

MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 21, Issue 3

March 2020



New inhabitant at the 4H wildlife room, created by Billy McDaniel

President's Message

Well, we've had some rain and now it's officially meteorological Spring!!! Time to get busy in the garden...there's so much to accomplish before planting. I try to till the garden a couple of times around those last couple of freezes to expose any pests/eggs/larva to the freeze and kill them off before they become problems in the garden. It's also that time to aerate, lime, and spread seed in the pastures/lawn for your forages/grasses (cooler season grasses). It's a very busy month on the farm and with all that rain in February, there's even more things to do.

Don't forget to spring forward on the 8th and use that day to change out your smoke detector batteries as well. And take a stroll on the 9th at night to observe the Worm Moon as it's expected to be bigger and brighter this close to the equinox. I'm tracking a new old farmer's saying this year – "Thunder in February, predicts the last frost in April." Well, for now it's looking like April 13th based on that saying and the Old Farmer's Almanac is still calling for April 2nd in our area as the last frost date. BUT as for me, I'll be planting seeds 6-10 April and transplants won't go into the garden until after Tax Day, probably the 17th – just to be safe!!

Spring is a season of change to our world and in many cases, it is dramatic change. This is something we all observe every year but so many of us are resistant to change in our own lives. Statistically, it has been found that when given a choice to make changes in our lives versus death -- ironically or crazily, we typically choose death!! Are we that set in our ways or that fearful of change? The doctors tell us after major life-threatening events that we need to make some changes in our lifestyles to continue to live a long and healthy life, but 93% of us will choose not to make those changes and basically choose an early death. That's not even gambling, it's just sealing our fates. The same is true for any healthy organization as well.

We have a great intern class and it is incumbent upon the "old" Master Gardeners to teach and show the way. Mentor an intern in any area that you have experience serving our Association - teach them about coordinating programs, recording hours, serving on the Board, developing landscape plans, planting vegetable gardens, planting flower beds, grafting, rooting and propagating rare plants, and so much more. Now is the time to invest in the future of our Association and it is up to all of us to change our ways and make the future viable.

See Y'all at the Creek!

MG Calendar

- **"The Beauty of Japanese Maples,"** Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County, 2 p.m., March 3, Sherry Blanton
- **MG Board Meeting**, 10:45 a.m., March 11, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- **MG Business Meeting**, 12 p.m., March 11, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- **Long Leaf Botanical Gardens 4th Annual Spring Symposium**, March 19th 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Contact the Anniston Museum to register.
- **Sprouts Deadline**, March 25, 2020

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Garden Inspiration

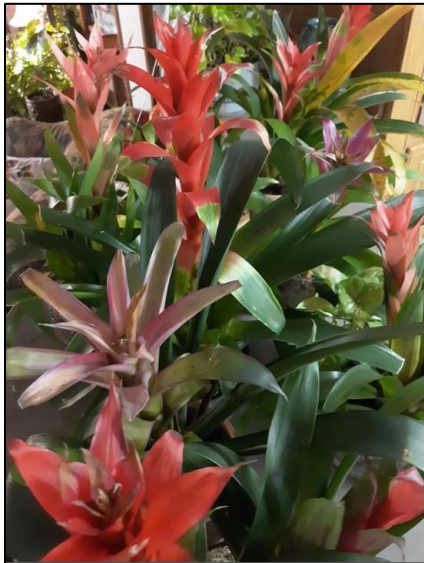
"Garden as though you will live forever."
— William Kent

Plant of the Month from Lyn Webb

Bromeliads make wonderful houseplants because they are colorful even after they have finished blooming. Drain and replace water in their natural cups weekly. Fertilize monthly with half strength water soluble houseplant food.

Continue care as the mother plant dies until the new plants at her base are one third of her size.

Repot these new plants and enjoy.



Bromeliads photo by Lyn Webb

MG Happenings

On Wednesday March 11, Retired JSU Professor and Calhoun County Master Gardener Jerry Gilbert will talk about bees. Jerry is a beekeeper and member of the local beekeepers association. We will be having lunch with the intern class and we will share soup and sides. Interns will provide drinks and desserts. Please remember to have your food ready to serve at 11:50, as we will start lunch at noon.

Lunch and Learn begins on April 22 with Dr. David West and a program about trees. Please invite your friends to bring a lunch and learn with us.

Thank you to Linda McDaniel for handling our weekly updates. Please send her any information to use by Friday for the next week.

Please contact Carolyn Patton if you did not receive your stars at the February meeting. Her contact information is in the directory.

If you did not pick up your directory, please come to the meeting and get your copy from our secretary Judy Shew. We do not mail them.

Contribute Photos to Brag Book

Summer Social July 8th regular meeting -- The program committee is sponsoring a summer social for our July meeting. There will be trivia contests to test our gardening know-how (with prizes), watermelon, and ice cream treats. We have also planned a "Brag Book" PowerPoint. Please send via e-mail a picture of something in your garden you are proud of (one flower, a pond, a flower bed, a container garden, or a special tree or shrub). Everybody has a photo or two on their phone. Please send your photos to Sherry. Celebrate your garden; start taking pictures now and join in the fun. Photos must be e-mailed in a jpg format. (Please do not text them.) Please put "photos" in the subject line. We do not often get to visit each other's gardens; this is an ideal way to share. Photos from any season are welcome. We need the photos by the end of May to give Janet time to prepare the power point. Thank you, Janet, for offering to compose the PowerPoint. We hope to see something from everyone's garden!

Sherry Blanton

Cane Creek Update from Skeeter Sims

- We have accomplished so much already this year, thanks to a dedicated crew and a great group of interns!! We will be practicing care and maintenance classroom instruction on the grounds following the March Meeting. Interns will need to bring pruners/clippers to prune knockout roses and we will pair interns up with a MG to ensure you get the practical skills you were taught in class.

- We have several special projects coming up this month and next...all are weather dependent so watch for emails announcing the dates. We will need ALL HANDS to help on these projects so it would be good to see other MGs invest in our home grounds and work alongside the interns to invest in the future of our Association.

- We will be working to complete the Sweet Tea Garden and Native Plant beds. We will be scraping and sanding sections of the Coke Williams shed and the Equipment shed for repainting. We also will be caulking, sealing and repairing sections of the Equipment Shed. Plus, we will be working to remove a lot of debris, the organic boxes, and several large borders of railroad ties/telephone poles to reinforce and protect our landscaped beds.

March Recipe of the Month

Feta-Black Bean Salad

Emily Richardson says this dish is a hit at all family functions.

Toss together black beans, red onion, fresh mint and more to make a tasty Feta-Black Bean Salad! You'll love using this black bean salad as a side dish.

Ingredients:

2 cans (15 oz. each) black beans, drained, rinsed
1/2 cup chopped red onion
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh mint
1 pkg. (4 oz.) crumbled Feta cheese with garlic & herb
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper

Directions:

Mix all ingredients in large bowl. Cover.
Refrigerate several hours or until chilled
Prepare as directed, substituting fresh basil for the mint.
From My Food and Family from Kraft Heinz

Gardening Hint

We may have some warm days in March and be tempted to put out some lovely summer color. The last official frost date is April 15. However, at that time, neither the ground nor the air will be good for tender annuals. May 1st seems a better time to add summer color.

Mark Your Calendar



- **AMGA 2020 Conference registration** is now available. Visit alabamamg.org. Just click on the 2020 Conference – Mobile, AL, link on the home page to be taken to the insert and the Planet Reg link.
- **Long Leaf Botanical Gardens 4th Annual Spring Symposium**, March 19th 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Contact the Anniston Museum to register.
- **4-H Tree Amigos Plant Sale**: Saturday, April 11, 8 a.m. - noon, Cane Creek Community Gardens.
- **Longleaf Botanical Gardens Plant Sale**: April 23-25 (Check website and Facebook for times)
- **Earth Day Activities at Cane Creek Gardens**: April 20-24. This is a two-day event on Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday and Thursday are weather backup days. Volunteers are needed.

MG Mystery Gardener

Last month's Mystery Gardener was Jennifer Gann. Dick Pritchett and Skeeter Sims identified her.

Can you guess who this month's Mystery Gardener is? This gardener hails from Anniston.

This MG enjoys working with houseplants and has 150 plants.

Our mystery gardener likes to travel, read, and spend time with grandchildren.

This gardener is retired from USPS.

Our gardener lives in Ohatchee.

Let me know if you recognize this person.

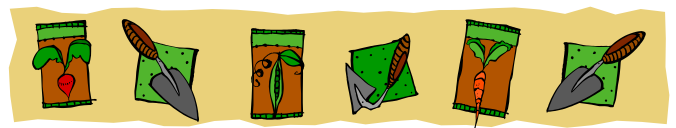
Sherry



Jimmy, Myra, and Judy received stars at the February MG meeting



Ruth Sarro and Lyn Webb are the facilitators for the 2020 intern class.





Dr. Charles Mitchell talks about our state flower, the camellia

the Creepy Crawly Things Around Your House.” Dealing with unwelcome visitors.

August 26th: David Doggett, Jefferson County Master Gardener: “Go Wild with Hydrangeas–Growing Smooth Hydrangeas.” So many to plant, so little time. David will share information about another hydrangea to add to our gardens.



Another Cane Creek beauty



Janet Evans teaching plant nomenclature to the intern class



Cane Creek daffodils

Lunch and Learn

A series of free gardening programs sponsored by Calhoun County Master Gardeners & Calhoun County Commission. Held the 4th Wednesday of each month at the Cane Creek Community Garden at McClellan, 77 Justice Avenue. Noon to -1p.m. Bring your own lunch!

April 22nd: Dr. David West, Alabama Extension: “Knowing our Trees.” Learn all about the selection and care of our trees.

May 27th: Stephen Faughn, Alabama Extension: “Wildlife in our Gardens.” Learn to recognize the good guys from the bad guys. Children are welcome.

June 24th: Dr. Todd Steury, Auburn University: “Bears!” Dr. Steury has done extensive research on the bear population and will share that information with us.

July 22nd: Dani Carroll, Alabama Extension: “Managing

Calhoun County Master Gardener Officers

President:	Skeeter Sims
Vice President:	Linda Wakefield
Secretary:	Judy Shew
Treasurer:	Myra Gann
Members-at-Large:	Gary Lawson, Linda McDaniel

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