

MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 23, Issue 2

February 2022



The CCCG Butterfly Garden is an oasis for pollinators of all kinds

MG Calendar

- MG Board Meeting, February 9, 10:45 a.m., Cane Creek Community Gardens
- MG Business Meeting, February 9, 12:00 p.m., Cane Creek Community Gardens. Lunch: TBD and program
- Sprouts Deadline, February 21

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President's Message: Reflecting on Life

Well, so far 2022 hasn't impressed me. Vaccinate, don't; boost, don't; mask, don't; gather, don't; eat – well I'm gonna eat. But not much has changed, and I am growing very weary of all the dos and don'ts. This year I'll be 60 and every morning that I see a sunrise and can get out of bed should be a blessing! I look out into the back pasture and see blue birds lined up on the fence, cardinals in the trees, goats at the gate begging, chickens doing their foraging and ducks being ducks; and I think what a great life this is... maybe not turning on the TV and watching the news is the way to go?

So far in January, we have lost a lot of famous folks, and for many of us some not so famous but influential in our lives, nonetheless. Maybe it's the virus, maybe it's the condition of this new world, maybe it's just old age or maybe it's just that time of life where things and age is catching up with me. But there is still a lot of life to be lived and I recently read this somewhere (I'm reading a lot more this year too!), and I think it's a pretty good reflection on how I see things lately. So I hope you enjoy this story as much as I have: On the first day, God created the dog and said, "Sit all day on the porch and bark at everyone who walks or comes by, and I'll give you 20 years of life." The dog says, "That's a lot of barking and sitting, how about just 10 years and I'll give you 10 back?" God says, "Fine, it's a deal." On the second day, God created the monkey and said, "Entertain folks with your crazy antics and make them laugh and I'll give you 20 years of life." The monkey says, "That's a lot of silliness and activity, how about the same deal as the dog?" God says, "Fine, it's a deal." On the third day, God created the cow and said, "You must go into the fields every day, with the farmer and sweat/work in the sun and heat, have calves, provide milk and food to support the farmer's family and I'll give you a long 60-year life!" The cow says, "That's a long tough life with a lot of work, how about 20 years and I'll give you back 40!" God says, "Fine, it's a deal." On the fourth day, God created man and says, "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy life and I'll give you a 20-year life!" Man says, "That's not very long to live, how about that 20 plus the 40 the cow gave back, the 10 the monkey gave and the 10 the dog gave back too? That would be 80 years, okay?" God says, "Fine, it's a deal, you have 80 years!"

That's why for the first 20 years, we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves; then for the next 40 years, we work hard and slave to support our families; for the next 10 years we do monkey tricks to entertain our grand kids; and for the last 10 years we sit on the porch and bark at everyone that passes by!

As for me, I would really prefer my dog's life, get up and out to potty, served breakfast and then on the nice soft couch for morning nap until 11; then out to potty and move to sunspot on the floor for afternoon nap until about 3 pm; get up stretch and act like I'm ready to play for about 15 minutes, then outside to bark at (not chase) a squirrel, stretch again and look at servant for supper service; aggravate humans while they try to eat then when they are done sit by my cookie jar for bedtime snack and go to bed by 8 pm – now that's a life I could maybe get used to!!

New intern class has started. Our next meeting will be 9 February at noon at Cane Creek, watch weekly emails for more information. Please get your addresses, phone numbers, and emails updated online and as quickly as possible for the upcoming directory.

See y'all at the Creek!

Let's Be Social

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/CalhounMGs>

Twitter:

<https://www.twitter.com/CalhounMGs>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/ccmgsala>

Garden Humor

There can be lots of humor in gardening. Just depends on our point of view!

"You know you're a gardener when you're happy to devote three months of your life growing tomatoes to save \$1.27."

~Unknown

Cane Creek Plant of the Month: Judy Shew

Pyracantha - this beauty is located in the Wildlife/4H Bed at Cane Creek. This evergreen with bright red berries is a joy to see at this time of year when there is not much color in the gardens. Also known as Scarlet Firethorn, this shrub does have needle-like thorns, so caution is needed when getting near or if pruning. Birds enjoy the berries which are not poisonous and are technically edible to humans but are considered unpalatable when raw but can be made into jams or jellies.



Recipe of the Month

"Our White Chicken Chili is not only healthier than other versions, but quicker and easier too! Have dinner on the table in a half hour and enjoy leftovers again the next day."

-Katie Funderburk, Alabama Extension nutrition specialist, and registered dietitian

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- one onion, diced
- three cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups cooked chicken, shredded
- two cans navy beans, 15 ounces, rinsed and drained
- one package frozen corn, 16 ounces
- one can green chilies, 4 ounces
- 2 teaspoons cumin
- ½ teaspoon oregano
- 2 cups chicken broth
- salt and pepper, to taste
- one lime, cut into wedges
- cilantro (optional)

Pro Tips

Canned vegetables are great, but they can be full of salt. Remember when using to rinse canned vegetables before using. Also, try roasting or baking chicken instead of frying for a healthier choice.

Directions

Heat the olive oil, onion and garlic for five minutes in a large pot over medium heat. Add all the ingredients except for the lime and cilantro, then cook for 30 minutes.

When finished, top with a squeeze of lime juice and cilantro. Then, enjoy!

Want to learn more? Step by step instructions for the White Chicken Chili recipe, as well as an instructional video, are available at LiveWellAlabama.com.

Gardening Inspiration

"Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them." – A.A. Milne

Cane Creek Update from Skeeter Sims

- We return to working the grounds at Cane Creek this month. Every Tuesday 9:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m. weather permitting, we will be cleaning and clearing up all landscaped areas and refreshing with mulch. Pruning back remaining knockout roses and clearing dead limbs from fence line and in areas where mowers and tractor must maneuver,

- The intern class has started and once they begin getting hours, we may modify the work schedule to support them getting their hours in a timely fashion and also to help us get the gardens ready for Spring!!

Watch weekly emails for updates and possible changes/opportunities for volunteer hours across all areas.

Tree Amigos Update from Ellen Cannon

The Tree Amigos volunteers have finished planning the education, greenhouse work, and great trips for 2022. If you would like to volunteer and help us at Coosa Valley Youth Services, just contact Hayes Jackson. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesdays at 8:00 a.m. Due to the outbreak of Covid, we did not meet in January.



The ornamental cherry on the grounds of CCCG has been a gorgeous addition.

Longleaf Botanical Gardens Update from Patricia Patty

The Green Team continues to propagate plants inside the greenhouse, while a few hardy souls maintain and clean up the color beds around the buildings. Orders have been placed for vegetable seeds to grow for our

spring sales. We are still in need of a tractor driver to haul mulch. We welcome anyone who has an interest in working with plants or grounds.

The LBG Education Committee is planning our Spring Symposium for March 17, and has excellent speakers lined up. There will be a speaker on growing mushrooms for anyone who has ever thought about doing this. Mark your calendars now.



Master Gardener Happenings from Sherry Blanton

After more thirty years of service for Paula, our editor, and me together, we have decided it was time to retire and pass the baton to other Master Gardeners. Our final edition will be in March. We look forward to reading Sprouts from the next generation of volunteers. Patricia Patty was the prior editor and started the newsletter and named it "Sprouts."

Valentine's Day is February 14th; present your love with a living plant, a gift to last for years.

Covid is taking a toll on our community. Hope everyone is well.

We will miss Emily Richardson, who has settled with her spouse closer to family. We wish her much happiness with her children.

Plant sales are being planned; events are happening at Longleaf Botanical Gardens and Lunch and Learn is not far away. Paula and I handle our MG social media content: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We keep our pages updated; we welcome your photos or information.

Please join me at the Public Library of Anniston Calhoun County on Tuesday, February 1st, at 2 p.m. for a program on using white flowers in the garden. White flowers glow in our landscapes. The program is free; masks are not required but the room is large enough for proper social distancing. There are snacks. I have had wonderful support from our Master Gardener Association and I surely am grateful.

On Wednesday, February 23rd, I will be doing a program on creating a moonlight garden for Alabama Smart Yards—Alabama Extension System at 1 p.m. and via Zoom. Watch their FB page for the link. The

program is aimed at helping gardeners extend the time they have to enjoy their gardens after daylight hours.

I appreciate Dani Carroll's allowing me to participate in Alabama Smart Yards, a great experience for our MGs over the state and for me.

Our February 9th, the monthly MG program will be presented by Tim Kaylor and will be "Rising Star Gardener" Mentor Program. We wish the new intern class a grand experience and look forward to having them in our Association.

Alabama Butterfly Atlas

To learn more about butterflies, check out this site:

Alabama Butterfly Atlas:

<https://alabama.butterflyatlas.usf.edu/>

Atlas News & Announcements

MONARCH BUTTERFLY HABITAT PROGRAM: A new program has become available in Alabama to help landowners develop Monarch butterfly habitat. The USDA's National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) offers technical and financial assistance to help landowners manage for monarch habitat on farms, ranches and forests. This assistance helps producers plan, plant and implement. Information about the overall monarch program is available here:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/?cid=nrscseprd402207> To find county NRCS offices in Alabama:

<https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>



The Lady Banks rose on the front gate greeted our guests at CCCG last spring.



The Moss Village is growing. Thank you to the CCCG crew for adding this feature to the grounds.



We stayed safe with our masks on (Sarah Sloan) meeting under our wonderful pavilion

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