



The Newsletter of Lee County Master Gardeners

President's Message

"Leaf Notes" Wins State Award

"Leaf Notes", Lee County Master Gardeners' quarterly newsletter was awarded as the Outstanding Newsletter award by Alabama Master Gardeners Association at the recent state at conference. Patti Householder awarded the plaque to David at our June 1st meeting.

"Leaf Notes" won the award for an association with over 61 members. Newsletters are judged on news/public relation's stories, lists or calendars of events, photographs of activities, monthly columns, announcements, contact information, attractiveness. Imagination, color and art.

Congratulations to David Peterson, editor and frequently photographer of our "Leaf Notes" for winning this prestigious award. Members of the board made the nomination without David's knowledge. Thank you for the outstanding award winning work you do for our association. Congratulations David for a job well done.

Nancy Golson
President

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Photo by Jolly Roberts



Summer 2016

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Leaf Notes



The Master Gardeners Program educates volunteers in science-based gardening and landscape practices and helps them effectively extend research-based information to the public as Master Gardeners. The Master Gardener's role is primarily that of "educator."

There are many different ways our volunteers in Lee County help the Alabama Extension System (ACES) expand outreach to the community. We construct and maintain community demonstration gardens and help implement community projects. A variety of garden-related programs and workshops are offered to the public.

Master Gardeners Please Note:

If you have misplaced or have need for a new badge, please let Mallory Kelley know —.

Mallory Kelley:

Jones57@aces.edu

PLEASE INCLUDE:

Name, County, Year of Master Gardeners Certification!

Daylilies



Quarterly Quiz

Can you identify this flower bud?
(Answer on page 4)





Meet your 2016 Garden Coordinators

Beth Ballard Dorman—Grandma's Garden

I was born and raised a "Mississippi Girl" in the small town of Stonewall MS from 1954-1975. I received my education from Jones County Junior College, Ellisville MS and Mississippi University for Women in Columbus MS. I married Geedy Dorman in August of 1975 and he swept me away from my Mississippi roots to enjoy a great life together while he pursued a career in the United States Army. We loved all of the places we called home during those 26 ½ years, especially our overseas assignments in Germany and Italy.

We were blessed with our first beautiful daughter, Amy Ellen, while on assignment in Fort Bragg, North Carolina and our second beautiful daughter, Mary Claire, while stationed in Little Rock Arkansas. They embraced our military life and made great friends at all our assigned posts. They both met their husbands while attending Prattville High School during our last assignment while Geedy was stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery.

Our family lived in Prattville from 2001-2007. During that time, I took the opportunity to finish my college education and graduated from Auburn University, Montgomery with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology. With retirement from the military in our future while living in Prattville, we begin looking for a place to set down our roots for our final posting. Hoping to stay close to our family in Mississippi, we chose Auburn Alabama to call home for our retirement years. We moved into our final home off of Farmville Road in January of 2007.

Since moving to Auburn, I graduated from the 2010 Master Gardener class with a great new group of friends from this wonderful community we love to call home. I especially enjoy working with my friends on each Thursday prior to "Second Saturdays" in Grandma's Garden in Pioneer Park. I am also a die-hard fan of Auburn Tiger football and seldom miss a game in Jordan Hare. However, my greatest source of joy is the wonderful blessing of 2 special granddaughters born to our daughters last year.

Charlot Ritenbaugh—Kiesel Park

My most recent birthday marks the point where I have lived more than half of my life in the great state of Alabama. My Pennsylvania roots remain fruitful due to the numerous geographical and agricultural similarities between the two states.

I grew up on the rolling hills in rural central Pennsylvania, dotted with dairy farms belonging to most of my aunts and uncles. Nature and recreational activities were entwined from my earliest years. Lakes, streams of cold water full of rocks and rapids, uncles who excelled at fly fishing, the statewide standard school closures on the first day of deer hunting season, horses, dogs, a large variety of hay and cattle filled barns in which to play, award winning harvests on the fertile banks of the Susquehanna River, these things and more contributed to my lifelong interest in wildlife and horticulture. I was a 4-H member, club president, equestrian, seamstress, baker, and a graduate of the 4-H Junior Leadership program. The cherry on the ice cream sundae of my 4-H membership was "a weeklong summer camp" highlighting my life from age 9 to 18.

After 35 years in public education I am permanently best defined as a teacher and advocate for those among us with less than a fair share of natural or economic resources. During my last decade as an educator with the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, I supervised 9 regional centers covering the state. I honestly loved traveling around Alabama. The state is so diverse even in the most rural of areas. I used to tell my boss that driving around Alabama filled my pastoral need. I don't think he ever figured out that I wasn't talking about a ministry.

My husband Bob and I share our lives with our sons, their wives, and two grandchildren. The decision of my sister and brother-in-law to move to the area brings more family into our daily lives. Becoming a Master Gardener opened my life to meeting folks from completely different backgrounds. Chatting with other MG's, new or old brings me joy.

Gardening is one of the top leisure activities in the U.S. Our three demonstration gardens provide learning opportunities as well as a moment away from the stresses of life for our many visitors. While working in the gardens, we spend hours together with other members and Friends. Those hours are hands on minutes of learning and sharing the how of gardening. When we converse with the folks that walk through our gardens we don't think we are masters, but with enough hours volunteering in a demonstration garden together, we really do know more than most who visit our gardens. That's when we share the wealth of being a Master Gardener.



Tour Sponsors and Contributors

Thanks to our Sponsors and Contributors!

Orchid Level

Auburn-Opelika Tourism Bureau • Blooming Colors
Chicken Salad Chick • Joel Pittard



Camellia Level

Alan Dorn/Keller Williams • Auburn Land Improvement
C&C Land Development • Garden Delights
Brian Golson • Home Depot
Piedmont Fertilizer Company • Prestige Properties
R & R Landscapers • The Event Group • TruGreen
University Ace Hardware



Daisy Level

Alabama Power • Alligare • Amsterdam Cafe
Auburn Bank • Auburn Furniture • Bonnie Plants
Buxton Financial • Cannon Pest Control
Charter Bank • Dilworth Development
Jordan Tree Service • Momma Goldberg's
Our Home Pharmacy • Perch Jewelry Studio
Pho Lee • Quail Hollow Gardens
Jeffcoat Trant Funeral Home • Southern States Bank
The Flower Store • Toomers Coffee • Austin and Linda Wade
Wild Birds Unlimited • Wilson Investment Group
Winston Smith T Building Supply • Sleepy Hollow Pine Straw



Contributors

Anna and Bo Buckner • Mary and Barry Burkhart
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Teresa and Floyd Vest • Karen and Mac Wright
Southern Lawns Professional Lawn Service



Sponsorship Team with Opelika Mayor Fuller

Photo by Jolly Roberts

Answer to quiz on page 2

{Flowers growing at Ft Morgan in Honor of those who died there}



Lantana

Lantana is a [genus](#) of about 150 [species](#) of [perennial flowering plants](#) in the [verbena](#) family, [Verbenaceae](#). They are native to [tropical](#) regions of the [Americas](#) and [Africa](#) but exist as an [introduced species](#) in numerous areas, especially in the [Australian-Pacific](#) region. The genus includes both [herbaceous](#) plants and [shrubs](#) growing to 0.5–2 m (1.6–6.6 ft) tall. Their common names are **shrub verbenas** or **lantanas**. The generic name originated in [Late Latin](#), where it refers to the unrelated [Viburnum lantana](#).^[2]



Thank You to Our Sponsors and Contributors!

Special Thank You for a successful Lee County Master Gardeners 2016 Wandering Through Wondrous Gardens Tour. This was a true community effort from our sponsors and supporters, our garden owners, the visitors on the tour, and all the many hours of work by Master Gardeners. Thank you all!

Chicken Salad Chick was our major sponsor as she provided about 500 meals on the two days of the tour. Last year we met with her and agreed we would pay for part of the meals, but after the tour she paid the bill personally. Thank you Chicken Salad Chick! We love you and your chicken salad.

Auburn/Opelika Tourism over a year ago became our advisor on printed materials and the advertising campaign. They gave us the time and talent of graphic designer talent of Laura Miller, who designed the booklet, posters, ticket, nametags, and sponsor board. Their professional touch, advice, and beautiful printed materials provided the basis for a level of pride for the tour. Thank you John Wild and Laura Miller.

Special thank you to both Auburn Mayor Ham and Opelika Mayor Fuller for their support and guidance and for attending the tour. We appreciate the support Joel Pittard and Ann Renquest gave to Master Gardeners. They worked the first day and visited the gardens the second day of the tour. King Braswell and Blooming Colors not only supported us financially but also gave us leads on gardens for the tour and served as a ticket outlet. Again, a big Thank You to these Orchid Level Sponsors.

We send appreciation to all our Sponsors: please review the list again and let them know how much we appreciate their support of Master Gardeners. Thanks to Clay Williford, Scotts Miracle-Gro.

We also want to thank again Jim Disque and his sponsor committee for working so hard to gain the support of our sponsors.

Thank you for your support and work to make Lee County Master Gardeners 2016 Wandering Through Wondrous Gardens Tour a success.

Nancy and Susan



Helping Bees

By Lois Chaplin—Alabama Gardener

Helping bees is a hot topic as rural and urban folks look for ways to support a healthy bee population, especially native bees. These bees pollinate home gardens, fruit trees and flowers, which provide vegetables, fruits and seeds.

Here are a few simple ways to provide bees food and habitat:

The majority of native bees nest in the ground or in hollow stems. Creating a nesting habitat is surprisingly simple. Often it means doing nothing other than leaving things alone. For example, an unmanicured area where the lawn meets woods, creek, drainage or other "wild" places with bare or leaf-covered ground provides nesting places. Bees need a water source, too. It could be just a simple spot that puddles after a rain or watering.

It's easy to include plants that bloom in each season. Especially important are those that flower when bees are first active in early spring. Oaks, maples and willows are big sources of nectar and pollen as bees emerge from their nests. Those are followed by native trees like redbud and fringetree. Blueberries are also an excellent early food for bees. Gardeners with shade can plant Lenten rose, a beautiful early flowering perennial whose blooms will be open when bees emerge. Hosta and cardinal flowers are two other perennials that bloom later in the shade.

If you like an "all green" landscape, try to choose evergreens that produce flowers bees can use such as hollies, mahonia and rosemary. You don't have to dig up a current garden to include these; just plant in areas that already exist or dig up some grass to make a bed larger. Some easy flowering plants to put into beds include crocus, day-lily, catmint, salvia, lantana, cone flower and sedum. When shopping, avoid double-flowered hybrids. The extra petals make it hard for bees to reach the nectar and pollen. Most flat, ray flowers such as zinnias and sunflowers are good (but not the sunflowers without pollen that are grown for cutting.)

Unfortunately, some popular flowers like geraniums, impatiens and petunias are not attractive to bees.

Avoid spraying excess insecticides on plants that bees visit for pollen and nectar, especially in the morning when bees are most active.

Avoid dusts; bees pick those up easily on their hairy bodies. Read labels carefully, and avoid using anything toxic to bees. Be careful about organic products such as soaps, and spray them only when bees are not active. Just because a pesticide is labeled organic doesn't mean it won't kill bees if used improperly. When available, select a product targeted toward a specific insect, the best known of which are caterpillar killers and mosquito dunks, which don't affect other species of insects.

Harvey Cotten, former Huntsville Botanic Garden director, points out that recent heightened concerns about Zika virus implores us to approach mosquito control with bees in mind.

Any spraying or fogging of the landscape should be done in the evening or at night, never during the day when bees are active. Be aware of this when using a mosquito-control service. Also, keep abreast of what products are used to be sure they are as bee-friendly as possible.

To learn more about encouraging bees, start with Alabama Smart Yards bulletin ANR1359 by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and Pollinator.org. There are many resources online from universities and organizations dedicated to bees



The Benefits of Adding Honey to Your Food

From Baba-Mail

For the past 2,500 years, honey has been an essential ingredient, used by countless cultures all around the world. Perhaps one of the reasons why, even today, honey is so widely consumed, is due to the variety of ways it can be eaten: You can eat a spoonful of honey directly, or spread it on bread like a jam, you can mix it with juice or tea for a sweeter taste, or simply add it to warm water. No matter how you use it, honey has become an extremely useful and versatile ingredient. It is also becoming increasingly recognized not only for its amazing taste, but its medicinal properties. To reap its benefits, selecting the right type of honey is key.

Knowing the Difference between Raw and Artificial Honey When purchasing honey, bear in mind that raw honey (honey in its purest form) is best. Raw honey may have been filtered, or strained but not heated above 115°F (46°C), like many of the commercial varieties we find lined up in our conventional grocery stores. In fact, most of the commercial kinds have been processed to the point that many (if not all) of the beneficial enzymes, nutrients and antioxidants have been completely destroyed.

But, how can you identify the difference between the two? These 4 tests will help you determine whether the honey you purchased, is pure or not:

1. The texture test Unlike artificial honey, pure honey is solid. A spoonful will remain intact and will not drip off or spread easily.

2. The water test

Artificial honey, dissolves easily in water. Raw honey, on the other hand, will lump and settle at the bottom of a glass that is filled with water.

3. The shelf life test

Raw honey will crystallize over time, while imitation honey will continue to look like syrup, no matter how long it has been stored.

4. Light a fire

If you dip the tip of a matchstick in honey, then strike it to light, natural honey will light the match easily and the flame will burn off the honey. Artificial honey, though, will not light due to the moisture that it contains.

To get the most out of this beneficial food, purchase a raw, organic honey from a whole food shops, a farmer's market specialized food stores, or your favorite bee keeper

The Key Nutrients Found in Raw Honey

Raw honey is loaded with many essential vitamins and minerals. It is packed with essential B vitamins, including B1 (Thiamine), B2 (Riboflavin), B3 (Niacin), B5 (Pantothenic Acid) and B6 (Pyridoxine), all of which function as coenzymes that help the body attain energy from food. The B-vitamins are also important for normal appetite, good vision, healthy skin and nervous system function, as well as red blood cell formation. Honey is also a good source of vitamin C, which benefits the body by holding cells together through collagen synthesis (a connective tissue that holds muscles, bones and other tissues together).

Honey also contains minerals like magnesium, potassium, calcium, sodium chloride, copper, iron, manganese, sulphur, zinc and phosphate - most of which aid in body metabolism, water balance and bone health, among many other beneficial qualities.

10 Ways Raw Honey Can Benefit Your Health

1. A great source of energy

Carbohydrates in the form of glucose and fructose supply the body and mind with energy, which can boost endurance and reduce muscle fatigue. In fact, honey is used by many athletes as an instant, yet sustained, energy source.

2. An excellent source of antioxidants

Besides containing a full spectrum of vitamins and minerals, honey also contains the flavonoid pinocembrin - which is unique to honey. This supports and promotes healthy enzyme activity.



The Benefits of Adding Honey to Your Food—Continued

Garden Tour May Day Sunday Supper

Photos by David Peterson

3. Supports good bacteria

Honey supports Bifidobacteria, which is present in the gastrointestinal tract and is essential for efficient digestion and good health. Honey also contains pre/pro-biotics, which helps growth and activity of Bifidobacteria. Honey doesn't ferment in the stomach and can be used to counteract indigestion.

4. Treats allergies and supports a strong immune system

Raw honey contains antibacterial and anti-fungal properties that can treat allergies by supporting a strong immune system. Using honey often can also strengthen the white blood corpuscles, which help fight bacterial and viral diseases.

5. Slows down the aging process

The slow depletion of enzymes in the body partly contributes to the aging process. Raw honey, however, is one of the few foods that helps slow the depletion of enzymes through the ingestion of amylase - an enzyme that breaks down sugars and carbohydrates. This has the ability to restore damaged skin, giving a softer, younger look.



Bees entering Hive

“Courtesy Talking With Bees” www.talkingwithbees.com.



Caring for Fruit Trees



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

The excitement of spring is in the air and that means, time to dig in the “dirt.” I have to admit, the bug has bitten me and I have been browsing the stores for the new plant that is “needed” in my landscape. In the spring time we often see the beautiful hydrangeas, azaleas, perennials and annuals, but also you may be enticed by fruit trees. Fruits can be a great addition to the home landscape if the proper conditions and devotion to caring for them are a priority.

First of all, let’s talk about the easiest fruits to grow in Central Alabama. If you are new to fruits in the landscape, start out with those that require the least amount of maintenance and care, such as: figs, pomegranate, blueberries (need acid soil), oriental persimmon and muscadines. These fruits rarely require spraying and very little pruning, except the muscadine. The muscadine needs a structure to grow on so that can be an initial investment of money and labor. In addition, the blueberries will produce best if there is more than one variety for pollination and the muscadines can be self-fertile or female. If you plant a female, you will need a self-fertile variety to accompany it.

Now for the more difficult fruits to grow such as peaches, plums, apples and pears. Peaches are self-fertile so just one tree will do, but all the others need another variety for pollination. Tree fruits require pruning and training year after year for best production. Beyond pruning, sanitation of the orchard or tree is very important in your success. Anytime fruit or leaves drop from the tree clean it up to prevent the spread of diseases. Heavy mulching all the way out to the canopy of the tree will also help prevent diseases while holding in moisture, suppressing weeds and adding organic matter.

Spraying is often required to have a healthy crop when it comes to fruit trees. Spray recommendations are to start spraying Captan (fungicide) as soon as the petals begin to open. Continue to spray every 10-14 days. Once the petals are falling to the ground and you no longer see bees visiting the flowers, start spraying Malathion or Sevin for insect control. Continue spraying every 10-14 days and it can be applied in conjunction with the Captan once the pollinators are gone.

Especially for fruit trees it is necessary to thin the fruit. For peaches, pears and apples you will want one fruit per 6”-8” with plums one fruit per 4”-6.” If the fruit is not thinned the tree will try to produce too many. The end result is all the fruit ends up being the size of a golf ball when ripe or the stress of too much fruit can cause the tree to abort the fruit, meaning drop it all at once. This usually occurs about a week before you think the fruit is ready to be harvested and suddenly every fruit is laying on the ground under the tree. Thinning the fruit will greatly increase the size of your fruit and prevent the weight of the fruit from breaking limbs.

Hopefully this information will improve your home fruit production. If you have more questions about growing fruits or any other horticulture related question please call the Master Gardener Help-line at: 1877-ALA-GROW (252-4769).

Quarterly Quote

Character is the result of two things: mental attitude and the way we spend our time.

– Elbert Hubbard



Coordinators Garden Tour

Photos by Jolly Roberts



Pre-tour Picnic



Fire Pit



Grandma's



Grandma's 3



Chris Huff



Birders



Coordinators



Smyth's



Potpourri

By Charlot Ritenbaugh

We are currently in one of those rainless periods that are never far off the horizon in Lee County. Here are a few survival techniques for your lawn during these dry spells from the Turf Resource Center, an international non-profit. These were published on the Better Homes and Garden website.

Making your lawn as strong and healthy as possible before annual rainfall becomes scarce is the first step.

Reduce or eliminate nitrogen fertilizer and increase potassium fertilizer.

Reduce thatch and compaction.

Water the lawn late at night or early in the morning.

Water infrequently and deeply.

Sharpen your mower blade two or three times per season.

Mow often so you never remove more than the top third of grass blades.

Leave clippings on the lawn.

Avoid using herbicides and pesticides.

Once the drought hits, or once temperatures reach high levels for a week or more, take these additional steps:

Raise the mowing height 25 percent or more.

Reduce traffic on the lawn.

Increase watering on areas near buildings and other heat-reflecting surfaces as well as high or sloped areas.

If the drought is extended or water-use restrictions are implemented, take these additional steps:

Eliminate all traffic on the lawn.

Restrict watering to the areas that are most important to you.

Accept that the unwatered portion of your lawn will be dormant and brown until conditions improve.

Another interesting article, **The Art of Green Mulch**, discusses the value of plants touching each other and sharing important information with one another. Here is the opening paragraph.

Drive around any city, and the landscapes you see may be as much filled with mulch as with plants. Plants aren't allowed to touch, which leads to the ground being open to sunlight and weed seeds. Besides being susceptible to weeds, this style of landscape requires annual maintenance, and the design doesn't reflect how plants grow in nature. How can we get back to a more natural aesthetic that mitigates the need for yearly wood mulch applications and supports more wildlife?

Here is the link to the entire article.

<http://www.houzz.com/ideabooks/54618267/list/the-art-of-green-mulch>

It is Blueberry time at Kiesel Park ...pickers and nibblers are welcome!



Garden Tour Photographs



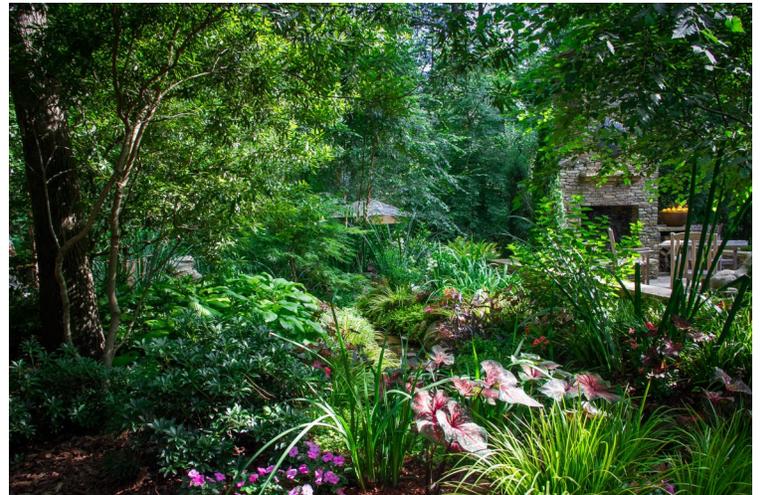
Emily's Secret Garden—Photo by Pat Giordano



Emily's Secret Garden—Photo by Pat Giordano



Splash—Photo by Pat Giordano



Emily's Secret Garden—Photo by David Peterson



Splash—Photo by David Peterson



Garden Tour Photographs



Tending Roses—Photo by Pat Giordano



Tending Roses—Photo by David Peterson



Serene Surprise—Photo by David Peterson



Peaceful Solitude—Photo by David Peterson



Gardeners Passion—Photo by David Peterson



Gardeners Passion—Photo by David Peterson



Recent Shows and Sponsor Gift



Home and Garden Show—submitted photo



Garden in the Park—submitted photo



City Fest



City Fest



Collage Canvas Print Presented to Stacy Brown
Sponsor/Contributor



City Fest

City Fest Photos by David Peterson