
MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 22, Issue 4

April 2021



Moss Hill Village



Teri Gilbert and daughter admire Moss Hill Village

President's Message: Spring is Officially Here!

Now that we have had the vernal equinox and sprung forward on the clocks, we can really start getting ready for a burst of Spring with all its wonderful surprises of color, growth, and beauty. It is also a time of new birth for nature's animals, and of course the dreaded pests of the South – Mosquitoes, ticks, and no see-ums!! I've already started battling these pests due to a few warm days and a lot of water in low lying areas. I love the signs of early Spring – daffodils, tulips, redbuds, pears, plums and cherry trees; but it's also a great time to identify some of the less desirables – the Callery Pear – unfortunately, I have found a couple of those on the farm as well, but a sharp chainsaw and a container of dyed herbicide hopefully have solved that issue.

I cannot express how great it was to see everyone at the March meeting. Several have completed the vaccination schedule; others are getting started or already one shot in – so maybe things will start getting a bit more back to normal. For now, we are planning to meet again outside under the pavilion for April (14th at noon), still using normal precautions of distance, masks, and no food lines – so bring your chair, wear a mask, bring your own lunch if desired and come join us. Hope to see everyone again and even those that have not been in a while!!

Plant sales are just around the corner. So, plan to attend those as well, Tree Amigos will be at Cane Creek on the 10th, the Greenhouse crew will also be open for sales as well. Longleaf will have their sales on Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24. All these sales have native plants as well as some unique finds – please come out and show your support; you're going to buy plants anyway so why not support our local causes!!

Keep in mind this month would have been our State Conference, but it was canceled due to unexpected issues with COVID. The State Conference business meeting and elections will still be held just as they would have been at our Conference on April 21 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. I will get the information out to everyone and everyone is invited to attend and cast your votes just as if we were at the actual Conference.

See y'all at the Creek!

MG Calendar

- MG Board Meeting, April 14, 10:45 a.m., CCCG clubhouse
- MG Business Meeting, April 14, noon, under the CCCG pavilion
- Sprouts Deadline, April 23, 2021
- Lunch & Learn, April 28, noon, CCCG
- "Butterflies," with Sherry Blanton, Alabama Smart Yards, April 28, 1 p.m. via Zoom



In This Issue

President's Message	1
My Favorite Plant	2
MG Happenings	3
Recipe of the Month	2

My Favorite Plant from Jerry Gilbert

"My favorite plant is the good old Southern Rabbiteye Blueberry. Why? The reasons are many, including:

- They are beautiful in all seasons, especially their red foliage in the fall and much of the winter
- Their fruit can be used in many, many ways (fresh, cobblers, muffins, smoothies/slushes, in either hot or cold cereal, leathers, jams and jellies, in pancakes, and many more)
- They are very easy to preserve via freezing
- Not only are they good, but they are good for you, as they are very high in antioxidants
- They are easy to grow and to maintain, having few pests and only moderate nutritional requirements and they are well suited for our naturally acidic soils in the Southeastern region --The berries are easy to pick (no thorns, very little bending down, ripeness is easy to identify, etc.)
- They are very attractive to pollinators. (Jerry is a beekeeper)

I could go on and on about my favorite plant, but space will not allow it, so let me urge you to try a few blueberry bushes (more than one variety is highly recommended for pollination purposes) either in a neat row or scattered around the yard as ornamentals. Either way, you'll be glad you did."



Blueberries getting ripe

Who is April's Mystery Gardener?

Landon Rivers, Lyn Webb, and Skeeter Sims identified our March Mystery Gardener, Teri Gilbert.

Can you recognize our April Mystery Gardener? Please let Sherry know if you can.

"I was born in Sylacauga, Alabama. My growing up years were in southern Calhoun County and adult years have been in Jacksonville.

The enjoyment of my gardening is in the morning while having my coffee, sitting on my deck. The early morning light shining on blooms is my favorite time.

Other hobbies are reading and genealogy. Genealogy research took me to Northern Ireland.

My work before retirement was in law enforcement, support staff. There was no extensive traveling associated with my work. I sat for 32 years at the same desk. I live in Jacksonville."

Garden Inspiration

"The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over never weeded a garden."
Ray D. Everson



Linda Schiff admires a Dwarf Cherry at CCCG

Cane Creek Update

- Cane Creek grounds are looking great, but mowing and weed eating time is upon us. We will need ALL HANDS to help make the grounds safe and prepared for County Schools if Earth Days are on. So, look for updates in the weekly emails from Linda McDaniel.

- The Cane Creek Crew has been hard at work accomplishing our goals for 2021. We will have 2 major projects this month -- sanding, finishing and painting both Coke Shed and Equipment Shed before hot weather sets in for good!!

- Be sure to check out all the Garden's Landscape beds

books inside classroom on the book shelf. It's a great addition to our home grounds and provides insight to every plant planted in each individual bed. We are also working to get plenty of tiles labeled to mark the plants as well. This will be a tremendous help in making our grounds more educational for all that visit.



Recipe of the Month: Paula Barnett-Ellis

Cranberry Grapefruit Salad

Ingredients:

1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1/4 cold water
1/2 cup hot water
1 can jellied cranberry sauce
1 can red grapefruit
pecan halves

Directions:

Soak 1 envelope plain gelatin in cold water for 5 minutes. Dissolve in hot water. Crush cranberry sauce with fork in dish. Add gelatin mixture and mix well. Arrange grapefruit sections in gelatin. Top with pecan halves.

Source: John Ellis' Grandmother, Evelyn Deal Brown

Gardening Giggle

"Autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn, drought follows planting."

MG Happenings by Sherry Blanton

Congratulations to the MGs receiving stars, badges and pins: Bronze Stars -- Tom Gilbert, Tim Kaylor, Landon Rivers, Mary Rose, Elaine Williams, Dana Williams, Kevin Qualls, and Patricia Womack: Silver Stars -- Joan Alexander and Patsy Hudgins. A Gold Badge went to Linda Gunnoe. Carolyn Patton received her Ruby Pin. Not pictured here were Patricia Womack, Kevin Qualls and Landon Rivers.

For questions about hours etc., please contact Billy McDaniel, our hours chairman.

Please take the time to visit the Moss Hill Village on the CCCG grounds. The Cane Creek Volunteer Crew designed a charming place using the moss already covering on the hill as a backdrop.

Plant Sales Times: April 10, Tree Amigos and Sherron Pritchett Greenhouse: CCCG from 8 a.m. to 12 noon
Longleaf Botanical Gardens: April 23: 8-5 pm. April 24: 8 a.m. to noon.

Thank you to Linda McDaniel for creating a beautiful comprehensive reference of the plants at Cane Creek.

The Cane Creek Volunteer Crew will start tours of Cane Creek the third Wednesday of each month from ten until noon. There will be tours in July, August, September. There will be a large group in June; that day is not available for touring. Members of the Volunteer Crew will be on site each Wednesday as hosts. Tours are open to the public, clubs, etc. Please spread the word.

Get involved in "Grow More Give More," a wonderful Alabama Master Gardeners Association program where MGs share their crops with other others lacking access to vegetables and fruit. Information is on the state website.

I invite you to stroll through my spring garden, virtually, of course, on April 13 at 2 p.m. sponsored by the Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County. The presentation is streamed on Facebook Live ([facebook.com/publiclibrary.cc/live](https://www.facebook.com/publiclibrary.cc/live)) or on YouTube ([youtube.com/publibann](https://www.youtube.com/publibann))



Ruby Pin recipient Carolyn Patton

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Linda Gunnoe received her Gold Badge



Patsy Hudgins was a Silver Star recipient, along with Joan Alexander (not pictured)

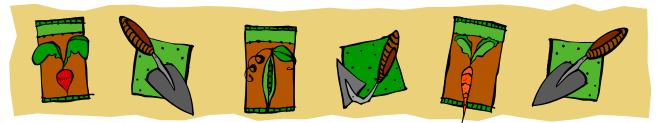


Bronze star recipients

Spring is Bustin' Out All Over

April is a buffet of wonderful plants. It is hard to choose a favorite among the old standbys, the evergreen azaleas and the dogwoods which make Spring in Alabama unforgettable. If I were actually forced to pick, my selection would be the native azalea. This highly fragrant deciduous woody ornamental comes in an enormous variety of colors.

In addition to being gorgeous, this plant is a native, which means it adjusts to our conditions well. Remember to keep it watered during drought conditions especially until it is settled in.



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