



# GARDEN THYMES

## A Word From Our President



**Janet Boothe (W06)**

It's almost Summer and I still seem to be doing Spring things in my garden. Every year I promise myself in March that this year will be different, I'll clean out the fallen leaves in my flower beds, or get my tomato seeds planted on time, maybe I'll even start weeding. Who am I kidding? I always find something "better and more fun" to do so that I can postpone the "not so fun" stuff until next week or even next month. If you are better at managing

your time and discover you have a few extra hours in your day, check out some of our projects that would benefit from your help.

- Adopt a Spot - meets Tuesday, 8am – 10am, at 222 Washington Street NE, Huntsville, contact Carlita Edwards
- Ask a MG – Will be at Lowes in Owens Cross Roads and Farmers Market on Cook Avenue, contact Flo Helman
- Greenhouse at Morris – Work days are usually Monday, Wednesday and Friday Mornings, contact Josie Asquith
- Demonstration Vegetable Garden (DVG) meets Monday, Wednesday and Saturday starting at 7:30am until done, contact Susan Parker
- Workshop Committee meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month at Extension @ 1 pm, contact Janet Boothe

Don't forget, to be an active Master Gardener member you need a minimum of 25 hours and 10 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) each year.

If you know a piece of land that would look better with a greenhouse on it then please, please, contact myself or Carolyn Wade.

*"Gardening requires a lot of water, most of it in the form of perspiration."* Lou Erickson

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Speakers Bureau at Work
- Fun Field Trips and Tours
- Busy DVG
- Morris Activities



**Susan Beam (F17)**  
**MGNA Secretary**

*“The best part of Master Gardeners is the people in the group and the expertise they are glad to share.”*

Susan has lived in Huntsville since 1965 except for a short stint in Birmingham. She attended SR Butler High School, Auburn, UAH and graduated from Athens State College with a degree in Physical Education and an art minor.

She has been married to Brent for 36 years and they have two four legged children. When not gardening, Susan enjoys hiking with friends, snow skiing, traveling and sailing. Downsizing from a larger home in Hampton Cove has led to a 9-month renovation on a smaller home on the lake in Hampton Cove. Sadie, the lab, loves walking around the lake, meeting other pups and swimming after tennis balls (and ducks). Now that most of the interior is completed, the landscaping has begun!

Susan took the master gardener course in 2017 in preparation for retirement after 20 years in the contract furniture industry. She had always enjoyed gardening and thought she knew a lot about it until the first class! The best part of Master Gardeners is the people in the group and the expertise they are glad to share. It is also a great way to give back to our community. She volunteers at the DVG most consistently and enjoys some of the other opportunities MGNA affords, like Galaxy of Lights and Ask a Master Gardener.

Being on the Board of Directors has helped connect faces with names of the members of MGNA. It's a great group of people!



## Happenings at the Speakers Bureau By Melissa Kirkindall (W98)

The Speakers Bureau was busy this spring, and many programs are already scheduled for the next few months.

In June, Pam Price, Doty Henry and Cookie Kruvand did a program on “Harvesting and Preserving Herbs”. Also they did a program on “Herb Garden Basics” at the Madison Library on June 18 followed by “Harvesting Herbs” on June 23 for the Huntsville Herb Society.

“Water Features” will be the program for the August MGNA meeting.

Bonnie Gardner gave a program on “Gardening for Seniors” at the Madison City Senior Center on April 20.

Jennifer Johnson spoke to the Intern Class about butterflies on April 14. On June 9, she will speak to 4-H students, and on June 23 presented an MGNA Educational Workshop on “Butterflies”.

On May 17<sup>th</sup> Kathy Gardner gave a program for young children on Monarch butterflies at the Madison Library. She had chrysalises and one live caterpillar from Melissa Kirkindall to show, and her husband showed a Monarch under a microscope. She also gave a slide show about the Monarch anatomy and life cycle. There were videos of a caterpillar turning into a chrysalis and of a Monarch emerging. These were followed by an outside activity. She kept the attention of a group of 5 year-olds for an hour! I think this was remarkable.

**Kathy Gardner giving a program on Monarch butterflies at the Madison Library. She had 20 participants ages 5-10 years old.**



Photo by Carolyn Reagle, the Madison librarian

## Garden Tours on June 4

Pictures and Articles by Ameree Young (F13)

It was a beautiful, warm sunny day as we toured two master gardeners' gardens in Harvest, Alabama.

**Betty Patterson**—Betty's garden contained many pollinator plants as well as perennials with annuals bordered by arborvitae serving as a privacy hedge at the rear.

There were several water features with a big fountain as the focal point of the garden with lots of garden statuary and nooks with garden swings. Something that was very unique was the hummingbird fountain.



Betty with her hydrangeas



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**Barbara and Herschel McFarlen**—Their driveway was bordered with lots of rose bushes which led into the backyard. The garden in the rear was filled with 90 rose bushes such as hybrid teas, floribundas, grandifloras and shrub roses. There were also lots of zinnias, cosmos, celosia, morning glory, decorative gourds and sweet potatoes. Spinach, cabbage and lettuce will be planted in the fall.



Barbara and Herschel





## Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Cahaba Craft Brewery on June 8

Pictures and Articles by Ameree Young (F13)

Our master gardener field trip to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens and the Cahaba Craft Brewery was an easy and fun day-trip.

**Birmingham Botanical Gardens**—There was a record-shattering rainfall that took place in the early morning hours before we arrived in Birmingham. Fortunately, all the rain had dissipated when we started our tour. We toured all the different parts of the botanical garden including the Japanese Garden, Southern Living Garden, rose garden, fern glade and the vegetable garden.

My favorite area was the Conservatory where we saw the desert garden with all the cactuses and other desert plants. There were lots of tropical plants including Bromeliad, Wandering Jew, Lemon, and Satsuma Orange trees.



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**Cahaba Craft Brewery**— Eric Meyer, the owner, took us on a comprehensive tour of all the different areas of the brewery that is involved in making the beer. We learned that it takes four ingredients, water, malt, hops and yeast to make beer. These ingredients are used in different ways to create different flavors. There is also lots of specialized equipment necessary to make the beer. It was a wonderful tour shared by our small group.



Bill Young, Ameree Young, Donna Phillips, Susan Meyer, Eric Meyer, Jean Lake



## THE DEMONSTRATION VEGETABLE GARDEN IN PICTURES

By Susan Parker (F17)



The DVG crew from the Master Gardeners of North Alabama greeted and educated garden guests on growing vegetables, soil testing, and Grow More Give More (GMGM) on March 26. Displays included a popup greenhouse, pest exclusion cloth, cold frame, soil warming cable, and posters. Guests received gourd and hyacinth bean seeds and learned about crop rotation and vegetable characteristics. They saw seed starter mix, seed tray, seed packets and plant ID tags as well as soil sample boxes, tools and instruction forms. Brochures with MGNA information, GMGM, SOW app and ACES gardening links were available.

Top, left to right, Susan Parker, Susan Beam and Connie Carr. Bottom, left to right, Diane Rodgers, Carlita Edwards, Eileen Tully, and Lisa Crump.

Photo by Susan Parker on March 26



Interns tour the DVG.

Photo by Rhonda Britton on March 4



## DVG continued . . . .



During the Huntsville Botanical Garden plant sale, Amber Braman discussed companion planting, and Susan Parker talked about crop rotation. Their posters were informative and pretty. The sale was April 14, 15, and 23. Master Gardeners answered questions for two extra hours.



As a crop is harvested, it is replaced with the summer crop. Guests say they could garden in containers following these examples. Jim Parker made the wooden, engraved sign.

Photo by Susan Parker on May 6



## Master Gardener Volunteer Opportunities

By Suzanne Kirkhuff (W07)

Are you looking for your niche in master gardeners? Check out pages 3 and 4 of your latest MGNA handbook and you will find a list of several committees, projects, and support groups with their contact information that would love to have you join them.

# MORRIS ELEMENTARY

Article and Picture by Carolyn Wade (W12)

June brought the end of another school year for the Morris Elementary Garden project. It was a wonderful year, and the volunteers educated, learned, laughed and had an all-around great experience. We met with the 16 students from Jan Coryell-Mahone's 5th grade class for an hour on Tuesdays. The children were divided into four groups, and since the same volunteers worked with the same group all year, they really got to know the kids.

We had successful fall and spring gardens which included sweet potatoes, white potatoes, okra, gourds, greens, radishes, onions, garlic and peas. More than 50 pounds of produce were donated. A speaker from the Rose of Sharon Soup Kitchen, who spoke with the students about the food bank, received a donation of fresh produce from the school garden.

The children painted gourds and okra as Christmas decorations for their families. Bird feeders were made and hung on the school trees. The children enjoyed a day trip to the Huntsville Botanical Garden, and each took home a tomato, pepper or flower in a container to grow over the summer. And we ate – boy did we eat! Each week we sampled the produce being grown, and we also tried a new fruit or vegetable. The children researched and reported on the food before samples were passed around. All the samples were eaten raw without any seasonings. The fried artichoke hearts (AKA ice pops) on the last day were a huge hit. A special highlight was that each child earned a Junior Master Gardener Certificate which was awarded the last day of school.



A big THANK YOU to our dedicated MGNA volunteers: Stephanie Boyd, Helen Carr, Jenene Castiligone, Carlita Edwards, Sandra French, Allyson and Owen Hofer, Kay Jacobson, Mary Ann Stasiak, Candy Trowbridge, Ameree Young, and Paul Zachary. We couldn't have done it without you!

*We will be back at Morris in September. If you would like to join us, please let me know.*



## 2022 Alabama Master Gardener Conference

By Janet Boothe (W06)

This year 11 MGNA members attended the May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Master Gardener Conference in Montgomery. The title of the conference was *Behind the Garden Gate*. The conference began with a surprise guest speaker. Governor Kay Ivey opened the conference and thanked all master gardeners in Alabama for all the volunteer work we do to enrich our state. She was followed by speaker Erica Glasener whose topic was *Cultivating a Sense of Place*. In all there were seven great guest speakers. Bet you didn't know that the Long Beach Radish, famous in Long Beach, MS, was a bar snack that was dipped in luxurious butter and coarse salt during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The things you can learn at a Master Gardener Conference is staggering! There were also pre-conference tours and two hands on workshops. The *How to Air Layer Camellias* workshop was fabulous.



Soozi Pline, Walt Lindblom, Cyndi Lindblom, Gigi Bullman, Dan Pline, Owen Hofer, Dottie Pierce, Kendra Spadoni, Allyson Hofer, Sue Bish, Elouisa Stokes, Janet Boothe

## A Glimpse at this Quarter's Workshops



**April Floral Workshop by Huntsville Florist, photos by Suzanne Kirkhuff**



**June Herb Workshop by Doty Henry, Cookie Kruvand, and Pam Price, photos by Janet Boothe**



**June Butterfly Workshop by Jennifer Johnson**



# RESULTS OF OUR APRIL PLANT SALE

By Cyndi Lindblom (F13), Pictures by Carolyn Wade (W12) and Carol Umstaedter (W05)

The April 22-23 plant sale netted around \$19,165, with more money coming in late. We are grateful to all volunteers, including the greenhouse folks, table crew, Petals From The Past, set-up crew, greeters, concession workers and Agribition Center support personnel including Donna and Robert, who helped with logistics, and Eric and Tim, who moved things around.

Firsts included this being a two-day sale, vendors whose items complemented our plants, a Realtor who did a Facebook Live segment, Gibson Group, one of our sponsors, who gave out business cards with the plant prices on the back and the new location, Alabama A&M Agribition Center. Petals From the Past helped to get us roses for sale and Gail Futoran propagated roses and answered questions.

Next year's plant sale will be April 14-15, 2023 at the Agribition Center on Moores Mill Road.



Wow! \$19,165





*Give this flyer to your friends who are inquiring about becoming a Master Gardener.*

**BECOME AN  
ALABAMA MASTER  
GARDENER!**



**Do you love plants? Do you love volunteering your time? Then you are a great candidate for the Master Gardener Intern Training! You do not have to be a garden expert. Just come with a desire to learn and grow!**

**As part of the Master Gardener intern class, you will receive training materials and horticultural training specific to Alabama's soils and climate. Best of all, you will make great new friends and have an opportunity to give back to your community.**

**2022 FALL Session:  
August 11 – November 17**

**9:30 AM – 11:30 AM (Zoom) &  
1:00 – 2:30 PM (Live on Location)**

**Application Deadline:**

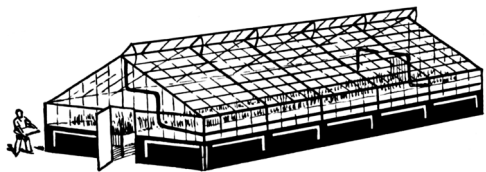
**July 29, 2022**

**The course fee is \$200**



Classes are taught by Alabama Extension agents, Extension Specialists from Auburn University & Alabama Master Gardeners.

**\*For more information and to put your name on the list contact : Rhonda Britton 256-690-8979.**



## Tales from the Greenhouse

By Carol Umstaedter (W05) in corroboration with Josie Asquith (1984), Master Gardener Greenhouse Manager

THANKS! A big thank you for all the wonderful volunteers who jumped in to help in all kinds of ways during the 2022 Spring Plant Sale. Believe it or not, we are now working toward preparing the plants for the next spring sale in 2023.

Outside, we've added black ground cover to suppress weeds, sorted plants by type and color, and created watering zones. The summer sun really gives them a jump in growth for next year as well.

Inside, we've gone through the same sorting process so that each greenhouse wizard knows how much to water. As you can see, the succulents love the indirect sun and dry conditions. Once a week of deep watering makes them really happy. These hugely popular plants are so easy to propagate. Come and get a lesson--- free of charge.

Pictures by Carol Umstaedter



Houseplants are soaking up nutrients and light.

In just two hours, teens from St. John Paul II High School who had never gardened learned to repot seedlings, propagate houseplants and when to air-bubble water plants.

Continued on next page . . . . .



## Tales... continued



One of the teens from St. John Paul II H.S.



Paula Eggert (W20)

Paula Eggert, our Succulent and Houseplant Wizard, patiently taught the other student, pictured above, how to propagate a begonia. It takes skill, guts, luck, and a detailed eye to know where to pull branches apart. Master Greenhouse Wizard Josie Asquith says, "Just do something. You'll learn from it."

If you can name some ferns, come help. If you can't, come and learn.



Maidenhair fern and asparagus fern



Boston fern

**Come to the Morris Elementary School Greenhouse by the Huntsville Botanical Garden any Monday, Wednesday, or Friday from 9-11 to learn something new.**

We also have a lot of fun getting to know each other, laughing at our goofs, and sharing ideas on plant arrangements. We bring in plants and cuttings from our own yards to share and propagate for the plant sale and each other. Sadly, we rarely meet a plant we don't like.

Join us but wear old clothes, waterproof shoes and it's much too humid for makeup.





# GARDEN THYMES

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The Alabama Master Gardener Program is conducted at the county level by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

