



DIRTY DIGS



Autauga County Master Gardeners Association

August 2014

ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, ELEVATE

Next Meeting

August 14,
2014

Meeting Location:

First Baptist
Church

@9:00 AM

Guest Article: Submitted by Nancy Waggoner



The Transforming Gardener

I never really liked gardening, you know. It's hot, messy, dirty, tiring and wormy. My mother loved to garden but then, she had the gene for making superb pie crusts from scratch. I do not.

Sometime after retiring from full time work in 2003, I complained to my husband that our backyard was just blah-a few overgrown shrubs, trees, spindly grass, and the obligatory petunia-filled half whisky barrel. What to do? Have it landscaped, he suggested; it took a few years to get to it, but eventually the time was right.

Eny-meeny is how I found a landscaper. I just drove around looking for a business; talk about dumb luck. Karen Wainwright and her mother Mary Smotherman have a landscaping and lawn care business and I spotted their sign; I asked Karen if she wanted the job, she said yes and that was that. So much for research, references and background.

Planning and planting

We sat down to plan the project sometime in the spring of 2006. My back yard is shallow; the house is situated on a corner lot and there is enough grass in front and on one side to build a small putting green. (Oh, how I wanted a bigger back yard when we moved in in 1976 and, oh, how glad I am now that I didn't get what I wanted!) Mature existing trees were: two dogwoods, a sweet gum, a pecan, and several varieties of oak; shade was abundant. This yard has good bones, Karen praised. Well, that was good news I thought, so maybe this will work.

A shed was needed for storage, an old fence was to be replaced, and after all that, I needed as many easy-come-up-every-year plants as possible (*perennial* I was later to learn); I asked if some of them could keep their leaves in winter (that word is *ever-green*) and could we keep it casual and informal? With that, she drew some sketches and suggested plantings of trees and shrubs as a framework for the garden. Those would be planted in the late fall/winter of 2006; smaller perennials would be installed the following spring. A shaded area centrally located under a sweet gum tree would be a place for "color beds"- ground cover and annuals such as impatiens. The ground cover was to be existing wild violets (See "weeds" Dirty Digs June/July 2010). My job was to get the shed built and the fence put up. By November, we were ready to go.

Karen and Mary planted, to the best of my recollection, Japanese maples, a Japanese weeping maple, a tea olive, encore azalas, gardenias, acuba, knockout roses and nandina. In the area designated "color beds", pansies were put in for the winter. Frankly, it looked a little sparse to me, but it was a start. In the spring, they planted ornamental grasses, perennial ferns, and numerous varieties of hostas. Under the sweet gum tree, in the shade, they carved out from

the wild violets, little cleared areas where they put impatiens and torenia. I was eager for things to happen, so over the next year or so, I had more added. A friend and new landscape architect graduate, Mark Spurlin, added a few cyprus trees. Karen and Mary added limelight and oak leaf hydrangeas, Japanese yew, Japanese spirea, kaleidoscope abelia, lorapedalum and regular azaleas.



Note the oak tree.

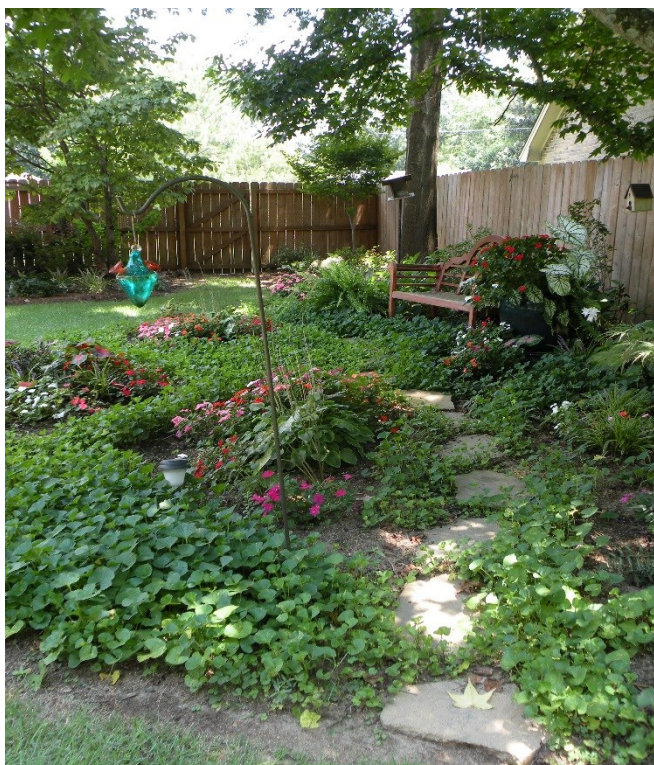


The new shed was loaded with garden tools

My husband, always resistant to change, admitted, that first summer, that the backyard looked pretty. He passed away in February 2008, so I am so grateful that he got to see it beginning to look good.

Caretaker needed

This really happened: One day, as Karen and Mary were adding yet more plants, it occurred to me that I was going to have to take care of the garden and, frankly, I found this intimidating. I asked Mary how I might be able to learn. She suggested that I become a Master Gardener. What is a Master Gardener? I honestly did not know. Obediently, I found an application, completed it, was accepted; and the rest is history. I have often said that, as a beginner, I didn't know what I didn't know. Today I know what I don't know about gardening and this sets me up for a lifetime of learning by reading, talking to and volunteering with smart people and benefitting from my mistakes.



One of the most meaningful classes of my internship year was *Annuals and Perennials* taught by Jason Powell of Petals from the Past of Jemison. I knew that, with much shade and part shade, vegetable gardening was going to be out of the question and not really suitable for my needs. I wanted a lush flower garden and set out to accomplish just that.

Slowly at first, but encouraged by some successes, I started to fill in here and there. I replanted the annual color beds each year and, looking back, I realized that I used quite a few annuals elsewhere at first. Good old marigolds and reliable zinnias were plants I knew and could depend on. However, I noticed that in one of the beds I wasn't having much luck with my little flowering plants. They were situated near azaleas and gardenias which I had dutifully slathered with appropriate fertilizer after blooming; after all, I had just learned about doing that and do that I was going to do! But I had also learned about soil Ph and began to suspect that I was frying my poor little flowering bedding plants in too much acidity from their neighbors the azaleas and gardenias. Armed with a little knowledge and a lot of gut feeling, I splurged on two soil sample tests: one in the center of the bed near the azaleas and gardenias, and one for the periphery where I had not used a specialty fertilizer. Sure enough, the numbers backed up my hypothesis and the azaleas and gardenias moved to another spot in the yard to live near other acid heads. Just looking at the soil told me that amending was needed, so I added some organic material and replanted flowering plants. Today, they are thriving. I was proud of what I had learned in MG classes!

Impatiens and Caladiums in shady beds.

Note the oak tree pictured center. Today it is not there.

Sudden change

Several summers back during the nasty drought we endured here in Alabama, I noticed that a limb on an oak tree in the back of the yard by the fence was dead. I called a tree trimmer to come remove it. He and his buddy climbed up, removed it, then informed me that the squirrels, in quest for moisture, had stripped all the bark off the rest of the branches and the tree was dying. I had no way of verifying this, was in a hurry to go somewhere, so I agreed to let him take it down. When I got home that afternoon, the change was sickening. What had once been a lovely, cool shaded spot was now a glaring, seemingly empty space. The tree stump had to be left because it was too tight a spot for a grinding equipment.

It didn't take long for hostas, impatiens, and other shade desiring plants to wither in the brain-boiling heat. Wild violets, my lovely weeds turned ground cover weren't happy either. Well, fast-forward through the stages of grief and get on with it, I told myself. Some time that fall and/or spring, I started transplanting hostas to other shade/part shade areas. Most of those transplants survived. I divided and transplanted some Shasta daisies and black-eyed susans from a sunny spot to this new sunny bed. I noticed that this new bed would have full sun until two in the afternoon. I have gradually added sun loving plants to this bed and I now think it is wonderful; I would not wish that oak tree back. Not only daisies and black eyed susans thrive, but lovely coreopsis, phlox, sunflowers, Brazilian bog sage, lantana, sunpatiens, butterfly bush, marigolds, and numerous other flowers grow well in the sun. The biggest bonus, one that I had not thought of, is that grass, Empire Zoisia, is now a thick carpet extending all the way in a path to the gate.

Under the Sweet Gum tree

The central shade bed, under the sweet gum, now was part shady and part sunny. Previously, this had all been shade flowers in one color theme. It has taken a few years to work out a compromise with the sun. I thought that vinca would work just fine on the left side of the bed where the sun blazes much of the day. They did not do well. Last summer, I tried sunpatiens, a variety of impatiens that tolerates full sun. They have done well on the left, or sunny side of the bed. Although they require a great deal of water, they have been a good substitute for regular impatiens and fit in with the look and color of the rest of the flowering plants in shade. Additionally, I have discovered that polka dot plant, miniature phlox, dwarf caladium, flowering creeping jenny, dwarf heuchera, plumbago and snapdragon seem to do well in sun part of the day. Wild violets, once a thick groundcover, are less prolific, but are left to meander throughout the flowers to add their interesting leaf shape and color. I use dark brown mulch to help keep the weeds down



Looking ahead

Perennials are gradually replacing annuals in the garden. It is exciting to learn about the great variety of plants available. I am just now beginning to be able to pass along plants to others and have more to donate to our Master Gardeners annual plant sale. My goal is to photograph the beds each year, plan moves and additions and to buy permanent labels so that I and others can identify the variety of each cultivar. How grateful I am to Karen and Mary who had the vision to see the potential in my yard with "great bones". What a journey this has been and what a joy it is to walk through the garden, particularly in the morning and evening. I am mindful of that wonderful old hymn, *In the Garden*. I was asked to write this article, describing the transformation of my yard over the few years. The transformation has been more than that of my yard.

Now I really love gardening.

Nancy Waggoner

Autauga County Master Gardener

July, 2014



August 2014

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1	2 <i>Farmer's Market</i>
3 <i>Watermelon day</i>	4 <i>Governor's Man- sion 8-11</i>	5 <i>Demo Garden 8:00 AM</i>	6 <i>Helpline</i>	7 <i>Prattvillage 7:30 AM</i>	8 <i>ACMGA Bd meeting</i>	9 <i>Farmer's Market</i>
10	11 <i>Governor's Man- sion 8-11</i>	12 <i>Demo Garden 8:00 AM</i>	13 <i>Helpline</i>	14 <i>ACMGA meeting FBC 9 AM</i>	15 <i>Deadline to regis- ter for intern class</i>	16 <i>Farmer's Market Daylily meeting (see flyer)</i>
17	18 <i>Governor's Man- sion 8-11 First Day of School in Autauga County</i>	19 <i>Demo Garden 8:00 AM</i>	20 <i>Helpline</i>	21 <i>Prattvillage 7:30 AM</i>	22	23 <i>Farmer's Market</i>
24	25 <i>Governor's Man- sion 8-11</i>	26 <i>Demo Garden 8:00 AM</i>	27 <i>Helpline</i>	28 <i>Prattvillage 7:30 AM</i>	29	30 <i>Farmer's Market AU and UA first football game</i>
31						

September 2014

AM-
GASun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p> <p><i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u></p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>Intern Class be-</i> <i>gins</i></p> <p><i>Helpline</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p><i>Prattvillage 7:30</i> <u>AM</u></p>	<p>5</p> <p><i>ACMGA Bd Meet</i></p>	<p>6</p> <p><i>Deadline for</i> <i>registration for</i> <i>AMGA Fall Con-</i> <i>ference (see flyer)</i></p>
7	<p>8</p> <p><i>Governor's Man-</i> <i>sion 8-11</i></p>	<p>9</p> <p><i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u></p>	<p>10</p> <p><i>Intern class</i></p> <p><i>Helpline</i></p>	<p>11</p> <p><i>Prattvillage 7:30</i> <u>AM</u></p> <p><i>ACMGA meeting</i> <u>FBC 6 PM</u></p>	12	13
14	<p>15</p> <p><i>Governor's Man-</i> <i>sion 8-11</i></p>	<p>16</p> <p><i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u></p> <p><i>AMGA Fall Sem-</i> <i>inar (see flyer)</i></p>	<p>17</p> <p><i>Intern class</i></p> <p><i>Trip to Hyundai</i> <u>8:30 AM</u></p> <p><i>Helpline</i></p>	<p>18</p> <p><i>Prattvillage 7:30</i> <u>AM</u></p>	19	20
21	<p>22</p> <p><i>Governor's Man-</i> <i>sion 8-11</i></p>	<p>23</p> <p><i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u></p> <p><i>First Day of Fall</i></p>	<p>24</p> <p><i>Intern Class</i></p> <p><i>Helpline</i></p>	<p>25</p> <p><i>Prattvillage 7:30</i> <u>AM</u></p>	26	27
28	<p>29</p> <p><i>Governor's Man-</i> <i>sion 8-11</i></p> <p><i>More herbs and</i> <i>less salt day</i></p>	<p>30</p> <p><i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u></p>				



By Mallory Kelley
Regional Extension Agent
Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests



"Crazy Ants"

With over 150 resident ant species in Alabama, you would think there is NO room for more! Meet the Tawny crazy ant, *Nylanderia fulva*. Tawny crazy ants have been in the surrounding states of Mississippi, Florida, and Georgia for years, but we now have confirmation of them in Mobile County, Alabama. This is the first confirmed sighting in Alabama.

Tawny crazy ants were formerly known as Raspberry crazy ants, Caribbean or hairy crazy ants. They were originally found in Florida in 1953. Since their discovery they have been sighted across south east Texas, Louisiana, central and southern Florida and found last year in Albany GA. Tawny crazy ants are native to Northern Argentina and Southern Brazil. They are small brown ants that are less than 2mm long. Under a microscope or hand lens, you can see the hairy body of the ants. Despite their small size, it's their incredible populations that give them away.

In the United States, crazy ant populations are 100 times greater than other ant species. Because of the sheer number of tawny crazy ants, food sources are limited for other ant species. This is especially true for fire ants which are displaced due to the tawny crazy ants. That may sound like good news for those of us inundated with fire ant mounds. However, the sheer numbers (millions) in a tawny ant colony is pretty scary. In areas where they have been found for years, it is not at all uncommon, to shovel dead Tawny crazy ants by the 5 gallon bucket full. They are very opportunistic ants, invading electrical boxes, campers, homes, and practically anything 'just lying around'.

Tawny crazy ants do not have stingers. Good news, right? Instead of a stinger, the workers have a specialized pore on the end of their abdomen. It will excrete chemicals for defense or attack. Tawny crazy ants are very social ants and colonies may not be distinguished from one another reaching super colony status. They also have polygyne colonies which means colonies may contain several queen ants. This means that the population of tawny crazy ants increases rapidly. The foraging trails of these ants are very apparent and their movement is very erratic, which often looks as though the ground is moving. The trail of ants may also follow structural lines around buildings.

Tawny crazy ants, unlike red imported fire ants are not spreading by mating flights. Current research suggests that Tawny crazy ants must be picked up and moved by

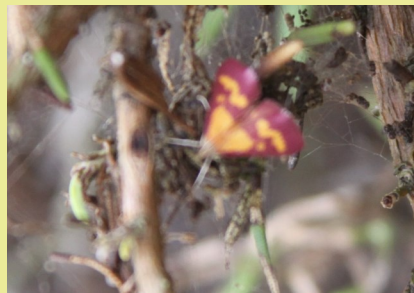
us. Tawny crazy ants may invade campers when you are on vacation. They may be present in potted plants or anything that they are able to crawl in. It is extremely important to check anything being moved from a known infested area. This is how the Tawny crazy ant spreads to new locations.

Because of the numbers and biology of the Tawny crazy ant they are hard to control, manage may be a better word. When they invade homes, indoor insecticides are just not enough since the colonies are often nesting outdoors. In our own yards and gardens, remove anything that may become a nesting site such as firewood piles, potted plants, thick pinestraw and yard debris. Tawny crazy ants prefer humid, wet conditions which is another reason to plant drought tolerant plants that do not need irrigation as often as others. Crazy ants are seldom attracted to the bait products that are used for the management of fire ants. These guys are often managed in infested areas with contact pesticides applied in buffer zones around structures. For home owners, using pest control operators is usually the best option.

Remember that people are responsible for spreading Tawny Crazy ants. Please check anything that is moved from an infested site before bringing it home.



What's Bugging You?



Not an easy one. Picture taken in my yard.

Do You know the name of this critter? Is it beneficial or destructive or both?

Answer and information can be found on Page 18

The article below was sent to the media and is included for your information.



Master Gardener Program Announcement

By Mallory Kelley
Regional Extension Agent
Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests

Would you like to become a Master Gardener? The Autauga County Extension office is in the process of recruiting a Master Gardener class for Fall 2014. Classes will begin Wednesday, September 3rd so get your applications in now. The deadline to register is Friday, August 15th, 2014.

The Master Gardener Program is a nationwide Extension Education Program designed for non-professionals with interest in increasing their gardening skills and helping others with the knowledge they have gained.

The program will consist of 12 weeks of class and hands on training. After completing the courses, the Master Gardener interns will be expected to give 10 hours of service to the Master Gardener Helpline and 40 hours of volunteer service to Extension and/or their communities.

Examples of volunteer efforts include: Talking to Garden Clubs, community garden projects, outdoor school projects, educational workshops, or assisting the local Cooperative Extension Office in some way.

The courses on gardening will be taught by specialist, county agents, and veteran Master Gardeners on subjects such as: Soils and Plant Nutrition, Plant Physiology, Plant Propagation, Care of Landscape Plants, Landscape Design, Lawn Care, Weed Identification, Vegetable Gardening, Herbs, Composting, and many more.

The Autauga County Master Gardener class will be held on Wednesdays from 9-2:00 at the Autauga County Extension Office in Autaugaville beginning September 3rd through December 3rd 2014.

****If a fall class does not make, your applications will be held for the potential of a spring 2015 course on the same day and time (February 11th- April 29th).**

For an application please contact the Autauga County Office at (334) 361-7273. The fee associated with this class is \$125.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

A class is being planned for this Fall. Please help us find interested people who might want to take the class and get them an application. As of now we need about eight more people to register to have a class.

Autauga County Fall Master Gardener Class

Important Facts to Know:

Application should be mailed to Kerry Smith (Autauga County Master Gardener Program):
101 Funchess Hall, Auburn University, Al 36849

The background check forms will be placed in a secure location until time for the class to begin.

Your application must be in no later than Friday August 15th to be considered for the class.

Auburn will provide the Autauga County Extension office with the names of applicants who passed the background check. Approximately 20 applications will be selected for the class. Those selected will receive an acceptance letter in the mail around August 20th.

The fee of \$125.00 is due after you are selected, but before the first class to secure your seat.

Classes will be held at the **Autauga County Extension office in Autaugaville** each **Wednesday from 9-2:00** starting **September 3rd through December 3rd**.

Graduation requirements for Master Gardener Certification include:

- 1. Class Attendance (missed classes must be made up)**
- 2. A passing grade on the weekly take-home tests**
- 3. 50 hours of Volunteer Service (10 of the 50 hours) are to be done at 2 Mandatory 5 hour sessions on the telephone helpline.**

Graduation will be held in August of 2015.

You are considered an Intern until graduation.

Deadline for applications: Friday, August 15th.

Wild About Our Back Yards



Seminar Sessions...

1. All About Eagles
2. Easy Gardens For The South
3. Nature Calls: Photographing Your Backyard and Beyond
4. Landscaping That Works
(Full Day = 4 CEU's)



AMGA 2014 Fall Seminar

September 16, 2014
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Guntersville
State Park
Goldenrod Room

Registration: \$25
Payable to:
Marshall County
Master Gardeners
(MCMG)

Send Registration
and Check to:

Wilma Tanner
80 Ensley Drive
Arab, AL 35016



9-9:30 – Registration

Morning Sessions:

9:30 – Welcome

9:45 – Patti Donnellan,



Lake Guntersville State
Park Naturalist

All About Eagles

10:45 – Harvey Cotton,



Vice President & Chief Horticulturist
Huntsville Botanical Garden, Co-Author of
Easy Gardens For the South
Books will be available for purchase/signing

Box Lunch 11:45-12:30

Provided by Guntersville State Park

**12:30 – David Moore, Publisher and Editor of
Good Life Magazine**



**Nature Calls: Photographing
Your Backyard and Beyond**

**1:30 – George Bennett,
President of Bennett Nurseries, Inc.**



**Make Your Landscape
Interesting!**

Plants will be available to purchase

**AMGA 2014
Fall Seminar**

September 16, 2014
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Lake Guntersville
State Park
1155 Lodge Drive
Guntersville, AL 35976
256-571-5440
800-548-4553

Goldenrod Room

Registration: \$25
Payable to:
Marshall County
Master Gardeners
(MCMG)

Send Registration and
Check to:

Wilma Tanner
80 Ensley Drive
Arab, AL 35016

256-586-8615



Alabama A&M and
Auburn Universities



AMGA Fall Seminar:
Wild About Our Back Yards- September 16, 2014

Name:

MGA Affiliation:

Address:

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

We encourage you to wear your official Master Gardener name tags.

Registration forms must be received by September 6, 2014.*

The \$25 will include morning snack, a lunch and drink.

Box Lunch Choices: ___ Cold Cut Sandwich
 ___ Chicken Salad on croissants
(Select One) ___ Pulled Pork Barbeque on bun

All box lunches include potato chips, fruit salad, tea and pickle slices.

For more information contact:

Wilma Tanner, 256-586-8615/email: wtanner@otelco.net or

Linda Widner, 256-586-7483/email: widner@otelco.net

Please mail your check made out to MCMG along with this form to:

Wilma Tanner
80 Ensley Drive
Arab, AL 35016

*Refunds will be decided on a case by case basis and cannot be guaranteed after lunches are ordered.



AMGA 2014

Fall Seminar

September 16, 2014
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Directions from within Alabama:
(As you can see by these directions, all roads lead to Guntersville State Park. If we missed covering the directions from your location, give us a call and we will be glad to assist you. Should you choose to use an internet mapping service and it tells you to take Martling as your route into the park, we encourage you to stay on the main roads of Highways 431 and 227 instead. The roads through Martling can be confusing and cause you to become lost if you are not familiar with this community.)

Auburn - Take Hwy. 431 North towards Anniston. Stay on Hwy. 431 into Guntersville. Turn onto Alabama Highway 227 South and follow into Guntersville State Park.

Birmingham - Take I-59 North to Gadsden and exit onto Hwy. 431. Follow Hwy. 431 North to Guntersville. Turn onto Hwy. 227 South into Guntersville State Park.

Montgomery - Take I-65 North to I-459 North to I-59 North to Gadsden. Take the Hwy. 431 exit and follow Hwy. 431 North to Guntersville. Turn onto Hwy. 227 South into Guntersville State Park.

Lodging:

Lake
Guntersville
State Park Lodge
1155 Lodge Drive
Guntersville, AL 35976

Reservations:

256-571-5440
800-548-4553

www.alapark.com/lakeguntersville/

Chamber Of Commerce:

Albertville
256-878-3821

Arab
256-586-3138

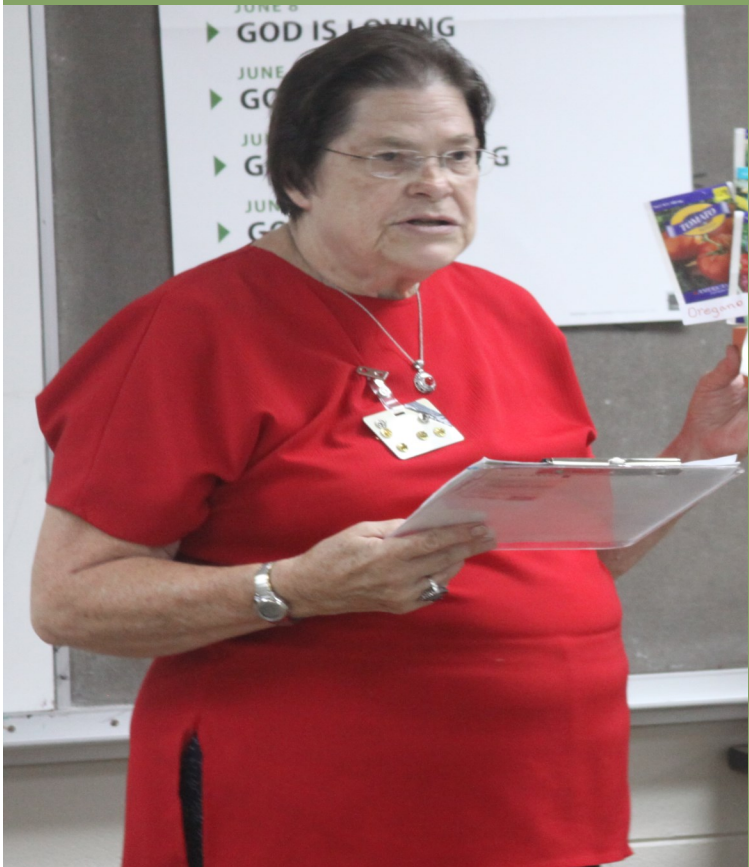
Guntersville
256-582-3612





Farmer's Market

Lynn Yarbrough, Deb Hill, and Ann Fuller enjoying the MG booth on a cool Saturday morning at the Autauga County Farmer's Market. Lynn reports that approximately 50 people visited the booth each Saturday and that around 30 people wanted intern applications during the month of July. The booth will be set up throughout August and there are still slots for volunteers. Please see Lynn Yarbrough and volunteer for one of these Saturdays. Everyone who has worked reports that it is a fun time to experience the Market.



Carolyn Gray gave a presentation on Roasting fresh vegetables at the Farmer's Market.

Alabama Gardener's Calendar

August

Fruits and Nuts

- Cut out old blackberry canes after fruiting and then fertilize and cultivate for replacement canes.
- Remember to order new catalogs for fruit selection.

Shrubs

- Layer branches of hydrangea.

Lawns

- Watch for diseases.
- Mow regularly.
- Water as needed.

Roses

- Keep roses healthy and actively growing.
- Hybrid teas and floribundas may need slight pruning to prevent scraggly appearance.

Annuals and Perennials

- Water as needed. Plant perennials and biennials.

Bulbs

- Divide old iris plantings and add new ones.

Miscellaneous

- Keeping flowers, shrubs, trees, and lawns healthy is the major task during this month.
- This means close observation for insects and diseases.
- Water.

Vegetable Seed

- Plant turnips, rutabagas, beans, and peas in south Alabama.

Vegetable Plants

- Plant cabbage, collards, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, and celery



All Bugs Good and Bad

2014 Webinar Series

Please join us for this webinar series for information you can use about good and bad insects. Webinars will be on the first Friday of each month at 2 p.m. Eastern.

- February 7** If Flowers are Restaurants to Bees, Then What Are Bees to Flowers?
Dr. John Skinner
- March 7** Straight Talk About Termites
Dr. Xing Ping Hu
- April 4** Get TickSmart: 10 Things to Know, 5 Things to Do
Dr. Thomas Mather
- May 2** Are Those Itsy Bitsy Spiders Good or Bad?
Dr. Nancy Hinkle
- June 6** Fire Ant Management
Elizabeth Brown
- August 1** Minimize Mosquito Problems
Molly Keck
- September 5** Kudzu Bug Takes Over the Southeastern U.S./Brown Marmorated Stinkbug—All Bad
Dr. Michael Toews/Dr. Tracy Leskey
- October 3** Alien Invasions, Zombies Under Foot, and Billions of Decapitated Fire Ants
Dr. Sanford Porter
- November 7** Where Have All the Honey Bees Gone? Hope for the Future
Dr. John Skinner



For more information on the series and how to connect to the webinars, visit: <http://www.extension.org/pages/70120>.



Brought to you by these eXtension Communities of Practice: Imported Fire Ants, Urban IPM, Bee Health, Invasive Species, & Gardens and Landscapes.



Citations for pictures: Jim Occi, BugPics, bugwood.org; Jerry A. Payne, USDA-ARS, bugwood.org; Nadeer Youssef, TN State Univ.; USDA ARS Photo Unit, USDA-ARS, bugwood.org; David Cappaert, Michigan State University, bugwood.org; Sturgis McKeever, Georgia Southern University, bugwood.org.

Hummingbird Award for July.



Lynn Yarbrough was awarded the Hummingbird Award at the July meeting. Lynn came up with the idea to have a booth at the Autauga County Farmer's Market. She organized these events and made sure they were staffed each week. This promoted Master Gardeners and helped recruit new interns for the upcoming class. The booth has been a great success as around 50 people visit the booth each Saturday.





July Monthly Meeting

Our regular meeting was held on July 10, 2014 at the First Baptist Church. Our own Carolyn Gray, Master Gardener, gave the program on companion plants for the garden. These plants help repel bad insects and other pests from our planted gardens.

Important Announcements

From Pam Olson: Here's your monthly reminder to bring items for the "Cultivating Our Community" project with you to the next meeting. Pam Olson usually collects them. If she's not at the meeting, Nancy Waggoner steps in. This is our sister project to the Prattville-Autauga Demonstration Garden. Produce from the garden supplies fresh vegetables to AICC, Autauga Interfaith Care Center – our county's food bank. But people who need a temporary helping hand have many needs in addition to food. Cleaning products, both personal and for the home, can take a big bite out of one's wallet yet are essential for one's dignity. We, as individual members, help supply the non-food items. AICC is in constant need of: **adult toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, dish detergent, laundry detergent, and household cleaners.** Smaller-sized store brand cleaning products are better because your dollars put products into more bags at the center. Sample sizes of any of the items are okay, too. Anything is appreciated! As with all our MG projects, participation is optional.

New Item Requested for "Cultivating Our Community" Project

We have a new item to add to the other six we regularly collect for AICC – **adult toothbrushes.** The center has finally run out of the generous supply donated by a local dentist. Thank you for your generosity. AICC is always grateful for our donations.

PALS Beautification Award

Anytime you see a yard that you would like to nominate for this award and do not have a nomination form, please get the information to me, Rose McCauley, by regular mail, email or drop it by my home. Include the following -

Your name and contact information

Category - Private House, Business, School, Government

Nominee's Name (if you have it)

Nominee's Address

Nominee's Phone Number (if you have it)

Directions

Reasons for Nomination

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Rose McCauley

Helpline Notes (Important)

Kerry Smith and Mallory Kelly have asked us to do a pilot program in Autauga County to help with a survey of those that have attended workshops. Not only does this help ACES but it also helps us to be busy during down times. Since we are averaging about two calls per week, we have a lot of downtime. We are in the midst of doing the first survey and have been able to contact 12 people and ask them 5 simple questions. If you are scheduled to do the helpline, you will notice a stack of survey sheets, names and phone numbers of those to be called, and detailed instructions. All the names of people contacted have been highlighted so you won't unnecessarily call them. After you contact someone please highlight their name. Everyone that we have been able to reach has been positive. We only have to contact 20 of the 60 people that attended the workshop. This will let ACES know if the workshops are actually making a difference in people's lives. If this pilot program works out, it may be implemented state wide.



Forget Me Not

By Pam Olson

“IF IT’S NOT REPORTED, IT DIDN’T HAPPEN”

I once heard that catchphrase from an Extension Agent, and it confirmed how vitally important it is to report our volunteer hours and CEU’s. We might work long and hard on a Master Gardener project that benefits dozens in our community, but if we don’t report the hours, as far as Extension is concerned, **it never even happened.**

I recently asked Kerry Smith, State MG Program Coordinator, for her take on this, and here’s her response to us – “The MG hours validate the existence of our staff who support the MG program – and at the same time validate our whole program team, ‘home grounds’ – MG is our largest time commitment in a single year – it’s not a dollar to dollar relationship, but seeing that volunteers work in support of Mallory shows her additional community impact and so shows her time well spent with you.”

We sometimes hear members of our association say the “Reach for the Stars” awards program isn’t what’s important to them, so they only report their more significant projects. I respect them for their altruism, but to use current slang, that is SO not the point!!! If someone wants to bow out of the “Stars” program, that’s perfectly all right. In fact, we have a member who does just that. **But our total hours help indicate Mallory’s impact on the community and her value to Extension as our MG sponsoring agent.**

We know our role as MG’s is to be an extension of Extension, or more specifically an extension of Mallory, but how’s the Central Administration of Extension going to know how well we’re accomplishing that? How will it know the real value of the MG program in our county? The only way to quantify our efforts is through our total hours and total contacts each year.

There’s an additional focus now on the stories that accompany the numbers. Each story paints a picture of the quality of our projects and the new and different audiences we’re reaching, but the numbers back up the story, just as the story illustrates the numbers. Both are needed to assess the benefit of our work for the people of Alabama.

You may say you report most of your hours. If “most” means 90-95%, that’s terrific! If “most” means 75% or even less, Extension is missing out on much-needed data. Unless you keep a written diary, waiting to report service information online often leads to lower numbers being reported. Even though it’s already August, only 2/3 of our members who have Internet access have reported any 2014 hours. Please take time to report your hours or bring your record up to date, and don’t forget travel time. It’s a significant part of our volunteering that really adds up.

This isn’t about stars or even bragging rights when our county closes out a year in the top fifteen associations statewide. It’s about proving that Mallory is worth her weight in platinum, along with Kerry and every member of the Home Grounds Team. It’s about proving that MG’s are making a big difference by reaching more people with more projects. It’s about maximizing our influence on the numbers in Kerry’s annual report. We know we’re doing the work, now let’s make sure we can prove it.

If you have any questions or need a review on using the online Service Report, you know I’m always happy to help. Email or call me: polsonhome@charter.net, 361-7030.

Harvest For Health

A grant from UAB has allowed the opportunity for Master Gardeners to mentor cancer survivors in hopes that it will continue to improve their health and well-being.

In short, UAB is looking for approximately 25 Master Gardeners from the Autauga, Elmore and Montgomery region who would be interested in mentoring a cancer survivor in the area of Vegetable Gardening.

You will attend an orientation in the coming weeks for a refresher in vegetable gardening and to learn any other specifics about the program. Then another meeting is scheduled where all the Master Gardeners will meet their cancer survivor.

UAB will be providing all the materials and supplies for the vegetable garden and you will be providing the expertise.

Your involvement is to make contact with the cancer survivor 2 times per month. One time is through phone and the other face to face to help them in their garden. The program will start in September and last one year!

The hopeful outcome of this program is to improve the quality of life of the survivor, not only through nutritional food, but also through exercise and overall well-being. You all know the sense of worth and satisfaction you get from picking and cooking something you grew.

Please let me know if you are interested in being a mentor by emailing me at:
jones57@auburn.edu

Thank you,

Mallory Kelley

Here is a video about it that is also helpful:

<http://www.uab.edu/news/innovation/item/4827-gardens-help-cancer-survivors-cope-heal-and-grow+fdfeature>

May have to copy above link and paste in your browser.

JUNE TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer's Report June 2014

BEGINNING BALANCE		\$7,068.46
REVENUE	\$ -	
REVENUE SUBTOTAL		<hr/> \$7,068.46
CHECKS/EXPENSES		
716 Linda Parrish- Prattvillage	\$ 92.50	
717 Rose McCauley- L&L	\$ 11.12	
718 Carroll Bonifay-Prattvillage	\$ 103.90	
719 AMGA-Scholarship Endowment Fund	\$ 308.00	
721 Mark Carmichael-Prattvillage/mower	\$ 185.06	
Water-Prattvillage	\$ 51.14	
EXPENSES TOTAL		\$ 751.72
ENDING BALANCE		\$6,316.74

Gold Badges



Lois Pribulick



Marjorie Hannah Mark Carmichael

I inadvertently forgot to mention in an earlier newsletter three of our members who were awarded their gold badges this year. A person earns a gold badge when they have completed a minimum of 1000 volunteer hours. Lois Pribulick was honored by Central Alabama Master Gardener's Association where she has her primary membership. Marjorie Hannah and Mark Carmichael was honored back at our April meeting. Thanks so much to the above mentioned individuals.

National Association of County Agricultural Agents

Alabama Master Gardeners were invited to participate in the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference, in Mobile on July 20-24, 2014. Autauga County Master Gardener's Association (ACMGA) was one of eight programs across the state to provide a display. The ACMGA display was based on our Demonstration Garden. It highlighted many of the vegetables we grow in the garden and give to Autauga Interfaith Community Concern (AICC), the local food bank. Also shown was the teaching aspect of the garden. President Rose McCauley, Anthony Yarbrough, and Gaines Smith set up and manned the display at the conference. Rose McCauley also gave a 20 minute presentation on the history and uses of our Prattville Garden. We had many interested questions about both gardens from those that attended the conference. Other ACMGA members that helped put the display together were Nancy Waggoner, Lynn Yarbrough, Pam Seamon, and Tina Reed. Here is a special thank you from Kerry Smith: Hello Dottye, Cathy (and Capital City MGs), Sara, Rosemary, Rose, Anthony, Gaines, Beth, Jan, Gene, Tanys, Ann and Anna, and all others who helped make Alabama MG shine brightly last week! I really appreciate your show of support last week. You showed our ag agents what a great program we have with your displays and presentations. I was also very proud to see your combined efforts. As a followup, I had an idea to share the presentations with a wider audience. Since we're revamping our webpages, I had the idea to include a narrated version of all your powerpoints. Here's one more reason I enjoy spending time with you. Your energy gives me inspiration!

Thanks again and especially for all your efforts to support ACES – Kerry



Mark Your Calendars
Southern Region Master Gardener Conference
October 21-24
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

The [East Baton Rouge Master Gardener Association](#) of the LSU AgCenter's MG Program is proud to host the 2014 Southern Region Master Gardener Conference. When gardening enthusiasts from Texas to Virginia converge on Louisiana's capital city, they will be greeted with riveting speakers, entertaining tours and a trade show that promises to offer those 'one-of-a-kind' items.

This event will bring together master gardeners, vendors, horticulture professionals and others with a common interest in all aspects of gardening, the environment and plant sciences. The 2014 Conference Committee is grateful to all who have made this conference possible through [sponsorships](#), in-kind gifts and hundreds of volunteer hours from our members.

Please join us in beautiful [Baton Rouge](#) from October 21st through October 24th at the [Crowne Plaza Hotel](#). Check back often for updates! Hope to see you there!



Keynote Speakers' Productions



Baton Rouge

What's Bugging You Answer from page 6

The answer is the tortrix moth. There are many different species that attack specific plants. This species pictured from my yard only attacks rosemary. The larvae of this caterpillar has almost decimated my huge plant. Must use bt such as Dipel or spray on liquid sevin. This info was provided by several County Agents at the National conference.

Working at the Governor's Mansion

If you are looking for a rewarding gardening project, please consider joining us for workdays at the Governor's Mansion. We meet every Monday 8:00-11:00 a.m. during the summer months to beat the heat, and--with all the beautiful blooming plants--it is a lovely place to work. Add to that the pleasant company of your fellow laborers, and I believe you'll find it a truly enjoyable way to earn volunteer hours. Please call Jane McCarthy (334-221-9936) by noon the Friday prior to any workday to be put on the list for access to the grounds. Bring your favorite tools.

One last note. Due to time constraints, the deadline for submitting articles to the newsletter is now the 25th of the month. I am also looking for someone to be a proof reader for me. If you have a desire to also help work on the newsletter, I will welcome it.

Thanks



Anthony Yarbrough,
Editor