

Ask a Master Gardener

March 15, 2016

Suzanne Holland, Carroll County Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

All for the Love of Gardening – Master Gardener Appreciation Day on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

If you read this column on a weekly basis, you know that a Master Gardener tries to answer gardening and landscape questions that are of interest to the community. If you read all the way to the end of the article, you might have noticed that there is a Master Gardener Volunteer that will answer questions via the phone or email. However, there is so much more that Master Gardeners do that connects your UGA Cooperative Extension to gardeners and the community.

Have you heard of Heritage Days? An annual event in September at the Carroll County Ag Center has demonstrations about rural life in the early days of Carroll County. Last year about 1,300 4<sup>th</sup> graders attended to explore their heritage. Master Gardeners were there volunteering as the youngsters experienced music, stories, crafts, clothing displays, and food preservation techniques from times gone by.

Master Gardeners also sponsor the Junior Master Gardener program for youth in three different age groups: Sprouts for ages 5 – 8, Junior Master Gardeners for ages 9 – 12, and Senior Master Gardeners for ages 13 -16. The groups meet monthly September through May. Using games, arts and craft projects, computer research, and presentations, topics such as horticulture, the environment, insects, landscape design, and much more are covered. This June, a four day summer camp called Camp Dirty Knees will round out the curriculum for ages 9 -12. Camp Dirty Knees will expand next year to include all three age groups.

The Buffalo Creek Garden, located at the Carroll County Ag Center is a demonstration garden maintained through Master Gardeners Extension Volunteers. Abundant varieties of plants and trees are on display and labeled so one can perhaps pick that next great addition to the landscape. Strolling through the garden one will find a gurgling water feature and whimsical garden sculptures.

Carroll County Master Gardener Volunteers and the West Georgia Chapter of the Georgia Native Plant Society maintain and beautify the Buffalo Creek Trail to provide a short hiking trail featuring native plants. Recently, numerous native azaleas and trillium were planted along the trail and should provide a beautiful spring walk. There are tables and benches along the way if you want to bring along a picnic or stop and enjoy the views.

Keep in mind that much of the time and effort to create the programs mentioned here along with others, including hands-on demonstrations, plant clinics, and workshops, are performed by dedicated volunteers. Paula Burke, Carroll County Extension Coordinator says it best: “We have ninety Carroll County Master Gardener Extension volunteers

helping educate our community on their horticulture needs and questions. In 2015, they volunteered over 9,800 hours reaching over 413,000 clients in Carroll County. Their volunteer efforts are a tremendous help to me as the County Ag Agent in reaching as many people as we can with researched based and unbiased information to make their lives better.

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, if you see or know a Master Gardener, tell them thank you. In addition, on April 1st at 10:00am, Commissioner Michelle Morgan will issue a proclamation on the Historic Courthouse steps to recognize the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in April to be Garden Week in Carroll County.

If you want to know more about Master Gardener activities or if you have gardening questions, contact a Master Gardener Volunteer at the UGA Cooperative Extension Carroll County office at 900 Newnan Road, Carrollton at 770-836-8546 or via email at [ccmg@uga.edu](mailto:ccmg@uga.edu)