

# The New Leaf

Coweta County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers Newsletter  
University of Georgia Extension – Coweta County

**MARCH 2024**

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*DIANE COOK*  
*MGEV PRESIDENT*

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

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Wow MGEVs, there is just no slowing us down this year! Activity abounds in our group. In February alone we had 12 scheduled workdays. Add to that the various committee meetings, communications necessary to set up those workdays, Help Desk, mentoring the new MGEV class, and all the other time spent beyond our designated workdays, and you really see what a dedicated, hardworking group we are.

Recently, our hard work was acknowledged at the Capitol building in Atlanta. On Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, House Resolution 955 was presented to the State Legislature by our very own Lynn Smith!! The Resolution honored the service of all of Georgia's Master Gardener Extension Volunteers on the 45th anniversary of the program. The Resolution outlined our considerable commitment to the program "by completing a rigorous training program that includes 50 hours of classroom study, passing a final exam, and 50 hours of volunteer service," and we all know that is just the first year!! The Resolution goes on to state that the thousands of hours of volunteer support is valued in the millions of dollars. As a result of educational activities offered by Master Gardener Extension Volunteers more Georgians connect with agriculture in their own homes and gardens and are able to make environmentally sound gardening decisions. Thank you, Lynn, for sponsoring this resolution. I was fortunate enough to be at the Capitol on Tuesday, and as always enjoyed being with my fellow MGEVs. One thing I noticed is how nice it is to share little gardening tips we come across that make our gardening lives easier. Hopefully, not a tip like the one in the picture that accompanies this article!! In sharing our ideas, it reminded me of an idea that Cathy LeBar had, to set up a "tip jar" at one of our meetings. Not the kind of "tip jar" that seems to be cropping up in every location imaginable these days. Do not get me going on that subject, but a "tip jar" filled with gardening tips from our group.

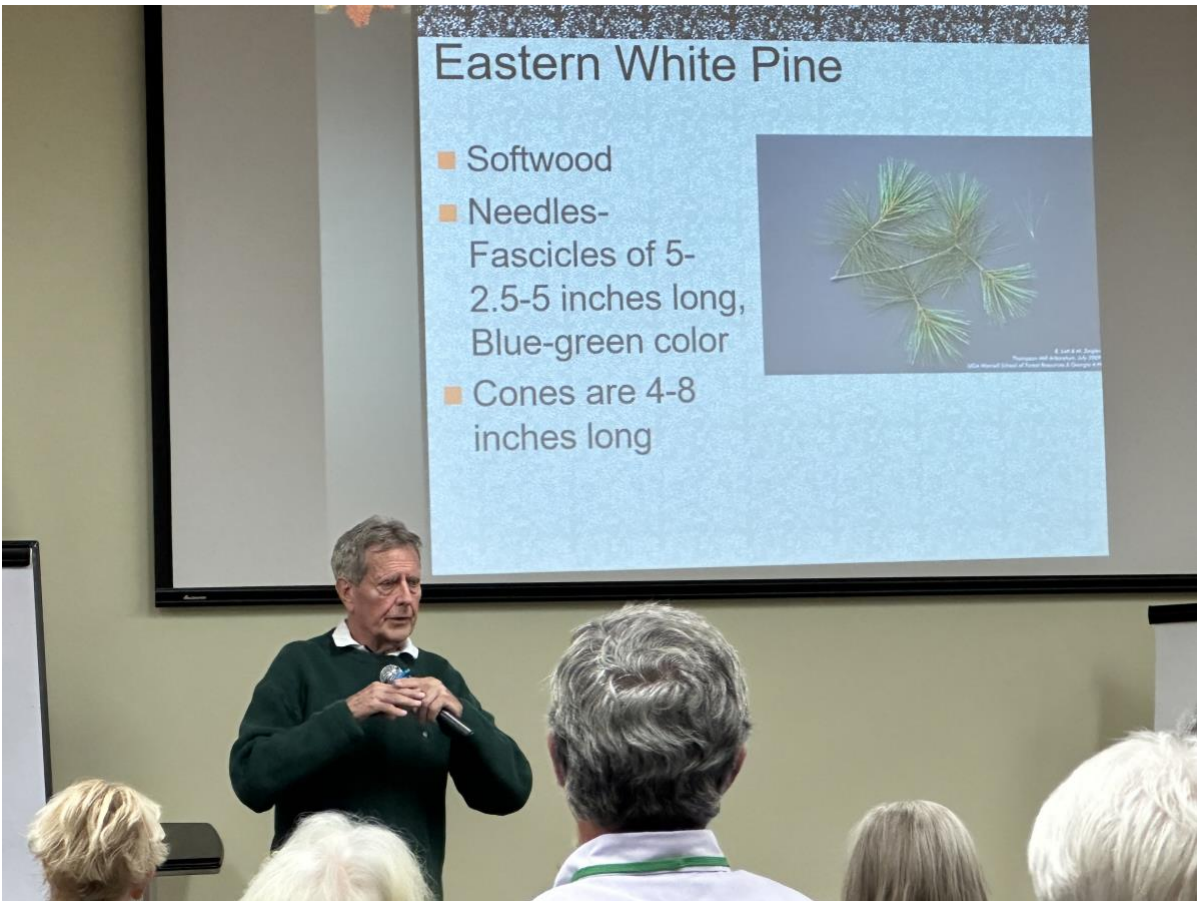
So, MGEVs put on your thinking caps and come up with 2 (or more) of your tried-and-true tips that help make your gardening life easier. Write them on a slip of paper and place them in the "tip jar" that will be at our next Volunteer Meeting on March 14th at 10 am in the Don Morris Meeting Room. If you can't make the meeting, email them to me and I will see they get put in the jar. After the meeting, I'll collect them, type them up and get them out to the group as an attachment to one of my weekly updates.

Well, that about wraps it up for this month. As always, if you have an idea for our group, shoot me a text, email or call and I will see what can be done to make your idea happen! Looking forward to seeing everyone at the Volunteer meeting or a workday soon!

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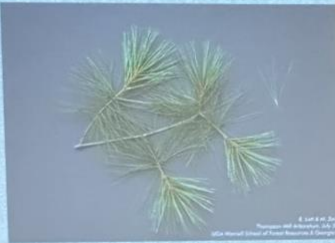
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**DON MORRIS TEACHING ABOUT TREES  
IN THE DON MORRIS CLASSROOM**



**Eastern White Pine**

- Softwood
- Needles- Fascicles of 5-2.5-5 inches long, Blue-green color
- Cones are 4-8 inches long

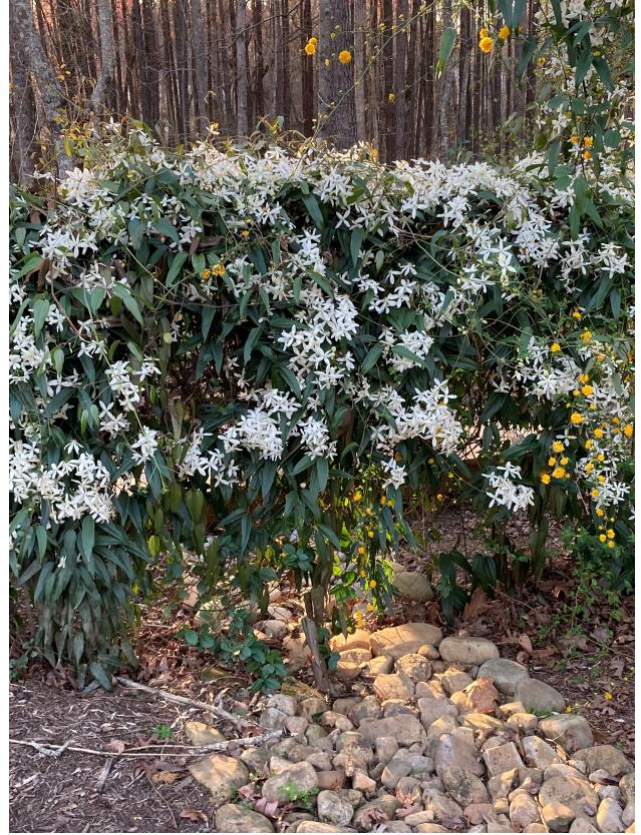


E. Carl G. Smith  
Professor and Extension Specialist  
2014-2015  
2014-2015  
2014-2015

## WHAT'S BLOOMING IN MGEV GARDENS?

There is no excuse to go through the winter without flowers and fragrance in the garden. Experienced gardeners like Denise Best, Dianne Teer, Nancy Harrelson, Donna Dietz, and Dale Senko share photos of the beauty that can be found during the colder months. Besides Camellias there are lots of other plants.

### Witch Hazel and evergreen Clematis bloom late winter



### Kerria blooms late winter.



### Winter honeysuckle blooms December to March.



**Hellebores bloom February to April.**



**Quince blooms in February and March.**



**Edgeworthia begins blooming in December.**



**And if you stay inside for the winter months, float some of those flowers in a bowl, or watch your Amaryllis grow.**



## LOVE IT or LOVE TO HATE IT

Submitted by Dale Senko

Cathy Pugh, Class of 2020, loves sedums, hostas and especially fennel because the caterpillars love them. Hostas and sedums are easy to pass along, and Cathy loves to share her plants with friends. Cathy uses an all-natural product containing mint to deter deer. She says the deer haven't eaten her hosta since she started using it. See Cathy's photos with happy pollinators on her plants. She loves to hate crocosmia because it gets out of hand.



## BYA

Submitted by Lyn Matthews

For those of you lucky enough to attend Tom Johnson's February BYA, *Creating a Romantic Garden*, I don't need to tell you how great it was. He is both an excellent storyteller and garden designer. I have heard from many of the attendees of this BYA and I feel certain Tom will be a return speaker in the future.

The next BYA is March 12 at 7pm. Teddy Meeks will present a program on *Lavender and Lilies*. Teddy, along with his wife Jenny, owns and operates Wild Daisy Farm in Molena, GA. Teddy will educate us on the uses and growing techniques of this much-loved herb, and we will learn about his collection of hybridized lilies.

On March 26, at 10 am, Morning Glory is happy to welcome Abra Lee, Director of Horticulture at Oakland Cemetery. Abra describes herself as a horticulturalist by trade and a storyteller by choice. The title of her program is "*Garden Glory*" which emphasizes stories of Black horticultural history, spotlighting folk gardens. There is a lot to learn from Abra so come and enjoy.



**Backyard Association**  
A Presentation by Coweta Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

**Teddy Meeks**  
Wild Daisy Farm, Molena, GA  
Tuesday March 12, 2024  
at 7:00pm

**"Lavender & Lilies"**

**UGA Extension – Coweta County**  
255 Pine Rd, Newnan, GA 30263  
(770) 254-2620 / [coweta.extension@uga.edu](mailto:coweta.extension@uga.edu)

**FREE to attend, but you must register to be entered into the drawing for door prizes.**

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If you are an individual with a disability who may require assistance or accommodation in order to participate in or receive the benefit of a service, program, or activity of UGA, or if you desire more information, please contact us.




**A Morning Glory Backyard Association Event**  
A Presentation by Coweta Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

**Abra Lee**  
Director of Agriculture,  
Historic Oakland Foundation  
Author, "Conquer the Soil"

**CONQUER The Soil**

**Tuesday, March 26**  
**10:00am – Noon**

**"Garden Glory"**

Exploring stories of Black Horticulture history—spotlighting Folk Gardens and lady legends who forged a path to economic and social freedom, inspiring plant lovers today.

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## SPRING PLANT SALE & GREEN HOUSE

Submitted by Barb Schwartz

<u>DATE/Time</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
03/02 – 10:00	SPS/Greenhouse – Intake Day	Greenhouse
03/04 – 1:00	Nature Trail Workday	Nature Trail
03/05 – 10:00	SPS/Greenhouse – Intake & Seeding	Greenhouse
03/05 – 1:00	Demo Garden Workday	Demo Garden
03/09 – 10:00	SPS/Greenhouse – Intake Day	Greenhouse
03/12 – 10:00	SPS/Greenhouse – 6 pack Tomato Seeding	Greenhouse
03/18 – 1:00	Nature Trail Workday	Nature Trail
3/18 Overnight	SPS/Greenhouse – Soak Moonflower seeds	?
3/19 – 10:00	SPS/Greenhouse – Seed Moonflowers	Greenhouse
4/13	<b>Spring Plant Sale!!</b>	Fairgrounds



**HARD WOOD CUTTING DAY: Thanks to all who participated; Cathy L, Rhodes, Cathy D, P, Marge, Mary Ann and Sonjia.**

## NATURE TRAIL

Submitted by Ed Atkinson

There is a lot going on at the Nature Trails.

The controlled burn is prepped but has been put on hold until the area dries out a bit, and we receive the go-ahead from the Forestry Commission. We will let everyone know when we have a date for the burn. Split rail fences are in really bad shape. Many rails have fallen out and some whole sections are on the ground. They are at the end of their useful life. We just learned that the county will be replacing the fence on both sides of the dam with post and board fencing that will be easier to maintain. We understand that all of the split rail fencing will be replaced as time and resources permit.

A lot of the pine trees have died and will be removed by Officer Webb and his crew. This is being done for safety reasons but will have the added benefit of opening up some areas and allow other more desirable plants to thrive. We hope that not too many of our favorite plants are damaged when the pines fall.

We had a great turnout for our workday on February 19 and got the purple trail and area around the pavilion cleaned up. Our goal was to clean up the sticks and limbs that made it look uncared for, and to put larger limbs in areas where erosion is a problem. We filled the trailer and a parking space with everything that was picked up. Our next workday will be March 4<sup>th</sup> and we will work on the red trail between the parking lot and the Demo Garden. We would love to have another great turnout so that the Trails will be in better shape when the new class of Master Gardeners visits on March 14<sup>th</sup>. With warmer weather, we hope to see more visitors to the Trails and make it something that they will enjoy. Over and over, we hear people say, "This place is really nice, didn't know it was here." Let your friends know about the McGuffey Nature Trails and invite them to visit. Brochures are available in the Extension Office.



Thanks Nancy, Melanie, Barb, Donna, Ed, and Mark.



## MARCH IN THE GARDEN

- Spring arrives on Monday, March 20 but more cold can still come.
- Prune early spring blooming plants (forsythia, quince, winter honeysuckle) after they finish blooming.
- Sow seeds indoors for spring vegetables and flower transplants according to germination and planting dates.
- Divide overgrown clumps of Hosta.
- Finish pruning rose bushes.
- Prepare your garden beds for planting; incorporate plenty of organic matter such as compost.

Check UGA Weather site for soil temperature when beginning to plant. [Georgiaweather.net](http://georgiaweather.net) <http://georgiaweather.net/?content=calculator&variable=C&site=WANSLEY>

## MARCH PRUNING HINTS FROM CR

- **Annuals:** Pick out and snip off all those faded blooms and stems. Neaten up their pot.
- **Bulbs:** Right now, you should be seeing lots of blooms. Nothing to do but enjoy!
- **Edibles:** Blueberries tend to grow tall sprouts in the center of the bush, and now is an excellent time to remove them, BUT DO NOT prune any horizontal branches within 6' of the ground as they will bear most of your fruit.
- **Houseplants:** Turn your house plants once a month as they tend to lean into the sun. It makes them look neater that way.
- **Lawns:** I just had my yard 'scalped' removing all the chaff, and it's starting to green up already.
- **Perennials and Ornamental Grasses:** Nothing this month, but April will be busy.
- **Roses:** Prune bush roses severely between now and March 15<sup>th</sup>. The new growth that is produced will bear most of the year's rose blooms. Wait until June to prune climbing roses. Also, remove all the dead and diseased branches. Cut away limbs that rub. If the plant is completely overgrown, 1/2 to 2/3 may need to be removed.
- **Shrubs:** Continue to prune deciduous shrubs removing all dead wood. If a shrub is rangy, spindly, or has overgrown its location, it is time to prune it back severely. Stay off your camellias until they finish blooming.
- **Trees:** Prune all dead and diseased branches. There aren't any leaves, so it's easy to see what needs to be done. Remove all crossing branches, rubbing branches, and any branches that make a sharp V-shape with the main trunk as these are usually weak and are prone to break off.
- **Vines and Ground Covers:** Get out your lawnmower and mow off your monkey grass on the mower's highest setting or about 3". Spring will convert the ragged edges with lovely, new green foliage.
- And as always, many, many thanks to Reeves & Glasener for their "Month-By-Month GARDENING in GEORGIA."

## LYNN SMITH HONORS GEORGIA MGEV's



**On February 20<sup>th</sup> a group of MGEV's from Coweta County traveled to the Georgia Capitol to participate in a legislative resolution sponsored by Lynn Smith. The resolution honors Master Gardener Extension Volunteers 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Georgia.**

**In attendance were Sarah Sawyer, Sheri Dorn, Lynn Smith, Amy Keller, Diane Cook, Stephanie Butcher, Dale Senko, Dana Selementi, and Patty Ellis.**

## **SPEAKERS BUREAU**

Submitted by Patty Ellis

After almost a decade of guiding the Speakers Bureau project for our group, Dan Gentry is stepping away from his leadership role. Thank you, Dan, for helping to found the group and bringing science-based gardening information to our community.

Patty Ellis will be stepping into the group leadership role. At this time, we'll be maintaining the group as is with the current speakers and presentations. In the future we'll be thinking about new and exciting ways to promote our speakers, different ways to get the presentations out to our neighbors and recruiting new volunteers to help.

The next time you see Dan, please thank him for all of his hard work on this project!

## **HELP DESK**

Submitted by Patty Ellis

As the weather gets warmer our neighbors get more excited about their gardens, and the help desk gets busier answering questions about a wide variety of gardening and horticulture topics. From plant and disease identification to what to plant when and where in the vegetable garden and how to decipher that soil test report, we hear it all!

We currently have a group of five volunteers who do "remote" help desk, which means checking the inbox from your home computer and answering client questions as they come in. There are also in person opportunities to volunteer helping with tasks in the office and following up on soil test results. If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering at the help desk, please reach out to Patty and we can schedule training, which takes about an hour.

The help desk isn't about knowing everything about gardening, it's about knowing where to find the information the client needs, and when to reach out for help on tough questions. It's amazing how much you'll learn!

**“Spring is nature’s way of saying, “Let’s Party!” – Robin Williams**

**“Hang on, Piglet. It’s March!” Winnie the Pooh**

## 2024 Master Gardener Coweta County Board and Committee Chairs

### **MGEV BOARD:**

President	Diane Cook
Vice President	Kathy Olmsted
Past President	Patty Ellis
President Elect	Jennie Adcock
Treasurer	Chuck Olmsted
Secretary	Stephanie Odom

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

Ask MG/Market Day	Harley Stewart
Backyard Association	Melanie Landrum, Deberah Williams
Boys & Girls Club/Youth Ed.	Rebecca Gibson
Communications	Jerry Allen
Demonstration Garden	Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller
Education	Cathy LeBar
Extension Landscape	Cathy LeBar
Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk	Susan Mills (Library), Patty Ellis
Fundraising	Open
Garden Tour	Open – no Tour planned until 2026.
Greenhouse	Barbara Schwartz (lead), Cathy LeBar, Marge Cox
Hospitality	Amy Sharpe, Susan Mills
Nature Trail	Ed & Melanie Atkinson, Audrey Harrelson
New Leaf	Pat Farmer
Plant Sales (Fall/Spring)	Kim Magyar, Kathy Olmsted
Scholarship	Jennie Adcock
Speakers Bureau	Patty Ellis
Spring Plant Sale	Kim Magyar, Kathy Olmsted
Sunshine	Sara Hanson
Volunteer Awards	Patty Ellis

Photos: Pat Farmer, Dale Senko, Diane Cook, Barb Schwartz, Denise Best, Donna Dietz, Dianne Teer, Nancy Harrelson  
 Editors: Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis, Connie Gilliam



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