

# The Dirt | May, 2023

Mobile County Master Gardeners



## MCMG Officers

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251.605.4667  
h.surline@gmail.com

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251.367.0473  
readingweeder72@hotmail.com

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251.377.2312  
kzruckart@gmail.com

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251.423.3108  
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Treasurer Jane Finely  
251.605.0625  
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Our MCMG Urban Nano Gardening Festival is over, and it was a great success, selling over 2000 plants. Everyone did a super job getting the festival together for the first time. Much initiative and organization brought in vendors, a food truck, and so many volunteers. Adding a group of outstanding speakers made the festival a great event for everyone. All of you who were volunteers or group chairmen did a great job. You made the event go very smoothly and a success story. Thanks especially to Carol Williams for taking on this new organizing role as our vice president. I hope you all had a great time. Please make sure to log the many volunteer hours you generated. When you have logged in and entered your hours, take another couple of minutes to go to the Volunteer tab and see what opportunities are listed. Then go to the Calendar tab and check the calendar for volunteer activities on specific dates. Please let Theresa Davidson know if you can volunteer as she is our Coordinator who keeps all of this up to date for us.

I would like to thank **Cindy Knowlton**, our Mobile County Extension Coordinator, for stepping in at the last minute to become our speaker for the April meeting. She gave helpful information about how MCMG and Extension can continue to work together to serve our community well.

Continued below...



The President's Message continued...

Our monthly meeting on May 4 will have our own, **Jack LeCroy**. Jack will be speaking on "**10 things every Master Gardener should know.**" Maybe everyone should make a list of what you think a Master Gardener should know and then compare their list to Jack's. We will also have final figures for Festival and offer a discussion for its continuation or improvements.

Our June general meeting will feature **Rudy Yates**, Marengo County Extension Agent, who will be talking about poisonous plants in our yard. This topic was suggested by one of our Master Gardeners. If you have a topic you would like to hear more about, let us know.

Dr. Gary Bachman has agreed to join us for our general meeting on August 2, so that all members will be able to enjoy his knowledge of gardening. "We can get all fired up for the fall gardening season" by listening to Dr. Bachman.

As usual, there will be no meeting in July.

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

Congratulations to **Lydia Criswell** and **Cindy Findlay** for the correct answer to "What is the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold in any form except fresh?" *Lettuce!*

Here are the bad jokes and riddles along with the gardening question. Please share your jokes or riddles before I run out of mine.

**Joke:**

How did the millionaire gardener get rich so quickly?  
He was running a huge pansy scheme.

**Gardening Question:**

Q: What kind of flower looks like it just came back from a fight?  
Send your answer to the gardening question to [h.surline@gmail.com](mailto:h.surline@gmail.com).

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**Editor's Note:** Yes, it's still relatively early in the year, however the Greenery Sale is the major fund raiser for MCMGs, so early attention to detail is important. **Emily Arellano** and **Paula Reeves** are heading up the sale this year. Updates for upcoming Greenery Sale planning will be made periodically in *The Dirt*.

### NEWS FROM THE HOLIDAY GREENERY TEAM

Your 2023 holiday greenery team met on April 18 to begin planning for this year's sale. The annual holiday sale is our largest fundraiser, the proceeds helping to fund projects for the Mobile County Master Gardeners and to provide a scholarship for a horticulture student at Auburn University.

The team discussed a lot of ideas to make this event run smoothly and efficiently. (Look for updates in coming newsletters.) Please mark your calendars for the week before (Pinecone Party) and after Thanksgiving. That is when all the action begins. The auditorium at the Archer Center becomes an amazing workshop, producing florist quality holiday arrangements. Everyone can participate in this fun event!!! We need set up and break down crews, designers, bow makers, cleanup crews and more. This is a wonderful opportunity to get your volunteer hours before the end of the year. This is especially true for interns that need hours to get certified.

I encourage everyone to be a part of this event. It is a time of fellowship and teamwork. I am always amazed by all of the talented designers and the beautiful products we are able to offer our community. Again, please put the dates on your calendar. We need you! Working together, we can make this our most productive year while enjoying the wonderful season of joy with our gardening friends.

Paula



Pinecone Party 2022

## Helping Our Neighbors

Today Extension strives to carry out a three-pronged mission:

- Research and education
- Relationships within our communities
- Address societal challenges and opportunities

Recently a few MGs gathered at Rendu Terrace Senior Apartments located off of Old Shell Road to assist, along with Grow More Give More and Volunteers of America, residents in planting their raised beds. (By the way, Mr. Webster indicates "rendu" is French for an architectural drawing representing a design issue.)

No design flaw here, just making the design in place better. The Dirt Diva on behalf of Grow More, Give More and VOA thanks MGs **Bill Fink, Bob Howard, Christine Moates, Harry Surline, and Carol Dorsey**. Pictured, in addition, are Rendu residents who stated their appreciation for supplementing additional fresh and nutritious food into their garden.



## Chronicles by Barbara Boone

Hello, fellow Master Gardeners! As you are probably aware, March into April has exhibited quirky weather, but nevertheless, we have moved forward with activities associated with Mobile County Master Gardeners.

March 16-March 18 Master Gardeners had the opportunity to assist Mobile Botanical Gardens with their annual plant sale, otherwise known as Plantasia. As usual, beautiful plants were offered for sale during the Preview party on the March 16 with daily sales March 17-March 18.

The Festival of Flowers, held on the Ascension Providence campus, was held March 23 through March 26. Baldwin County Master Gardeners built a beautiful exhibit featuring an Asian Zen theme. Both Baldwin and Mobile MGs manned the exhibit during the event.

Organization for the first Spring Festival was coordinated by **Carol Williams**, who, with her team leads and their own teams, managed to pull it off with a short timeline successfully on the scheduled date of April 1. As anyone who has ever assisted with such an endeavor knows, a great deal of pre-planning and work is required. Frequent meetings were held in March with updates from team members for vendor recruitment, food truck recruitment, speaker recruitment, set up, decorating, security and parking, public information, gussying up the Dream Garden, and last and certainly not least, transport of the vegetables for sale from the Ornamental Research Center off of McGregor Avenue to the Jon Archer Center. Prior to transport, vegetable labeling of about +/- 4,000 plants was held with about 15 sets of MG hands participating in this activity for tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash, zucchini, and eggplants. As a graduate of that "other school" in Alabama, the Dirt Diva has to give a shoutout of **War Eagle!** for those vegetable seedlings! Well propagated by the Ornamental staff, they were sturdy and ready to plant in designated containers. Excellent produce!

Ten Master Gardeners traveled to Tuscaloosa for the 2023 AMGA conference held April 3 through April 5 where the theme was Home Grown. Excellent speakers spoke to such topics as sustainability and the environment. Of course, Felder Rushing kept the audience laughing and learning with his Mississippi Good Ole Boy persona. Schedule alert! The 2024 AMGA conference will be held in Daphne, Alabama, close enough for easy attendance from April 22-24, so mark your calendars.

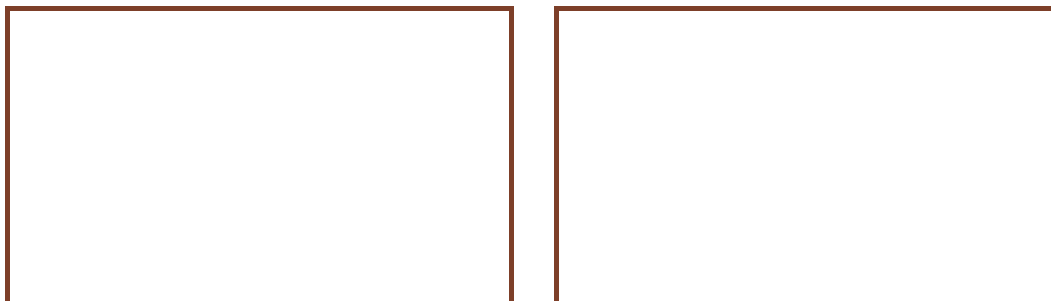
**Cindy Knowlton**, County Extension Coordinator, spoke at the general meeting held April 6 at JAC. Her topic was "What is Extension?"

**Sharon Claseman** (2022) was recognized as receiving Master Gardener certification. Congratulations , Sharon!

I hope your Spring into Summer garden is flourishing. Remember, plant with love, and harvest with wonder and joy.  
/bb



Sharon Claseman





Future MG



Veggie Prep

MGM Horticultural Students



Lotsa Maters



Lotsa Veggies



Carol Dorsey

Apprentice Craftswoman?



Earl Gochey

Master Craftsman?

## Master Gardener of the Month

by Carol Williams

Marsha Stolz decided to become an MG in 2003 when visitors, admiring her lovely yard, told her that she would probably enjoy the program. The visitors impressed her with their knowledge of plants, even the Latin

names of many. Marsha believed more knowledge about dirt, plants, and landscaping would help with her volunteer gardening at church, Woodridge Baptist. A native of Montana, Marsha had retired in 2000 after 45 years as a registered nurse, 35 of those years in the neo-natal unit at the University of South Alabama Women's and Children's Hospital. Retirement gave Marsha time to pursue her growing interest in gardening by joining Mobile County Master Gardeners.

Shortly after Marsha joined, MGs plowed up the field near the Jon Archer Center, amended the soil, and Marsha helped plant their first vegetable garden at the MG home site. She has had her hands in every vegetable garden project since. Planting in two stages twice a year, then watering, weeding, fertilizing, spraying pests, and harvesting, keeps Marsha and her helpers very busy. The joy of donating the produce to the needy in our community is a bonus for our vegetable gardeners as well.

Soon, Marsha's gifts and skills placed her in charge of the vegetable garden. In 2015, the concept of dividing the land around the main building, suggested by our home grounds agent, drew more interest in a variety of gardens, creating our DREAM gardens. Leaders took responsibility for each of these separate gardens, and in recent years, Marsha has become the leader of those leaders, encouraging the continuing development of these gardens where MGs can demonstrate best garden practices. The DREAM Garden especially impressed our visitors who toured during Spring Festival. Everyone who works with Marsha comes away with new knowledge of gardening as well as inspiration from her work ethic. If you love plants and the outdoors, join Marsha in the garden and you'll be proud of the outcome.

Marsha is also remarkable for the number of hours she has recorded in these 20 years: over 9,000! She advises that entering past hours the first week of every month has proved to be the easiest and most reliable way, only taking about 45 minutes each month rather than hours "catching up." Remember to enter all those hours you will earn when working alongside our April MG, Marsha Stolz.



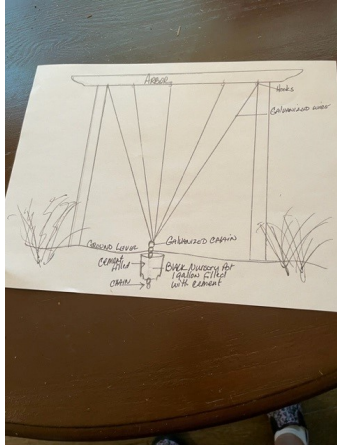
## Master Gardener of the Month:

Marsha Stolz

From the Greenhouse:

The Frugal Gardener

**Editor's Note:** Mary Jo Broussard is an expert gardener. She will tell you herself that her landscape is almost totally



planted with shrubs and plants with a lawn that can be mowed with a Weed Eater in a matter of minutes. Not only having gardening expertise, she knows how to improvise to save money. An actual how-to photo is not available, so instead her artistic drawing has been rendered. Her submission shows how she has done that. Read on...

For an inexpensive and practically invisible way to create a trellis for climbing roses, etc., use a 1 gallon black nursery pot, a stick long enough to lay on top of the pot and hang over sides, a small amount of cement, a 10" length of galvanized chain and a roll of galvanized wire plus cup hooks to attach to the side of your house or in the top of a pergola/arbor.

**Step one**-gather supplies in one place.

**Step two**-put chain through bottom hole of black pot letting a couple of loops be outside, and let it hang off the side of the pot, pour in cement and move the chain to the middle using the stick to keep it out of the cement.

**Step three**-let cement set well.

**Step four**-dig a hole to put the now cemented plastic pot in, deeper than ground level but still leaving a few loops of the chain out.

**Step five**-decide the pattern of your trellis, then create that pattern using the galvanized wire, hooking one end to the chain and the other to the hooks you have placed on your wall/facia board or arbor.

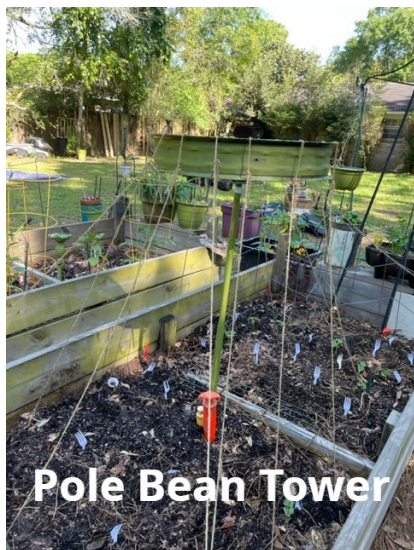
The galvanized wire lasts forever, it disappears against a wall, the pot stays in the ground even with the addition of a climbing rose or can be used to **espalier** as well. (See espalier visual.) Several of these were created 30+ years ago and they are still working just fine, not a problem at all. You can add and take away strands to "rearrange" roses. It really is much better than



a wooden trellis. If you change your mind you can easily move it or simply cut the wire away and leave the pot in the ground. (See top photo)

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In addition to Mary Jo's useful and frugal idea she implemented long ago, other MGs lean in to save money. The Dirt Diva has a tried and true method of preventing critters like cats from stalking and snoozing in your garden. Place plastic forks tine side up around and in between plants. Kitties don't like it! Alternatively, use pine cones to deter felines. Dirt Diva's best thrifty idea is a cobbled together bicycle rim with a center pole from a repurposed curtain rod to make a diy pole bean tower. Dirt Diva's husband calls it the "contraption." Her grandmother, who must have passed along the repurposing gene, and could make something out of nothing, would be proud.



**Pole Bean Tower**



*In the Loop*  
by Theresa Davidson

Event (Category)	Date/Time	Contact(s)
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MCMG May Meeting:  
Jack LeCroy, Regional  
Extension Agent located

Thursday, May 4, 10:00  
AM Jon Archer Center,  
1070 Schillinger Rd. N.

President: Harry  
Surline, 251.605.4667  
h.surline@gmail.com



in Mobile, will speak on "Ten Things a Master Gardener Should Know". **CEU for Speaker, .5 hour MGA meeting**

Mobile, AL 36608

MCMG June Meeting: Rudy Yates, Regional Extension Agent located in Marengo County, will speak on "Poison Plants in the Yard". <b>CEU for speaker, usually 1 hour; .5 hour for MGA meeting</b>	Thursday, June 8, 10:00 AM Jon Archer Center, 1070 Schillinger Rd. N. Mobile, AL 36608	President: Harry Surline, 251.605.4667 h.surline@gmail.com
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No Meeting in July!

May Board of Directors Meeting <b>MGA Administration</b>	Tuesday, May 2, 10:00 AM	President: Harry Surline, 251.605.4667 h.surline@gmail.com
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Mobile Botanical Gardens Marketplace

April: Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 - 2:00, Two Checkers per shift; MAY: Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00-12:00

Theresa Davidson MBG Volunteer Coordinator 251.510.4961 theresadavidson80@gmail.com

EARTH DAY at the Japanese Gardens, Combined effort with Mobile Urban Growers ( <b>community special event</b> )	Saturday, April 22, 2023, Man the MG Tent to promote MG's and Grow More, Give More, 2 Shifts: 9:30-12:00 & 12:00-2:30, 700 Forest Hill Dr. Mobile, AL 36608	Carol Dorsey 251.209.3483 bcdorsey63@gmail.com
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Monthly Garden Zoom Class **CEU**

3rd Thursdays

Diane Anthony, jda0002@aces.edu, 251.574.8445

Market in the Park Muncipal Event	Saturdays during May and June, 7:30-noon	Bob Howard, 251.423.2605 rwhoward51@gmail.com
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Orchid Society Meeting New attendees welcome! Info available on FB: Mobile Area Orchid Society

4th Sunday every month (except June & December), 2:00 PM, 1260 Dauphin St.

Lynn Coleman 251.622.3939

Herb Education Day <b>CEU</b>	Saturday, May 6, 9:00 a.m. Mobile Botanical Gardens	Seach "Gulf Coast Herb Society" on Facebook
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Mobile Japanese Garden Planning and Touring, 700 Forest Hill Drive, Beautify this

Weekly: Mondays and Fridays, and As Needed

Don Fry 251.422.8466 don.fry@comcast.net YouTube tour: <https://bit.ly/3bhyKWA>

community and educational garden and help teach college students Community Gardening (**community landscape**)

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](mailto:marshastolz@msn.com)

Grandma's Pass Along Garden

Catherine Moates  
251.366.6163  
[memo366@att.net](mailto:memo366@att.net) &  
Olivia Reinhaus  
251.458.7383  
[omcvea@gmail.com](mailto:omcvea@gmail.com)

Native Garden

Melissa Nichols  
251.680.7779  
[indigigardener@gmail.com](mailto:indigigardener@gmail.com)

Shade Garden

Bob Howard 251.423-3108  
[rhoward51@gmail.com](mailto:rhoward51@gmail.com)

Vegetable Garden

Marsha Stolz  
251.689.5993  
[marshastolz@msn.com](mailto:marshastolz@msn.com) &

Mary Ann Days  
251.391.5806  
[masdays@comcast.net](mailto:masdays@comcast.net)

Herb Garden

Jackie Jenkins  
251.422.6675  
[jjackiejenkins108@gmail.com](mailto:jjackiejenkins108@gmail.com)

Cottage Garden & Formal Garden

Glenda Eady  
251.342.4248  
[jerryeady2@comcast.net](mailto:jerryeady2@comcast.net)

Building Garden

Marsha Stolz  
251.689.5993  
[marshastolz@msn.com](mailto:marshastolz@msn.com)

Community Gardens

Carol Dorsey  
251.209.3483  
[bcdorsey63@gmail.com](mailto:bcdorsey63@gmail.com)

Mobile Medical

Ambassadors Needed!

Carol Dorsey

Museum: Robert Thrower Medicinal Garden		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)		TBA
Office Manager/Phone Lines		Cindy Findlay 251.786.4245 cndyfindly@att.net
Updates on the Volunteer tab or Calendar tab at Master Gardener Service Report Login (acesagmg.site)		
REMINDER...	No Meeting in July!	REMINDER...



# 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.net**
- **Bamboo skewers needed for drilled cones for the 2023 Greenery Sale.**
- **Now only VERY SMALL pine cones needed for Pine Cone Party.**
- **Need snacks at monthly MG meetings. Lydia Criswell 251.610.5543**



Mobile County Master Gardeners | 1070 Schillinger Rd. N., Mobile, AL 36608 251.574.8445

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