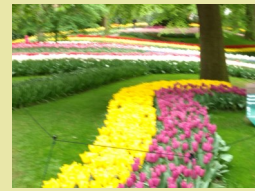




# GARDEN THYMES

Master Gardeners of North Alabama, Inc.



Tulip River Cruise  
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2019 - Quarter 3

## *Congratulations to our Graduates*

### *Give A Hand*

The Give a Hand winner for May 2019 was Carolyn Wade for responding quickly when asked, for special projects. The June 2019 winner was Alice Brigman for being the “best co-chair on the planet”. There was no meeting in April. Please take a moment to fill out a Give A Hand Nomination form at our next meeting to recognize a hard-working fellow Master Gardener!



Pictured above are the Master Gardener Graduates that received their certificates at the May Meeting. To move from an Intern to a fully certified Master Gardener one must successfully complete the Master Gardener Course and 50 hours of service. The graduates are (starting from the back left): Jim Mullen, Mark Batchelor, Rob Rosson, Carla Auchterlonie, Nick Peshman, Mary Snow, Jessica Boike, Teri Elliott and Susan Kirkpatrick and those in the front row are Rhonda Britten (Regional Extension Agent), Marsha Levy, Lelia Austin and Eileen Tulley.

### **Like! Us on Facebook**

You don't have to be a member of Facebook to view the MGNA Facebook page. If you are a member, remember to Like Us, and share the articles that interest you!

[www.Facebook.com/MGofNA](http://www.Facebook.com/MGofNA)

# From the President

Cyndi Lindblom (F'13)

**W**OW! That's all I have to say!

We have had a busy spring and early summer. The Family Fun Fest was a hit, thank you for participating. The Ribbon Cutting for the Energy Green Way was fun thanks to Kathy Gardner and crew, and the Ask A Master Gardener has been busy with both Lowe's and other activities, thank you Flo Helman.

I do have a bit of news, Michele at the Farmers Market on Cook Ave has asked us to "set up shop" at the end of the Farmers Market where Monks was. I'm so excited that Ann Tippie has taken this on and plans are being made for us to do some "make and take" projects, answer questions, and teach about composting among other subjects as they come up. Please think about volunteering if you are asked.

Our MGNA Spring Plant and Rummage Sale was a great success, Thank you Sue Khoury and her volunteers.



I do have a favor to ask....Please volunteer for the help desk. If you could sit just one day a month for a couple of hours it would be a big help. Thank you.

How are your gardens looking? I have picked some cucumbers and squash so far and my tomatoes are looking good to me AND the birds.

Have a fantastic summer. I will see you at the meeting July 11 at 6 PM

Cyndi Lindblom



**VOL. XXIX, ISSUE 3**

**Editor**

**Ken Tippie (F'13)**

**Contributing Editor**

**Carolyn Wade (W '12)**

The *Garden Thymes* newsletter is published quarterly: January/February/March, April/May/June, July/August/September and October/November/December. Editorial deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

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The Alabama Master Gardener program is conducted at the county level by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES).

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# Master Gardener Profile

*"I can do it, with a little M.G.  
education so can you".*

**H**elen, the second of six children, was born at her home in Clinton, Pa. (10 miles west of The Greater Pittsburgh Airport) into a farm family. Her maternal grandparents lived one mile down the road on their Dairy Farm where they raised eight children. All her aunts and uncles eventually had small farms. She remembers as a child taking their produce to a local Auction Barn, and she longed to have her own small garden. The family milked a few cows by hand and shipped cream.

She never thought that she would eventually marry the boy that lived on the farm next door to the one that she lived on when she was 10. Since Tom and she were both attending the University of Pittsburgh, they were allowed to be married on campus in the beautiful, castle-like Heinz Chapel (catsup). Tom is an Electrical Engineer who worked mainly in management for PPG and consulting with other companies. It was PPG who sent them here 51 1/2 years ago. Tom managed their 2 Madison Square stores, "The Coffee, Tea and Thee" and "The Peanut Shack" where their young teenagers learned to work. They have two attention-seeking cats, koi fish, chickens who lay blue eggs and a worm bin.

Their oldest, a daughter is the Business Manager for Whitesburg Christian Academy, the Tate Farm Pumpkin Patch Manager, singer, tennis coach, etc. Their second child and first son is an Auburn graduated Mechanical Engineer at Redstone Arsenal married to an Auburn graduated teacher. Their third and second son is an Alabama graduated Mechanical Engineer, lawyer and FBI agent married to an Alabama graduated teacher and lawyer. Notice the family divided. They have 6 wonderful grandchildren and 4 beautiful great grandchildren.

She followed her oldest sibling into nursing and retired 3 years ago from



**Helen Carr (W'98)**

the Cardiac Critical Care Department of Huntsville Hospital after practicing as a nurse for 51 years. She stated that maybe her father's death from a myocardial infarction when she was 13 had a lot of influence on her life, as not only did it thrust her into more farm responsibilities but in her career. She still attends monthly Nursing Inservices to keep her license as she plans to volunteer at (Heaven forbid) Alabama disasters.

Helen graduated as a Master Gardener 21 years ago (Winter '98) and has been very active ever since she completed the class. There are few projects in which she has not participated. Some projects that she did are: 2017 State M.G. Conference Decorating Committee, MGNA 25<sup>th</sup> Celebration Decorating Committee, Christmas Party (2 years), Field Trips (4 years), Monthly M.G. meeting Hospitality (2 years), Green Mountain Picnic (2 years) and Vegetable Chair of 2018 MGNA Spring Plant Sale. Other project support includes: D.V.G. (6 years), assist-

ed with the Intern Class (propagation class), grading tests and obtaining pumpkins, fresh flowers and other decorations and arranging them for the Intern Graduations, made decorations for the Christmas parties, and fresh flower centerpieces for all the 2017 State conference meals and monthly MGNA meetings (2 years). She grew hundreds of plants for the MGNA and HBG Plant Sales. She has worked the HBG Spring and Fall Plant Sale for years, serving as a personal shopper and advisor at the Preview Plant Sale and Party and serving as a pH tester. She also worked the Master Gardener and Herb Society weekends, Ask-a-Master Gardener at churches, schools and the Civic Center, worked at the Adopt-a-Spot on Williams Avenue, Seedlings and Sprouts, Extension telephone answerer, "Max's" garden at the Extension office, Home Garden Consult, Daylily potter, Herb Garden worker and monthly herb board designer (and Herb Society Board member). She has also written numerous Garden Thymes Newsletter articles, submitted a drawing for our logo, a HBG Green House worker and collected data at the HBG for a graduate student. For the past 7-8 years she has been a Workshop Committee member assisting with Workshop planning, and execution, as a helper in the Workshops and Lunch 'n Learn classrooms, served 5 years as Workshop Secretary. She has taught classes at the library Learning Quest and at Dublin Park on Landscaping and Pruning and is on Speakers Bureau list. She now holds Advanced Gardener Certificates in Landscaping and Pruning. Helen opened her yard and garden for a pop up tour.

[Continued on next page](#)

## Profile (Continued)

She has donated Silent Auction items including several dried flower wreaths, that she made from her flowers, and a Dinner Party for four. She was a Madison Arbor Week worker and judged Arbor Day posters for several years. She has judged the Huntsville and Madison City Beautification Awards numerous times. She has been a member of the Garden Ministry of her church for years and helps her neighbors and friends with their landscaping and garden needs. At the HBG each year, she volunteered for the Galaxy of Lights and this year she supported the Chinese Lantern Festival.



Helen has been active with Harvest for Health. Shown in the picture is her 90 year old Harvest for Health Cancer Survivor, her Master Gardener teammate and all the garden boxes that they helped her create and now oversee.

Helen's interests and hobbies include: growing all her own vegetables and cooking from scratch, cake decorating, oil painting, sewing, reading non-fiction and Bible studies. She says she seems to have an infinity for doing everything "flowers," from cake deco-

rating drying, painting, growing and looking at her favorites, especially hydrangeas and lilies. Another of her hobbies is raising berries: blueberries, wine berries, black, red and gold raspberries, strawberries and blackberries.

She loves to see other countries and has traveled to most of Europe, New Zealand, Turkey, Egypt, South Africa, Central and South America, most of the Caribbean Islands, Alaska, Hawaii, Canada and Mexico. Last year they

saw Paris thoroughly as her son was living next door to Notre Dame. One of their trips was with her son and his family through Belgium to Holland to see the tulips. Her favorite part of their 2 weeks with her son was the weekend he took them on the Loire Valley Castle Tour. It was almost Mother's Day and at the last castle her son said "we are spending the night here". Helen said "It made me feel like a queen!"

## Annual Award Nominations

Barbara K. Stansky (W'17)

August 2019 - Accepting written Nominations from members for year end rewards. Master Gardener of the Year, Project of the Year, and Friend of Master Gardeners. Submit nominations to Barbara Stansky ([barbarastansky@gmail.com](mailto:barbarastansky@gmail.com)).

**MGNA Master Gardener of the Year:** Nominees for this award must be Active members of MGNA. The criteria designated by the AMGA for the annual Mary Lou McNabb Award will be used as a guideline for selecting the MGNA Master Gardener of the Year, as follows: • Current Active membership in MGNA and in the AMGA. • Minimum of 100 hours per year in volunteer service. • Leadership in a local project; multiple projects will enhance nominee's résumé. • Attendance at local and/or state association meetings. • Service as an officer in local and/or state associations. • Giving programs to the public about Master Gardeners or on one of the areas covered in training. • Furthering the image of the Master Gardener Program. • Involvement in volunteer service activities that are supportive of the mission and purpose of the Alabama Master Gardener Program.

**Group Project of the Year:** Nominations for this award must have an Active member of MGNA as Project Leader. Nominations shall be based upon successful and timely accomplishment of a project that has been pre-approved by the Board of MGNA.

**Friend of Master Gardeners of North Alabama:** Nominations for this award shall be based upon the performance of an individual or group, not members of MGNA, whose support and assistance has enabled the organization to meet its annual goals.



# Morris Update

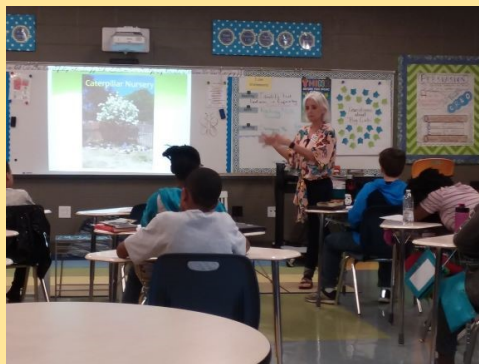
Carolyn Wade (W'12)

What a great school year the gardeners at Morris had this year. Working with 2 classes was challenging at times, but also satisfying. We got the greenhouse finished and used it for classes at the end of school. We grew enough vegetables for everyone to have a large salad the last day as well as to take some home to share with parents. The courtyard was bloom-



ing and welcoming to butterflies and birds alike. In addition to

tasting new fruits and vegetables, the students developed relationships with the wonderful Master Gardeners who volunteered with them this year. The teachers and students gave us a



farewell party complete with a slide show of the year. Many thanks to those Master Gardeners who helped this year: Bill Fuller, Ann Tippie, Gloria Uhl, Candy Trowbridge, Mary Ann Stasiak, Jennifer Johnson, Kay Jacobson, Eva Conn, Allyson Hofer, Owen Hofer, Helen

Carr, Elouisa Stokes, Jenene Castiligone, and Stephanie Boyd. We could not have had such a great year without the time and support of these and all MGNA.

Planning for next school year has already started and changes



are in the works. Stay tuned for more info. If you would like to work with the students next year or simply teach a class one week, please email me.

## Farmers Market

Ann Tippie (W'12)

The Madison County Commission has loaned MGNA the space at the east end of the Madison County Farmer's Market across from the Madison County Extension Office for an indefinite period of time. We are excited to have this venue to showcase our projects and talk with patrons of the Farmer's Market. The plan is to offer a mini workshop the second Saturday each month and have soil pH testing the fourth Saturday each month. Carol Cook will hold a training session just prior to the July monthly meeting for anyone interested in learning how to do soil pH testing. On July 13th, our first "Make & Take" will be a garden whimsey. Thank you to the crew who showed up to clean. I would also like to thank Alice Brigman who has been a mainstay with her help cleaning, finding chairs and decorating the area. The manager of the Farmer's Market, Michelle Quarles, has helped MGNA any way she could and has gone above and beyond to help set up the space we occupy.





# Volunteer Spotlight

Reprinted from the **Huntsville Botanical Garden May-June-July Garden Columns**

## The Interdependent Relationship Between Master Gardeners and Huntsville Botanical Garden

Our relationship with Master Gardeners and the results of their volunteer presence and activities are part of what makes the Garden possible. We depend on volunteers and could not exist without them. We set the stage, and volunteers such as Master Gardeners provide the performance. In 2018 alone, 92 Master Gardeners volunteered more than 4,000 volunteer hours.

The Demonstration Vegetable Garden and Herb Garden are two very important and popular areas of our Garden, due to the continued diligence of our Master Gardeners. The DVG volunteers under the direction of Carolyn Wade also partner with Louis J. Morris P-8 School to help students learn about gardening, producing future Master Gardeners in Alabama for generations to come.

In addition to helping our Garden look its best and assisting our horticulture staff, Master Gardeners also serve as docents and shuttle drivers and answer plant questions posed by our visitors. We can always count on Master Gardeners volunteers to be a part of our spring and fall plant sales, potting and making plants attractive as well as providing pH soil testing and plant information for our customers. Master Gardeners also assist with programs and events that educate visitors about all the Garden has to offer.

In return, we provide a monthly meeting place where Master Gardeners can gather to welcome a visiting speaker and enjoy other activities. We are dedicated to maintaining this relationship and are so thankful that we have our Master Gardeners!



## Bess Parks Garden Tour

Ann Tippie (W'12)



On June 1, fourteen of us gathered to carpool to Bess Park's home in Oneonta. Bess has a beautiful home complete with a spectacular garden, wooded acres

and a lake! We had a picnic lunch catered by Publix in a most beautiful and serene setting. Bess showed us all around and pointed out the many native plants she has. Bess's brother Joe took several groups out for a ride in the neighbor's pontoon boat. It was a very enjoyable day.





# Spring Master Gardener Activities



Owen and Allyson Hofer welcomed about 15 MG's and guests to their garden on Saturday, June 15th, 2019. Questions and answers were passed back and forth between hosts and guests, an enjoyable learning experience for all.



On May 15th at the Senior Center, the attendees and MGs sang "It's a Grand Old Flag" while creating the flag on the fence. Also the attendees shared some insight about what the flag means to them (as many come from military families). The project at the Sr. center was also educational, as it showed the attendees how their flowering or vegetable gardens can include other important elements to the garden decor.



Libby Loose opened her lovely garden on Monday, April 29th to several Master Gardeners. Libby is renowned for her many beautiful roses. She also features her favorite fanciful garden creatures, fairies. She is always ready to share the fruits of her labors with others.



# Mushrooms Everywhere

Rhonda Britton ( Regional Extension Agent)

The fun part of being a regional extension agent is trying to help people when they have a lawn, garden or insect problem. Most of the calls are generic, such as how to read a soil test or what is wrong with my plant. Every once in a while you get the one call that really makes you scratch your head!

I had a phone call this month from a homeowner in the Huntsville area. The gentleman proceeded to tell me about all of the mushrooms that had invaded his yard. He was convinced that these mushrooms came in the seed he had bought from a garden center. He said they were invasive and had taken over the yard. I told him that mushrooms are a fungus and live off of dead or decaying wood. I knew we had some unusual weather with rain and that could have caused the outbreak.

I could tell from his tone that he was not happy and that he was ready to dig up his whole yard and redo it. So I started asking all the general questions such as when he noticed this and what type of seed he had planted. He explained that he had sprayed the mushrooms (not recommended) and they were still everywhere. He had started digging up the mushrooms and bagging everything and putting it at his curb. He mentioned that his sister was a microbiologist and said that these mushrooms were not from this area and that the seed had to be the culprit.

Luckily his home was nearby, so I went to look in person. “WOW,” was all I could say! There were mushrooms everywhere that he had not dug up. The only thing that was definite were the trees in the yard and mushrooms everywhere! I called another agent, Allyson Shabel, to get her advice, and sent pictures to Dr. Jim Jacobi, located at the state pathologist lab in Birmingham, and called an arborist friend. I knew there had to be a relationship between trees and mushrooms but all the trees looked healthy and not under any stress. The homeowner mentioned that they had had a lot of deer feeding in the yard, too!

I took some samples of the mushrooms and headed back to the office, determined to figure out what was going on. The one known factor was that the owner’s grandfather had planted four ash trees many years ago and the front yard was full of roots from these trees. After doing some research and with help from Allyson Shabel, we discovered that there is a mushroom/aphid/ash tree relationship! Below is the link with more information:

<http://www.fungusfactfriday.com/143-boletinellus-merulioides/>





What a year it's been already at the DVG this spring. I think we've been through all four seasons in four short months. The great group of volunteers have worked hard to get the educational beds planted. We have beds demonstrating row gardens, till vs no till beds, keyhole, container and square foot gardens, heirloom and hybrid beds plus so much more. We've given many tours and talked with many visitors about the garden and different techniques demonstrated. The Huntsville Botanical Garden is including us in their Alabama Bicentennial celebration. They have provided additional signage showcasing the DVG. We continue to update our garden blog weekly and welcome any who would like to volunteer with us or who simply want to know more about the garden. We have a great group of volunteers who work on Tuesday and Thursday mornings starting about 8. If you would like to help and can't make those times, we are looking for volunteers who would like to work one evening a week or Saturday mornings, just email me.

[cbwade9@gmail.com](mailto:cbwade9@gmail.com)



## Leaf and Flower Pounding Workshop

Ann Tippie (W'12)



On May 2, fourteen people attended the Education Workshop's Leaf and Flower Pounding Workshop. Crystal Kitchens taught half the attendees leaf pounding while Ann Tippie demonstrated flower pounding to the other half. After an

hour, everyone switched. Our attendees were teenagers and adults. Five were Master Gardeners, five were Interns, and four were general public participants.

Everyone had a great time and went away with some pretty napkins and note cards.





# Teach a Man to Fish... The First Stop Story

Sue Khoury (W'13)

Imagine for a moment that you suddenly found yourself jobless and eventually homeless. Or consider what it's like to be a veteran with PTSD who can't hold a job and is forced to live on the streets. How would you survive?

Many of us are just one misfortune away from financial devastation. Metropolitan Huntsville's homeless don't live in the "camps" by choice. Most would rather have jobs and homes of their own. Regardless of why or how they ended up homeless they still have the same basic needs as you and I: food, shelter, and a purpose.

First Stop, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit seeking to get the folks in the camps off the streets permanently through one-on-one counseling services. By partnering with local churches and other non-profit groups they also provide 2 hot meals daily, give out bus tickets for those that have appointments or interviews, and now – through its Gardening Program – it's giving willing participants a purpose.

First Stop (FS) board members approached REA Rhonda Britton in early 2018 looking for help getting a gardening program up and running. Publix had built a greenhouse behind the FS building, and a local aerospace engineering firm had built a series of raised beds and designed and installed irrigation systems. But no one at FS had any idea how to grow anything. I responded to a message from Rhonda asking if there was anything we could do to help them. Once I'd toured the FS property and listened to the Facilities and Operations directors' hopes for the program I knew we could help. I began by bringing in subject matter experts (SMEs) on vegetable, herb, and flower gardening. A FS employee and former homeless client affectionately known as Tim2 served as the Greenhouse Manager and was my primary contact. With the help of MGNA members Bill Fuller, Max Campbell, Brenda Tapp, and Melissa Kirkindall, we sorted all the donated (by Walmart) seeds Tim2 was storing and selected the best for planting. For 2018, the main goal was making the new Gardening Program self-sustaining, so they grew lots of starter plants (tomato, pepper, herbs, and flowers) to sell at area Farmers Markets. Plants were priced according to pot size. Later in the season they switched to selling produce from the veggie plants. By the end of the season the program broke even, which exceeded their expectations!

For 2019 I solicited input from Bill and Max regarding the best tomato and pepper plants to grow, helped FS secure a Jane R. Parks Memorial grant to secure high-quality seeds from multiple sources, and devised a staggered planting plan so there would be starter plants through June and herb plants through September. The directors, Tim2, and I met several times in February and March to solidify plans for the season. The Facilities director, using photos and descriptions I furnished of each plant, made large signs to be

displayed at the Farmers Markets. Tim2 visited Dot's Greenhouse to solicit 4" planting pots, which they freely donated. Home Depot donated broken bags of soil and Black Kow. He also stopped pricing and selling plants and switched to a "Make a donation and get a free plant" marketing approach. "Hardening off" shelves were installed and a tray-based watering system for the shelves is in process. Aprons and posters proclaiming the partnership with MGNA are displayed prominently at every venue. To date, with only 5 Farmers Markets "in the bag," they've already exceeded their income expectations! The Gardening Program is now a source of revenue for FS.



[Continued on next page](#)



## Teach a Man to Fish... (continued)

Sue Khoury (W'13)

But it's much more than that! Tim2 is now the over-arching Gardening Program Manager. A homeless client is now a part-time employee designated as the Greenhouse Manager. He's earning money, but he's also learning skills he can use to eventually secure employment at a local nursery or garden center! He and Tim2 both want to take the next TriCounty MG course. Also, at each biweekly planting session at the greenhouse 4 clients are paid hourly wages to plant the seeds. They're all eager to learn, grateful for the work and the education, and talking about how they can grow their own food when they get into their own homes.

We are teaching clients how to garden and grow food. While they're planting we talk about what plants need to thrive, why we use the growing medium I specified, and for those that have some means of accessing the internet I show them how to look for information on the ACES website. In short: they have a new purpose, and that makes my heart soar. They still need to get back on their feet, but they have a new reason to work toward that end and a new set of skills to exercise when they get there. To me, that exemplifies why we do what we do in the community.

On my recommendation Tim2 has had clients solarizing in-ground beds to kill the existing (and persistent) weeds so they can plant cool-season crops in the fall. That produce, as well as any excess summer harvests, will be given to clients.

Long-term goals include conducting basic gardening classes at FS. My budget request for 2020 will include heat mats for the greenhouse so we can plant earlier and have larger starter plants when Greene Street Market opens in May, and a more robust greenhouse heater. We'll adjust the planting plan in accordance with the most popular 2019 plants and build on this year's successes.

Bottom line: FS, with the help of MGNA, has a viable Gardening Program that will continue to grow, employ clients, and teach those clients a marketable skill set. We are teaching them to fish, not just giving them a meal of fish.

## 2019 Spring Master Gardener Class

Rhonda Britton ( Regional Extension Agent)



The Alabama Master Gardener Program is provided and administered by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. It is an educational program to train and certify individuals who, in turn, volunteer their expertise and time in support of the Cooperative Extension effort as well as organizations that foster horticultural science and best practices in local communities. Class attendees are as follows (not in picture order):

Madison County - Cynthia Achorn, Carrie Bailey, Mary Baggett, Mark Batchelor, Stephane Boyd, Erin Catoire, Cheryl Cochran, Holly Christiansen, Pamela Farr, Charles Hancock, Sherley Leonard, Allen Markell, James Mullen, Joyce Pack, Donna Phillips, Teresa Prestridge, Debra Vacik, Melissa Wells

Limestone County - Pan Aden, Carolyn Barnes, Rebecca Hildebrand, Jim Lovell, Kathleen Noojin, Cheryl Sullens, Carol Wood

Morgan County - Billy Fortenberry, Cathy Heads, Patsy Siek, Charles Westcott

## Garden Wisdom

Mary Lou McNabb (81 Lifetime)

My friend is so sad - her plants are not growing.  
What has she done without even knowing?  
Left them in the car - they got too hot!  
Watered them too much - they got the rot!  
They all turned yellow, poor little fellows.  
A foot stomped on them.  
The dog romped on them.  
Gave them lots of fertilizer, but no new shoots.  
No wonder they are dying - burned the roots.  
Should have given compost.  
They would climb up the lamp post.  
They were going to have blooms,  
all pretty and red -  
But now my friend, I'm afraid  
They are all dead!

## The Garden

Author Unknown

For the garden of your daily living,  
Plant three rows of peas:  
Peace of mind, peace of heart and peace of soul.  
Plant four rows of squash:  
Squash gossip, squash indifference, squash  
grumbling and squash selfishness.  
Plant four rows of lettuce:  
Lettuce be faithful, lettuce be kind, lettuce be  
happy, lettuce really love one another.  
No garden should be without turnips:  
Turnip for service when needed, turnip to help  
one another, turnip the music and dance.  
To conclude our garden, we must have thyme:  
Thyme for fun, thyme for rest, thyme for others,  
thyme for ourselves.  
Water freely with patience and cultivate with  
love.  
Your garden is abundant because you reap what  
you sow.

## 2019 Family Fun Fest

Eugene Roberts (F'14)

The Family Fun Fest is a really big event for us. We had 693 people come by our booth. Rosenblum Realty sponsors our booth, and we have one of the largest booths in the Fest. They are also really nice to work with.

We had Ask a Master Gardener, composting demonstration and information and activities for the kids. Mary Howe brought a number of plants from her greenhouse and gave them away at the Ask a Master Gardener table. Special thanks to Mary for this. We had 202 kids plant a seed and take it home. They took a butterfly and bird quiz and got a Mardi Gras bead necklace for participating. Thanks to Brenda Myers for supplying the necklaces. And the kids made 172 UV bracelets. The bracelets change from white to an assortment of colors. The message was if the bracelet changes color you should put sunscreen on. Thanks to the many Master Gardeners who made this all possible.





# Barber Speedway Motorsports Park

Ameree Young (F'13)



On Monday, May 6, members of MGNA went for a day trip to Barber Speedway Motorsports Park. They enjoyed a tram tour of the grounds including the waterfall and museum. The park is an 880 acre multipurpose racing facility that is noted for its beautiful landscaping and greenery. The track is referred to as the “Augusta National of Motorsports”. It is located in Leeds, Al.



# Why Habitat for Humanity?

Sue Khoury (W'13)

For more than 10 years MGNA has designed garden beds for new Habitat for Humanity homeowners, selected and acquired the necessary plants, and supervised the new landscape installations executed by Habitat volunteers and the homeowners themselves. I agreed to chair the project 2 years ago and started by touring some of the homes that had been planted the year before to get an idea of the scope of the project. It was clear then that plant selection was of the utmost importance, because none of the new homeowners had ever had a garden. Plants – perennials, shrubs, trees – had to be low-maintenance, if not carefree. A handout customized for each new yard was also necessary: I provide a document that shows photos of the plants at maturity with detailed instructions on caring for each plant. Homeowners needed to know they'd need either sprinklers or nozzles for their hoses to water properly; Habitat now provides that information before we ever arrive.

But it was also obvious that most of the homeowners took great pride in their new homes and gardens. I loved the idea of helping them complete the American dream! And as I got to know each new homeowner I realized that our partnership with Habitat is tremendously important.

I engaged our own Anna Bright, who is an expert in native plants, to design a garden planting that took advantage of native plants' drought tolerance and overall ease of care. Anna is also a professional landscape designer and she came up with a plan that could easily be adapted to the different Habitat home designs. Anna has also donated native perennials and shrubs and has taught me a lot about our natives! I've also received some wonderful plants and shrubs from Alice Brigman, Melissa Kirkindall, and others. My own yard has benefitted from Anna's native plant expertise, too.

A recent build was at the home of "Melissa" (name changed to protect her privacy), a Huntsville Hospital nurse and single mom of two daughters. Her nursing skills are so good that she's in high demand so she works a lot of hours. I met her the morning of our planting and fell in love with this vibrant, devoted mom who just wants to give her girls their own rooms and the kind of child-/teen-hood most of us take for granted. Habitat homes are modest, to say the least, but they are labors of love for the churches and other non-profits who build them, and they give their new owners a real sense of belonging to their new neighborhoods. We had a fantastic group of volunteers – a big team from Northrop Grumman with a few Raytheon folks and a couple of habitual Habitat volunteers – who were eager to learn about the plants I'd brought and how to properly plant them. They all asked great questions. But Melissa was the shining star! She was enthralled that she was getting a small kitchen garden – herbs – as well as elegant native grasses and shrubs, flowering perennials, and a redbud tree that will dazzle her in early spring. I showed her how to water at the base of each plant and went over her detailed handout. She was so grateful to be "so

blessed!" My Habitat volunteer coordinator was there and shared how much she values our partnership and my willingness to share my knowledge so freely (she frequently emails me with questions.)

I also provide each homeowner with my own contact information as well as our website URL, the Ask a Master Gardener hotline numbers and email address, and our Facebook page, so they know they can always reach out to us any number of ways with questions. Several homeowners are now my Facebook friends so I can see their landscapes as they mature!

Classes are held twice a year for potential homeowners. Bill Fuller teaches the lawn care class. I provide a version of the handout that includes our basic landscape plan and generic plant selections so they know what to expect.

We are fulfilling our mission by teaching first-time homeowners the basics of gardening using research-based information while providing them with a sustainable landscape that adds value to their new homes. And we're making friends and educating homeowners and Habitat volunteers about MGNA and ACES.

I could not be more proud of and humbled by my MGNA association with Habitat for Humanity. I'm convinced we are making a difference in the lives of Habitat homeowners and their families. When each new landscape planting is complete I come home with a big smile and stories about the people I've met and taught.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the contributions of our own Elouisa Stokes. Elouisa belongs to a church that oversees the building of some Habitat homes, but she's also very willing to help with landscape installations whenever she's in town. I've learned a lot from Elouisa and her generosity with her time and plants is unequaled.





# The Netherlands Tulip Trip

Ann Tippie (W'12)

Master Gardener's from Alabama along with spouses and friends went on a Tulip River Cruise from April 18-26. The route, which included various cities in the Netherlands and Belgium can be seen in the map below. This trip only occurs three weeks in the year in the height of the tulip flowering season. The highlight of the trip was Keukenhof Gardens.



Bill Young, Ameree Young, Judy Young, Joe Jones, Laurie Folkman, Darryl Buie, Sandra Pape, Lisa Enfinger, Ann Tippie, and Shelia Gentle.



# 2019 Workshop Schedule

## 2019 MGNA Education Workshops

**Thursdays 10:00-12:00**

Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Avenue, Huntsville, AL

Alabama A&M Research Station, 372 Walker Lane, Hazel Green, AL 35750

Alabama A&M Agribition Center, 4925 Moores Mill Rd, Huntsville, AL 35811

Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35805

Date	Topic	Presenter	Location	Time
September 19	Color in the Shade & Winter Gardening	Melissa Kirkindall & Elouisa Stokes	HBG Anderson Education Classroom	10:00-12:00
October 17	All About Pumpkins – decorating, famous pumpkins, trivia	Gloria Uhl & Cookie Kruvand	HBG Anderson Education Classroom	10:00-12:00
Nov. 21	Soap Making Demonstration	Doty Henry & Pam Price	Madison Co Extension Office	9:30-11:30, 2:00-4:00



# Calendar of Events

## July

**July 8** MGNA Board of Directors Meeting. 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Ave, Huntsville.

[president@mginfo.org](mailto:president@mginfo.org)

**July 11** MGNA Monthly Meeting. 6 p.m., Speaker: Carol McCrady to talk about ancient paper making, Murray Hall, Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Ave, Huntsville. [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

**July 27** Jules J. Berta Vineyards located at 1409 Darden Ave., Albertville, Al. We will leave from the Hampton Cove Publix parking lot at 9:00 AM via carpool to the winery. We will have a tour of the vineyards and the winery followed by a wine tasting and a pizza lunch prepared in their pizza ovens. The cost of the trip is \$23 per person which includes the two tours, wine tasting and lunch.

Contact Bill Fuller.

[auburn64@comcast.net](mailto:auburn64@comcast.net)

## August

**August 5** MGNA Board of Directors Meeting. 12 pm to 2 p.m., Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Ave, Huntsville.

[president@mginfo.org](mailto:president@mginfo.org)

**August 8** MGNA Monthly Meeting. 6 p.m., Speaker: Jay Moorer from Bonnie Greenhouses, Murray Hall, Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Ave, Huntsville. [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

## September

**September 7** MGNA Annual Picnic. 12 p.m. to 3p.m Green Mountain Nature Trail Pavilion 5000 Nature Trail Rd SE, Huntsville. (watch email for any updates)

[www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

**Sept. 9** MGNA Board of Directors Meeting. 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Ave, Huntsville.

[president@mginfo.org](mailto:president@mginfo.org)

No MGNA Monthly Meeting. Due to Annual Picnic.

[See prior page for workshop schedule](#)

**More information and registration for workshops and webinars at [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org). and <https://ssl.acesag.auburn.edu/mgmanager/calendar.php> (requires login)**

**DEADLINE FOR 4th Qtr. ISSUE IS Sept. 15, 2019**



Master Gardeners of North Alabama  
Alabama Cooperative Extension Sys-  
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