

Project Feature:

Grandmother's Garden at Sloss Furnace

A group of Master Gardener interns from Jefferson county began a class project named "Recreating Grandmother's Garden at Sloss Furnace". These interns were awarded first place for The Search for Excellence in the Demonstration Garden category. After their graduation, this group along with other Master Gardeners continued work on Grandmother's Garden. They meet on Wednesdays from 9am to 11am each week. Anyone interested in joining them can contact Sallie Lee at leesall@auburn.edu.

This year, the group began Second Saturdays at Sloss where they host "Walks and Talks in Grandmother's Garden". During this event, the Master Gardeners educate the public about this wonderful garden which recreates a home garden of the early 20th century, before commercial fertilizers, hybrid seeds, and highly mechanized practices.

Photo (Below Left): Antonia Viteri is displaying some of the harvest from last fall. (Below Right): Linda Goode and Kitty Lineberry are shown accepting the award. Article and photos courtesy of Diane Remick



[Gardener Spotlight]

Marie Dyson of Mobile County describes her passion for low maintenance gardening.

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[Volunteer Opps]

Check out the many opportunities to volunteer across Alabama!

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[Mark Your Calendar!]

Spread the word about upcoming events like Lunch & Learn.

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Gardener Spotlight: Marie Dyson

Marie Dyson has been interested in gardening her entire life – she worked alongside her brothers and father in the yard growing up, and later in life she accomplished her goal of becoming a Master Gardener in 2007 after she retired. This year marks nine years that she's been a Master Gardener.



Of all the ways to garden, Marie's favorite is a low maintenance garden which requires very little, guess what, maintenance (water, pruning, fertilizer, etc.). She took a Water Smart class from Extension to expand her knowledge of the principles behind this gardening style. Key components are to: 1. assess the garden space to decide the best plants and 2. let the design adapt to the conditions of the yard over time. There are specific questions one should consider before starting a garden: What do you want to plant? How much time do you have to devote to the garden? What are the resources currently available in your space? Marie prefers her gardens to cross all the seasons, providing blooms all year with a variety of plants. She recommends using azaleas and camellias in shadier spots, gardenias in the sun, and emphasizes the use of "bulbs, bulbs, and bulbs!" everywhere. Because of the variety of bulbs available, a different bulb can be blooming every week. Marie highlights that perennials and native plants should be

used whenever possible. She also encourages you to incorporate colorful plants that attract bees, hummingbirds and other birds into the yard. They complete a garden.

When asked to describe some of the things she has learned over her many years of gardening, Marie replied, "There's so much I've learned!" Everything from which plants work best in certain conditions to details about the plants themselves, such as botanical names and varieties of each, fell into a list of what she has added to her knowledge bank. Marie continues to learn by working the Master Gardener Helpline – A service offered by the Alabama Cooperative Extension for homeowners to call in questions regarding their own lawn and gardens. Marie not only benefits by learning new material, but she finds satisfaction knowing she helps other people learn too. She boasted, "The Master Gardeners are a resourceful group of people and tapping into that knowledge bank would be advantageous to anyone."

For other gardeners, Marie advises to "experiment." They should experiment with different garden programs, plants, and soil types and techniques. Marie suggests, "get a bunch of plants and try them." And as you are learning, teach other people – they want to learn, too.

Photo: courtesy Ellen Huckabay

Volunteering Across Alabama

Autauga County Master Gardeners

Demonstration Garden Workdays

When: Every Tues. and Thurs. at 8:00 AM
Governor's Mansion Workdays every Monday

Claybank Master Gardeners

Dale County Lake Walking Trail

Contact Carole Ball at (334) 774-5353

Ozark First United Methodist Church Meditation Garden

Contact Jan Lisenby at (334) 774-6998

The Ozark-Dale County Public Library

Contact Carole Ball at (334) 774-5353

Calhoun County Master Gardeners

Cane Creek Gardens

When: every Tuesday morning
 Where: Anniston, AL

Chilton County Master Gardeners

Demonstration Garden

When: Mondays and Thursdays at 9:00AM
 Where: Chilton Research and Extension
 Center (CREC)

Pruning Days

When: Mondays and Thursdays at 8:00AM
 Where: CREC

Craft Days

Contact Sondra Henley at (205) 567-3333

Lee County Master Gardeners

Kiesel Park Demonstration Garden

When: Most Tuesday mornings at 9:00
 Contact Charlot Ritenbaugh (334) 750-1984

Caroline Dean Wildflower Trail

When: 8:00 – 10:00 AM, 2nd & 4th Tuesdays
 Where: Municipal Park; Opelika, AL
 Contact: Spencer Roy, 334-744-0769

East Alabama Home & Garden Show

When: April 9, 8:00 am-2:00 pm
 Contact: Raleine Sillman (334) 663-1948

Auburn City Fest

When: April 30
 Contact Charlot Ritenbaugh (334) 750-1984

Tuscaloosa County Master Gardeners

Eagles' Wings

When: Wednesday mornings
 Where: Coker, AL

Hospice of West Alabama

When: Wednesday mornings
 Where: Tuscaloosa, AL
 Contact Judith Rives, jjarives@gmail.com

Shoals Master Gardeners

Florence Community Gardens

When: TBA, call the office

Wiregrass Master Gardeners

Dothan Area Botanical Garden

When: Mondays, 8:00 AM
 What: Maintain demonstration beds

Helpline Reminder!

Please volunteer to work the Helpline this spring in one of the following counties.

Autauga	Etowah	Madison
Baldwin	Jefferson	Mobile
Chilton	Lauderdale	Montgomery
Elmore	Lee	



Find us on
Facebook

Alabama Master Gardener Helpline

Mark Your Calendar!

Join and promote the following events

April Lunch & Learn:

Lunch & Learn occurs once a month, shares a new topic every event, and takes place from 12:00—1:00 p.m. Drinks are provided, but tell friends to bring a sack lunch. L&L are a cooperative effort between Extension Agents and several hard working crews of Master Gardeners.

5	Houston County: Topic: Flowers Where: Houston-Love Memorial Library	12	East Central County: Topic: What is Biochar? Where: Randolph Co. Equine & Ag Center
5	Blount County: Topic: Color in the Landscape Where: Blount Co. Extension Office	13	Morgan County: Topic: Propagation Where: Aquadome, Decatur
6	Montgomery County: Topic: Growing Tomatoes Where: Armory Learning Arts Center	18	Mobile County: Topic: Layering Camellias Where: Jon Archer Ag Center
7	Autauga County: Topic: Pruning Tools and Techniques Where: Christ Lutheran Church	21	Cherokee County: Topic: All About Bees Where: Cherokee Co. Public Library, Centre
9	Dale County: Topic: Vegetable Gardening Where: Dale Co. Extension Office	26	St. Clair County: Topic: Spring Splendor Where: Mike Rushing's Garden, Coal City
12	Elmore County: Topic: Goats - From Start to Finish Where: Elmore Co. Extension Office		

Have a cool story or project you'd like to share? We'd love to hear what your association is doing in your community. Contact us so we can learn more and publish it in an upcoming *Volunteer Opp's!*

Kerry Smith — smithkp@auburn.edu

Mary Mathis — mem0076@auburn.edu

Produced by Kira Chaloupka & Mary Mathis, ACES Home Grounds Assistants

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