

The Dirt | August, 2023

Mobile County Master Gardeners



The President's Message

by Harry Surline

Dr. Gary Bachman is Coming in August!!!

For our August General Meeting, August 2, we have the privilege of once again hosting Dr. Gary R.

Bachman at the Jon Archer Center. Dr. Bachman, CPH, is a retired extension/research professor of urban horticulture earning his BS and MS from Clemson University and his Ph.D from Ohio State University.

Gary was previously on the faculty at Tennessee Tech University and Illinois State University and is currently a retired Extension/Research Professor of Horticulture from the Coastal Research & Extension Center, Mississippi State University.

Dr. Bachman is the former host of the award-winning Mississippi State University Extension Service's Southern Gardening TV, newspaper columns and social media outlets. He has also been a Fellow, American Society for Horticultural Science; Great American Gardener, The American Horticultural Society; Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Distinguished Achievement Award, American Society for Horticultural Science; and author of his first book, Southern Gardening All Year Long.

Gary and his wife Katie are retired and live in Ocean Springs, MS. They are urban homesteaders prepping for the zombie apocalypse and operate the Heritage Cottage Urban Nano Farm. They continue to demonstrate on their urban farm how to grow and preserve an abundance of locally grown specialty vegetables, producing all year long, and sharing it with their neighborhood.

If you would like a preview, many of Dr. Bachman's Southern Gardening videos are still available online on YouTube. Dr. Bachman is an entertaining and knowledgeable speaker. **Mark your calendar.**

I got my camera out a few days ago to take some photos. I wandered into the DREAM Garden, and I really enjoyed my time spent there. That started me wondering how the DREAM Garden originated. So, I asked my experts on the DREAM Garden, **Martha Stolz** and **Mary Jo Broussard**. I learned the DREAM Garden started around 2003 on top of debris from Hurricane Frederic. The plantings were originally in flower beds just around the Jon Archer Center.

In September 2015, The vegetable DREAM Garden was started atop the debris by the County after Hurricane Frederic. Marsha,

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one of the first to start planting the vegetables, is still working in the DREAM Garden. Mary Ann Days started helping Marsha in 2011 and still works in the Herb Garden and Vegetable Garden with Marsha.

Ellen Huckabee, Regional Extension Agent in 2015, believed the DREAM Garden should be expanded so people could see examples of various types of gardens displaying a greater variety of plants. Former president, Jan Tanner (2013) oversaw adding the additional gardens. We now have 7 gardens in our DREAM Garden. You can see a listing of the gardens in *THE DIRT* or better yet, tour the various gardens. My favorite is the Shade Garden.

I liked it so much that I have started my own Shade Garden. If you have an open area and are considering a garden, visit the DREAM Garden for ideas. If you think you don't have the skills to develop a garden, be a volunteer in the DREAM Garden and learn gardening skills. The people in charge of each garden are talented gardeners and will teach you as you work.

The DREAM Garden needs Volunteers.

Have you ever thought about how the name DREAM Garden was selected? DREAM is an acronym: **D**emonstration, **R**esearch, **E**ducation, **A**ctivity, and **M**ind. You can find all of these by working in or visiting the DREAM Garden. Many Master Gardeners have contributed to DREAM Garden and unfortunately, I don't have space to list their names, but their contributions are on full display in our outstanding DREAM Garden.

Continued...DREAM Garden Mystery Photos



~~~~~Harry's Corner~~~~~

Jokes (The following jokes were sent to me by Master Gardeners whose names I won't reveal to avoid embarrassing them, but if you ask, I will tell.)

Joke 1

How long before slugs get to your fruits or vegetables? A: It's only a matter of slime.

Joke 2

The neighbor's dog pooped in our garden, so my wife told me to get the shovel and throw it over the fence. I don't see what that solved. We've still got dog poo in our garden and

the neighbor has our shovel.

Gardening Question

Congratulations to **Lydia Criswell** who answered the question, What kind of bean never grows in a garden? A jelly bean.

My Gardening Question for August has 4 parts.. Name the plants shown in the above 4 photos labeled A thru D.

Hint: if you don't know, visit the DREAM Garden and find the name tags .

Send your answer to the gardening question to h.surline@gmail.com.

All Photo sources: Mobile County Master Gardeners.

Editor's Note: Recently an unofficial survey was sent out to the Master Gardener membership asking recipients specifically what was being done to encourage pollination in their respective landscapes. This is the first of a 3-part series with Part 1 local, hands on response, Part 2 outlining what has and is causing pollinator trouble, and Part 3 focuses on local and national governmental, legislative response.



Polli-Nation Part 1

by Barbara Boone

Mary Townsley responded, regaling us with her efforts in the last couple of years to establish a garden in her landscape dedicated to attraction of pollinators. She planted perennials, relying on their ability to reappear yearly. Examples are Porterweed, firecracker plants, and, of course, milkweed, as well as bronze fennel. (Scientific names upon request.)

Carol Williams reported that she has planted Mexican sunflowers and milkweed to attract butterflies and hummingbirds. She is very cautious about the timing of using organic pesticides to accommodate bees "bedtime" and only using organic chemicals like Bt which has an effect on caterpillars only.

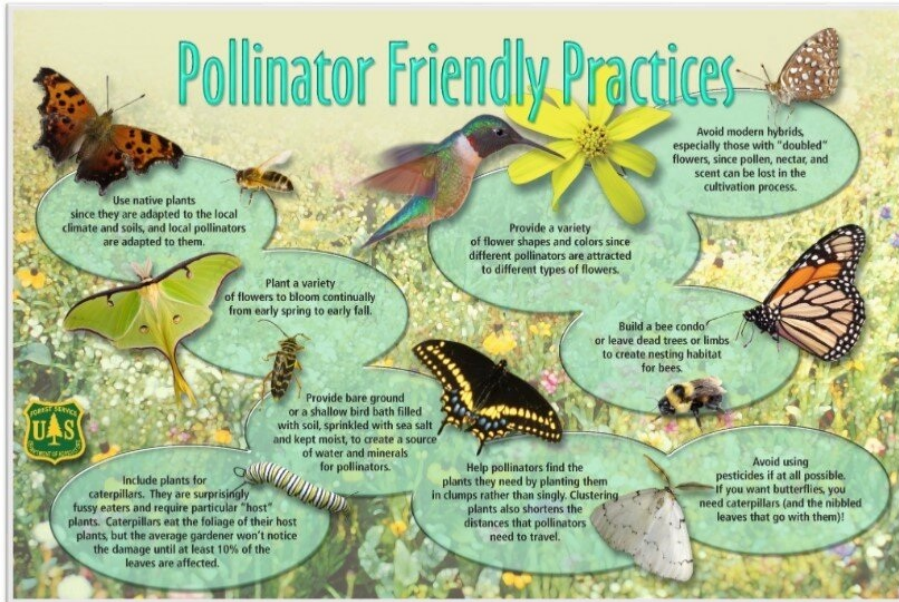
Mary Jo Broussard has planted many pollinator-friendly plants in her landscape. She even considers the shape of the flower so that long-billed hummers can siphon nectar easily. A true pollinator "mamma," she provides orange slices for butterflies, as well as providing birdbaths with and without mud for minerals.

Alice Marty's garden contain plants that attract both hummingbirds and butterflies. Her garden includes honeysuckle, cigar plants, red rocket russelia, firecracker plant, shrimp plant, and milkweed. Alice does not deploy any pesticides. (Scientific names upon request.)

Although the above respondents are only a snapshot of all Master Gardener effort, note the common thread, which is that, sure, the flowers are pretty, but the objective is to provide haven to all inhabitants in the landscape. Each garden is small in the grand scheme of things, but taken together, we can all make a difference.

Polli-Nation Part 2 continued in the September newsletter.

Source: Pollinator Friendly Practices from Pollinator Partnership, 2023



Chronicles by Barbara Boone

95 degree temps in other languages: heiss, caliente, goryachiy, quente. But in good ole English, it is H-O-T and Dog Days are here! In between watering our gardens and dodging the heat for inside AC, here is what Master Gardeners have been doing recently.

Despite the heat, two faithful Master Gardeners ALWAYS show up in the DREAM Garden: **Marsha Stolz** and **Mary Ann Days** tending and harvesting beautiful vegetables.

Harry Surline forwarded a survey on Master Gardener's choice of general meeting days. Your opinion is important, so hopefully you responded.

July 7 **Jack LeCroy** presented a program on growing houseplants at Mobile Botanical Gardens.

Jon Archer was the venue for the Grassroots meeting which focused on community outreach from Extension. Everything from 4-H to forestry was on the agenda.

July 18 was sweet! Sweet at Mobile Botanical Gardens, that is. MBG hosted an ice cream social as a thank you for volunteers with Ice cream sundaes and all the trimmings enjoyed by all.

Jon Archer was also the venue for financial planning entitled "The Many Flavors of Finances." Think about this: putting more money aside means you can buy more plants.

Jack LeCroy presented a Zoom program July 20 focusing on planting a fall garden.

New faces will soon be seen at Jon Archer, meaning the 2023 intern class starts soon. August 3 interns and mentors will convene for a meet and greet to kickstart the new class.

By the way, did you know...

how the above mentioned Dog Days came to be known as Dog Days? Actually dogs have nothing to do with the name, nor does lollygagging around the house because of the heat. Instead, the dog reference is to Sirius, the brightest star in the Canis Major constellation, which, by the way, is Latin for "big dog" and represents one of Orion's hunting dogs. So, if you have any interest in perusing the night skies, check out the southern sky for Canis Major.

Fall planting should be ongoing soon, but remember in the meantime, plant with love and harvest with wonder and joy.

Source: National Geographic, July 2023.



Ariell serving sundaes



MBG volunteer sign



MGs like ants on a log

Master Gardener of the Month

Coming soon next month to a newsletter near you!

Master Gardener of the Month:

Who will it be?

From the Greenhouse:
The Bookworm

by Jes Gering

Editor's Note: This month our resident bookworm has reviewed a gardening-related book we should all check out. Gardening to many of us is more than dirt under your fingernails; it is therapy. Read on...

Rootbound: Rewilding a Life by Alice Vincent

One of the things I love the most about being a Master Gardener is the gift of surrounding myself with all of you. Your experiences and acreage, successes and failures fuel the dreams I have of gardens I may one day tend. As the group's token Millennial (anyone else out there?) and recent transplant to our region, I've had to learn how to garden here on a small scale – some ferns on my screened porch, a few large pots outside my front door. Gardening, for me, along with many others my age is constrained by rental agreements and limited sunlight.

Rootbound: Rewilding a Life, a memoir by British writer Alice Vincent, is one of my favorite gardening memoirs. Although her life in London—one marked by flatmates and press passes to cover music festivals for national newspapers—is markedly different than mine, we're the same age with similar life trajectories. What happens when your long-term relationship ends and you're still living in an apartment but you're over thirty and everything seems a bit not like you expected?

Alice's answer to this question was to discover gardening (as was mine). *Rootbound* chronicles Alice's personal life, but it the narrative weaves botanical history and sage horticultural advice into the biographical details. In one chapter, Alice likens the excesses of outdoor music festivals like Glastonbury to Pteridomania, the Victorian fern collecting craze when people went to extreme lengths to travel and collect rare ferns and houseplants. We learn about her failed attempts to propagate and grow seedlings indoors. We travel back in time to grow sweet peas beside Alice and her grandfather, learn about her Grandmother's love of anemones: "the coronaria, or poppy-flowered, anemones...that would unfold in soft billows of red and blue, although purple ones were her favorite."

By the end of the book, however, we sit with Alice as she realizes her apartment's flower boxes no longer need tending, that maybe they can just grow. "Where before I would have wrenched out fading foliage, horrified by the seeming imperfection of it, I had become happy to let it be, realizing that this was beautiful, space-filling stuff that was fit for purpose. I had become more content to be curious, letting things grow and seeing how beautifully they turned out, rather than constantly striving for control." This, of course, is what the book is about – the changing of seasons, both in life and in a garden, and the process of learning to simply embrace it. Like Alice, my life has changed since I moved here, and I am no longer constrained by a small apartment footprint. But *Rootbound* is a book I return again and again when I want to be inspired to slow down a little and enjoy the small gardening joys

around me.

In the Loop by Theresa Davidson

| Event (Category) | Date/Time | Contact(s) |
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No general meeting
was scheduled in July!!

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| MCMG August Meeting: Dr. Gary Bachman, our keynote speaker for the Spring Festival, returns! (CEU for speaker, usually 1 hour; .5 hour for MGA meeting) | NOTICE!! Meetings change to Wednesdays in August and run through November! Wednesday, August 2, 10:00 am, Social time: 9:30 am | President: Harry Surline, 251.605.4667 h.surline@gmail.com |
| August Board of Directors Meeting (MGA Administration) | Tuesday, August 1, 10:00 am | President: Harry Surline, 251.605.4667 h.surline@gmail.com |
| Mobile Botanical Gardens Plant Sales on the Plaza (Community Special Project) | Assist with Plant Sales on the Plaza-outside the Gift Shop Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 10:00- 12:00 & 12:00-2:00 | Theresa Davidson, MBG Volunteer Coordinator, 251.510.4961, theresadavidson80@g mail.com |
| Leadership Training: A statewide initiative for any MG interested in leadership roles | Ben May Main Library 701 Government Street Monday & Tuesday August 7 & 8 | Jack LeCroy, 251.574.8445, jml0003@auburn.edu |
| First Friday at the Gardens: Jack LeCroy- Happy Houseplants (CEU's) | Mobile Botanical Gardens July 7, 10:30- 12:00 | To register: email- acashin@mbgardens.or g |
| First Friday at the Gardens: Jack LeCroy- Planning the Fall Garden (CEU's) | Mobile Botanical Gardens August 4, 10:30-12:00 | To register: email- acashin@mbgardens.or g |
| Assist during the MG Master Gardener Class (Manage/Teach/Assist Intern Class) | Thursdays, August 10- November 16 Prepare snacks, interact with class members, set up and take down tables: 2- 3 times during the duration of the class | Dorothy White 251.895.3710 haroldanddorothy@bell south |
| Prepare Snacks for the MG General Meetings | Bring a snack to the monthly meeting | Lydia Criswell, 251.610.5543 |

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| Monthly Garden Zoom Class (CEU) | | Diane Anthony, jda0002@aces.edu, 251.574.8445 |
| 16th Annual Go Run 5K, 1 Mile Fun Run, benefitting Mitchell Cancer Center Gynecological Research | Saturday, September 16, 8:00 am- 11:00 am Need 3 Volunteers to man a booth and distribute MG info, handouts, and seed giveaways THEME: Gardening- More than a Hobby | Barbara Boone, 251.680.8263, boonebama@live.com |
| Orchid Society Meeting New attendees welcome! Info available on FB: Mobile Area Orchid Society (CEU for the presentation) | 4th Sunday every month (except June & December), 2:00 PM, 1260 Dauphin St. | Lynn Coleman 251.622.3939, lynncolman411@gmail.com |
| Gulf Coast Herb Society (CEU for (Presentation) | 4th Tuesday every month, except July and November; 5:30 pm; Mobile Botanical Gardens Botanical Center | Beth Poates, 251.342.6508, poates57@hotmail.com |
| Mobile Japanese Garden Planning and Touring, 700 Forest Hill Drive, Beautify this community and educational garden and help teach college students Community Gardening (Community Landscape) | Weekly: Mondays and Fridays, and As Needed | Don Fry 251.422.8466 don.fry@comcast.net YouTube tour: https://bit.ly/3bhyKWA Website: https://mobilejapanesegarden.com Facebook: https://facebook.com/mobilejapanesegarden Twitter: https://mobile.twitter.com/mobjapangarden |
| DREAM GARDEN: Join a Garden Room (Education/Demonstration) | Contact a Garden Leader or Marsha Stolz to join a team. Volunteer and work as needed. | Marsha Stolz 251.689.5993 marshastolz@msn.com |
| Grandma's Pass Along Garden (Education/Demonstration) | | Catherine Moates 251.366.6163 memo366@att.net & Olivia Reinhaus 251.458.7383 omcvea@gmail.com |
| Native Garden (Education/Demonstration) | | Melissa Nichols 251.680.7779 indigigardener@gmail.com |

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|--|---------------------|---|
| Shade Garden (Education/Demonstration) | | Bob Howard 251.423-3108 rhoward51@gmail.com |
| Vegetable Garden (Education/Demonstration) | | "Marsha Stolz 251.689.5993 marshastolz@msn.com & Mary Ann Days |
| Mary Ann Days 251.391.5806 masdays@comcast.net | | |
| Herb Garden (Education/Demonstration) | | Mary Ann Days 251.391.5806 masdays@comcast.net |
| Cottage Garden & Formal Garden (Education/Demonstration) | | Glenda Eady 251.342.4248 jerryeady2@comcast.net |
| Building Garden | | Marsha Stolz 251.689.5993 marshastolz@msn.com |
| Community Gardens | | Carol Dorsey 251.209.3483 bcdorsey63@gmail.com |
| Mobile Medical Museum: Robert Thrower Medicinal Garden | | Carol Dorsey 251.209.3483 bcdorsey63@gmail.com |
| Grow More Give More | Ambassadors Needed! | Carol Dorsey 251.209.3483 bcdorsey63@gmail.com |
| Therapeutic Horticulture | | Carol Dorsey 251.209.3483 bcdorsey63@gmail.com |
| Classroom in the Forest (youth programs) | | Mary Jo Broussard 251.574.8445 mjb0054@auburn.edu |
| Speakers Bureau (program or workshop for public) | | Paul Ezelle 251.402.1798 paulezelle@gmail.com |
| Office Manager/Phone Lines | | Cindy Findlay 251.786.4245 cndyfindly@att.net |
| Updates on the Volunteer tab or Calendar tab at Master Gardener Service | | |



Connections

In addition to the events and activities highlighted *In the Loop*, occasionally there are requests made to which Master Gardeners and interns can additionally respond.

Please note the following:

- **Need items for raffles. Contact Jackie Jenkins-251.422.6675
jjackiejenkins108@gmail.com**
- **Donated coffee mugs for Cuppa Cheer for the 2023 Greenery Sale. Contact Peggy Wright-251.679.2985 (c) 251.463.4230pwright2273@comcast.**
- **Need snacks at monthly MG meetings. Lydia Criswell 251.610.5543**

Mission Statement

The Alabama Master Gardener Volunteer Program is an educational outreach program provided and administered by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A & M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity and employer. www.aces.edu

