

The New Leaf

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

DECEMBER 2022

MARK HESS, MGEV
PRESIDENT



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the year ends, I would like to thank the board and all the committee chairs for all their hard work in making this a successful year! A special thank you goes out to first-time board member Colleen who really stepped up our financial game. She put her CPA skills to good use, trying her best to keep us on budget. . . not an easy task. Another big thank you goes out to Carol, who is a long-time board member and has served us faithfully as Vice President for many years! We had many accomplishments this year including turning out a fantastic group of new MGEVs! Our new colleagues have jumped right in and are already lending a hand. We also reinvigorated our mentor program, assigning seasoned master gardeners with our new folks to help them learn the ropes. This year also saw the introduction of our new electronic MGEV calendar to minimize us stepping on each other's toes when scheduling events. We also had some changes in doctrine, allowing MGEVs for the first time to earn hours by attending our volunteer meetings (previously known as business meetings). We polled our new and existing MGEVs on their interest in serving on various committees, and this information was shared with the committee chairs to recruit volunteers.

We had several successful fundraisers including our Spring Plant Sale which raised over \$14,000 and our Fall Plant Sale which raised an additional \$6,700. We also had a very fruitful partnership with Soil3, thanks to the leadership of Melanie Landrum, which raised over \$3,500. We will end it all with a celebration at our holiday awards program on December 8th. I had a MGEV reach out to me wanting to know why we are referring to it as a Holiday Party versus how we have in the past referred to it as a Christmas Party. Unfortunately, I don't know the answer to that except I suspect we are probably trying to be politically correct. I mentioned previously that in my last career I traveled a lot and predominately overseas. I worked quite a bit in the middle east, working in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Jordan, UAE, Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, etc. It would probably be easier to say where I haven't worked. In spending so much time in the middle east, I developed a lot of friends that were Muslim. I was always amazed that in places like Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where Muslims go on their Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, in December you would find Christmas trees in the hotels. My friends there would wish me a Merry Christmas, and I would wish them a Happy Eid, and no one was offended. So, on that note, let me wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year (or a Happy Holiday if you prefer!).

HELP NEEDED



December In-Person Help Desk

Volunteers are needed for the In Person Help Desk at the Extension Office. Two time slots are available per day: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays. Please click the button below to review the available slots and to sign up. Thank you!

www.signupgenius.com

ESSENTIAL OAK - DECEMBER

Submitted by Dale Senko



This is the last in a series of excerpts from Doug Tallamy's book, "The Nature of Oaks". December's chapter takes note of some oak trees' winter behavior. Marcescens is an uncommon behavior for trees in the temperate zone. Instead of shedding its dead leaves in fall, the oak tree may retain its leaves until new leaves sprout in April. It is a sporadic phenomenon with no one explanation. Scientists speculate that it helps trees on nutrient poor soil. Marcescent leaves trap more moisture increasing soil moisture below the tree. Additionally, by holding their leaves in winter, it slows the rate of leaf decomposition. When they drop in spring, they create mulch beneath the tree when it needs it the most. Another theory is linked to animal browsing. When dead leaves are retained around buds, it makes it more difficult for browsers to eat the buds. Look at your oak trees (and other trees in the Fagaceae family) this month and see how many are marcescent.

ASK THE MASTER GARDENER



Thank you MGEVs Janice Wise, Julie Bull, and Michael Williams for volunteering on Saturday, November 10th at the downtown Newnan Market Day.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Submitted by Jennie Adcock

We recently received, through MGEV Ros Johnson, a message from a previous scholarship recipient. Max Owens reported to her that he had graduated with an agricultural degree and would like for us to know that he had followed through on his scholarship commitment.

It is great when we hear that our scholarships have made an impact on our recipients.

MGEV MEETING - NOVEMBER 10

Submitted by Mark Hess

Thanks for attending the November volunteer meeting. The 2023 budget y cu'err t q x g f . ' c p f ' v j g ' new slate of officers will begin their duties on January 1, 2023.

Congratulations to v j g ' l p e q o l p i ' d q c t f < President/ Patty Ellis, Vice President/ C.R. Phillips, Secretary/ Shanna Campbell, Treasurer/ Colleen Stephens and Past President/ Mark Hess. The President-Elect position is currently vacant.

Thank you for g x g t { q p g u participation. and I'll see you at the holiday party on Dec 8th!



""""""Patty Ellis
""""""President



""""C.R. Phillips
""""""Vice-President



Shanna Campbell-Yeane
Secretary



Colleen Stephens
Treasurer



Mark Hess
Past President

DECEMBER IN THE GARDEN

- Water newly planted trees and shrubs during cold weather.
- Do holiday shopping for garden-loving friends and families. Consider gifts like garden tools, gloves, birdhouses, books on native plants, and garden calendars.
- Resist temptation to prune shrubs and trees now.
- Replenish mulch around your plants.
- Harvest fall planted vegetables.
- Keep bird feeders filled and clean throughout the winter.
- Review notes from the summer to plan for next year's garden. Order catalogs and review online.

DECEMBER PRUNING HINTS FROM CR

- Annuals: Remove faded flowers from Pansies, Dianthus, and Snapdragons.
- Bulbs: No pruning is required at this time.
- Edibles: A good pair of hand pruners and long-handled loppers are essential for maintaining fruit trees and vines. When purchasing pruning tools, you get what you pay for. Now is the time to disassemble, sharpen, lubricate, and clean your sharp instruments for future use.
- Houseplants: Prune your evergreen shrubbery and bring the cuttings indoors. Juniper, Holly, and Magnolia foliage is quite decorative when arranged around houseplants. Use Nandina berries for a red accent in a table centerpiece.
- Lawns: Mow your Fescue and Ryegrass regularly, removing only 1/3 of the height each time. Now is an excellent time for mower maintenance. Run the engine until it runs out of gas and stops, check to make sure there is plenty of oil in the engine sump, tip the mower deck up and clean the bottom of the mower if necessary, and remove and sharpen the blade. Now you're all set for next year.
- Perennials and Ornamental Grasses: If you haven't cleaned up your perennial garden yet now is the time to do so. Prune dead stalks and leaves but remember to leave 3 to 4 inches of stem as a marker (you will cut down the dead stalks in early spring once new growth begins to emerge). Discard any diseased leaves or plants.
- Roses: There is no pruning now.
- Shrubs: You can do a little selective pruning of evergreens like Hollies, Nandinas, and Camellias if you want to use them for holiday decorations, but wait until early spring just before they begin to actively grow, to do any substantial pruning.
- Trees: Prune out any dead, diseased, or broken branches from trees planted in the last six months. If you have deciduous trees that require major pruning, schedule the work to be done in the next six months while trees are still dormant. Be sure you hire or consult with an arborist if you are not sure which branches are alive and which are dead.
- Vines and Ground Covers: Once vines are dormant you can prune to shape them, but be sure not to prune off flower buds for next spring.



STUMP THE MASTER GARDENER



There were two winners of the NOVEMBER CHALLENGE. **Rhodes Shell and Alice Jackson.** They correctly identified the *Camellia Sasanqua*.



The DECEMBER CHALLENGE

What happened to this 10 year old Japanese Maple? What would you do to fix it?

Send answer to patfarmer100@gmail.com

MASTER GARDENER PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



LYN MATTHEWS

Class of 2014.
Lyn volunteers everywhere, especially at the nature trail and BYA, but I think it is safe to say.
It's All About the Hat!

ARTIST CORNER

Coweta County MGEVs are talented in more ways than one. Please share your other talents with us.

Local Poet, C.R. Phillips, shares these poems.

"The soil is hard
and difficult
and red
Giving way with effort
Pick and shovel
and claw
One in fifteen minutes
four in an hour
Plus, heat
Humidity
Sweat in streams
Rain gives a day's reprieve
but only one
We love these gardens so
That we become miners of the earth."

"I read a Story
About a leaf
Tips Brown all round
From water
More or less
Curled edges
Hold a nest
A spotted rash
Disease and miners too
The rest still green
And hard attached
There's work as yet to do."

"There are Fairies in my
garden
2 spots, skippers, tigers
More
Gossamer wings
of Colored Hews
Yellows, blacks, orange
blues
Flitting
Floating
Found
Drinking nectar
There are fairies in my
garden
Look for blossoms
Yellow, red
Then you'll see them
There and There."

"When I step out beyond my
door
And see what nature
holds
The oak leaf hydrangea
bent with heavy bloom
The long spent azalea
awaiting the pruners
Knife
There in the straw the wood
sorrel
Creeping in the dust
Ignoring all the rest of
Concern
Awaiting only perhaps a
glint of sun
A few drops of water
It will outlast us all
Pull it if you must
And back it comes
Tomorrow and tomorrow
World without End
Indeed."

SPRING 2023 PLANT SALE

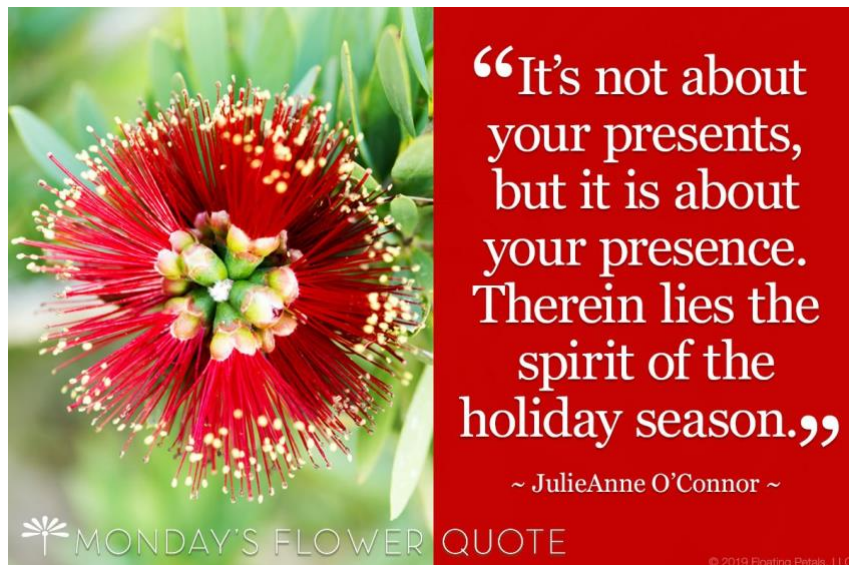
Submitted by Kimberly Maygar

As I write this, there are only 145 days until the 2023 Spring Plant Sale. The Spring Plant Sale Team and Greenhouse Team have been meeting to discuss what plants we want to sell at our spring sale. What plants would you like to see? What plants would you like to donate? What plants have you seen in the past that you think would be good sellers?

What plants “speak to you”? What plants would you purchase? At the 2022 Fall Plant Sale, we had 6 traditional Yuccas and 4 variegated Yuccas that were donated. Quite frankly, I was concerned that these plants would not sell. Some of our experienced MGEVs asked me to “ditch” the yucca. Today I did a wee bit of research on the yucca and came upon Dr. A’s video about the yucca. The link is here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6kXoVpR_JY&ab_channel=AllanArmitage If the link does not come through, search on YouTube, Dr. Allan Armitage, July 22, 2022.

But as the luck of the yucca would have it prior to our FPS, a friend of the Coweta Master Gardeners contacted me and asked if she could purchase 2 of the 4 variegated yucca. Karen Beatenbough said, “I know most people don’t like yucca, but I really do. I have some that were originally moved approximately 50 years ago from my grandfather’s garden on Staten Island, New York.” I recently visited Hills & Dales in LaGrange, and they, too, had a variegated yucca tucked into a flower bed on the right side of the walkway headed toward the dog kennel.

We ended up selling the traditional yuccas for a “fire-sale” price, and we still have 2 small, variegated yuccas in our inventory. So, while we will never know how a plant will touch someone’s heart, this was our last year of the yucca. Please reach out to myself, Kathy Olmsted, Amy Barnes, Jerry Allen, Ros Johnson, and Barbara Schwartz with suggestions and comments for improvement for the 2023 Spring Plant Sale, and we hope to see and work with you prior to April 15, 2023!



BYA

Submitted by Lyn Matthews

There were so many “morning glories” at the Novmeber 8th meeting, it was standing room only. Didn’t I tell you to come early? The next time Jason comes, I think I will bring my own lawn chair.

In addition to the wonderful plants that Jason brought to sell, his talk was very interesting and very useful. He is such a fountain of great information. We learn something new every visit. He’s like having a good friend come over for a chat and coffee.

The December 8th BYA will be the annual holiday get together. More information will be sent out via listserv. Come and see Amy’s 2022 cake.

Everyone have a safe and Happy Holiday and a wonderful New Year.

BYA COMMITTEE MEETING



Top Row: Melanie Landrum, Cathy LeBar, Allen Summerlin, Carol Fuller, President Patty Ellis
Front Row: Deberah Williams, Susan Mills, Nan VanPatten

NATURE TRAIL

Submitted by Audrey Harrelson

A small group of volunteers has been working on the Nature Trail in 2022. This year the work has been almost entirely clean up and maintenance. There was not much 'fun' stuff like planting. Most Mondays have found us pulling invasive plants, picking up limbs, and occasionally treating things that manual removal isn't really an option for. It finally seems as though we've made some progress, even though there's still so much more to do.

As the temperature has dropped, we'll be changing the work hours for the winter months. We will work in the afternoons when it will be warmer.

Monday, December 5, 1-3 p.m.

Monday, December 12, 1-3 p.m.

Saturday, December 17, 1-3 p.m.

Some of the healthiest, most fruitful persimmon trees ever are on the site. They have lots of ripe fruit on them. There are also some of the healthiest privet ever, and there's at least one armadillo running amuck through the plantings. This project, envisioned and begun years ago by Pat Farmer and Dale Senko, is always one where the goal each workday is to make it a little better than it was when we started, and 2022 finds the Nature Trail better than 2021. We wish the same for all of you.

HOT TOPICS FROM THE HELP DESK

Submitted by Pat Lincoln

A recent question that came into the help desk prompted questions about proper disposal of diseased plant tissue. What should we do with diseased plant debris so that it doesn't infect other areas of the garden? The growing season here is pretty much over so it is time to start tidying up our gardens and trimming back the bushes. As Master Gardeners, we know to dip our tools in a bleach solution to avoid transmitting any possible diseases from one plant to the next. We also know not to take the diseased plants or their clippings to our compost pile. But no one tells us what to do with these diseased remnants and very little is written about this problem. So, what is a gardener to do? One of the possible solutions is burning the woody branches and plants. This may not be the best solution for plants whose seeds can be airborne as the heat from the fire can disperse them. Also, local fire ordinances may not allow burning. The next solution is bagging. Using contractor grade plastic bags, place soft tissue plants inside, seal the bag, and allow the bag to sit in the sun for several weeks until the plant is no longer viable. This is best done during the summer as the temperature in the bag must get hot enough to burn the plant and any seeds. Another option is burying. Dig a hole at least three feet deep, line it with a thick plastic tarp, layer the plant on top and cover it with another plastic tarp and finally cover it all with the soil. This is not a preferred method as some of the plant or seeds may escape and begin re-growing. The last option is called drowning. The plant is immersed in a large bucket of water and kept there for weeks until the plant rots. After the plant rots, it can be added to the compost pile. If this method is used, the plants must be removed from the garden before going to seed, otherwise the seeds may still be viable even though the plant has rotted away. The best solution is to maintain a healthy garden by having your soil tested at least once every two years. Fertilize when appropriate, weed, and tackle insect and disease problems before they have an opportunity to take hold of your plants.

MGEV Holiday Awards Program, Thursday, December 8, 2022 @ 5:30 PM, Coweta County Fairgrounds

You and a guest are cordially invited to attend the annual MGEV 2022 Holiday Gathering. Please RSVP by Thursday, December 1, 2022. Please use the sign-up genius link, on your invitation, to sign up for your favorite side dish. You may RSVP by calling the Extension office at 770-254-2620 or email coweta.extension@uga.edu

2022 Master Gardener Committee Chairs

Ask MG/Market Day	Harley Stewart
Backyard Association	Allen Summerlin, Deberah Williams
Scholarship	Jennie Adcock
Speakers Bureau	Dan Gentry
Adv. Training/Continue Ed	Nancy Coats
Youth Education/Boys & Girls	Rebecca Gibson, Kris Carpenter
Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk	Susan Mills (library), Patty Ellis, Kathy Olmsted
Finance	Colleen Stephens
Fundraising	Diane Cook
Garden Tour	Diane Cook
Spring Plant Sale	Kathy Olmsted, Kim Magyar
Fall Plant Sale	Kathy Olmsted
Greenhouse	Audrey Harrelson, Mark Hess, Jerry Allen
Demonstration Garden	Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller
Media/PR/Coweta Shopper	Vicki Sewell, Marci Moore, Kim Magyar, Shanna Campbell
Nature Trail	Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson, Audrey Harrelson
Nominating Committee	2022 MGEV Board/plus other members
Volunteer Management/Support	Mark Hess, Carol Fuller
Directory	Mark Hess
Hospitality	Kim Magyar, Amy Sharpe
The New Leaf	Pat Farmer, Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis, Connie Gilliam
Sunshine	Sara Hanson
Volunteer Awards	Patty Ellis

Photos: Pat Farmer, Mark Hess, Barbara France, Maureen Dwyer
Editors: Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis, Connie Gilliam

