



# GARDEN THYMES

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 40th anniversary celebration
- New column "Tales from the Greenhouse"
- Upcoming workshops and social events

Master Gardeners of North Alabama, Inc.

Fourth Quarter 2021

## MASTER GARDENERS 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

By MGNA President, Janet Boothe (W06)

Pictures by Barbara Stansky (W17)



Robin Chambers and Janet Boothe

Fall is one of my favorite times of the year. Did you know that during the Fall, squirrels get smarter, Fall babies are better students and more likely to live longer? Autumn is good for the economy and until the 1500's it was just called "harvest". Autumn movies aren't Oscar-worthy. Autumnal equinox is when the Earth receives exactly 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness. But, as gardeners we also know that Fall is the best time of year to plant trees, shrubs and bulbs for Spring flowers.

I hope most of you were able to either be present or view via Zoom the Alabama 40<sup>th</sup> MG Anniversary party. The five 'Founders' of our organization were pre-

sent. Mary Lou McNabb who brought the MG program from Cornell to Alabama, and Robin Chambers a graduate student at AA&M were both present at our party at the Carriage House. Also present, via Zoom, were Gary Murray, Madison County Extension Agent, and two professors who taught at AA&M, Dr. Sharma Govid and Dr. Caula Beyl. These five were instrumental in starting the MG program in Alabama in 1981.

A Resolution was read during the party that was passed from the Senate of Alabama "Recognizing the Alabama Cooperative Extension Systems Master Gardener Program".

Did you know that Master Gardeners have provided service to the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and to their local community, averaging 150,000 volunteer hours per year, valued at over \$2.8 million per year?

I would like to thank, Barbara Stansky, Tricia Teetor, and Alice Brigman who helped make the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party a success. You are very special.



Mary Lou McNabb, one of our founders, and Elouisa Stokes who was in the first Master Gardener class in 1981

*"When everything looks like a magical oil painting, you know you are in autumn!"*  
**Mehmet Murat Ildan**

... More pictures on page 9

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# HOME GARDEN TOURS

Articles and pictures by Gigi Bullman (W83)

## TOUR OF GIGI BULLMAN'S GARDEN

(June 2 & 3, 2021)

After two years of steady rain, my hydrangeas looked the best I've ever seen, and I have a lot of them – bigleaf, smooth, oakleaf, pee gee... I would have at least one of every kind if I could!

I haven't been able to do a lot of gardening the last few years, so my garden was the farthest thing from perfectly manicured that you might imagine. Yet, the hydrangeas looked soooo lush, it was now or never – my first chance to offer my home garden as a pop-up tour. Ameree Young got me prepared and helped me get the notices out.

This year, some of my hydrangeas even surprised me. I have a 'Mini-Penny' mophead that has been very stingy with its blooms ever since I planted it. Two weeks before the tour, I had decided to dig it up; once again, there were no flower buds on it, just like every other year. However, right before the tour, I went out to look, and it had 40+ blooms, so heavy they touched the ground. Somehow, plants can always make a liar out of you!

So, I got my nerve up and made ready to greet guests. Despite the rain both days, I enjoyed greeting visitors to my garden. It was a lot of fun to discuss the different hydrangea types, with all the visitors pointing out their favorites. I loved, loved, loved having a tour. Now, if we get another year of steady rain, I just might do it again next year!



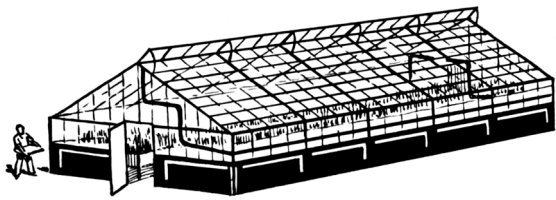
## TOUR OF LIBBY LOOSE'S GARDEN

(June 23 & 24, 2021)

There's nothing like stepping into Libby Loose's garden (F09). It's easy to find, with roses greeting you as you pull to the curb. When in bloom, an arch with 'Climbing Pinkie' over the sidewalk has been known to stop traffic. Libby has filled her front yard with all types of roses, antique and modern alike. They bloom happily under the high shade of her large trees.

Roses and perennials line the driveway, drawing you into her large garden in the back. Many more roses, perennials, hydrangeas, hosta, and natives may be found there. A vegetable garden is tucked along a fence, and, if you look closely, you *may* find a fairy garden as well. A visit to Libby's garden offers so many good ideas. It's so very easy to find an enjoyable seat to watch the birds, or to sit in the gazebo and listen to the music of the water features. Libby is always generous about opening her garden to visitors, and we greatly enjoyed this pop-up garden tour for MGNA members.

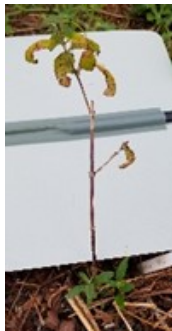




# Tales from the Greenhouse

**Josie Asquith (1984), Master Gardener Greenhouse Manager,  
in Corroboration with Carol Umstaedter (W 05)**

Good Golly, Miss Molly! I know you are all waiting with excitement on what happened to the two cuttings from the Morris School Miss Molly Butterfly Bush. Well, as expected, the cutting without leaves is still a dead stick. The cutting with leaves, soon dropped the unnecessary leaves (I couldn't bear to cut them away) to allow the roots to grow. As you can see, there is new growth on the terminal end as well as at the basal end. It is now in the ground in full sun. It may be small, but one day it will be Mighty!



We have been slammed getting ready for the fall plant sale. As you can see, the seedlings are filling up the greenhouse. They are under a misting system to keep the leaves from desiccating. A lot of seed trays are sold with plastic covers to keep the humidity up.



Planting pansy seeds was a real challenge. The seeds are so tiny that they stuck to our fingers and our backs

ached from bending over. The solution was to use tweezers to maneuver the seeds. One enterprising gardener overturned two empty gallon pots and put the seed tray on top of them. Voila! Our backs thanked us.

We've had a lot of successes and some setbacks during the summer. The tables are full of seedlings, divided plants, and many succulents. What we didn't invite was the Army worms that ate every Swiss chard we had. They also bit into the hostas, so we had to dust them with insecticide to eliminate the pests. My lesson? After a few cranks of the spreader, the song that advised us not to "spit into the wind" danced in my head as I backpedaled like a drunk duck. Outside, I came back to dust very early in the morning when the breeze was down and figured out which way the wind is blowing. I did remember to wear eye protection, and, wouldn't you know, a medical mask. Inside the greenhouse, I turned off fans before spreading pesticide dust. Perhaps it would have been a good idea to think before acting. Just sayin'.

The fig cuttings now have roots and are thriving after several weeks. You may notice that the cuttings comprised of very small leaves as those large fig leaves require too much water for emerging roots. When propagating



woody plants with cuttings, we used hormonal rooting powder with at least 1% IBA (indole-3-butyric acid). Tougher plants, like magnolias, would require a higher IBA.

A slightly different method was applied to the hydrangea cuttings. A successful technique for large leafed plants like this one is to remove all but the terminal leaves and cut them in half. Dip the stem in rooting powder and plant in potting mix. Again, it's very important to keep the leaves in a moist environment with a clear cover or misting until the root system can feed enough water to the leaves.

Rosemary is another plant we decided to propagate. Josie Asquith showed us how to take rosemary cuttings and place in pots. Evergreens take longer to decide to develop roots, so patience is totally required.



(By the time you read this, we will have had our fall plant sale. I hope you joined us!)

## NEWS ON OUR GREENHOUSE

By Carolyn Wade (W12)

The former Three Springs juvenile detention center at 1329 Browns Ferry Road in Madison was recently bought by the City of Madison and will be converted into a community center. Madison City Administrator, Steve Smith, kindly offered MGNA a home for our greenhouse on the grounds of the new Community Center (thanks Rita Icenogle (W15) for the referral) In addition to having a home for our greenhouse, we will be able to have our monthly meetings and Christmas socials in the center.

In exchange for our new home at the center, The City of Madison would like us to host two workshops a year and plant a community garden near the greenhouse. We are currently working on bids to move and erect the greenhouse (thanks Jim Mullen for the referrals). The area needs to be levelled, gravel or concrete installed, the greenhouse taken down from behind the Extension Office on Cook Avenue, moved and rebuilt by the new Center.

The City of Madison expects the center's renovation to take 5 years. That said, Mr. Smith will allow us to begin our greenhouse move as soon as we have an approved written agreement.

Sounds like a lot doesn't it – plans are to hopefully have everything complete by early in the New Year.



The plans for the Community Center

## MORRIS ELEMENTARY by Carolyn Wade

Once again, we plan to mentor 5th grade students at Morris Elementary in the joys of gardening, nature and our environment. We will meet with the students on Tuesdays from 1145 to 1245. We plan to start on 21 Sept and meet each week until May.

We try to have 2 adults per 4 students, remaining with the same students for the year.

We grow vegetables and flowers in the raised beds and in the greenhouse, do nature inspired art projects, talk about butterflies, worms, birds and more. We try to introduce a new food each week for taste testing and occasionally have a cooking class (minus the ovens).

We have a lot of fun and the kids are very appreciative - in fact some requested Ms. Coreyell-Mahone's class just to be able to join our group.

If you would like to join us or have questions please let me know. If you want to join us but can only make every other week - that's OK too (that's why we have partners).

Hope you can join us



## **Carol Weand (F18) MGNA Secretary**

Carol Elaine Cannon was born in Tampa, Florida, but when her father passed away, she, her mother and her two sisters moved to Jacksonville to be near family. She attended Wolfson High School where she was a member of the Wolfson Marching Band and an accomplished flutist. She received a Music scholarship to Louisiana State University, but after her freshman year, she transferred to Florida State, earning a BS in Dietetics in 1970.

Also in 1970, she married Lieutenant Arnold E. "Sandy" Weand Jr., then spent 30 years as an active-duty military wife with time in Virginia, California, Alaska, and Missouri. While in Missouri, Carol completed her MS at St. Louis University, becoming a Registered Dietitian. For Carol their penultimate assignment was in Shrivenham, England where Sandy taught at the Royal Military College of Science, and Carol involved herself in British gardening and flower arranging at the college. The family had opportunities to travel in the United Kingdom and Europe before they were transferred to Redstone Arsenal.

Sandy finished his Army career at the Program Executive office, Tactical Missiles and then worked as a contractor for the Missile Defense Agency. She worked as a geriatric dietitian for 16 years then as a renal dietitian for over two years before retiring. During this time she also was a proctor for dietitian interns from Oakwood University and University of Alabama-Birmingham.

When Carol retired in 2018, her first project was to take the MG class (F 2018). Since completing the MG class she has worked on plant sales, served as MGNA Secretary, and worked with Horticulture Therapy and Adopt-a-Spot. Carol volunteers as needed for the organization. Carol also has volunteered with the Huntsville Botanical HBG Garden Guild and is former treasurer of the Redstone Garden Club.

Carol's first home in Huntsville was on a very steep hill which necessitated her learning to landscape for erosion control. She also fought a losing battle with "urban deer" learning they would eat almost anything she planted including pansies, hostas, gold leaf aucuba and even ivy. Humane deer repellent products including human hair didn't deter them either.

Carol and Sandy currently live on a 32-acre farm that grows hay for cattle feed. However, there is still plenty of room for gardening and flower beds. Her favorite beds are the perennial bed and the fire pit beds, one with a water feature that she and Sandy installed. Other beds include a blueberry patch, a herb bed and a Japanese maple surrounded by Japanese yews, Lenten roses and iris. She also has crepe myrtles surrounded by loropetalums and decorative grasses. Although Sandy is not a MG, he gained garden knowledge from his parents who had a nursery when he was growing up. He is always able to complete Carol's gardening projects as well as helping with MGNA projects when Carol volunteers him.

The Weands have three adult children. Joshua, his wife Jasmina and their two daughters live in Bosnia. Caleb followed in his father's footsteps and became an Army Aviator who is currently flying for a company with contracts to fight fires in California and other western states. Their daughter, Joanna, lives in Huntsville. She manages, and is, a coffee roaster for the Kaffeeklatsch.

In addition to gardening, Carol's hobbies include reading any type of book including cookbooks, and sometimes she even cooks from them! Currently she and Sandy have three street rods either completed or in some stage of construction. Over the years they have become "once a year" regulars at their favorite car shows. A goal is to travel route 66 and other places in one of the cars, hopefully soon. Carol looks forward to enjoying new challenges in the future, and Master Gardeners is definitely an interest that will continue for many years to come.

## NEWS FROM THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

By Elouisa Stokes (1981)

Our meeting in Jemison, AL, on August 3 was informative as usual. It is time to receive nominations for officers for AMGA and for the Advisory Council (AC). Susan Hagan is the chair for AMGA. Deborah Harris of Blount County is the Nominating Committee chair for AC. The Transformation Garden at Auburn is looking for association money to help build the herb garden, children's garden, butterfly garden and a teaching garden. Check out the Horticultural Department on the Auburn website for pictures. Myra Lassere, AMGA President, reported that AMGA hopes to partner with ACES IT folks for our new website. This will allow the smaller associations that cannot afford a web presence to have one. Patricia Peoples is looking for a Newsletter Editor Apprentice. It is a volunteer position that would enable you to make lots of volunteer hours.

The 2022 AMGA Conference will be May 2-4 in Montgomery at Embassy Suites. The 2023 Conference will be April 3-5 in Tuscaloosa.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY AND SILENT AUCTION

By Barbara Stansky (W17)



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Our **Christmas party** and December monthly general meeting will be held on Thursday, December 9, at the Community Fellowship Baptist Church, 7905 Logan Drive SW, Huntsville. This will be a potluck dinner, and a Sign-Up Genius for food contributions will be issued closer to the date. We're excited to announce that there will be a **Silent Auction** on that same evening, and we need your help!

Local businesses have struggled during the past months, and it doesn't seem right to solicit donations at random. We're coming to you - our members - to help with this instead. We are seeking gift baskets, gift cards, quality "new" items, and/or handmade items such as quilts, bird houses, etc. (Or perhaps your employer would agree to help with a gift?) We're asking that you donate something that you would personally enjoy owning!

This is a great opportunity to pool your resources with another MG or gardening friend to provide an item for the auction. All of the proceeds from the auction will be used to fund the many worthwhile causes that MGNA sponsors. We are accepting donations NOW and are willing to pick up and store all items until the evening of the party.



December 9



# THE DEMONSTRATION VEGETABLE GARDEN

By Susan Parker (F17) and Photos by Rhonda Britton

This summer, several new demonstrations were added to the Demonstration Vegetable Garden (DVG) in the Huntsville Botanical Garden (HBG). Tomatoes were planted in a Japanese Ring Garden and a raised bed utilizing the Florida weave method. Straw bale gardening was once again demonstrated. The determinate and indeterminate tomato demonstration is at its end – the determinate tomatoes fruited first and all ripened at the same time. The zinnias, part of the ‘Zoomin for Zinnias’ program and planted as pollinators are adding color outside the rear garden fence. New to the DVG this year is Carlita Edwards’ demonstration bed to deter critters from digging up the sweet potatoes. She wrapped the perimeter of the raised bed with chicken wire wrapped around posts. She then spread cayenne pepper flakes and slivers of Irish spring soap – the critters don’t seem to like the smells.

An accessible raised bed was installed and planted with herbs and marigolds. The dedicated team of Jim Mullen, David Grey and Lisa Crump researched, purchased the materials, and installed the bed. Jim Mullen constructed the frame. The accessible raised bed is an outstanding addition to the DVG. A person with back issues can stand and garden or an individual in a wheelchair can tend the plants and enjoy gardening. Garden guests gravitate to the accessible raised bed, commenting that it is a project that they can do.

Little HBG campers came to tour the garden on Friday June 25. To add excitement to the impromptu tour, almost 2 pounds of cosmic carrots were pulled from the square foot bed and sent with the group. On Wednesday June 30, K-2<sup>nd</sup> graders visited and were divided into three groups. Tour guides Eileen Tully and Lynn Myers answered questions and showed the little guests red and green beans (Louisiana Purple Pod), a whole sweet potato, planted sweet potatoes, and Irish potatoes attached to the plant ready to harvest. Tina Cechovic directed the blueberry picking. Susan Parker instructed the youngsters on planting Henderson Bush Lima beans and weeding. The weeding, at Eileen’s suggestion, was a super hit. The ‘Littles’ were allowed time to rest in the shade of the muscadine arbor. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade campers planted Henderson Bush Lima Beans on July 2. Youth volunteers also toured the garden on July 7 and planted sweet potatoes slips. The group was instructed on planting the transplants and the process of creating slips from the tuber for replanting.

Exciting news! As a participant of Alabama Extension’s Grow More Give More Program, the DVG was selected to be featured in a documentary, “Spotlight on Agriculture”. On August 4 the PBS crew filmed the garden for the Grow More Give More program created by Bethany O’Rear, Regional Extension Agent Birmingham. The DVG crew was filmed harvesting and delivering produce. Kerry Smith, Alabama Master Gardener Program Coordinator, may narrate the series. The DVG segment, just a small portion of an hour-long documentary, is to be aired February 2022 on Alabama Public Television. Extension Agent Rhonda Britton joined the group for the day and was able to visit with new master gardener volunteers. We had lemonade, cookies and Susan Beam provided Chick-fil-A. It was a great honor for the opportunity to highlight the DVG, promote the Grow More, Give More program, and represent MGNA.

Over 800 pounds of produce has been harvested by the end of August 2021. The produce is donated to CASA and the Rose of Sharon Soup kitchen. If you are interested in volunteering with the DVG, please contact Susan Parker by email [susanp.grdn19@gmail.com](mailto:susanp.grdn19@gmail.com). We look forward to seeing you!



Front- Lynn Myers, Eileen Tully, Susan Parker, Susan Beam  
Back-Diane Rodgers, Lisa Crump.



Zinnias at the rear of the garden attract pollinators.

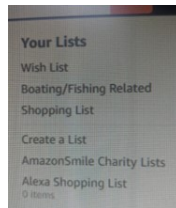


By Barbara Stansky

Did you know that there is an easy way to support Master Gardeners of North Alabama with every purchase you make through Amazon? Since we're all doing a lot more on-line shopping these days, and the holiday shopping season is just around the corner, please consider supporting the Master Gardeners of North Alabama as your favorite charitable organization every time you shop in the Amazon Smile program. A portion of your purchase will deposit money to MGNA at no cost to you.

It's easy! You must first log into smile.amazon.com. Then select Master Gardeners of North Alabama, Inc. as your charity. After that simply log into that list before you make any future purchases through Amazon.

- 1) Go to amazon.com
- 2) Log in using your username and password as you would with your Amazon account.
- 3) Under your name, select the drop-down Account & Lists bar.
- 4) Under "Your Lists" select AmazonSmile Charity Lists. Under "Search" type in Master Gardeners of North Alabama Inc and hit select.



- 5) Verify in the upper right-hand corner of your screen that you are shopping under "AmazonSmile"...Supporting Master Gardeners of North Alabama Inc. "



- 6) Shop as usual!!

It's that simple, and our collective shopping dollars add up!

## Wendell Uptagrafft's Creative Pots (F07)



Magenta purslane growing in a fish wire frame planter

Yellow & orange  
purslane + purple  
ice plant growing in  
his pot tower







## MEMBERSHIP DUES

By Elouisa Stokes (1981)  
Membership Chair

It is time to renew your membership in the MGNA. As we look forward to 2022, let us reflect on the wonderful year of membership activities we have had and encourage everyone to renew their membership. Renewing your membership will ensure that all the magnificent work the MGNA is doing in our community will continue.

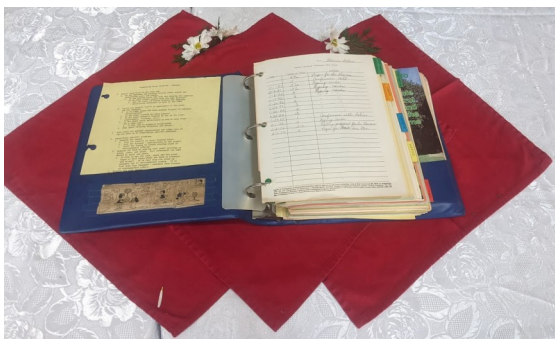
You may bring your membership dues and form to be collected at the October meeting by completing the MGNA Membership Form online on the MGNA website ([mginfo.org](http://mginfo.org)).

To pay online you may choose MGNA Membership On-line Form, complete the form, and pay with PayPal. Please note that PayPal does charge you \$1 for the transaction.

You also have the option of printing a form by choosing MGNA Membership Printable Form, completing the form and mailing the form and a check to me, Elouisa Stokes at 2415 Glenn Street, Huntsville, Alabama 35801. If you would like your membership cards mailed to you, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope and I will mail them to you. You may also pick up your membership cards at any MGNA meeting.

The cost of Active Membership this year is \$30 and for Associate Membership dues are \$40. I look forward to seeing you all soon. If you require more information, please do not hesitate to call me at 256-539-2058 or 256-604-8669.

## 40th Anniversary Pictures, continued . . .



The first MGNA handbook which belongs to Elouisa Stokes.





By Brenda Tapp (W98)



Our last two workshops have been our most popular to date this year with registrations reaching our Zoom limit of 100 each. Thanks to Trace Barnett and our own Rhonda Britton and to the committee members who coordinated these workshops.

We have two more workshops scheduled for this year. On October 21, MG Bonnie Gardener will conduct a workshop on *Gardening for Seniors*, also via Zoom. She will focus on modifications that have worked for her.

For our final 2021 workshop, we are going **LIVE and IN-PERSON** for the first time this year. Huntsville Florist personnel will demonstrate how to make a fall floral arrangement and will help you create your own arrangement for Thanksgiving. The workshop will be Monday, November 22, at 1:00pm, at the HBG at a cost of \$25 per person. Details will be sent to everyone a couple weeks before the workshop, but since we are limited to 20 participants you need to put the date on your calendar now!

We are already planning for 2022 workshops, and if you have any ideas for workshops, please share them. Also, if you are looking for a new place to volunteer, consider joining the workshop committee.

## OUR FALL PLANT SALE

Below is an excerpt taken from an email Sue Khoury had sent to the MGNA membership:

*“Fall sales are notoriously difficult to predict. Not everyone knows that perennials, trees, and shrubs are supposed to look tired this time of year! Not everyone knows that this is the best time of year to plant all of those plus spring-blooming bulbs. And we’re competing with late summer vacations, municipal events, and personal efforts to clean up yards and garden beds. **But we did well anyway!**”*

*The Board can and will report the financial results. I’m so very proud of what was accomplished by both 2021 Plant Sales!!! **Y’all did a fantastic job!**”*

Thank you to our plant chairs, Sue Khoury (W13) and Amber Braman (W16), and everyone who assisted with this large endeavor.



# GARDEN THYMES

Master Gardeners of North Alabama  
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Connie Carr (F16)	Candy Trowbridge (F05)
Liz Gould (F18)	Carolyn Wade (W12)

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