

GEORGIA MASTER GARDENER EXTENSION VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Learn

Serve

Grow



Spotlight: Value of Landscaping

The Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival (<http://www.celebrate.douglascounty.com/>) began nine years ago with Penny McHenry herself, founder of the American Hydrangea Society, as inspiration for the festival. It was launched to increase interest in horticulture and to draw visitors to Douglas County, and it has been successful in doing so!

The project benefits the community and the local economy. Since 2007, Douglas County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers (MGEVs) have been involved in the festival and have been instrumental in adding new activities every year. MGEVs provide educational displays and maintain educational gardens at the Douglas County Courthouse where the festival is held. Interacting with MGEVs and touring the gardens encourages visitors to learn more about gardening and start their own gardens.

Many activities and events make up the festival. An award-winning Standard Flower Show is a big part of the festival, open to the public to enter and including three divisions: Horticulture, Design, and Special Exhibits. This event succeeds in encouraging public interest in horticulture, as it includes entries from many categories, including hydrangeas, roses, and herbs, to ferns and shrubs. The Standard Flower Show has won several state and national awards each year since its inception.

Other festival events include garden tours, a 5K race, and a marketplace. MGEVs lead garden tours through the courthouse and butterfly gardens, teaching attendees about plant selection and gardening methods. The Douglas County Butterfly Trail, sporting gardens designed and maintained by MGEVs, will officially open in 2016. MGEVs will also contribute fairy gardens in wheelbarrows to the annual miniature garden display and will show off a scarecrow display in the MGEV vegetable demonstration garden.

MGEV involvement in the festival has not only been essential to the events and gardens, but has also resulted in the introduction

Hydrangea Festival
Douglasville, GA
Served by MGEVs from Douglas County



2015 Project Contributions:

Volunteer Hours: 1,319
MGEV shifts: 16
Tours: 6
Workshops: 6

Special thanks to MGEVs contributing to the Hydrangea Festival!

of pollinator and vegetable gardening to the public. Also, children visiting the gardens during the festival benefit educationally from interacting with MGEVs. Children are excited to pull up carrots, receive seeds, and take these prizes home. Overall, the event is one which the entire community enjoys!



The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program prepares volunteers to support UGA Cooperative Extension in delivering gardening information to Georgia's citizens and communities. Since 1979, Master Gardeners and UGA Extension have helped Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.