

MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 21, Issue 6

June 2020



Social distancing at Cane Creek

MG Calendar

- MG Board Meeting, 10:45 a.m., June 10, Cane Creek Community Gardens
- MG Business Meeting, 12 p.m., June 10, Cane Creek Community Gardens. Speaker TBA
- Sprouts Deadline, June 25, 2020

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President's Message

As I write this month's article, it is Memorial Day. A day to remember all my friends and family who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. During my 28 years in the Navy, I had several friends give their lives doing service that they volunteered for both willingly and happily. I pray their memories will never leave me and that both their brothers in arms and families will never forget them! If you have family or friends who served and gave their lives, remember and honor their service every day while you can.

June is about here, and I think March, April, and May have been some of the longest, weirdest, and most historic in my lifetime. In March we saw our world turned upside down with this virus, April was a lot of the same and in May we saw even more things change – some for the good of our species and some not so good examples of how our species selfishly serves itself first before others or our environment. As Master Gardeners, we volunteer to serve our local community both in action and education. This is where we have the chance to make a difference in example, conduct and truly impact our local communities and County. Be kind to one another and put others first, it goes a really long way in changing our world!!

We saw the last super moon with May's Flower Moon and because of clear night skies courtesy of the pandemic and shelter in place, it was magnificent!! The detail you could see with the naked eye, reminded me of my childhood years laying in the front yard looking up at the stars and moon. This year I stood in the back pasture while looking up at the moon and listening to the whippoorwills, bobwhites, and hoot owls – again a time to reflect and be thankful. So for June, we'll have the Strawberry Moon and the first day of Summer; plus maybe all our gardens that we started while sheltering in place will begin to bring forth their fruits and our harvests will be abundant; but it will still take a lot of hard work through June and July to get to the point where we wonder "why did I plant so much?" and when will it ever end?

For now, we are planning to have our June meeting on 10 June at Cane Creek Gardens. We will not bring food to share for lunch, but you can bring your own brown bag lunch. We will plan to meet under the pavilion, spread out wide for social distancing and bring your own lawn chair for safety and comfort. We will keep everyone informed if anything changes through weekly emails -- and if you have anything to pass along weekly, please send it by Friday of each week to Linda McDaniel (lanty@bellsouth.net) for inclusion in weekly emails.

If you have not been to Cane Creek lately, run by and check out the grounds. The Cane Creek Gang has been working hard to get the grounds back up and running.

See y'all at the Creek!

Skooter

Garden Inspiration

“The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies.”

Gertrude Jekyll

My Favorite Plant: Patricia Patty



Oriental poppies

One of my favorite flowers is the Oriental Poppy. They “pop up” wherever they feel like it, and always complement whatever else happens to be there. Later in the summer when the seed heads dry out, the Goldfinches, being about the only local bird to feed their young seeds instead of bugs, will peck holes in the pod to get to the tiny seeds.

Poppies only bloom a short while before the weather heats up. Seeds must endure a period of cold and usually start germination in January.

June’s Garden Tip

In Alabama it is feast or famine. It either rains every day and our plants get fungus and disease or we have high temperatures and drought and plants wilt. We have to adjust on a daily basis on whatever conditions come our way. I often see irrigation systems running when there has been ample rain.

Make certain when you water to allow plants to dry before nightfall as one way to prevent plant problems.

Scout your vegetable gardens on a daily basis to take care of any problems sooner than later.

Any shrubs or trees added this past spring will need careful monitoring during summer’s hot and dry days. Moisture and good drainage are essential to a plant’s life.

MG Happenings by Sherry Blanton

Due to the ongoing pandemic events can change. Please check Linda McDaniel’s e-mail each week to find out the status of meetings and other MG events.

Work on the new “Sweet Tea” garden (at the end of the barn) at Cane Creek continues. The volunteers are creating a special place for our grounds.

Thank you to everyone who contributed photos for our MG brag book. As of the end of May Janet was no longer accepting photos. We will show off our gardens at the July summer social.

Hope everyone is staying safe.



Rose on the fence in the butterfly garden



Clematis at the entrance gate

Garden Humor

"I consider every plant hardy until I have killed it myself." Politician and botanist Sir Peter Smithers



Chicken Casserole Recipe from Judy Shew

1 boiled chicken (off bone) or 4-5 chicken breast, chopped or shredded
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 can of cream of celery or cream of mushroom soup
1 cup sour cream
1 stick margarine, melted
1 sleeve crackers (crushed - save some for top)
Pepper (optional or to taste)
Mix together.
Bake in 9 x 13 dish at 350 degrees for 30 minutes

If you have a recipe to share, please submit it to Sherry.



Tom Gilbert working on the greenhouse at CCCG



Stan Bennett also at the greenhouse

Cane Creek update from Skeeter Sims

Well, after weeks of lockout, the Cane Creek Crew returned to begin restoring our home grounds. Weeds had taken over the beds but many of the plants were beginning to bloom and bud out.

- Special thanks to those dedicated few that continue to pour into Cane Creek Gardens. Our intern class has been truly phenomenal in supporting our efforts to repair/restore/refresh our home grounds; without them and their hard work, I'm not sure how far we would be; but because of their efforts and the regular Cane Crew group, I am glad to say things are looking great again and we are set for normal summer maintenance of grounds.

- During this time, we've experienced some theft of a few of our plants. They were naturally the ones in full bloom and looking great. We are researching options for providing video surveillance of the grounds as many of the box owners have also complained about their harvest being stolen by others. Thanks to those who have offered to replace the plants and keep our grounds in such great shape.

- For June, we will continue to try and work two days a week, always Tuesdays 9:00-12:30; and one other day per week based on weather. We also have a watering schedule and plan for other days when rain is not in the picture. Please follow the Facebook page [Cane Creek Community Gardens Volunteer Crew](#) for more updates and current pictures of our grounds and the folks working hard to keep them in top shape.



Iris at Cane Creek

Mystery Gardener

Last month's mystery gardener was Linda Schiff. Landon Rivers and Linda McDaniel identified her.

June's Mystery Gardener

This gardener is originally from Birmingham, Alabama. Growing day lilies is this gardener's favorite activity.

This gardener enjoys watercolor painting and making sour dough bread.
 This gardener was an English teacher before retirement.
 This gardener currently lives in Anniston, Alabama.
 If you know who this month's mystery gardener is, please let Sherry know.

From Our Advisor: David West

We finally received all the MG intern final exams via mail and email, and the group had good scores overall. The average score was around 88. Interns will be receiving their scores soon. Tests will not be returned.

Thanks to Ruth and Lyn for helping to administer and collect tests. It was a different experience this year! Thanks to those of you have returned to volunteer work! The photos and reports I've received show the MG's practicing social distancing, as they should. Working outdoors should be something we can enjoy during this difficult time.

Lunch and Learn is continuing online via Zoom. Our program today was a challenge with Stephen and the snakes moving around and broadcasting via phone. The bandwidth at Cane Creek is not stable. Next month we'll have more of a slide show presentation, and we will get that link published soon.

The Anniston Downtown Farmers Market will open June 6. The Market will be on Quintard, across from the power company.

Please remember to complete your US Census report! This report can be important for Alabama. Our local report is currently at about 60%, so complete your report and encourage others to complete their Census report.

Local Extension personnel returned to work in the office on May 11. The lines at the building are not long like they were early in the month. While going out to lunch, most places are not crowded. In fact, there has only been me and perhaps 3 or 4 customers in places I've visited. I've eaten alone several times, and that is OK with me. The grocery store is clearly the most crowded based on my experience. I think local citizens are taking COVID-19 seriously and doing a good job at limiting their risk. It seems that folks are still under a lot of stress, as I have heard from numerous people how rude people have been to them at stores. It hasn't happened to me, but it seems to be pretty common. Perhaps the masks are muffling their smiles. I suppose an appropriate southern retort would be, "Bless your heart".

Thank you for your work and stay positive!



Cane Creek front bed



Cane Creek beauties



Calhoun County Master Gardener Officers

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