
MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 20, Issue 2

February 2019



Cedar Waxwings in Pyracantha by Doris Baucom

MG Calendar

- All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar, February 1, 1-2 p.m.
- "For the Love of a Lily," February 5, Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County, 2-3 p.m. Speaker: Sherry Blanton.
- MG Board Meeting, 10:45 a.m., February 13, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- MG Business Meeting, 12 p.m., February 13, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- Sprouts Deadline, February 25, 2019

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Message from the President By Dick Pritchett

I would like to thank each and every Master Gardener member for what you do to improve our CCMG program. Sometimes we forget to say, "Thank you", or give a pat on the back to our fellow Master Gardeners! It is great that we have a variety of things to do to earn our volunteer hours each year. No matter what you contribute, I appreciate your efforts. I have especially enjoyed our own members participating in our monthly meetings and "Lunch and Learn" programs. Recently, Emily, Skeeter and Billy did our programs and they were a big hit! Jim and Linda will have our program on February 13. What a joy to showcase our own talents. Sherry Blanton does an entire series of programs for the Anniston Library. It takes many hours of preparation for a 30-minute presentation. You are all appreciated! The Continuing Education programs have been quite informative for me. I treasure each hour that I attend and usually learn something which I can use to improve my vegetable garden, home landscaping or barn area.

I have enjoyed my first year as your President. I especially enjoy working with Master Gardener members who were among the first in Calhoun County. Dr. Marge Lyons has been a mentor for many Master Gardeners through the years. Dr. Marge is a registered nurse (PhD), and was in the MG class of 2000. Marge works with the girls at Coosa Valley (Tree Amigos) and has for many years. She actively works with the girls in the greenhouse and has hosted a pool party for the girls at her home each year.

Don't forget to pre-register for "Party in the Garden" which will be held on May 8-10, 2019, at the AMGA Spring Conference. We need to see how others organize the conference. Our opportunity to 'shine' will be here before we know it in 2021! We will have a representative from AMGA who will visit us at the February meeting to give us a preview of the 2019 Conference.

"A man cannot change his circumstances, but he can choose his thoughts and so indirectly, yet surely, shape his circumstances".
James Allen (1864-1912)

'Till Later!

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



From Our Advisor

By David West

We've started to have some cold weather along with our wet weather. I had 23 degrees the week of January 14th and 20 degrees the morning of the 21st We've had enough rain to keep the creeks full and the yards soggy, but no serious flooding. I suppose it is just a matter of time before the rain and the cold arrive simultaneously. Unfortunately, Wetumpka was impacted by a tornado January 19. We are all too familiar with that.

We did not have enough class participants to fill a MG intern class this year. We've had a pretty good run of classes, but we've also frequently had classes 2 years apart. I will meet with the Board to discuss ways to begin filling next year's class.

One educational training opportunity is Alabama Water Watch. Crystal McPherson is our County Agent working on this program. Check with Crystal about meeting with her once a month to learn how to test water and to help keep a log of results on Cane Creek. Bring a friend. Call Crystal at (256) 237-1621 or (256) 689-6951. She'll be in schools most days, so give her time to get back with you.

Master Gardeners are busy at their respective work sites at Cane Creek Community Gardens, the MG Classroom, Cane Creek Greenhouse, Longleaf Botanical Gardens, Coosa Valley Youth Services and other approved sites. They haven't taken much of a break during winter, so check with MGs you know to see where they are working.

Thanks for all of your work in our community!

Recipe of the Month: Crazy Chocolate Cake

Crazy Chocolate Cake is a quick and easy handed down recipe that Trisha's mother used to make for an after-school snack. When cool, frost with Crazy Chocolate Icing or top with whipped cream and a drizzle of chocolate syrup. Serve from the pan!

Mix the cake right in an 8x8 pan (It may be easier to use a mixing bowl and then pour into the ungreased or lightly greased pan). Combine the dry ingredients:

Crazy Chocolate Cake
1 1/2 c. flour
1 c. sugar
1 t. baking soda
1/4 t. salt
4 T. cocoa

Make 4 dents in the dry ingredient mixture for the following:

4 T. salad oil
1 t. vanilla
1 T. vinegar
1 c. water

Mix until well blended and bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 30 minutes.

Crazy Chocolate Icing

2 T. butter
1/4 c. cocoa
1c. confectioner's sugar
1 T. milk (more if needed)
1/4 t. vanilla

Melt butter and stir in cocoa, place in mixing bowl. Beat in confectioner's sugar, milk, and vanilla. Beat on medium for approximately 5 minutes or until smooth. Spread on cool cake.

Trish Williams Chilton County Master Gardeners

MG Notes

by Sherry Blanton

Billy McDaniel and Skeeter Sims did an outstanding program for our January monthly meeting. They showed us how "To Stay Sharp in the Garden," and demonstrated correct ways to sharpen our tools. They showed some great new gadgets to lighten our loads. Delicious soups and sides filled up our serving table. Thanks to all for sharing their treats.



Skeeter and Billy demonstrate how to sharpen tools

For our February 13th meeting, avid birders Jim and Linda Wakefield will present the program, "Birds and Blooms." This is an opportunity for MGs to increase their knowledge about birds. It is great to have our MGs

participate as our speakers for our educational programs. Our covered dish will be casseroles; please remember to bring a serving utensil.

Please join me at the Public Library of Anniston-Calhoun County on February 5th at 2 p.m. for my presentation "For the Love of Lilies." The program is free; no reservations are required. The Library provides door prizes and snacks.

Garden Inspiration

*"The Earth laughs in flowers."
Ralph Waldo Emerson*



Male Eastern Bluebird by Doris Baucom

Tips for Happier, Healthier Birds from Emily Richardson

- * Keep a clean hummingbird feeder out all winter for stragglers
- * Keep your cats indoors. They kill millions of birds every year.
- * Birds take really good care of themselves but feed them anyway because they're fun to watch.
- * Make sure there is clean, liquid, water for drinking and bathing. Lots of little animals will appreciate it.

Cane Creek Community Gardens Update

By Skeeter Sims

1. February is our big pruning month at Cane Creek. We have roses, climbing roses, butterfly bushes, shrubs, etc. that all need pruning and the first weeds of the year are starting to appear. We will set a date in February around/near Valentine's Day to hold an ALL HANDS pruning event of our home grounds. We will need all CCMGs to help get this done in a timely fashion so that the Cane Creek Crew can move on to other beds, projects and plantings for our Spring gardens.

2. The Classroom building will be sprayed and bombed for bugs/critters. Please honor the no entry signs as the pesticides are dangerous for those not trained. It will be closed and sealed for 72-96 hours following the treatment!! If you enter, you destroy the process and we will have to retreat. So please honor the signs and respect the barriers. Skeeter will reopen and air out the facility prior to returning it to full use and the cleaners have agreed to clean all surfaces and bathrooms on the Monday following the treatment.

3. Be advised, once again, do not plant random plants at Cane Creek. You may provide plants to a Cane Creek Crew member and we will decide where, when, and whether to plant. We have had some plants appear that are not in acceptable locations, create safety issues, and constrain other activities. So, again, coordinate with Skeeter or another Cane Creek Crew member if you have extra plants, shrubs, etc., that you would like to donate.



Mahonia in bloom



Favorite Plant for the Winter Garden from Linda Wakefield

My favorite flower that blooms in the winter is the Lenten Rose (Hellebores.)

Flowers that range in colors from white, green, pink, red, deep purple and yellow, bring cheerfulness to the winter garden.



Lenten Rose

All Bugs Good and Bad Back for 2019

The 2019 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series is BACK! Please join us for this webinar series for information you can use about good and bad insects. We used your feedback to bring topics that you suggested. We will discuss troublesome insects such as fire ants and landscape pests as well as other animals like arachnids and bats! Remember, the majority of insects are not pests. Let's talk about the good guys too and a wealth of other topics. Webinars will be on the first Friday of each month at 1 p.m. Central time. Click on the link below for the entire schedule.

The link to the series is here:

<https://articles.extension.org/pages/74786/2019-all-bugs-good-and-bad-webinar-series>

February's topic is Open Forum (You Have Questions, We Have Answers!) So many great questions are asked at the end of each All Bugs Webinar -- we decided to dedicate a webinar just to let you ask more! We will spend the hour fielding questions about All Bugs Good and Bad.



Master Gardener Board for 2019

Mystery Master Gardener

Don Crow was January's mystery gardener and he was identified by Janet Evans. Thanks to both of you.

Who is this month's mystery gardener?

- This person is from Birmingham.
- His/her favorite part of gardening is enjoying seeing things bloom at different seasons.
- Other hobby besides gardening is reading.
- Before our mystery gardener retired, this person worked as Claims Representative at Social Security.
- This MG currently lives in Ohatchee.

Drop Sherry an e-mail if you can identify this dedicated Master Gardener.



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