



# Douglas County Dirt

Douglas County Master Gardener Association Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 3

## Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival June 6 & 7, 2009

### Calling all Master Gardeners.

Have plants will travel! right up to the greenhouse. The greenhouse is up and running and is need of your time, energy and plants. Call Jan, Sharon or Rachel if you have questions as to what plants are needed.



According to the calendar, spring is only a month away. I am ready! If you are like me and are down because of the cold weather, just remember --- Every flower that ever bloomed had to go through a lot of dirt.

Hope to see you March 5 at our DCMG meeting to see Ken Panse. Pat

### Next Meeting:

**March 5, 2009**

Douglasville, GA

6:30 for pot-luck

dinner

7:00 meeting

begins

**How to get to the meeting site:**

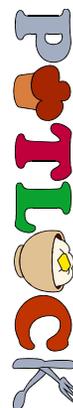
St. Julian's Episcopal Church

5400 Stewart Mill Rd

Take Chapel Hill Road to Stewart Mill Road (Intersection at Target and Shell gas station)

From I-20 turn right on Stewart Mill Road. Church is about 1 ½ miles on the right.

**March 5, 2008**



Get ready for a little excitement at our March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. We have 'Reptile Wrangler' Ken Panse coming with six very interesting animals. Ken is a Douglasville native and has been performing for well over 10 years showcasing a variety of animals such as snakes, turtles, an alligator, and giant bugs such as scorpions and millipedes. His show is both interesting and educational as some of the animals he highlights are found in nature around here. You may want to bring your children/grandchildren to this program.

# Rotating Crops in the Vegetable Garden

You can reduce the plant diseases and insects that attack your vegetable garden by practicing crop rotation.

Rotating your crops doesn't involve pirouetting potatoes or planting on turntables. Crop rotation simply involves not planting crops of the same family in the same section of the garden year after year.

Plants that are related to each other tend to be prone to the same diseases and insect pests. For example, squash borers will attack not only squash vines but also pumpkins. The squash borer larvae overwinter in the soil, but if they wake up the next summer and the squash vines are now at the other end of the garden, the borers will have more difficulty finding the vines.

Potato beetles and potato scab also overwinter in the soil, ready to infect the next year's crop. Establish your potato plot in another section of the garden to avoid those pests, and plant garlic or onions where the potatoes had been. Garlic and onions will repel some garden insects and will also suppress some soil-borne plant diseases.

In the section of the garden where last year's tomatoes or eggplants were growing, plant some members of the cabbage family, such as broccoli or cauliflower. These cruciferous crops have the ability to clean the soil of diseases that attack members of the nightshade family - potatoes, tomatoes and eggplant.

Other plants are heavy feeders and will use up much of the available nutrients in the soil. Sweet corn is a heavy feeder and has an especially large appetite for nitrogen. Planting a legume such as peas or beans in that same plot the following year will replenish the nitrogen that was used by the corn.

An easy way to rotate crops is to divide your garden into four equal sections and move particular crops clockwise from one section to another each year. Rotating your vegetable crops also gives the garden a different appearance each year and makes the garden a bit more visually interesting.

Have a great week! By Mike McGroarty newsletter article

Mike McGroarty's 72 second gardening message. February 18, 2009

# Georgia MG Events

\*\* If you are interested in going on the **Charleston Tour March 24-27**, we need to hear from you. Friends and spouses are most welcome to join us on these trips. Contact Tavia Henderson at 888-988-9776 or [sttours@mylink.net](mailto:sttours@mylink.net)

Upcoming tours-September 2009 Gardens of Western NY: the Finger Lakes, Rochester and Niagara Falls. December 2009, Orlando, FL. May 2010 California Gardens. Watch for more details to come.

\*\* The UGA Garden and Farm Tour of Ireland 2009 7-20 to 7-27 does not include the airfare to joining city (Shannon) or from terminating city (Dublin).

\*\* GMGA Dues- If you wish to retain membership with the Georgia Master Gardener Association, Inc. your 2009 membership is up for renewal. Paid membership in any Master Gardener organization is not mandatory in order for you to volunteer as a Master Gardener.

These local, regional and state organizations do serve a vital purpose in supporting the program and your dues help cover expenses like mailing newsletters and funding projects. You can renew your membership in GMGA in several ways: Clip the renewal form in *The Scoop* Newsletter and mail with your check, visit their website to pay online, or print and mail a membership form and check.

<http://www.georgiamastergardeners.com/>

\*\* Speaking of *The Scoop*, the GMGA quarterly newsletter, Feb 15th is the deadline for submissions for the April 1 mailing. You can send articles and photos to Fred Dyer, GMGA's newsletter editor at [fred.dyer@usg.edu](mailto:fred.dyer@usg.edu)

\*\* Upcoming GMGA Conferences: October 17, 2009 Gwinnett Technical College, hosted by metro Atlanta-area Master Gardeners. January 2010 in Gainesville, hosted by Hall County Master Gardeners Oct 2010 in LaGrange, hosted by Troup County Master Gardeners

\*\*One more thing about GMGA-Kudos to the Southwest Georgia Master Gardeners & GMGA for hosting the "Winter on the Flint" conference last weekend. Albany was great! The speakers were informative, inspiring and entertaining. And, the hospitality was top-notch!

# Douglas County Master Gardener Association

## Minutes of the Meeting held February 5, 2008

The meeting was opened by President, Pat Flickinger by welcoming all Master Gardeners and Friends, as well as, several new Master Gardener Interns in attendance.

Minutes of the January meeting were approved.

### Treasurer's Report:

Before giving her report, **Elaine reminded everyone to pay dues.**

Ending Balance as of Jan. 31, 2009--\$3,258.96

### Project Reports:

**Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival** – Plans are progressing smoothly for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual festival – including the Standard Flower Show Master Gardeners are co-sponsoring with the four Garden Clubs of Douglas County. This year's show is entitled "Limelight". Mark your calendars for June 5-7 and become a part of the activities. Help is needed as judges' clerks, flower show hostesses, garden tour hosts & hostesses, as well as, horticulture entries from your garden and design entries. Contact Judy Van Hook to reserve your place!

**Greenhouse** – Jan Thomas reported six volunteers had worked diligently on Thursday morning to repot and prepare plants for our May 2 Plant Sale. Two tables of plants were readied. She encouraged all present to dig up and bring rooted perennials to the greenhouse on Thursday mornings and to spread the word to other Master Gardeners not present. All are encouraged to help to make this fund raiser a success.

**Vegetable Garden** – James Dickinson reported 60 pounds of hay with horse and chicken fertilizer has been added to the beds for mulching. He reminded everyone of Randy Cooper's pruning workshop on Saturday morning at the garden and invited all to volunteer on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

**Nature Trail-** The March 28 Work Day was announced. Pat requested a volunteer for the Chairmanship of this committee. Volunteers are needed to assist Janet Deal with the lunch and volunteers are needed for the chores taking place during the Work Day.

**CAC Butterfly Garden** – A grant has been submitted to the State Garden Club of Georgia for a renovation of the Butterfly Garden paths, lighting and signage. Craig McManus of McPlants Landscaping graciously designed a plan with input from Randy Cooper. Renovation is to begin, hopefully, in the fall when we will be looking for Douglas County heirloom perennials. If you have any you would like to divide and share, please contact Kathy Henry. The Butterfly Garden will be on tour during the Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival on June 6 & 7. A maintenance schedule will begin again next month.

**Rose Garden** – Janet Deal announced roses will be transplanted from the greenhouse to the Woodie Fite Center Garden soon. The Master Gardener sponsored Garden Club at the Woodie Fite Center has made plans for the coming year which include a March tour of Calloway Gardens, with future tours of local gardens during their monthly meetings. She also welcomed the Interns that were present and asked for volunteers to help with the Intern testing.

### **Old Business:**

**Plant Sale-** Pat stressed the importance of the Plant Sale to be held on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, at the Greenhouse.

Pat shared the article in the Sentinel newspaper announcing the Inner Harbor Flower and Vegetable Garden receiving an award from the National Children's Gardening Association. She reminded everyone that Rachel Hendee had been instrumental in its design and in teaching the students about gardening.

### **New Business:**

**Mellie Boykin** received the honor of a **Lifetime Master Gardener** Plaque presented by County Extension Agent Kevin Livingston and Pat Flickinger. She was commended on her ten years of continuous service as a Master Gardener.

Audit Report was given by Judy Cole. Our books are all in order and Elaine Davis was complimented on a job well done for a first year treasurer.

A Cookbook Proposal was given by the committee of Betsy Simon, Sherri Beggs, Mellie Boykin, Genie Gordon, Flo Frey and Pat Wilkinson. Sherri Beggs was recognized for her beautiful painting designed to be replicated in the proposed cookbook. The original art will be raffled at a date to be announced. The committee proposed that hardcover books will cost \$10.00 each, including shipping, and will be sold for \$20.00. The order would be for 500 books. One half of the cost is due 37 days after books are received, and the remainder is due 67 days from the receiving date. Projected cost is \$5,000. Projected profit is \$5,000. A lengthy discussion was held on the feasibility of publishing a Cookbook as a fundraiser. A written survey was taken on the number of members who would or would not support such a project and the number of cookbooks each member would commit to buying and/or selling. Results will be tabulated and shared.

The Board presented a budget. Income and expenses were discussed.

### **Program:**

Wilford Milan, local beekeeper, gave us an informative presentation on bees as they relate to gardening.

Door prizes were distributed.

The meeting was adjourned by Pat.

Minutes Submitted by Kathy Henry



## Cocoa Mulch POISON to Dogs & Cats

Please tell every dog or cat owner you know. Even if you don't have a pet, please pass this to those who do.

Over the weekend the doting owner of two young lab mixes purchased **Cocoa Mulch** from Target to use in their garden. They loved the way it smelled and it was advertised to keep cats away from their garden. Their dog Calypso decided that the mulch smelled good enough to eat and devoured a large helping. She vomited a few times which was typical when she eats something new but wasn't acting lethargic in any way. The next day, Mom woke up and took Calypso out for her morning walk. Half way through the walk, she had a seizure and died instantly.

Although the mulch had NO warnings printed on the label, upon further investigation on the company's website, this product is HIGHLY toxic to dogs and cats.

**Cocoa Mulch** is manufactured by Hershey's, and they claim that 'It is true that studies have shown that 50% of the dogs that eat Cocoa Mulch can suffer physical harm to a variety of degrees (depending on each individual dog). However, 98% of all dogs won't eat it.'

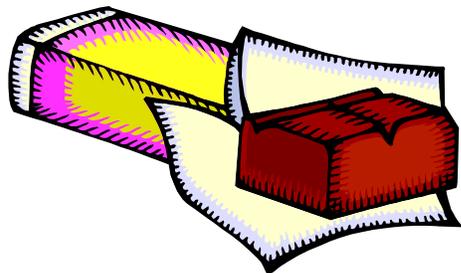
This Snopes site gives the following information:

<http://www.snopes.com/critters/crusader/cocoamulch.asp>  
<<http://www.snopes.com/critters/crusader/cocoamulch.asp>>

**Cocoa Mulch**, which is sold by Home Depot, Foreman's Garden Supply and other Garden supply stores, contains a lethal ingredient called 'Theobromine'. It is lethal to dogs and cats. It smells like chocolate and it really attracts dogs. They will ingest this stuff and die. Several deaths already occurred in the last 2-3 weeks. **Theobromine is in all chocolate, especially dark or baker's chocolate which is toxic to dogs.** Cocoa bean shells contain potentially toxic quantities of theobromine, a xanthine compound similar in effects to caffeine and theophylline. A dog



that ingested a lethal quantity of garden mulch made from cacao bean shells developed severe convulsions and died 17 hours later. Analysis of the stomach contents and the ingested cacao bean shells revealed the presence of lethal amounts of theobromine.



The two very old apple trees adjacent to the vegetable garden look much better after master gardener Randy Cooper conducted a class Feb. 7th, on 'Pruning Fruit Trees'.

This was a Fun 'hands-on' class with about 14 very interested people in attendance.



## Photos of Recent DCMG Events

**Mellie Boykin** receiving her 'Lifetime Master Gardeners' award at the February DCMG meeting .

**Local beekeeper Wilford Milan** kept his audience enthralled as he spoke at the February meeting of the Douglas County Master Gardeners.

Wearing the typical white jumpsuit most beekeepers prefer, he brought along his netted hat and long gloves which are used for protection and a 'smoker' used to sedate the bees while extracting honey from the hive. The information he gave sparked many questions from those in attendance and they learned that:

- A: Bees dance to communicate direction and distance of nectar sources.
- B: A typical hive may contain 35,000-50,000 bees.
- C: Eating local honey can fend off allergies.
- D: Bees are essential for the production of most foods—without pollination, plants will not produce fruit.



# Douglas County Master Gardener Association

www.dcdirt.org

**President:** Pat Flickinger 770-920-0988  
**Vice President:** Mellie Boykin 770-942-6871  
**Recording Secretary:** Kathy Henry 770-947-0760  
**Treasurer:** Elaine Davis 770 949-5963  
**Newsletter:** Melanie Cardell 770-920-1278  
**Web site:** Fred Finch  
**Web Site liaison:** Mellie Boykin 770 942-6871  
**Archivist:** Sharon Morton 770 949-4797  
**Yard of the Month:** James Kirkwood 770-942-1663  
**Douglas County Extension Office:** 770-920-7224  
Douglas County Court House

## Your input is needed.

For newsletter articles, tips, hints, anecdotes, recipes, book reviews, website reviews, gardening and/or shops or online sources, and ideas: Email: MJ\_Cardell@yahoo.com  
Newsletter deadline is the 20th of each month.

Did you know this newsletter is also posted at our web site in full color, so you can get your dirt online?

**The DCMGA meeting will be **March 5, 2009.****

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**March 21, 2009** Master Gardener Day in Georgia. Let's all celebrate with service in our communities.



**April 10, 11** Hall County MG 2009 Spring Garden Expo Friday and Saturday, Chicopee Woods Ag Center near Gainesville. [www.hcmgs.com](http://www.hcmgs.com)

**March 28** Nature Trail Work Day at DC Courthouse

**April 16** Intern Picnic at Triple Creek Farm

**April 18** Annual Spring Plant Sale Research & Edu-

cation Garden UGA Griffin Campus

**Apr 22, 2009** Earth Day

**May 2 DCMG Plant Sale** at the Greenhouse



## GMGA Mission Statement:



To stimulate the love for and increase the knowledge of gardening, and to voluntarily and enthusiastically share this knowledge with others.