
May/June	April 1
July/August	June 1
Sept/October	August 1
Nov./December	October 1

**New Year's Reminder --
Fireworks And/OR
Firearm Usage (discharge)
Is Illegal Within The
City Limits Of North Little Rock.**

Please Celebrate Responsibly.



**North Little Rock
Holiday Schedule**

**New Years Day
January 1**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 19**

**Presidents Day
February 16**

**Memorial Day
May 25**

**Juneteenth
June 19**

**Independence Day
July 4
(Observed on July 3)**

**Labor Day
September 7**

**Veteran's Day
November 11**

**Thanksgiving
November 26 & 27**

**Christmas Eve/Day
December 24 & 25**

**For additional sanitation
information, contact
NLR Sanitation
at 501-371-8340.**



**2026
Recycling Weeks**

January 11 & 25

February 8 & 22

March 8 & 22

April 5 & 19

May 3 , 17 & 31

June 14 & 28

July 12 & 26

August 9 & 23

September 6 & 20

October 4 & 18

November 1, 15 & 29

December 13 & 27

For Recycling Holiday

Pick Up Questions?

**Call Waste Management
at (501) 565-0191.**

Sandra Taylor Smith continued.

Corps structures in state parks, courthouses, commercial districts, cemeteries and residential neighborhoods across the state. The list includes the Mosaic Templars of America Building at 9th and Broadway in Little Rock, the Park Hill Fire Station & Water Company Complex on Magnolia Street in North Little Rock, the Lands End Plantation in Scott, the McRae Elementary School in Baring Cross, Arkansas Post Offices with WPA Murals, the Stiff Station Historic District in Little Rock, and two expansions of the Argenta Historic District in North Little Rock.

From 1975 to 1979 Sandra was the National Register Coordinator for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. She has been a Preservation Consultant since 1980 and was the Director of the North Little History Commission and the North Little Rock Historic District Commission from 1992 to 2025. Sandra was a founding board member of the Argenta Community Development Corporation and a member of the Main Street Argenta Design Committee from 1995 to 2002. She drafted the ordinance establishing the Argenta Local Ordinance Historic District which was approved by the City Council in 1993.

She wrote the design guidelines for that district. She also authored design guidelines for historic districts in Fort Smith, Helena, Van Buren, Rogers, Hot Springs, Texarkana, and Russellville, and El Dorado.

She has received the Quapaw Quarter Jimmy Strawn Preservation Leadership Award and the Parker Westbrook Lifetime Achievement Award. She has served on the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Alliance, been a tour guide for the Quapaw Quarter Association Tour of Homes, has Co-Chaired the QQA Christmas Potpourri Tour, was an Ex-Officio Board Member of the Argenta Leadership Council, was President of the Pulaski County Historical Society Board of Directors, and was a Board of Directors member of the Friends of the Old Mill.

If you look at historic preservation efforts across our entire state, you will find Sandra Taylor Smith's fingerprints on many of them. Her efforts not only started the rehabilitation of the Argenta neighborhood in North Little Rock, but has affected neighborhoods throughout Arkansas. We in North Little Rock are lucky enough to have experienced a preservation legend in our midst.

Please notify Neighborhood Services of any address change. Bulk rate mail will not be forwarded.



NLR Neighborhood News
Office of Neighborhood Services
P.O. Box 5757
North Little Rock, AR 72119-5757

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