

MG SPROUTS

Calhoun County Master Gardener Newsletter: Volume 22, Issue 2

February 2021



Thank you, Teri Gilbert, for painting this colorful addition to the CCCG grounds

MG Calendar

- MG Board Meeting, TBD.
- MG Business Meeting, TBD
- Electronics Recycling Drive, February 10th, 9 a.m-3 p.m., rear parking lot of the County Administration Building
- Sprouts Deadline, February 25, 2021

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President's Message

Time to Get Busy

Well, January is over and a new year of opportunity is moving right along... if you haven't logged 2.08 volunteer hours yet, then you are behind for the yearly totals. Time to get busy!! By now, everyone should have heard the 2021 AMGA State Conference that we had worked so hard on planning and preparing for has been cancelled. While disappointing on some level and frustrating a bit too, it was the right call to cancel and I am glad AMGA made the call earlier rather than later or just before execution of the event. Thanks to all those that worked so hard, planning, preparing, and providing such great inputs for every aspect of this event. I have received many compliments on our flyer, our program of speakers and everything we had accomplished thus far. So now we just have to wrap up our "lessons learned" and provide feedback to Capital City Master Gardeners who will be hosting the 2022 AMGA State Conference in Montgomery.

Again, time to get busy. Have you started planning your Spring plantings, your vegetable gardens, your next gardening adventure?? I know some of you have a pile of seed catalogs and plant catalogs that you have stacked on your table/desk, all tabbed out with what you plan to or already have ordered. Well good for you!! I have my garden layout planned and even will push the envelope and plant some things I have never tried before, just for fun!! Let me know some of y'all's ideas, I'm game for food related items mostly but will try flowers if they are good for local bees and pollinators.

Speaking of getting busy, it's time. I'm not sure about a February meeting at this point but will get word out if it looks like we can. But the Board met last month, and we have lots of positions to fill for this year. So, if you are interested in getting more involved, here's what we have and are looking for active MGs to serve and support – Nominating Committee, Awards Committee, and Pathways writer. Billy McDaniel has agreed to serve as our Volunteer Hours Coordinator so if you are having trouble logging in online to report your hours, webinars/CEUs, etc. get with Billy to figure it out early before it's too late. Again, it's time to get busy.

Also, as we get busy getting things started for this new year, don't forget to plant more to be able to share with others. GROW MORE, GIVE MORE is going to be something heard more and more. Our country, our county and our communities are also being impacted by food insecurity. Some areas more than others but there are ways that we as Calhoun County Master Gardeners can help our friends, neighbors, and community through this program. I for one hope to have a pile of Swiss Chard to give away – 'cause I don't think I am gonna eat it!!

See y'all at the Creek!

My Favorite Plant from Donna Tillison

"The most treasured plant in my garden is a hybrid hibiscus given to me by my mom many years ago. It grows in a sunny location near my door so I can enjoy the beautiful blooms. This hibiscus grows to about 4 feet tall. Insects aggressively munching the leaves is the only problem I have encountered with it."



Who is February's Mystery Gardener?

Last month's mystery gardener was Patsy Hudgins. Her good friend Lavon Brown identified her.

February's Mystery Gardener

"I am originally from Jacksonville, Alabama. My favorite part of gardening is walking my yard and seeing what's sprouting, budding, putting on new leaves and blooming. My other hobbies are cooking, baking, singing (in choirs), walking my dog, and watching Alabama football."

I am a retired now but was a civilian employee for Department of Defense (mostly US Army) as a Management Analyst and Auditor.

After several moves with the government, including Hawaii, upon retirement, my husband and I moved back to my Bonny Brook childhood home in Jacksonville."

If you know who the mystery gardener is, please let Sherry know.



Recipe of the Month from Everette Studdard

TOMATO BASIL SOUP

2 T olive oil
1/2 C yellow onion, diced
1/4 C garlic, minced
16 oz. chicken stock
32 oz. crushed tomatoes
1/2 C heavy cream
1/4 C basil
Kosher salt and black pepper to taste.

Heat olive oil in stockpot. Sauté onions and garlic. Add chicken stock and bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Add crushed tomatoes and basil. Simmer. Temper in the cream. Add salt and pepper. Makes 1/2 gallon. This soup freezes well.

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

Blooming this Month

February is a banner month for camellia japonicas to bloom, filling our gardens with an array of colorful flowers. Their brilliant shiny evergreen foliage, additionally, is outstanding. Camellias, the state flower of Alabama, can be a wonderful focal point, a superb hedge, or a screen. They can grow quite large; prepare a spot taking into account mature width and height.

Camellias are low maintenance plants once established. They prefer acidic, well-drained soil, and perform best in dappled shade. Camellias must be planted high; burying them too deep is a sure-fire way to kill one. At least an inch of the root ball should be planted over ground level.

Camellia sasanquas begin blooming in late September with the japonicas beginning soon after.

Camellias are drought tolerant when they are mature but must be watered until they are settled in.

The delicate flower of the camellia is one of the most beautiful sights in the winter garden. FB pages from the Alabama Camellia Society and the American Camellia Society demonstrate the magnificent variety in these blooms. ACES.edu has an excellent publication on care and maintenance of camellias.

It is still a great time to plant; add a least one to your garden. LBG has a wonderful selection of camellias for sale. Contact the Museum to set up an appointment to shop.



This photo by Hayes Jackson shows camellias brighten a winter garden even on frosty days

MG Happenings by Sherry Blanton

I will begin with an apology and a correction. In last month's Sprouts I inadvertently omitted Jim Wakefield's name (but not his photo) from the list of Master Gardeners who were awarded the Red Bandanna. Congratulations Jim for your dedication.

Stan Bennett completed the 2020 MG training class. His name was not included in the list of graduates. He was not present at the meeting; thus, he was not in the group photo. Thank you, Stan for all your hard work.

We give a big shout out to Skeeter Sims for his participation in "Grow More Give More." Skeeter reported sharing "20 pounds of okra, 8 pounds of pole bean unshelled, 5 pounds of field peas/cowpeas unshelled and 10 pounds sweet potatoes. I didn't track tomatoes, corn, or peppers. But if I had to guess it would be 10, 15, 5. But that's a rough estimate."

This AMGA program is a valuable means for our members to share their crops with those who may not have access to fresh vegetables. We thank both Skeeter and Gary for their participation.

This is a reminder of an important change in our procedure to count service hours approved by our membership. Our calendar year is now January 1 to December 31. Hours earned in October and November 2020 should have been reported with your 2020 hours.

The Cane Creek Community Gardens Crew continues volunteering every Tuesday, weather permitting. Please contact advisors at Tree Amigos and Longleaf Botanical Gardens for their schedules.

Please get in touch with Linda Gunnoe to volunteer in our greenhouse.

Kerry Smith will be resending the link to the state AMGA survey for us to complete. "As the State Program Coordinator for Extension Master Gardeners, I hope that you will participate in a strategic assessment of our program. You may participate (or may choose not to participate) if you are an active, inactive, or an intern Master Gardener. Completing all four parts of this survey should take about 50 minutes. However, please notice that I have broken this into four mini-surveys, each taking you 10 to 15. Completing all four mini-surveys earns you FOUR HOURS volunteer time (quadruple time!)." I finished it; it is painless.

It is hard to thank one person as so many do so much for this CCCG but Tom Gilbert has done an outstanding job of clearing the fence around the garden. Thank you!

For those seeking CEUs I am still doing regular programs at the Public Library of Anniston- Calhoun County. These programs are live streamed on its Facebook page and then posted on the library's YouTube Page. This process has been a learning experience; hopefully you will tune in. As always, I am grateful for your support.

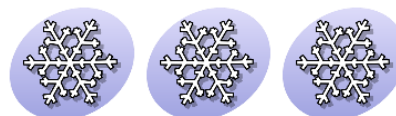
Sherry

Gardening Inspiration

"My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece."
Claude Monet

Gardening Giggle

"Growth takes time. Be patient. And while you're waiting, pull a weed."
Emilie Barnes



Cane Creek Update from Skeeter Sims

- We are working the grounds at Cane Creek every Tuesday from 0900-1230. There's lots to do in preparation for Spring to burst forth, so come on out and help get our home grounds ready for a show!!
- Two major projects for February will be to clear out the concrete bunkers in the back and remove all debris to roadside for county pickup. We also will be doing a lot of minor maintenance: refreshing name tiles, repainting tires/signs, refreshing all beds with new mulch and general weekly maintenance of existing beds.
- We have fun, work hard and enjoy our time outside together, so if you're looking for a place to learn, have fun and get your volunteer hours done early, then come on out!!



Photo by Doris Baucom. Cyclamen persicum is a "must have" for her garden

Virtual ACES Programs

- "Get Outside with Alabama Smart Yards" Series: Every Wednesday 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. Register: auburn.zoom.us/j/82398811386
<https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaSmartYardsAlabamaExtension>
- At Home Beekeeping Series: Last Tuesday of the month 6:30 p.m.-7:30p.m. (Begins January 26th) Register: <https://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838>
- Back to Basics Gardening Series: 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. (Begins February 10th) Register: <http://www.aces.edu/go/B2Bzoom>
<https://www.aces.edu/?s=Back2BasicsWednesdays&q=Back2BasicsWednesdays>
- Eco Friendly Fridays~ Environmental Education Series: Last Friday of Every Month 12:00p.m.- 1:00 p.m. <https://www.aces.edu/go/EcoFriendlyFridays>
- Alabama Garden Walk Series: 1st and 3rd Fridays 12:00 p.m.-12:45 p.m. (Begins February 19th)

- Register: <https://www.aces.edu/go/GardenWalk>
- Raising Trees Series: Thursday 12:00p.m.-1:00 p.m. <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/landscaping/raising-trees-webinar-series/>
- Alabama Garden Chat Wednesdays TBA (Begins in April)
- ForestHer Webinar Series: 2nd Tuesday's of Every Month 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m. <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry/foresther-workshops/>
- 2021 Natural Resources Webinar Series: Wednesdays 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m. (see the link for the dates scheduled) <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry/natural-resources-webinar-series/>
- Alabama Virtual Farm Tours: (Biweekly from March-Oct at 5:00p.m.- 6:00p.m. Stay informed or watch on <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionCommercialHorticulture>
- Commercial Horticulture Monthly Webinar Seminars, last Monday of each month: <https://auburn.zoom.us/j/590217859> or watch Livestream at <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionCommercialHorticulture>. Monthly agenda is posted on <http://www.aces.edu/anr/beginningfarms/webinars.php>
- 'Q&A Friday!' interactive shows: (Fridays from March-Oct 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) Stay informed or watch on <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionCommercialHorticulture>

From Horticulture Happenings list from the [Lawrence County Extension office](#).

PDF: <https://bit.ly/2NijBxD>

Calhoun County Master Gardener Officers

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

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