



GARDEN THYMES

Reaching for The Stars!

By Janet Boothe (W06) with Photos by Carolyn Wade (W12)

Reach for The Stars is a program of tracking Master Gardener’s volunteer hours and rewarding those members for the hours they have given to the community. During the February MGNA general meeting, Bronze, Silver and Gold Stars were awarded. Advanced badges and pins will be awarded during the AMGA State Conference and will be handed out at the May MGNA General meeting.

Mary Howe was honored with the MGNA Jean Lee Lifetime Hours Award with a total of 8575.26 volunteer hours since becoming a Master Gardener in 2006! Josie Asquith was submitted to the state level to vie for the AMGA Jean Lee Lifetime Hours award.

A listing of award recipients is on page 2.



Bronze star: Paul Zachary, Martha Hannan, Carlita Edwards



Silver star: Tina Cechovic



Gold star: Carol Weand, Eileen Tully, Mayra Pangborn, Ann Schroetter, Soozie Pline, Mary Ann Stasiak, Marge Mullen, Stephanie Boyd

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Reach for the Stars
- Spring Plant Sale Info
- Floral Workshop
- Speakers Bureau

Reaching for the Stars! continued

Bronze Star

Carlita Edwards	201.95
Alan Markell	146.5
Geanine Lehmann	120
Paul Zachary	117.7
Martha Hannan	113.4
Lyndia Lamitie	112.55
Lorraine Herel	110
Teresa Prestridge	109.5



Gold Badge

Candy Trowbridge	1056.9
Bonnie Gardner	1046.6
Deborah Bonkoski	1007.35

Platinum Badge

Owen Hofer	2134.75
Barbara McFarlan	2048.4

Ruby Star

Ann Tippie	4010.8
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Emerald Star

Sue Khoury	6141.1
Betsy Fletcher	6089

Diamond Star

Mary Howe	8575.25
Carolyn Wade	8477.7
Helen Carr	8473.21
Josie Asquith	8086.54

Silver Star

Carl Rourk	357.5
Tina Cechovic	352.9
Robyn Mann	344.5
Kay Jacobson	330.5
Shih-Hung Chou	314.8
Paula Eggert	310.5



Gold Star

Margaret Mullen	882
Eileen Tully	663.75
Barbara Stansky	620.5
Susan Pline	589.5
Joseph Hazeltine	543
Carol Weand	538.5
Stephanie Boyd	524.5
Carol Cook	517.5
Mary Ann Stasiak	515.5
Ann Schroetter	514.5
Mayra Pangborn	506.5



Janet Boothe is the Chairman of the Awards Committee.



A Snapshot of Our 2021
Spring Plant Sale

MGNA SPRING PLANT SALE

BY CYNDI LINDBLOM (F13)

It's hard to believe that our spring plant sale is coming up and we are so excited! The MGNA has so much fun while working tirelessly organizing the sale, growing plants, and scheduling volunteers and then the day finally arrives, and the Real fun begins.

The Spring Plant Sale will be held on April 22 & 23 at the Agribition Center, 4925 Moores Mill Rd, Huntsville, Al.

We felt it necessary to offer the plant sale in a new location due to scheduling uncertainty and space restrictions at the Farmer's Market. We had tremendous success at the Farmer's Market and incredible growth due to all the support we received from volunteers and patrons. This growth happened in part because we have been able to grow plants for the sale at the Morris Elementary greenhouse.

The Agribition Center is huge which will offer us room to grow, but with more room we need a LOT of plants to fill the space. We currently have heirlooms, natives, annuals, vegetables, herbs, and many more wonderful surprises. (We are hoping for roses to be added this year!)

Please email mgnaplantsale@gmail.com if you are planning on donating plants and what you will be providing. Plants should be potted by now to assure the plants look great for the plant sale.

Continue to watch our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/mgnaspringplantsale) for updates on the plants we will be offering during the plant sale.

Another new feature this year is the addition of vendors selling items that will appeal to plant lovers and gardeners. For example, one of the vendors, Kathleen will have plant hangers and planters. Another vendor Dennis Campbell, a vendor at the Farmers Market, creates amazing creations out of wood.

One of our sponsors, an insurance company, will also be at the sale and have donated their cards to post our prices.

We are in negotiations with a few more vendors and we hope they will join us and bring added value to the plant sale.

In addition to hosting vendors and sponsors this year we will also have concessions available for purchase. A continental breakfast of coffee and pastry will be available for \$3, and lunches will also be available for purchase with prices ranging between \$5-\$8.

In addition, we will have our ever-popular raffle again this year.

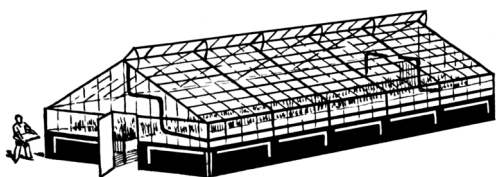
With an outstanding venue and lots of new offerings this event is shaping up to be one of our biggest and best Spring Plant sales. Please join us and bring your friends!

Cyndi Lindblom chair and Carol Weand co-chair



The Agribition Center
4925 Moores Mills Road
Huntsville

TALES FROM THE GREENHOUSE



Article and photos by Tina Cechovic (W 20)
In Corroboration with Josie Asquith (1984),
Master Gardener Greenhouse Manager

The greenhouse volunteers have been working very diligently preparing for the Spring plant sale! The greenhouse is rapidly filling with plants, and we keep rearranging to make more room!

During our quiet period over the winter, Josie demonstrated various methods of propagation including leaf propagation of begonias. The first step is to select a flat, healthy leaf and trim off the stem, keeping the petiole about an inch or so long. The petiole will be inserted into the growing medium. Cuts are then made through some of the larger veins of the leaf using a sterile knife and cutting the bottom side of the vein. Next, lay the leaf on top of the medium, ensuring contact by securing with pins or pebbles. New growth should appear in about 6 weeks near the cuts. Several took home a leaf to attempt propagating. I sadly have to say that my first attempt failed. I am on my second try now and am determined to succeed! If you haven't tried this method of propagation before, I encourage you to experiment with it!



After the new year began, we earnestly started planning for the plant sale. We received a large order of plug plants which included hens and chicks, various ivy, spider plants, and sweet potato vines. We also have several Bear Claw Ferns, thanks to someone who left us a huge plant on our table! Much to our embarrassment, after sawing and repotting, we discovered that the plant was left for overwintering in the greenhouse and not as a gift to us! No worries though, the original owner will get back two beautiful Bear Claws in place of one! Additionally, our succulents and houseplants are all thriving. We are also working on division of perennials and growing annuals. We look forward to a successful plant sale in April!



DEMONSTRATION VEGETABLE GARDEN

Article and photo by Susan Parker (F17)



Recently the weather has limited the DVG crew's time at the garden. However things are progressing on schedule. Our seed order has arrived and is ready for greenhouse production and direct sow. Soil temperature is being monitored. Demonstrations and crop rotations are planned.

The DVG is a participant in the ACES program Grow More Give More. Our final DVG harvest for 2021, completed by Lisa Crump, contributed to a total of 1,301 pounds of produce harvested and donated to The Rose of Sharon Soup Kitchen and the CASA Garden as part of this program. You too can contribute to Grow More Give More by planting one more row in your garden and sharing with a local food bank.

Auburn's installment on "Spotlight on Agriculture" aired on APT PBS Thursday, February 24. Several gardens were featured, and individuals from across the state were interviewed. Susan Parker, Jim and Marge Mullen were among those interviewed. The DVG crew created a superb garden for their backdrop. [Link [Spotlight on Agriculture | Grow More, Give More \(aptv.org\)](https://www.aptv.org)]

The DVG will host Ask a Master Gardener Day on Saturday March 26 (9 am to 12 pm) to answer visitors' gardening questions. Guests to the DVG may be new transplants in our area or visiting from another state or country. The DVG volunteers are ambassadors for Huntsville, Alabama, and the USA.

All of the DVG crew steps up to the challenge of maintaining the garden, greeting guests, contributing ideas, and suggesting projects and demonstrations. We welcome other MGs to volunteer with us. The DVG provides a regular schedule (Monday and Wednesday at 8 am depending on the weather) and location for earning MG volunteer hours. Most of all we have fun volunteering.

If you are interested in touring the DVG or would like to volunteer with the group, send an email to Susan Parker at susanp.grdn19@gmail.com.



Lisa Crump harvesting lettuce.

Easter Floral Work- shop



EASTER FLORAL ARRANGEMENT WORKSHOP BY CAROL MILTON (Wo8)

The Easter Bunny may bring treats for the children but the Workshop Committee with the help of Huntsville Florist will bring the Master Gardeners a treat in the form of a wonderful floral workshop on Monday, April 11 from 1-3 p.m. at the Purdy Butterfly House at the Huntsville Botanical Garden. The cost is \$30 and is for Master Gardeners only. This workshop is very popular and is now full.

Volunteer Opportunity!

MORRIS GREENHOUSE NEWS BY CAROLYN WADE (W12)



Morris News

We are back in the greenhouse/garden with Morris 5th graders on Tuesdays. The students recently studied compost in the classroom for a reading assignment. We expanded on their lesson by studying samples of our compost using magnifying lenses. Who would have thought bugs and worms could be exciting? We have taken a 'scavenger' hunt through the woods finding birds, mistletoe, a natural spring and so much more. In April we plan to take a self guided discovery tour of the Botanical Garden and plant our spring garden vegetables. Care to join us? We meet the students on Tuesdays at 11:30 from September until May.

USE SIGN UP GENIUS TO VOLUNTEER FOR OUR APRIL 22 AND 23 PLANT SALE



THE SPEAKERS BUREAU BY MELISSA KIRKINDALL (W98)

The Speakers Bureau has been active. Programs were given by Cookie Kruvad, Pam Price, and Doty Henry on Herb Gardening/Edible Landscaping for the Intern class on September 30.

Programs were also presented on “Garden Illusions” to the Redstone Garden Club on December 9, and on “Mistletoe” for HBG members on December 14.

Melissa Kirkindall presented a program on “Amazing Butterflies” for the Willowbrook Garden Club on February 9, and one on “Birds in Winter” for Redstone garden Club on February 10, and “Hummingbirds” for the Limestone County Master Gardeners on March 8.

More programs are scheduled for MGNA Speakers in March. We may be behind the scenes, but it is nice to see that MGNA Speakers are in demand.

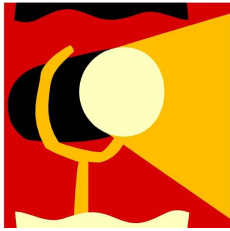
If your club or organization is looking for programs or presentations, we are a great resource.



“.. it is nice to see MGNA Speakers are in demand.”



2022 AMGA State Conference
“Behind the Garden Gate”
May 2-4, 2022
Embassy Suites by Hilton
300 Tallapoosa Street
Montgomery, Alabama



Liz Gould (F17)

Vice President

Liz Gould has been a master gardener in Texas and Alabama since 2000 but she has had her hands in the dirt for most of her life. The first of 4 children, she was born on a navy base. Liz spent the next 10 years traveling, living in Connecticut, California and Japan where the family lived in a fishing village near the base. When her father retired, they returned to his hometown in upstate New York where he tried his hand at farming. As part of her chores, Liz did her share of the farm work, getting her hands dirty helping to weed and harvest. They had 2 gardens: a little one that was close to the house and one that was close to a football field long. To this day Liz's dad is still growing his own vegetables at age 86.

In addition to growing crops, the family raised what she refers to as a "typical mix of farm animals"; horses, goats, bunnies, hamsters, guinea pigs, cats and dogs. She was an active member of 4H and, along with her sisters, enjoyed showing their animals until the family relocated to southern New Hampshire when she was 15.

As a young adult, Liz met her husband Bill while both were working for different departments in the same company; she was in finance, he was an engineer. Three years after their son Nick was born, they relocated to Huntsville in 1990 where she started her career as a full-time mom to Nick and his sister Emily who came along about 1 year and half later. The whole family considers Huntsville home.

In 1998, after 8 great years living in Southeast Huntsville, the family relocated to Dallas. Bill had a 3-4-year assignment that turned into 18 years. Liz was a constant volunteer at the kids' schools and was business manager of a family marital arts school that she and Bill started. Starting in 2000, she had the opportunity to join the Denton County Master Gardeners, part of the Texas Master Gardener program.

Enjoying her time as a TMG, Liz completed her Junior Master Gardener certification and began to work with local elementary schools and Girl Scout programs. Because of her strong interest and involvement in the program, John Cooper, the Denton County Ag Agent suggested Liz look into the Texas Master Naturalist program which he described as "Everything outside the garden gate". For 5 years, she was actively involved in both programs, including serving as Vice President and President of the Denton County Master Gardeners.

From 2005 to 2015, most of Liz's time was focused on family. With both kids finishing high school and attending local universities, and managing the family business, it was a busy time. In 2015, with Nick off to Grad School in Boston and Emily completing her degree at Texas Woman's University, it was finally time to come home to Alabama.

After settling into the Chaffee community in Southwest Huntsville, celebrating Nick's marriage in Boston and helping Emily move into her new home in Huntsville, it was time to look into the Alabama Master Gardener Program. While working as a realtor with Legend Realty, Liz started her training and became a Certified Master Gardener in Alabama in 2019. Since then, she has been active in a number of programs; helping with the plant sale, building of the greenhouse and subsequent dismantle, Ask a Master Gardener and planning field trips. She has also been a Harvest for Health mentor since 2019. In 2021, after retiring from real estate, Liz became a board member and is currently serving as Vice President.

A Word from our Prez



Janet Boothe (Wo6)

There are a lot of plant sales to visit during the months of April and May. Visit them but let our plant sale be the one you work for, contribute to and yes even buy from. Our Spring Plant Sale is this month, April 22nd – 23rd. Watch for emails asking for help. If some of your plants have out-grown their location, dig them up, pot them and let Cyndi Lindblom or Carol Weand know.

I'm thinking of Spring but when I look out my windows, I see 3" of snow and a chilly 16 degrees on the thermometer. This little hiccup in the weather will not stop the plans I have for Spring. I just laugh and boldly say, "I'm a Master Gardener, bring it on!"

April and May are always busy months as we tend our gardens and work on Master Gardener projects. I find myself volunteering more with MGNA's projects and neglecting my own garden. We all know it's more fun learning new things and about new plants than it is sweating and toiling in our beautiful clay soil.

There are workshops to attend (Membership Handbook, page 5, for list) and webinars to listen too. Try out one of our Projects or External Support Programs for volunteer opportunities. These also can be found in our Membership Handbook. There is a project just waiting for you!

Enjoy the Spring! Plant something new this year, especially for the Honeybees!



*"A gardener learns more in the mistakes than in the successes."
Barbara Dodge Borland*



March 29 “All About Tomatoes” Workshop

By Suzanne Kirkhuff (Wo7)

Photos by Janet Boothe (Wo6)



Dani Carroll speaking to us about tomato pests and insects.

We had two very knowledgeable speakers at this well attended workshop at the Agribition Center.

Dani Carroll, who is an extension agent for Lee County, spoke on tomato diseases and pests.

Dan Porch followed Dani with suggestions on various varieties of tomatoes and how to select the variety with the characteristics you desire. Dan retired in 2020 after serving as an extension agent for Blount County for over 30 years.



The attendees had plenty of questions for our experts.



Dan Porch discussing his favorite tomatoes



GARDEN THYMES

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Thank you to everyone who submitted articles and pictures and to our proof-readers. We would have no newsletter without you. . . . Editor

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

