

# MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 22, Issue 3

March 2021



Masked Master Gardener, Janice Cain, helps out at the Jacksonville Arbor Day tree giveaway

## President's Message: Spring is Here?

March 1st is official meteorological first day of Spring!! Yeah right. Don't get too overzealous. I'm tilling up my gardens, turning under leaf mulch and cover crops, tarping certain areas to heat up soil quickly; but I'm not jumping the gun and planting a bunch of things for final hard freezes/frost to kill or to be early feed for deer before everything else greens up!! I have already planned my garden layouts, my planting windows and sown starter seeds in the greenhouse for spring transplants; but that's enough for now. Sure, like many of you, I have bent down corners in seed catalogs, ordered the high interest seeds, and started watching big box stores for that first round of vegetable transplants that (by the way) go on sale the week prior to Easter just in case weather works out for us all this year!!

Daffodils are in bloom all over the farm. I still have some of my February work to get done because it's been so wet; but there's still time (maybe) to get things ready for grass in the fields, wildflower patches for pollinators, blackberries cut back, and trails cleaned for the upcoming year. We have lots of trees down after this wet and windy winter but some of those will have to stay where they are because it is just too hard to get equipment in and out safely.

So, what is happening for March, well we may have a meeting, but it will all be dependent on weather and pandemic precautions. I know that our scheduled meeting date is in the middle of the second-round week for most of our county – Oxford, Anniston and then Jacksonville – will all have the second-round clinics open during our meeting week. I may be able to find us a large area for meeting inside; but as of writing this, I am still awaiting word on approval. It's a large gym and we could spread out more than the standard 6 feet and its current capacity for COVID is 125, so it's more than adequate for size and safety. Keep your eyes on the weekly email for updates and to see if, when, and where we might or might not be meeting for March.

Just a quick reminder to make sure you start getting your volunteer hours in where you can and as early as you can because no one knows how the rest of this year will develop. I have been approached by a Middle School Special Needs teacher about creating a Sensory Garden for her students (touch/smell, herbs for cooking, etc). It would be planned, sponsored, and initiated by Master Gardeners working alongside the students but they would maintain it after initial plantings. Let me know if you are interested in helping with plants, students, or development. Greenhouse crew is working Mondays at Cane Creek and is open for others to volunteer to water during the rest of the week as temperatures start to rise. Cane Creek Crew, as always, is working most every Tuesday (0900-1230) outside, socially distanced, throughout the grounds. We do take a break during workdays but there is always work to be done on our home site. Thanks for all y'all do for Calhoun County and our MG community!!

## MG Calendar

- MG Board Meeting, TBD.
- MG Business Meeting, TBD
- Sprouts Deadline, March 23, 2021

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## My Favorite Plant from Linda Kaylor

"My favorite plant is the Christmas Cactus. I have two - one that I got from my parents' house when they passed away and the other is one they sent to me on my 50th birthday."



Linda Kaylor's cactus plant in bloom at Thanksgiving/Christmas time

## What is Blooming in March?

Crocus have been in bloom for a bit now. This tiny bulb produces ethereal small flowers in a variety of colors. Their blooms are surrounded by small grasslike leaves that may appear before the flower, while the flower is blooming, even when the flower has stopped blooming. Plant crocus in late fall after the first frost for bloom in winter. They perform best in full to part sun.

They look beautiful massed; they, however, are lovely in rock gardens or in crevices.

Crocus signal that spring may not be far away; the sight of those grass-like crocus leaves and cheerful blooms is a joy to the gardener.

The squirrels and the chipmunks like crocus as much as the gardener does. Some gardeners get frustrated as the bulbs disappear almost immediately after planting. Thus, the best plan is to plant a lot of them, some for the squirrels and some for the gardener.



Blooming Crocus

## Who is March's Mystery Gardener?

Landon Rivers was February's Mystery Gardener. Teri Gilbert, Elaine Williams, Lavon Brown, Everette Studdard, and Skeeter Sims identified her.

March's Mystery Gardener. Please let Sherry know if you can identify this gardener.

"My childhood years were spent in Wisconsin. Later I joined the military, where I worked as a fitness specialist, and raised my son and daughter in Washington and Oregon.

There are many fun aspects to gardening which I enjoy, one of which is not pulling weeds! I very much enjoy growing plants that attract butterflies and other pollinators. My favorite flower is lavender.

My number one hobby is traveling. I love seeking adventure and experiencing other cultures. Fortunately, I have been able to do that to a great extent. Other hobbies include baking, listening to music, and painting. I'm currently working on a wall mural in my basement craft studio.

Prior to marrying my husband and moving with him to Sarajevo, I worked in Atlanta for AC Nielsen, where I gathered and analyzed marketing data.

I now live in Anniston in a Tudor house with my husband and our little maltipoo."

## Garden Inspiration

"Gardening simply does not allow one to be mentally old, because too many hopes and dreams are yet to be realized." Allan Armitage



## Recipe of the month from Skeeter Sims

### BRUNSWICK STEW

serves 4-6 as main course

4 slices of bacon  
1 large yellow onion  
1 rotisserie chicken (2.5 lbs) meat removed and chopped (about 5 cups)  
1 can (28 oz) diced tomatoes  
1 can (16 oz) creamed corn (I use frozen because we like that brand)  
1 package (10 oz) frozen lima beans (fordhook limas are best)  
1 cup chicken broth  
1/2 cup barbeque sauce  
1 Tablespoon distilled white vinegar (cuts the sweetness of BBQ sauce)  
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce (I tend to use more because we like the flavor)  
black pepper to taste or just wait and let folks add at table.

1. In large saucepan or stock pot, cook bacon over med/high heat until almost crisp (about 5 minutes); add chopped onion to sauté. Cook until softened (about 5 minutes).

2. Add chicken, tomatoes, corn, limas, broth, BBQ sauce, vinegar, Worcestershire, all to large pot and bring to boil then reduce to simmer and cover cooking until beans are tender (5-8 minutes).

Now I add potatoes, chopped/sliced to extend the recipe. I also add a handful or so of chopped okra (just because I'm from the South!) You can drain cans to make thicker or leave the juices to make it thinner. If you are going to simmer all day in crock pot, like I do, then extra liquid isn't a bad thing!!

Don't forget to have some hot sauce on the table for folks who like it less sweet and with more of a kick!!

If you have a recipe to share, please submit it to Sherry.

### Gardening Giggle

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

## MG Happenings by Sherry Blanton

Important information regarding service hours (from President of AMGA via our president Skeeter Sims): “Reminder for everyone to stay active MG (including lifetime awards); you must work/volunteer for 25 approved hours, plus 10 CEUs.”

The webinars and Facebook videos are available for CEU credit but at this point AMGA has not waived the 25 active volunteer hours for 2021. Record these by title and source using appropriate hour conversions.

The date for submitting items for Sprouts is the 23rd of the month prior to publication instead of the 25th. Sprouts is submitted for publication to the Extension Office on or about the last day of the month. Linda McDaniel distributes it via e-mail as soon as it is completed; thus, you may receive your e-mail before your printed copy.

If you are interested in plant shopping at Longleaf Botanical Gardens, the Gardens are normally open on Wednesday afternoons (weather permitting); however, you must call ahead to the Anniston Museum to set up an appointment with Hayes for a shopping spree.

Please join me on March 2 at 2 p.m. for a virtual program on native wildflowers sponsored by the Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County. The presentation is streamed on Facebook Live ([facebook.com/publiclibrary.cc/live](https://facebook.com/publiclibrary.cc/live)) or on YouTube ([youtube.com/publibann](https://youtube.com/publibann))

## Winter Bloomers



Winter bloomer: ornamental quince



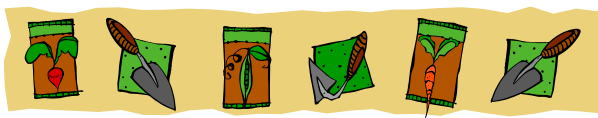
Winter bloomer: daphne odora



Japanese Maple frosted with snow



Cheerful Pansies



*New social media accounts!*

- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/ccmgsala/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CalhounMGs>

Calhoun County Master Gardeners




Follow us on Facebook, at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/CalhounMGs>

### Cane Creek Update

- Cane Creek Crew is working every Tuesday 0900-1230. For March we will be refreshing all landscaped beds with mulch. After we weed, clean, and prepare for the upcoming growing season. All are welcome -- we still practice social distancing even while outside and the more folks we have, the more we can get done!!

- Check out the new Moss Hill Village. It is a really nice place to sit in the shade and relax while taking it all in!! The beauty of this hillside area is remarkable if you just take the time to see it.

- We have two major projects planned for early Spring. Both Coke Shed and Equipment shed need some work - sanding, caulking, sealing, and painting. Both these projects will be weather dependent, and we'll send out an ALL HANDS call when we see the chance to get them done.

#### **Calhoun County Master Gardener Officers**

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

#### **Sprouts is published by:**

#### **Master Gardeners of Calhoun County**

Editor:	Paula Barnett-Ellis
Copyeditor/Proofreader:	Sherry Blanton
Advisor:	Dr. David H. West, County Extension Coordinator
Advisor:	Mr. Hayes Jackson, Urban Regional Extension Agent
Advisor:	Ms. Dani Carroll, Regional Extension Agent