

The Dirt | January, 2024

Mobile County Master Gardeners

The President's Message by Carol Williams

Mobile County Master Gardeners ended the year with a lot of excitement. We had a very successful greenery sale despite bad weather dampening in-person sales at the Mobile Botanical Gardens the first weekend, and the road crews nearly closing down sales there on the 2nd. We thank **Robin Krchak** and the staff of MBG for their help and hospitality during the sale. The public's positive response to on-line ordering and pick up at the Jon Archer Center also simplified the process and made more sales possible. So many MGs contributed their time and design gifts to make the sale possible, but **Mary Townsley, Paula Reeves, Bob Howard, Emily Arellano, and Theresa Davidson** deserve special mention for their efforts. (Did you get to see the okra and cotton boll ornaments that Theresa and her helpers created?)

We celebrated year-end at our annual Awards Banquet. We congratulate **Barbara Boone** as 2023 Master Gardener of the Year and **Earl Gochey** as 2023 Rookie of the Year. **Jack LeCroy**, our agent coordinator, added a new award: The Golden Trowel and awarded 8 of them at the banquet, including one each to **Harry Surline** and myself for our first Spring Festival as "best new project." (More award details follow in this newsletter.) We also thanked **Harry Surline** for his 2023 presidential leadership. His goal at the beginning of the year was to "have fun being MGs" and we did. We look forward to more in 2024.

Beginning our second-Wednesday schedule for all our MG General Meetings in 2024, we will have our first 2024 General Meeting on **Wednesday**, January 10, at 10:00 AM. (Social time begins at 9:30 AM. Bring treats to share.) As most of you know, all our fall intern classes must be held only on Thursday as every class has a statewide component from Auburn, so we moved General Meetings to Wednesdays. Also, remember the raffle: 6 tickets for \$5!

Our first speaker of the year will be **Kyle Owsley**, director of the Auburn Ornamental Horticulture Experiment Station in Springhill. They are a vital component of both our major outreach programs as their greenhouses grow our vegetables for Spring Festival and we harvest all our Greenery Sale greenery from their beautiful ornamental shrubs and plants on their grounds.

Our next Spring Festival is scheduled for Saturday, March 23. **Bob Howard**, vice president, will have more news and information about the Festival and how you can volunteer at the January 10 meeting. In the meantime, if you find a remarkable food truck or a crafts or garden vendor who might be interested in joining us for Spring Festival, ask their availability and let us know their contact information.

Wishing each of you Happy Holidays and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

Carol Williams, President

HAPPY NEW YEAR
2024!

MCMG
Officers

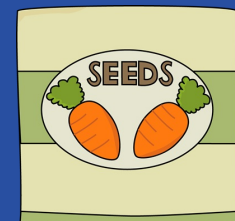
President:
Carol Williams
251.367.0473
readingweeder72@h
otmail.com

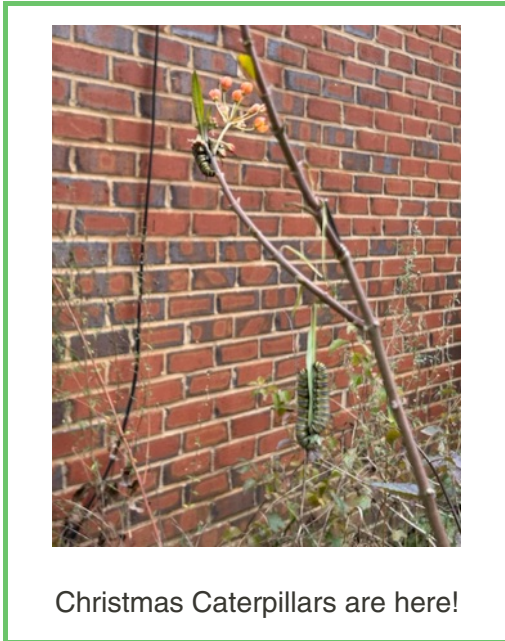
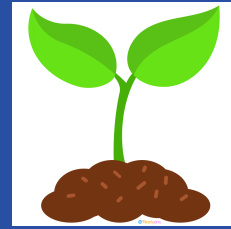
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om

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251.422.8537
ddavis6507@aol.com

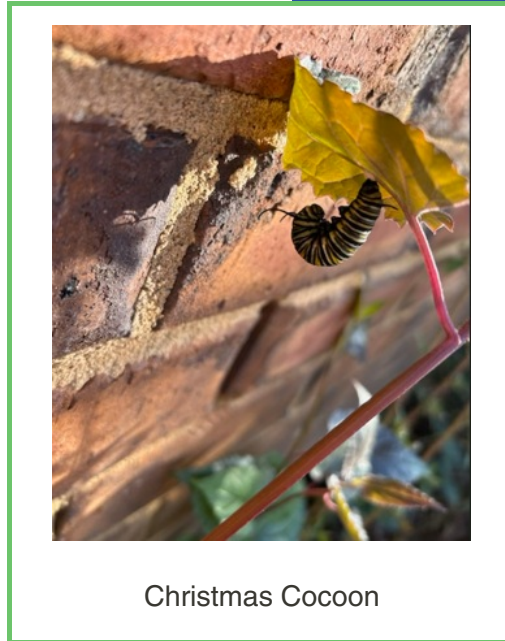
Corr Secretary:
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nward@msn.com

Treasurer: Jane
Finley
251.605.0625
janehfinley@bellsouth
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Christmas Caterpillars are here!



Christmas Cocoon

~~~~~Carol's Corner~~~~~

Joke:

A toddler was found chewing on a slug. After the initial surge of disgust, the parent said, "Well, what does it taste like?" "Worms," was the reply.

Riddle:

Your dad gives you \$10 to buy something for him to eat, something for him to drink, something to feed his cows, and something to plant in his garden. It can be only one single item. What do you buy?

**Gardle** (think word scramble where gardening terms are unscrambled)

- hulmc
- leeotstim
- geslgein
- tsimaopsu

Merry Christmas! See you soon!  
Carol

*Please send your answer to [readingweeder72@hotmail.com](mailto:readingweeder72@hotmail.com)*  
All Photo sources: Mobile County Master Gardeners.



Since the last newsletter submission, there has been a lot going on. Coupled with holiday activities, hardly a spare moment to reminisce, so let's catch up.

After the Pinecone Party held November 17, the cones that were painted and drilled were now ready for the design sessions held the last week of November by our resident designers, MGs, and interns. Beautiful table centerpieces, mantel pieces, and door swags were completed for the upcoming sale. Also included were okra pods and Cuppa Cheer designs.

Next was the ordered from the website designs pick up at the Jon Archer Center on November 30. The next scheduled event was the Greenery Sale held at the Mobile Botanical Gardens scheduled for December 1-3. However, sometimes there is a snag even in the most well considered plan such as bad weather on the patio or new roadway construction at the Gardens. For that reason, the Greenery Sale was extended to December 8-9, but even the weather glitch did not hamper sales, because the Mobile citizenry made it to the Gardens anyway, enabling a successful sale.

The Jon Archer Extension Center was the setting for the annual Christmas banquet on December 10. Delicious savory and sweet dishes provided by MGs accompanied turkey and ham, proving MGs can cook as well as grow! Master of ceremonies, **Jack LeCroy**, presented awards this year in the form of the Golden Trowel awards. See below for all Golden Trowel awards. See photo directly below with the following awardees: Theresa Davidson, Carol Dorsey, Earl Gochey, **Shirley Reynolds**, Marcia Stolz, Barbara Boone, Cindy Findlay, and Carolyn Rooks. (Mea culpa! Please note the name discrepancy for Shirey Reynolds. My sincere apologies to Shirley due to checking spelling her name.)

**No matter the season, plant with love, harvest with joy.**



## Out My Window

by Debra Morrow

I like being outside: gardening, hiking, running, sightseeing, etc. When I garden, sometimes I am there from dawn until dusk. There is so much to do: watching bees, dragon flies, anoles, beetles, and an occasional garden snake. I take pictures of them. Morning light is best. Early in the morning, my critters are just waking up for their photoshoot: Bumble bees fumbling in the blossom of Rose of Sharon, honey bees on pink guara, grasshoppers clinging to cabbage leaf coneflower, and the anole stealthily awaiting a meal in the straps of the Queen Emma crinum.

I also watch chickadees, cardinals, blue jays, finches, titmice, and red-winged blackbirds at my bird feeders. Feeding squirrels and the birds as well as the occasional box turtle that passes through the yard rounds out my gardening adventures. Of course, the opossums and raccoons partake of the leftovers.

My city, backyard wildlife also includes hawks, owls, and falcons – They like the squirrels and birds also. The gardenia, oakleaf hydrangea, weeping Mary, and bleeding heart provide safety for the song birds, if needed.

When I take a break from watching critters, I get rid of weeds: mimosa, rattlesnake, dollar, and dandelion; divide daylilies and crinums; plant turkey trot in a new spot; or prune the Happenstance white rose that visits my neighbor often.

I attempt to grow food: mint, oregano, basil, strawberries, Swiss chard, and rosemary. A bay tree is in the bunch, as well. By chance or tenacity; not by my talent, they grow. It is awesome to pick and dry bay for my soups and beans or add basil to scrambled eggs or salads.

I was a little nervous about what to do with my hands after I retired from the Naval Reserve (26 years) and from teaching high school (25 years). I am grateful to my maternal grandmother for planting and nourishing the love of outdoors, plants, and critters. Corn, collard greens, turnip greens, and tomatoes were her favorites in her backyard garden. My favorites, too. She did the planting; I ate her dishes – all excellent with cornbread.

Fellow gardeners, join me every now and then for a cuppa as I peer out my window and chat about what I see.

## Winter Solstice

By the time readers open this month's newsletter, this year's winter solstice date (Dec 21) will be past. Just a reminder, the winter solstice is the shortest day and the longest night of the year. This occurrence is due to the sun reaching its shortest path across the sky. In days past, celebrations with singing and dancing and feasting took place. Think Stonehenge. Most likely for us it means that days will gradually become longer. More time for garden planning and seed starting!

## SAVE THE DATE!

**SPRING FESTIVAL MARCH 23, 2024**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Master Gardener of the Month  
by Barbara Boone for Bob Howard





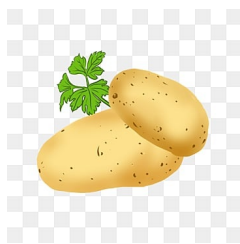
I am not taking over the MGoM section or bragging on myself, however this month was a little confusing. 'Nuf said... Bob will be on board next month. In the meantime, this gives me the opportunity to say what is in my heart about Master Gardeners.

Having received the Master Gardener of the Year Golden Trowel, those of you in attendance that night either remembered or learned what a world class crier I am. I tear up all the time if I see a cute, knobby-kneed toddler in short pants, a returning soldier surprising his children at school after a long deployment, or a puppy sleeping next to a baby on Instagram. And don't get me started on holiday commercials! Quick, get the Kleenex!

I am so proud to be a Master Gardener because I feel a member of a wonderful community of like-minded people, a tribe that promotes outreach for education and sustainability, I felt this in 2021 in MG class, helping out with the Greenery Sales, Pinecone Party, and speaking to groups as a member of the Speaker's Bureau. What gives me the greatest joy? Editor of this newsletter is my favorite MG activity because it gives me the opportunity for research and an outlet for my occasional sideways humor.

Let's not forget the fun we have gathering together, each of us bringing a talent to the table so that  $1 + 1 > 2$ . So, MGs, keep educating, keep designing, keep making meeting snacks, keep working in the Dream Garden, keep making senior lives brighter, but most of all, keep sending me photos documenting all you do!

2024 portends to be a great year for extension. Rest up and get ready to make it a banner year! I'll be here along with Dirt Diva to report all you do because you're the best, and, as a true Southerner, I love all y'all! Bless your hearts!



## A History of the Humble Potato

Driving past any fast food venue, one is likely to smell the intoxicating smell of potatoes in the deep fryer, a smell worthy of designer perfume in my opinion. How did the humble potato come to be a staple in our diet?

The potato is known by a litany of names: tubers, taters, spuds, murphies, fingerlings, and yams, in the case of the "sweet" variety. First and foremost, however, is vegetable. Potatoes are in the starchy vegetable subgroup due to their carbohydrate content and known scientifically as *Solanum tuberosum* and is in the same family as tobacco, tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers.

No matter the name, the cultivation of potatoes began around 8,000 B.C. to 5,000 B.C. in the Peruvian Andes by Inca Indians. In fact, the Incas used the time it took to cook a potato as a measurement of time. Over eons about 4,000 varieties of potatoes were propagated.

Eventually Spanish conquistadores plundering in South America discovered the potato and took this new vegetable to Spain and from there, the potato spread to Europe as a food source. Much like other new food sources, European royalty influenced populations to eat them.

Potatoes arrived in America in the early 1600s and were cultivated by Virginia colonists. Later on, early adopter, Thomas Jefferson, was introduced to potatoes which he planted in his fields.

Many researchers believe that potato crops both prevented famine and perpetuated starvation among Europeans, particularly the Irish. Irish peasants, who over planted the tuber and whose diets were largely potatoes, underwent famine and starvation because potato crops were

infected by *Phytophthora spp.*, a type of mold. This famine led to millions of Irish deaths in the mid 1800s and the eventual migration to the United States with the hope of a better life.

Today potatoes are recognized as one of the top five most important crops raised worldwide behind corn, rice, wheat, and sugar cane. Who could imagine a burger without fries, an empty bag of chips, no Canadian poutine, or a side dish of mashed potatoes? As a professed potatophile, I, for one cannot!

Fun Facts:

National Potato Day October 27.

Marie Antoinette wore potato blossoms in her hair.

Mr. Potatohead was first advertised on TV in 1972.

The largest potato grown to date weighed in at 370 pounds.

The potato was the first vegetable grown in space.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Sources:

usda.gov

montana.edu Extension

## Pine Resin? Good riddance!

Still tis the season for pine and evergreen greenery. The scent is fresh and outdoorsy, but sometimes pine resin adheres to hands and surfaces. So, what is an easy method to remove the sticky residue? A simple way is to use an alcohol-based product like hand sanitizer which is readily available and safe for skin. WD 40 is useful for car exteriors.

Source: BH&G Dec 2023



### Holidays at the Mulherin Home

Residents at Mulherin Home are experiencing merrier holidays due to decorations and additional landscaping by Crew 22. Pictured are **Lisa Davis, Mary Ann Tomberlin, Carolyn Rooks, and Earl Gochey.**







Marianna Parker



Jackie Jenkins and Emily Arenello



Chester Vrocher



Neil Milligan



Lydia Criswell



Marina Krishman & family





Jane Finley



Peggy Wright

Karen Ruckert



Greenery at MBG

Carolyn Davidson



Greenery at MBG

Greenery at MBG



Theresa Davidson and Leslie Maycock



Greenery Sale Designs



Mary Catherine Faralli, Rynn Toifel, Marion Platt, Leslie Maycock



All Golden Trowel Awardees

## Fruit o' the Month

### Pomegranates

Pomegranates, *Punica granatum*, are not an all year around fruit, appearing only in supermarkets October through the end of the year into January.

Although not restricted to California, approximately 80% of pomegranates in the U. S. are grown in California. The climate in this location is conducive to this fruit, as the climate is close to the Mediterranean from which they most likely originated.



Pomegranates perform best on deep loamy soils, but will still grow quite well in sandy and clay soils. Trees are tolerant of moderately acid to slightly alkaline soils and grow best in a soil pH range of 5.5 to 7.2. Though pomegranates can tolerate short periods of standing water, they prefer well-drained soils. Extended periods of excessive moisture will harm the trees.

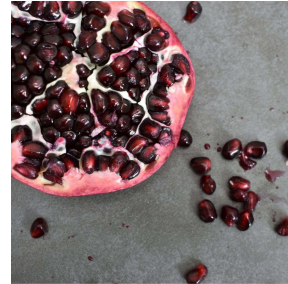
Peeling a pomegranate can be tricky. Cut through the mesh-like exterior and then pluck out the arils in their individual sections.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Sources:  
UGA Extension  
UC Extension



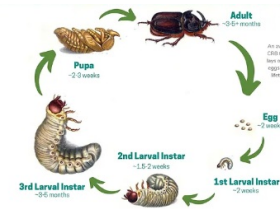
Pomegranate



Pomegranate arils

## Bugs n' Hisses

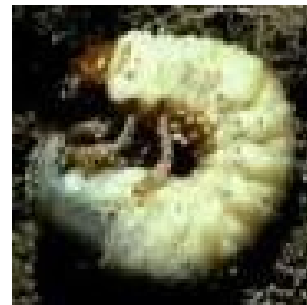
It is chilly outside. Not the best temp for insects in general. So where are they, and what are they doing? Are they on a lounge chair sipping an umbrella drink, soaking up the sun on some beach in the Bahamas? Let's find out...



Temperatures below 50 degrees F kill most insects, however some insects have utilized survival strategies such as migration or dormancy.

Those surviving in colder climates have adapted by producing cryoprotectants which lower the temps that otherwise would bring about freezing. Other insects hibernate

Many insects overwinter in a state of dormancy. These species remain as adults and then emerge in the Spring to breed. Examples here are beetles and stink bugs.



Diapause is the state of suspended growth triggered by decreasing temps, shorter days, and decreasing food supplies. See the life cycle illustrated above by many insect species.

Butterflies which travel thousands of miles are examples of migrating insects. Once in their destination, they wait out the winter.

So, fear not gardeners! Insects have evolved to perpetuate the species even in situations not conducive to reappearing in warmer temps.

Compiled by Dirt Diva



## Plants: No Brain, No Pain

This year during an outside pruning demonstration in the Dream Garden, agent **Jacob Kelley** was asked an off the wall question which was, "When plants are trimmed, snipped, or pruned, do plants feel pain and scream?" OK, it was me. He looked at me like I had three heads on my shoulders and resoundingly replied "Uh, NO!" Well, I took his answer as truth, but then, hmmm, I got to thinking...trees in the forest communicate chemically with the help of underground fungus and tree roots, so maybe there is something similar happening with plants. Could it be...?

Fast forward a lot of research: it appears numerous studies have been ongoing regarding this issue. Our own common sense tells us that plants do not have pain receptors, nerves or a brain. No brain, no pain because there is no nerve pathway to which signals can be sent.

However, there is some research that indicates plants do send out distress signals chemically. Example: the smell given off when grass is mowed could be construed as a distress signal warning of an attack. In this case, the "attack" would be lawn mower blades.

Plants use a variety of chemical signals to sense changes in light, temperature, and touch. They can also respond to external stimuli by growing toward or away from light, adjusting root and stem growth and producing chemicals as defense mechanisms against predators, all managed by biochemical pathways.

Distress signals aside, Jacob was correct when he stated plants do not feel pain as we know it. So, don't worry the next time you pull a carrot from the garden or trim your shrubs. These plants will think it's only their spa day getting a facial or a hair trim.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Sources;  
How Stuff Works, Sept 2023  
Discovery Magazine, 2016  
The Hidden Life of Trees, Peter Wohlleben, 2016



*From the Greenhouse: Dirt and Decor*

**Editor's Note:** This month **Mary Catherine Faralli** lets us

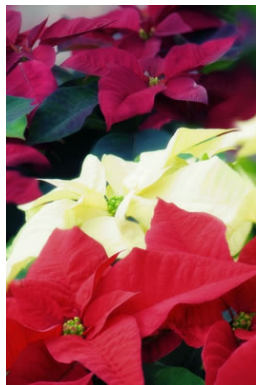


know how she makes cement growing areas in her yard. Kudos to anyone who masterminds and works with cement to make decorative planting spaces.

Per Mary Catherine, she wanted a maintenance free matching border in her front yard around a lavender crape myrtle that she planted in memory of her mother (lavender her favorite color). She did not want to power wash stones or worry about weed wacker damage, so she decided to use grey, scalloped 2"x 6"x16" concrete pieces, using oil-based paint to match her house trim. She painted two coats, allowing a hard dry and a good seal. Next, she measured, laid, and leveled a 2 1/2 x 8" paver brick about 1" below ground level as a border foundation and adding stability. (Mary Catherine indicated one could use pavers cut in half lengthwise if no brick is to stick out, but it would have sod around it.) Then she mixed and mortared the concrete pieces to the foundation brick and to each other. Painting the seams followed. Occasional spraying soil away from the brick is all that is required for maintenance. With much of the work done up front, that allows her to spend time on flowers. In addition, she has also done similar work around her mailbox and a street marker. See Mary Catherine's before and after work product above.

This type of work is never done, right? So, she has started another border project around a magnolia, using seasonal potted plantings that she learned in MG class.

Compiled by Dirt Diva



### Poinsettias: Make the Season Last

Long after an American amateur botanist, Joel Poinsett, noted the bright red blooms while visiting in Mexico during the Mexican holiday season, the tropical plant which became known as a poinsettia became a staple and iconic seasonal plant.

Early on it was difficult to cultivate poinsettias, but with persistent propagation, poinsettias were finally able to be grown commercially and by home gardeners. However, poinsettias are still difficult to maintain past the holiday season. Here are a few tips to make this seasonal beauty last longer:

- Start with a healthy plant.
- Check soil moisture daily.
- Let poinsettia drain water after watering.
- Avoid nearby heat sources.

With consistent water monitoring, a poinsettia should last well beyond the holidays. The only issue remaining is poinsettia pronunciation, "poin-sett-a" or "poin-sett-i-a."

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Source: National Geographic, Nov. 2017

**Needed: high quality photos for the website.  
Please forward pretty flower or shrub pics to**



## In The Loop

by Theresa Davidson

### Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:



#### January Board of Directors Meeting

Jon Archer Center  
Wednesday, January 3, 10:00 am  
Carol Williams, 251.367.0473  
readingweeder72@hotmail.com  
**MGA/AMGA Administration**



#### January General Meeting

Jon Archer Center  
Kyle Owsley, Associate Director,  
Auburn Ornamental Horticulture Research Center  
January 10, 9:30 am Social time, 10:00 am Meeting  
Carol Williams, 251.367.0473  
readingweeder72@hotmail.com  
**MGA/AMGA Administration**



#### Second Annual SPRING FESTIVAL

Details coming soon.  
Save the Date: March 23, 2024!  
Look for signup sheets at the January meeting!  
Bob Howard, 251.423.3108, rhoward51@gmail.com



#### First Friday at the Gardens

Poetry presented by Writers in Nature Students (WINS)  
-Students present original poems  
January 5, 2024  
Larkins Classroom

# Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities:



## Monthly Garden Zoom Class

Jack LeCroy

3rd Thursday of the month, 6-7 pm, November 16

Diane Anthony, [jda0002@aces.edu](mailto:jda0002@aces.edu), 251.574.8445 or

[www.aces.edu/go/gardenzoom](http://www.aces.edu/go/gardenzoom) to register

**CEU**



## Master Gardener Helpline Tuesday - Friday.

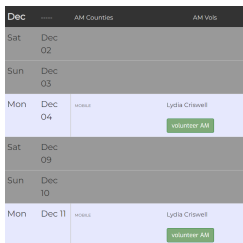
Please call Diane Anthony to schedule these shifts.

Morning shift 8:30 - 12:00

Afternoon shift 12:00 - 3:30

Contact: Cindy Findlay Email: [cndyfndly@att.net](mailto:cndyfndly@att.net)

**Helpline**



## Master Gardener Statewide Helpline Mondays

Please commit to Mondays on the Statewide Helpline.

Sign up online under '**Helpline Calendar**'.

Morning Shift: 8:30 -12:00

Afternoon Shift - 12:00- 3:30.

Contact: Cindy Findlay Email: [cndyfndly@att.net](mailto:cndyfndly@att.net)

**Helpline**



## Prepare Snacks for MG General Meetings:

Jon Archer Center

Lydia Criswell, 251.610.5543, [criswells2@mchsi.com](mailto:criswells2@mchsi.com)

**MGA/AMGA Meeting: Add your round trip drive time to the meeting time.**

Beginning January 10, 2024



## Orchid Society Meeting

Mobile Japanese Garden meeting room, 700 Forest Hill

4th Sunday of the month (except June & Dec), 2:00

Lynn Coleman, 251.622.3939, [lynncolman411@gmail.com](mailto:lynncolman411@gmail.com)

**CEU for the presentation**



## Gulf Coast Herb Society

Mobile Botanical Gardens 4th Tues. of the month,

(except July and Nov.), 5:30 pm

Beth Poates, 251.342.6508, [poates57@hotmail.com](mailto:poates57@hotmail.com)

**CEU for presentation**



Jon Archer Center  
2nd Sun of the month: Sept. 2023- April 2024, 2:00 pm  
mobilecamellia.org, Camellia Club of Mobile FB Group  
**CEU for presentation**

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**K Sawada Camellia Club**  
Most meetings at Mobile Botanical Gardens  
1st Sunday of the month: Nov. 5, 2023- March 2024  
2:00 pm  
Vaughn Drinkard, vdrinkard@yahoo.com  
**CEU for presentation**

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**Mobile Japanese Garden**  
700 Forest Hill Drive  
Volunteer your MG skills any morning/afternoon.  
Text Don to coordinate!  
Don Fry, 251.422.8466, don.fry@comcast.net,  
mobilejapanesegarden.com  
**Community Landscape**

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**Community Gardens:**  
Grow More Give More with Mobile Urban Growers:  
mobileurbangrowers.org  
Community gardens in Midtown, Downtown, + other neighborhoods, school sites. Search FB "Mobile Urban Growers" and Community Gardens  
Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com  
mobileurbangrowers@gmail.com  
**Helping Garden**

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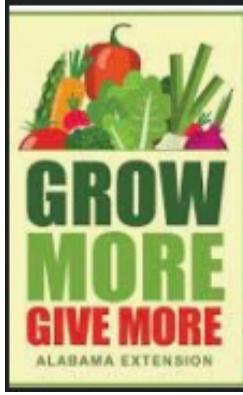


**Mobile Medical Museum**  
Robert Throer Medicinal Garden  
Curating and maintaining everchanging collection + gardening with Full Life Ahead, serving adults with intellectual disabilities, usually on Wednesdays  
1664 Springhill Avenue  
Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com  
**Helping Garden**

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**Grow More Give More**  
Statewide Master Gardeners initiative to encourage food gardening and sharing produce  
2 Ambassadors needed: attend meetings, target areas for grant development/grant funds fulfillment  
Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com  
**Community Food**





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### **Speakers Bureau**

Paul Ezelle, 251.402.1798, paulezelle@gmail.com  
Bob Howard, 251.423.3108, rwhoward51@gmail.com  
***Program or workshop for public***



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### **Office Manager/Phone Lines/MG Helpline**

Cindy Findlay, 251.786.4245, cndyfindly@att.net



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### **DREAM GARDEN: Join a Garden Room ( See below)**

Jon Archer Center  
Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com  
Contact Marsha **or** a Garden Leader to volunteer and work as needed.

***Education/Demonstration***

### **The Gardens:**

#### **Grandma's Pass Along Garden**

Catherine Moates, 251.366.6163, memo366@att.ne  
Olivia Reinhaus, 251.458.7383, omcvea@gmail.com

#### **Native Garden**

Melissa Nichols, 251.680.7779, indigigardener@gmail.com

#### **Shade Garden**

Bob Howard, 251.423.3108, rwhoward51@gmail.com

#### **Vegetable Garden**

Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com  
Mary Ann Days, 251.391.5806, masdays@comcast.net

#### **Herb Garden**

Mary Ann Days, 251.391.5806, masdays@comcast.net

#### **Cottage Garden & Formal Garden**

Glenda Eady, 251.342.4248, jerryeady2@comcast.net

## Mark your calendars for these SPECIAL EVENTS:

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### 2024 Alabama Master Gardeners Association State Conference

Welcome to the **2024 Alabama Master Gardeners Association State Conference**, hosted by the **Baldwin County Master Gardeners**. We are thrilled to invite you to join us for our annual gathering of gardeners, educators, and enthusiasts from across the state. This year's conference theme is "Paradise Found," We can't wait to explore the many ways we can cultivate our own little corners of paradise.

The conference will be held on **April 22nd – 24th, 2024**, at the **Daphne Civic Center** located in beautiful **Daphne, Alabama**. Over the course of three days, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops, lectures, and networking events, all focused on gardening, sustainability, and environmental stewardship.

We believe that gardening is more than just a hobby – it's a way of life. By bringing together the brightest minds in gardening and horticulture, we hope to inspire and empower our attendees to create their own little pieces of paradise- a community garden, a backyard oasis, or a thriving urban farm.

So join us in Daphne, Alabama, as we explore the many ways we can cultivate paradise in our lives and communities. We can't wait to see you there!

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### Marion Drummond Lecture Series at MBG

**What:** A lecture series honoring Marion Drummond (former Director of MBG) and Celebrating the 50th Anniversary year of Mobile Botanical Gardens

**Cost:** \$35 per event (MBG Members receive discount) or

**Season Tickets:** \$150 for the series include preferred seating and invitation to Coffee & Pastries with the Presenter.

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**Mary Palmer Dargan**, Landscape Architect

**Couture Garden Design – May Your Landscape Fit Your Lifestyle Like A Glove**

**Saturday, February 17, 2024**

9:00am – 2:00pm

*Shape your landscape to fit your lifestyle like a tailor creates a custom design for your wardrobe. The day includes seminar, lunch, and a fun after-lunch interactive adventure in design!*

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**Kathryn Aalto**, New York Times Bestselling Author

The Natural World of Winnie-The-Pooh: A Walk Through The Forest That Inspired The 100-Acre Wood and Writing Wild: Women Poets, Ramblers, and Mavericks

Who Shape How We See the Natural World

**Thursday, March 21, 2024**

9:00am – 3:00pm

Morning and afternoon book presentations with lunch included. Kathryn is an American landscape designer, historian, writer, and lecturer living in Exeter, England.

**Carol Reese**, Horticulturist and nationally-known speaker Native Plants: Facts, Fabrications and Foibles

**Saturday, May 4, 2024**

9:00am – 3:00pm

Carol's program celebrates the many native and non-native plants that provide great beauty, durability and excellent nutrition for our beloved wildlife. The day includes the morning seminar, lunch, and a an after-lunch interactive session: Why Did My Plant Die??

**Marianne Willburn**, opinion columnist for the American Horticultural Society's The American Gardener

Keep Calm and Garden On: Gardening in the Midst of Climate Change

**Saturday, June 22, 2024**

9:00am – 2:00pm

How can we best adapt to what is, right now, and make our gardens more resilient throughout the seasons? The day includes seminar and lunch.

## 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](http://www.aces.edu)



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