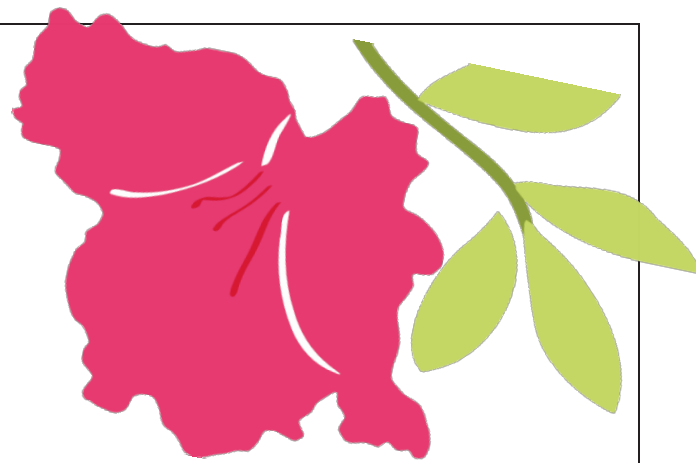


The Dirt



President's Message by Penny Claiborne

I hope everyone is ready to put away those coats, hats & snuggies. Although I love the cold weather in winter, it seemed as though it was never going to warm up. Unfortunately in a few months we will all be complaining of how humid and hot it is. As most of us know we wouldn't appreciate the spring without the winter. And what an exciting spring we have in store for us!

This is one of the busiest times of the year for Master Gardeners and there is something for everyone to get involved in. The biggest challenge for me this time of year is that I want to do everything! Besides our general meeting and the monthly Lunch & Learn there are several community events happening in March. We start the spring off with the Festival of Flowers on March 20-23, and although we are not responsible for the exhibit we are invited to help the Baldwin county Master Gardeners during the festival. This year's theme is "British Gardens in Time". Along with life-size landscaped gardens there will be a Colonnade of Crowns & blooms from England and around the world.

The week after the festival the Mobile Botanical Gardens will be having its spring plant sale on March 27-30. Since old man winter was not nice to us I am sure we all will find some beautiful plants to replace the frost bitten ones in our gardens. But before we can purchase the plants there is much work to be done in unloading and getting the plants to their proper place for the sale. This is a great opportunity to learn about all the plants that will be available so be sure to volunteer a couple of hours helping with this.

Coming up in April we will have our own spring planting in the DREAM Garden along with our educational seminar. If you have never had the chance to work alongside Marsha Stoltz you are missing a great learning opportunity. I was fortunate to be able to volunteer with her for a year and a half in the

door yard orchard and was amazed at her knowledge and passion for gardening. Glenda Eady has also done a wonderful job keeping up the cottage garden. She is always putting in new plantings and doing her best to satisfy the birds and the bees by enticing them into her area of the DREAM Garden. Barbara Bassett has been working on the muscadines and natives. And although the native garden may at times look a little shabby I know from growing natives myself it is the nature of the plants. They just seem to have a mind of their own sometimes. Beth Martin has done her best in the formal garden, which she designed, while holding down a full time job at A Bloom Garden Center. I am sure she would love to have someone co-chair this garden with her. The shade garden, which is maintained by the Jr. Master Gardeners & Penny Smith, is always fun to take in with a playful theme and whimsical elements.

All of the areas of the DREAM Garden are open to Master Gardeners to volunteer their time. Feel free to talk with any of the DREAM Garden team to see where you can help.

Baldwin County is hosting the AMGA state conference at the end of April. Be sure to register for this exciting conference. There are some great speakers lined up as well as vendors for purchasing gardening supplies. This is a wonderful time to meet other Master Gardeners from the surrounding areas.

What I truly love about the springtime is all the color in the garden. It starts gradually, like it is waking up from a long hard winter (which it is this year) and continues as it fills the air with a fragrance like no other. Everywhere you look there are trees and plants bursting with color.

Penny

Happy Spring

March 2014

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Dates To Remember:

- Feb. 25-Board Meeting
- Feb. 28-Pruning Demo
- March 3-Lunch and Learn
- March 6-Member Meeting
- March 21-23 Festival of Flowers
- March 24-27-Plantasia set up
- March 28-30-Plantasia
- April 12-Educational Seminar
- April 26-Cathedral Square Market opens
- April 28-30-AL MG



Chronicles

by Nancy Adams

Things have been a little slow around the gardens through our unusually cold winter, but they are beginning to pick up.

James Miles thought 40 chairs would be enough for his February Lunch & Learn presentation on Pruning, but he's much too modest. People know that he knows his business and is very good at sharing the knowledge. The room was packed and I began to worry that we would run out of chairs. As usual, he was well prepared and began with the basics of pruning: the tools. His directions and visual aids were easy to follow and great for taking home to use when we practice what he teaches. But because of the extreme cold weather that day, James has rescheduled the pruning demonstration for Friday, February 28, from 9:00 until 12:00, when we will be able to do some actual pruning.



Vertical Garden and supplies

Sherry Melton and Molly Dickson of Zimlich's Patio and Garden Center demonstrated unique and beautiful vertical gardens for those who attended the February general meeting. Beginning with simple frames such as those you may have around the house, they added landscape fabric, chicken wire, living green moss, good potting soil, plants (bromeliads, begonias, and cyclamens), another layer of green moss and wire to hold it in place, and created beautiful vertical gardens. They created another garden using bulbs – garlic, onions and caladiums. These gardens should be watered regularly, and a slow-release fertilizer is recommended. Zimlich's sells the supplies and Sherry says mentioning this program will earn you a 10% discount.



James Miles

Hosts and hostesses are needed for future Lunch & Learn sessions. Please contact **Regina Gunn** to volunteer.

Phone line helpers are needed for March and beyond.

The date for the **Festival of Flowers** this year is March 20-23, and the theme is British Gardens in Time. Baldwin County Master Gardeners are responsible for the booth this year but would welcome our help. Call **Elisa Baldwin** to volunteer.

Planting of the D.R.E.A.M. (demo) Garden will be March 8 at 9:00 a.m.

Call **Marie Dyson** if you can help with the Botanical Gardens' Spring Plant Sale scheduled for March 24-30.

Mobile County MGs will host the annual Educational Seminar at the Jon Archer Center on April 12th this year. As a part of this seminar, we plan to serve appetizers in the afternoon in the D.R.E.A.M. Garden. **Sybil Burnett** and **Sue Stefan** need volunteers to provide appetizers and to help serve them in the gardens. Please contact either Sybil or Sue if you can help. There will be a Silent Auction as part of the seminar, and you are asked to contact **Elisa Baldwin** or **Annette Daugherty**, co-chairs, if you have items appropriate for the silent auction or if you would like to make something for it. Annette will be making a gift certificate tree and would like help with that.

Now, if we can just get this cold weather to move out of here.....



Jo Hayes- Master Gardener of the Month

by Brenda Bolton

Maybe it's her upturned head on that long neck, or her lovely willowy form, or the way she moves her hands when she talks, but when I think of Jo Hayes, the word "graceful" comes to mind. And after spending a couple of hours in her beautiful home with her recently, I know why. This busy Master Gardener finds room in her week to go to both Yoga and Tai Chi, and I can tell her, it's paying nice benefits! Our Master Gardener of the Month for February, Jo was certified in the Master Gardener program in 1999, a fact which allows her to claim "veteran" status in spite of her youthful appearance.

Jo was born in Michigan into a family of farmers and probably because of that has always loved "getting my hands into the dirt." She worked on her family's dairy and grain farm there before later moving to Georgia at 13, but after she married her husband, she followed him around the country and beyond in the military while raising her son and daughter. She has been in Mobile long enough now to call it home, especially since her daughter is here with her as are some of her five beautiful grandchildren, three girls and two boys. Her son lives in Lakeland, Florida.

It's a good thing Jo ended up in the South, because among her favorite plants are the camellias and azaleas we grow so well here, and her garden boasts a couple of spectacular examples of old and new camellias. Even though this unusual winter has put down most of our perennial beds, the evidence of Jo's love for perennials is clear in front beds

where rain lilies have popped up and *Lycoris radiata*'s strappy leaves are clumped among various seed heads waiting for spring. Jo's husband was busy raking pine straw into the beds from their stately pines, and she sent me on my way with a bag of beautiful, huge pine cones and an unusual white lily which I am excited to plant. Don't you wish you had this job?

We all know Jo for her diligence over many years as the volunteer hours chair, keeping each intern class straight while she patiently navigated them through the rough waters of "certification" hours, "volunteer" hours, and "CEU" hours, and what distinguishes each – a job no computer is programmed to replicate, regardless of the many advantages computers have in the modern world. This year Jo decided she was ready for a change. Don't imagine that she was "retiring" because before she could enjoy a full month of "retirement" the Board was asking for her help with new membership duties, a task she has agreed to take on!

I asked Jo what she enjoys most about the Master Gardener program, and she immediately said, "The people." What a nice thing to say, Jo. And the people want you to know we recognize the contributions you've made to the group since 1999, and the new duties which February presented to you and which you graciously accepted. For all you have done since 1999, and for your willingness to take on yet a new position this month, the MGOM committee tapped you to be our



Brenda Bolton with MGOM Jo Hayes

February Master Gardener of the Month.

Jo said she likes the path the MG group is taking toward greater educational involvement in the community, and she has recently volunteered for the Harvest for Health program. And I learned something our veteran members probably already know, and this is that our Jo Hayes is a Survivor herself. She shared her Christmas, 2011, story with me in her usual practical, no nonsense way, and summed up her reaction to her diagnosis with an undramatic shrug, "Well, I said, it is what it is." I am a believer in the power of human will, and so it does not surprise me that this graceful and quiet practitioner of Yoga and Tai Chi who successfully followed a military husband around the world while raising his children... is a Survivor. What a gift she has to offer someone in Harvest for Health.



March Lunch and Learn

A “First Mondays” program presented by Mobile County Master Gardeners, a program of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Monday, March 3, 2014
Noon to 1 pm

Where: Jon Archer Center, 1070 Schillinger Road N., Mobile, AL 36608
Bring a friend and a lunch. Free. Drinks are provided.

Presenter: Ellen Huckabay, Regional Extension Agent for Mobile, Clarke, and Washington Counties, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Topic: “Growing Turf”

For more information: 251-574-8445 or www.aces.edu/Mobile/mg



Ellen Huckabay

Regional Extension Agent Ellen Huckabay says, “Growing turf can be one of the most frustrating landscape tasks that you tackle, but it doesn’t have to be so hard.” Come learn the basics of home lawn management including mowing, fertilization, and pest control. “Growing happy, healthy turf does not have to be a full time job,” she adds.

JoAnne Ortmann Scholarship Winners



L to R: Jeanon Massien, Chair of the AMGA Scholarship Program; Mobile County Master Gardeners JoAnne Ortmann Scholarship recipients; Angela Dobson Speetjens and Dillon Turk; and Paul Patterson, Associate Dean, College of Agriculture at Auburn University.



Upcoming Events

Mobile County Master Gardener March Member Meeting—Public Welcome

Presenters: Deborah and Pat Heroman,
Heroman Services Plant Company

When: Thursday, March 6, 2014 9:30 – 11:00 am

Where: Jon Archer Center,
1070 Schillinger Road, N. Mobile AL 36608

Admission: Free



Pat and Deborah Heroman

Topic: “Interior Landscaping: Interior Plant Design and Care”

Deborah and Pat Heroman are the owners of Heroman Services Plant Design Company with locations in Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama. Pat is a fifth generation horticulturalist and both Pat and Deborah are Certified Landscape Professionals. Together with a team of licensed horticulturalists, they bring houseplants to a whole new level, elevating the common houseplant to works of art. The presentation will discuss how to display houseplants for purpose and pleasure, how to use houseplants to warm a room and the amazing restorative qualities of plants in the home or office space.

 **Naturally Smart Gardener**
a wallet- and earth-friendly approach to growing your own

3rd Tuesdays, February – September, 5:30 to 8:00 pm
Mobile County Extension Office
1070 Shillinger Rd

- February 18 **Building Healthy Soil**
- March 18 **Trap Crops & Companion Plants**
- April 15 **Garden-to-Table**
- May 20 **Wise Ways to Water**
- June 17 **Pests: the weeds, the insects, and the diseases**
- July 15 **Attracting & Protecting Pollinators**
- August 19 **Preserving the Harvest: Use what you grow**
- Sept 16 **Chickens, Rabbits, & Goats, OH MY!**
&
The Law of the Land: City ordinances, design, other agencies

Cost is \$20 per session or \$150 for the series.
Price includes a notebook of publications and a light dinner.

Pre-registration required.
Call 251-574-8445 to register and for more information.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator and employer.
www.aces.edu

This demonstration is open to any and all individuals with an interest in learning about the care and maintenance of fruit trees, roses & ornamentals.



Bring your pruning shears!

FREE!

Pruning Demonstration for Various Fruit Crops, Roses & Ornamentals

Hands-on Learning
Will address tools and safety aspects of pruning

Friday, February 28, 2014
9:00 a.m. until Noon

At the
Jon Archer Agricultural Ctr.
1070 Schillinger Road North
Mobile, AL 36608

For more information contact:
(251) 574-8445 or email:
milesjd@aces.edu





Upcoming Events

2014 Caladium Sale 5 for \$6.00



Candidum



Roselight



Red Flash

Caladiums will be on sale at March 6, Member Meeting

MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS

Plantasia!

SPRING PLANT SALE

FRIDAY MARCH 28 9-4
SATURDAY MARCH 29 9-4
SUNDAY MARCH 30 11-4

Free
ADMISSION

40th
Anniversary

THOUSANDS OF PLANTS,
THOUSANDS OF COLORS
FOR YOUR GULF COAST GARDEN

OPENING NIGHT
PREVIEW PARTY
& SALE

THURSDAY
MARCH 27, 4-7 PM
WINE, MUSIC & HOTS D'OEUVRES -
\$25 ADMISSION AT GATE



MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS
5151 Museum Drive - (251)942-0555
www.MobileBotanicalGardens.org

Plant list posted online two weeks before sale. For easier shopping, please bring your own cart.

WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US FOR MOBILE AREA ORCHID SOCIETY'S 37TH ANNUAL ORCHID SHOW-SALE

NO ADMISSION CHARGE

FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 2, 2014

MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS

5151 MUSEUM DRIVE

MOBILE, AL



DENDROBIDIUM PALMERI, VAR. AUREOLOPLAVUM

Friday
5 am Exhibit Set up
Noon Sales Area Opens
5 pm Show Closes

Saturday
5 am AOS Judging
Noon Show Opens
5 pm Show Closes

Sunday
Noon Show Opens
4 pm Show Closes

Show Chairman
Joe Paine
251 209 1005
joe6w@aol.com

President
Harry Stephens
(251) 767 2281
hrstephens1950@bellsouth.net

Secretary
Iris Linder
(251) 565-6677
linderiris@gmail.com



2014 Educational Seminar

At Jon Archer Center



AMY STEWART

Author of *The Drunken Botanist*

Book Signing to follow lecture. Books are available for purchase at the event. Registration required.



APRIL 12 • 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Herbal Infusions served from 1:30-2:30 p.m. • \$20 per person
Jon Archer Center 1070 Schillinger Rd. N. Mobile, AL 36608

251.574.8445 www.aces.edu/Mobile/mg

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity institution and employer.



Mobile County Master Gardeners
Mobile County Office
1070 Schillinger Rd. N.
Mobile AL 36608-5298
Phone: 251-574-8445
E-mail: www.aces.edu/Mobile/mg

Officers

President	Penny Claiborne '10
1st Vice President	Regina Gunn '11
2nd vice President	Brenda Bolton '12
Recording Secretary	Nan Costello '10
Corresponding Secretary	Beth Walmsley '11
Treasurer	Susan Morrison '07

Board of Directors

Glenda Eady '09	2014
Greer Wilhelm '10	2014
Jackie Jenkins '11	2015
Joe Pippin '11	2015
Mary Ann Days '11	2016
Carol Eskridge '12	2016
Past President - Connie Barron	'08

Term Expires

Appointees

Newsletter Editor	Alice Marty '07
Volunteer Activity Coordinator	Elisa Baldwin '06
Volunteer Hours Coordinator	Jo Hayes '99, Genie Schneider '12
2013 Class Representatives	Kathy Sanders and Jan Tanner
ACES Advisor	Ellen Huckabay

Mission Statement:

The Alabama Master Gardener Volunteer Program is an educational outreach program provided and administered by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

Alice Marty will publish the Dirt on the 25th of each month. Articles for inclusion must be received by the 15th of the month and may be submitted to Alice Marty MCdirt@comcast.net or the Extension Office.

Issued by
Ellen Huckabay
Regional Extension Agent



Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities

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