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# MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 21, Issue 8

August 2020

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Cane Creek Beauties: Crepe Myrtle

## MG Calendar

- Garden Tiny Terrific Treasures, Facebook Live, Anniston-Calhoun Public Library, 2 p.m. August 4, 2020, Sherry Blanton.
- MG Board Meeting, 10:45 a.m., July 12, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- Business Meeting, 12:00 p.m., July 12, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- Sprouts Deadline, August 25, 2020

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## President's Message

Wow! Who would have ever thought we would still be doing this? COVID rates for our county are now screaming uphill, hospitals are overwhelmed, healthcare workers have been doing "this" for far too long. They are exhausted and putting their lives and their families lives at risks daily....take a minute, right now, and pray for all those front line workers – doctors, nurses, police, firemen, ambulance workers and EMTs, cleaning crews, and food service workers; then take another moment and pray for all our teachers as they are about to go on the battlefield too!! As a community leader, husband, father, grandfather, and farmer, I hate wearing a mask but it's necessary to protect others (maybe it protects me too!) I don't really mind staying away (6ft+) from most people, I washed my hands multiple times a day before all this (if you have chickens, goats or other pets, you know what I am talking about); and going to town has always been a once a week thing for me because it takes half a day anyway – so literally for me the mask thing is the only really new thing, and for now I will continue to do that.

As for our August meeting, we will make that call as time goes forward. As for now, I plan to hold our meeting outside under pavilion, bring your own chairs again, we will have wipes and hand sanitizer available. Wear your most fashionable mask, keep your physical distance, and I promise to keep it short as I expect it will be HOT!! Right now, our speaker is scheduled to be Dr Chip East but we will have to wait and see if Auburn releases Extension staff for meetings as scheduled or if it is extended even more because of the virus infection rates across our State.

I know many of you are concerned about meeting as a group and I get that; so, take the precautions you need for your safety. But I also feel I need to let everyone know, there is a major issue on the horizon that will affect our Association as a whole and the future of Calhoun County Master Gardeners. I am still trying to get as much information as possible before presenting it to everyone, but when I have more details I will either add a note to the weekly email or let you know via *Sprouts*; we may even call a "special called" meeting to discuss and decide our way ahead. I am praying this all goes away and resolves itself but am very fearful that it might not and therefore will impact our group tremendously. Sorry to be so vague but I just do not have enough details yet to share without influencing your thoughts.

Again, I hope you are all safe and well; and staying busy in your yards and gardens; I know I have accomplished more this year on the farm than in the past years, so that's a good thing!! If you are out and about, come out to Cane Creek Gardens and check out the Sweet Tea Garden (native plants, shade beds, etc.) all located at end of new porch area of the barn. As I am writing this, we are planning to complete the pathway and that will complete this new special project.

Also, if you are a Facebooker, check out the Cane Creek Community Gardens Volunteer Crew page for updates, weekly photos, and other interesting posts.

Thank all y'all for what you do to make Calhoun County better and supporting our local community partners. Stay safe, wear your masks, and keep washing yo' dirty hands!!

See y'all at the Creek!!

## Garden Inspiration

"Gardening adds years to your life and life to your years." Unknown

### MG Happenings by Sherry Blanton

Our spring social was a great success; we had thirty MGs in attendance. Thank you to Linda Crow for providing the prizes for our trivia game and to Lyn Webb for treating us to the ice cream sandwiches. Janet Evans created a beautiful PowerPoint that allowed us to admire each other's yards.

We crave a little bit of normal and this meeting was certainly a nice outing. There were some great masks too.

Thank you to everyone who donned a mask and did social distancing to keep us all healthy. If we do this again, perhaps, we can have a better screen instead of one of my old sheets.

Please read Linda McDaniel's weekly e-mails. As I compose Sprouts, I do not have any updated information on our August MG meeting or the August Lunch and Learn. David Doggett will not be with us for August; hopefully, we can reschedule him next year. At this time volunteers are working regularly at Cane Creek. If you need hours, please join the Cane Creek Crew on Tuesday mornings. There is always plenty to do. Tree Amigos has not opened to volunteers; nor has Longleaf Botanical Gardens.

There has been a weekly plant sale at LBG. To make an appointment for a Wednesday afternoon shopping spree call the Anniston Museum.

I will be presenting a live Facebook program for the Anniston-Calhoun Public Library August 4th at 2pm. This is not a Zoom program. We will enjoy seeing our garden's "Tiny Terrific Treasures." There will be no guests in the library for the program. Please join us.

Please wear your masks, social distance, and keep your hands clean. Let us beat this horrendous virus.

### Garden Humor

"A weed is a plant that is not only in the wrong place but intends to stay."

~Sara Stein~

### Masked MGs from July Social



Linda McDaniel



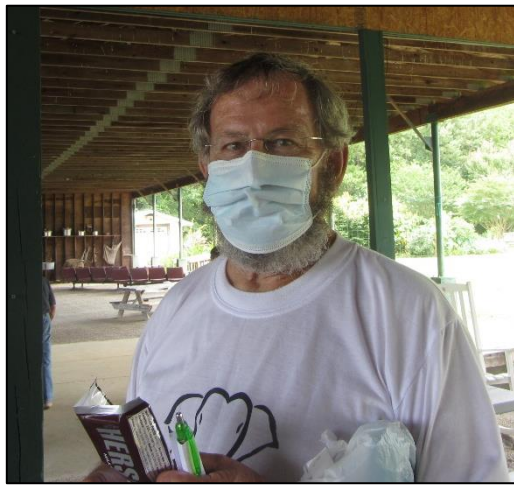
Shirley Heifner



Janet Evans



Linda Crow



Gary Lawson

## Mystery Master Gardener

July's Mystery Gardener is Tom Gilbert, member of the class of 2020. Everette Studdard, Ellen Cannon and Lyn Webb identified him.

Who is the Mystery Gardener for August? Please let Sherry know if you can identify this person. This Master Gardener was born in Alexandria, Alabama.

The Mystery Gardener enjoys "planting, watching the plants grow, and marveling at their beauty." Our gardener says "(gardening) helps me to solve my anxiety when I am digging in the dirt."

This Master Gardener volunteers at RMC, Coosa Valley Youth and serves on the Calhoun County Beautification Board.

This Master Gardener is the retired Office Manager for Calhoun County Water.

Our Master Gardener lives in Alexandria Alabama.

## Gardening Tip for August

Take a few moments to jot into a journal or calendar this year's plants that were all-stars and those that were duds. It can be easy to be overcome by all the displays next spring and forget that a plant did not perform or that it out performed. I learned that some were not worth the effort it took to keep them going.

## Favorite Plant of the Month: Judy Shew

"Like a lot plant and flower lovers, my favorite changes from season to season. Also, for me it can change from year to year and even month to month. This summer my favorite flower is yellow Purslane. My sweet neighbor, Mona, who passed away in November, and who shared lots of her plants with me, gave me my first pot of yellow Purslane a few years ago. Neither of us knew its name at the time, but she loved it and always had several hanging baskets of it in her yard. So, I have bought several yellow Purslane this year in memory of Mona."



Yellow purslane

## Cane Creek Update from Skeeter Sims

At the time of writing this, we are scheduled for 3 big work days at Cane Creek to complete the paths in the new Native Plant area called the Sweet Tea Garden. I am optimistic and prayerful that we can complete it and open that area for all to see!! Thanks to all who have come out to help with this special project with labor and plants; and also, thanks to those that have also contributed financial support to making this happen. It's another example of how special Cane Creek Gardens

are and how much impact CCMGs have to this community.

August is upon us... which means more heat, more humidity, more weeds, more grass cutting, more weed eating, etc. Basically, August means more work to keep up our home grounds. So, we will continue to work our normal Tuesdays, weather permitting, to maintain Cane Creek Gardens.

Y'all take care, wear masks, take all precautions to stay healthy and be careful with the heat!!

Skeeter

### Recipe of the Month from Linda Wakefield

It is fig season!

#### Fig Cake

Ingredients for the cake batter:

- ¼ cup softened butter
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup Stevia
- 1 egg
- 2 cups self-rising flour
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup chopped fresh figs

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare two 8" round cake pans. Cream butter with sugars until fluffy. Add egg and beat well. Alternate adding flour and milk. Fold in vanilla and almond extracts and 1 cup chopped figs. Divide batter between the two cake pans and bake 25 to 30 minutes or until it springs back when touched in the center. Turn layers onto a wire rack to cool.

Ingredients for the filling:

- 2 cups chopped figs
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Combine chopped figs, brown sugar, water and lemon juice in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes or until thickened. Spread between cooled cake layers and on top.

Note: I've made this with fresh figs from Gary Lawson's farm and also adapted the recipe to use fig preserves. Both delicious if you like figs!



Serenity Garden, Cane Creek Community Gardens



Entrance to Sweet Tea Garden

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#### **Calhoun County Master Gardener Officers**

- |                   |                                |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
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| Vice President:   | Linda Wakefield                |
| Secretary:        | Judy Shew                      |
| Treasurer:        | Myra Gann                      |
| Members-at-Large: | Gary Lawson and Linda McDaniel |

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