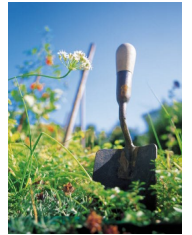




DIRTY DIGS



Autauga County Master Gardeners Association

November/December 2015

ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, ELEVATE

Next Meeting
December 10,
2015

Meeting Location:

Autauga County
Extension Office

11 AM

Christmas
Luncheon

Guest Article: by Anthony Yarbrough



My Drinking Buddies

Well I finally found some drinking buddies I can trust. These buddies are especially jovial and festive during the holiday season. However, it takes a little early preparation. I went to Walmart and bought three packs of paperwhites (Narcissus). Next I will plant some at two week intervals to keep blooming plants into January. I will just put them in stones and water in a nice warm place and wait for them to sprout. These flowers are known to get too tall and fall over. So one can stunt their growth with, you guessed it, alcohol (whiskey, vodka, rum, etc). If you are too embarrassed to buy the good stuff you can use rubbing alcohol but don't drink it. When the bloom stem reaches two inches pour of the water and use a mixture of water with 5% alcohol. You got it. One sip for me and one for the flowers. Remember when calculating the percentage that 40 proof is actually 20 percent alcohol. There is a handy chart following this article that will give you the right calculations to get 5% alcohol solution

- They will need some sun when they start to bloom. Don't leave flowers in sun too long or they won't last. These make wonderful table decorations.

-
- 10% Alcohol = 1 Part Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- 15% Alcohol = 2 Parts Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- 20% Alcohol = 3 Parts Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- 25% Alcohol = 4 Parts Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- 30% Alcohol = 5 Parts Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- 35% Alcohol = 6 Parts Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- 40% Alcohol = 7 Parts Water to 1 Part Alcohol
- Etc.




Remember 60 proof is equal to 30% alcohol. The alcohol does not hurt the flowers it just stunts their growth. Happy drinking (I mean happy flowering.)

Don Armstrong and Pam Olson Speaking at the Land Owner Tour during Farm City Week



December 2015

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1 <i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u>	2	3	4	5
6	7 Happy Hanukkah  Governors Mansion	8 <i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u>	9	10 <i>Autauga County</i> <i>MG Christmas</i> <i>Luncheon 11AM</i> <i>Extension Ofc</i>	11	12
13	14 <i>Governors</i> <i>Mansion</i> <i>workday</i>	15 <i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u>	16	17	18	19
20	21 <i>Governors</i> <i>Mansion</i> <i>workday</i>	22 <i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u>	23	24	25 	26
27	28 <i>Governors</i> <i>Mansion</i> <i>workday</i>	29 <i>Demo Garden</i> <u>8:00 AM</u>	30	31		



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

Controlling Fire Ants in the Fall

The temperatures are finally falling and with all the recent rainfall, the leaves are quickly falling too. After the hot and humid summer, everyone is anxious to get outside and enjoy the fall foliage, football and maybe even a bonfire. However, if you not careful you may encounter fireants. Is now a good time to treat for these awful pests?

Now is the perfect time to rid your lawn or landscape of these unwelcome invaders!

"Fall is a great time to treat fire ants," Dr. Kathy Flanders, an Alabama Cooperative Extension Entomologist said. "Fall temperatures are perfect for fire ant activity and foraging, making it an opportune time to put out fire ant bait."

While the warm weather is rolling out and cooler air moves in, fire ants are still actively foraging. Fire ants look for protein-rich foods all year, but especially in the late spring and early fall. Foragers will continue searching for food until temperatures drop below 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Using fireant baits on a sunny day after the dew on the ground has dried can provide specific and continued control of fire ants, in a cost-effective way.

Not only are fire ants a nuisance outdoors, but they can wreak havoc indoors, as well. Fire ants will be looking for a warm place to overwinter and begin searching for warm places to spend the cold months. Often, this means mounds inside the house or built against the foundation. Treating all areas in the landscape surrounding the home should eliminate a home invasion. Be sure to inspect your pile of leaves or compost area, stacked firewood, raised garden beds and potted plants as they all make great hiding places.

Flanders said it is important to check for fire ants before playing, working or carrying wood inside and remain proactive. This is a great time to consider a slow-acting bait for continued control going into the cold season. Treat the areas before piling up leaves to play in or for compost, treat your preferred firewood location and treat around the perimeter of your garden, but only specific products can be applied in a vegetable garden no matter what time of year it is.

For increased success, controlling fire ants should definitely be a team effort. Working with neighbors or surrounding landowners can greatly boost your success. Fire ant control is more effective when larger areas are treated. When an 80-90% control rate is acceptable, consider participating in a community- or neighborhood-wide treatment program. If the problem is widespread, a large treatment plan could be more effective than treating in small areas. Flanders said Extension professionals have developed a community-wide management program that is available for use and implementation.

For more information on controlling fire ants, please visit http://www.extension.org/fire_ants.



**Autauga County
Master Gardeners Association**

LUNCH & LEARN 2016

THE 1ST THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH

12:00-1:00 P.M.

FREE PROGRAMS

Christ Lutheran Church

2175 Cobbs Ford Road, Prattville 36066

- 7 January** **Seed Starting**
Anthony Yarbrough, Master Gardener
- 4 February** **Rose Selections for your Garden**
Jason Powell, Petals From the Past
- 3 March** **Backyard Tomatoes**
Mallory Kelley, Horticulturist, ACES
- 7 April** **Pruning Tools and Techniques**
Mary McCroan, Advanced Master Gardener
- 5 May** **Backyard Birds**
Carrie Threadgill, Wildlife Biologist, ADCNR
- 2 June** **Shade Gardens**
Phil Easter, Master Gardener
- 7 July** **Citrus**
Dr. Arlie Powell, Petals From the Past
- 4 August** **Protecting your Property from Wild Fires**
Brigetta Giles, Autauga County Forester
- 1 September** **Fall Vegetable Gardens**
Mike Forester, Master Gardener
- 6 October** **Nuisance Wildlife**
Chris Jaworowski, Wildlife Biologist, ADCNR
- 3 November** **Winterizing your Garden**
Linda Griebel, Advanced Master Gardener
- 1 December** **Decorating with Nature at Christmas**
Anna Owen, Master Gardener

For more information contact
Autauga County Extension Office (334) 361-7273
BRING A SACK LUNCH **DRINKS PROVIDED**

Hummingbird Award for October



Kathryn Whaley received the Hummingbird Award for her outstanding job as Secretary and for taking minutes for the Board. Hats off and well done.

Hummingbird Award for November



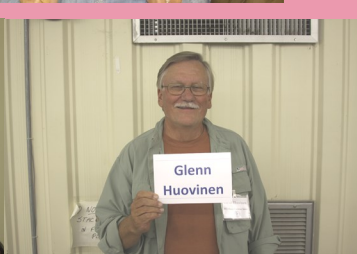
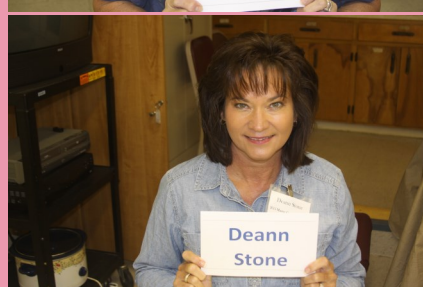
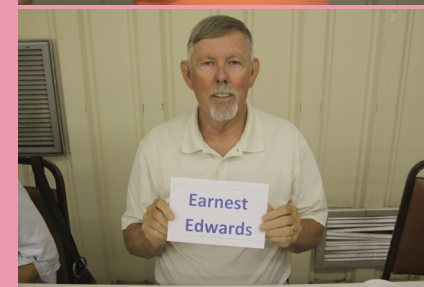
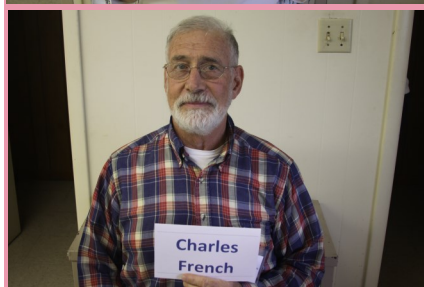
Shari McCandless received the Hummingbird Award for her work in the renovation of Prattville Garden. Yea Shari

Master Gardeners Rose McCauley and Stephanie Stephens teaching classes to school children during Farm City Week. Here they are speaking on composting and vermiculture.



Intern Class for 2015

Combined Elmore and Autauga



Carol Pugh

Glenn Huovinen

On November 4th, Rose McCauley and Paula Seamon taught a class at AUM on Backyard Composting and Vermiculture. There were 25 attending the class.



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.

Pam Olson reported that last year we donated 145 pounds of personal care and cleaning products (and most of the personal care items don't weigh very much) in addition to almost 20 cosmetic bags to be used in gift baskets for ladies, a school backpack, and a set of sheets,

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

November Lunch and Learn



Phil Easter presented a program on making holiday decorations from your Garden. Notice the door ornament below on lower left.



October Monthly Meeting



Andy Wendland presented a very informative program on growing sesame seed crops. This a relatively new crop grown in Alabama and is expected to be quite successful in the future.

November Board Meeting and Maxwell Tour



Of Course We Like to Eat, Especially at the Farmer's Market Café.





CHRISTMAS Shopping Idea

The Holidays are here! Have you done your shopping for those for neighbors, friends, and gardeners on your list?

The Lee County Master Gardeners can help. Attractive **gift certificates** are available for their 2016 biennial garden tour. "Wandering Through Wondrous Gardens" May 14-15, 2016, is shaping up to be a tour anyone will love.

You can purchase a **gift certificate** during December, and January. These beautiful gift cards include information about the tour and how to redeem the gift certificate for a ticket. There is room to write a special note to the recipient. This is a delightful gift for a friend, your child's teacher, neighbor, and that person who has everything.

Gift certificates can be purchased for \$28 or groups 10 or more are \$25 and can be purchased at www.LeeMG.org.



Please Read

After much thought, I have decided that this is my last issue as editor of the Autauga County Master Gardener's Newsletter. Sometimes you just know when it is time to move on. I hope someone else will step up and try their hand at this. It has been very rewarding and enjoyable. I am willing to help anyone get started and I will continue to take pictures for the newsletter. This would be a perfect task for someone who wants to get more hours but may have some physical limitations that prevent them from doing manual labor.

I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and remember that Jesus is the reason for the season



Anthony Yarbrough, Editor
Email: ayarb@knology.net
May God Bless