



# GARDEN THYMES

Master Gardeners of North Alabama, Inc.



MGNA Annual Picnic

Page 11

2019 - Quarter 4

## *2020 Featured Travel Destination*

### *Give A Hand*

The Give a Hand winner for July 2019 was Sue Khoury for all she does for MGNA. In August Nareatha Studdard won Give a Hand for her work on the publicity committee. There was no meeting in September due to the annual picnic. 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!

### **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](https://www.facebook.com/MGofNA)

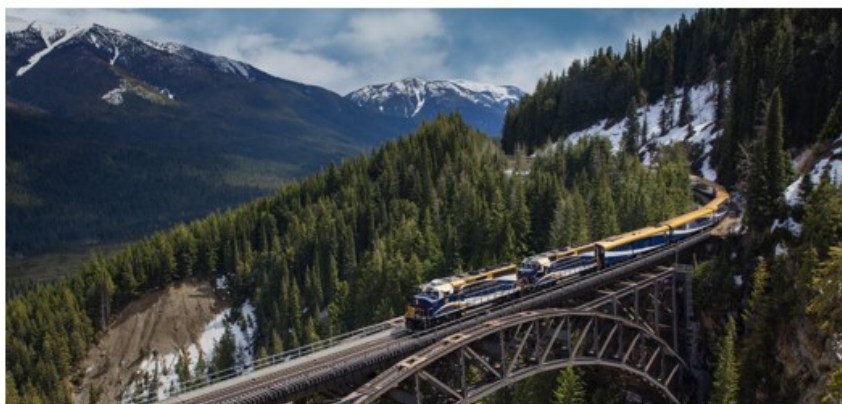
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# In This Issue

## COLUMNS

<a href="#">From the President.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">MG Profile: Melissa Kirkindall.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

## NEWS

<a href="#">2020 Featured Travel Destination.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Give-A-Hand.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Like! Us on Facebook.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">My favorite Tool.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Membership.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>

<a href="#">Field Trip to Jules Berta Winery.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Garden Whimsy Make and Take.....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">Hypertufa Class.....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Hummingbirds and Bird house Painting.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Annual Award Nominations.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">AMGA Website Help Wanted.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">2019 Workshop Schedule.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Calendar of Events.....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>

## FEATURES

<a href="#">Ask Master Gardner - Farmers Market....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">DVG.....</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Morris Update.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Annual Picnic.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Horticultural Therapy.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>

## From the President

Cyndi Lindblom (F'13)

**H**ello everyone, are you staying cool or are you working in the garden?

Although it has been hot, we have had a busy summer with the Farmers Market, Ask-A-Master Gardener, and of course the Annual Picnic. The picnic was held September 7<sup>th</sup> at Green Mountain Nature Trail. We had hotdogs as our starter and LOTS of great “side” dishes and wonderful desserts. After much conversation, laughter and food, some of us took the walk around the trail. Did you know they have redone the trail and there are very few holes to step in? I was pleasantly surprised.

Melissa Kirkindall did a very informative presentation on hummingbirds, September 14<sup>th</sup>, at the Farmers Market. I for one learned a lot. After Melissa’s presentation many of the attendees painted a bird house to take home.

Don’t forget we have Open House at the Farmers Market October 5<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 PM.

Please come and meet the new interns and see what projects you might want to be a part of. Speaking of projects, we are still short a few



chairs. We need the following chairs; Habitat, Project/Volunteer Coordinator, HOSPITALITY, and DVG (Demonstration Vegetable Garden) If you are interested in chairing one of these please email me at [cyndi.lindblom@gmail.com](mailto:cyndi.lindblom@gmail.com)

I am looking forward to seeing each of you at the Open House Oct 5<sup>th</sup> and the meeting October 10<sup>th</sup>.



**VOL. XXIX, ISSUE 4**

**Editor**

**Ken Tippie (F'13)**

**Contributing Editors**

**Sue Khoury (W'13)**

**Ann Tippie (W'12)**

**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

*"Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest" (Mark Twain)*

**M**elissa was born and raised in Orlando, Florida, which she remembers before Disney, and even before she stood on their front lawn and watched Sputnik blink overhead.

She attended Emory University in Atlanta, and graduated in 1970 with a BA in English.

Melissa is married to Sandy Kirkindall (who attended Georgia Tech, where they met). They have one child, Elizabeth Anne Weaver, who lives in Austin, Texas, and is a graphic designer. Sandy worked for NASA from the days of the Apollo program, with a few interruptions, up until the day he retired in 2004, and was sworn in as Mayor of Madison the same day. Brief retirement.

Melissa worked at the late lamented Castner Knott Department Store in Madison Square Mall. She was there through 13 Christmas seasons, at which time she decided it was enough, and quit. Her plan, when she quit, was to volunteer at the Botanical Garden. The CEO at the time, Al Privette, told her that she should take the Master Gardener class, so she attended



**Melissa Kirkindall (W'98)**

the winter class of 1998.

She has been secretary of MGNA and on and off the Executive Board/Board of Directors a few times. She has been the Awards Chairman and was the MGNA Hospitality Chairman for about three years, back in the day when this job involved responsibility for meetings, the picnic, and the Christmas Social and is now the Speakers Bureau Chairman. She states that she enjoys creating and giving programs for MGNA and LearningQuest.

She was interested in birds before she became interested in plants, particularly native plants. Now she is also inter-

ested in butterflies. She always has more plants than she can get in the ground. Her yard is certified as a National Wildlife Federation Backyard Wildlife Habitat, and is also a Monarch Waystation. One hobby is attracting hummingbirds with feeders and flowers, and sharing her love of these wonderful creatures with others.

Another hobby is travel. This does not mix well with gardening, and she comes home from their trips to a jungle. Their first major road trip was a tour of western national parks in 1998. In 2003 they went back to see more parks. When Sandy *really* retired they started going "across the pond". They love Ireland. In 2018 they flew to New Zealand for a 6 week road trip.

One of her favorite quotes is from a commencement address given by Mark Twain: "Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest." But the words that she tries to make her guiding star are from Matthew 25:31-46.



# My Favorite Gardening Tool

Sue Khoury (W'13)

I hope to see other MGNA members and interns contributing about this topic in the future! I've learned so much about the tools I need from other Master Gardeners. (besides trees or established shrubs) planted in your garden beds regardless of how many hairy feeder roots are involved. The larger notch will cut through roots up to 1/4" in diameter.

My favorite tool at the moment is my Radius Root Slayer trowel. You can buy them online directly from Radius or from other outlets such as Amazon. I happened to find mine at Old Time Pottery in Madison early this summer. I was able to change 5 front porch containers from summer to fall annuals in under an hour using this tool. I love container gardening and have more than a dozen in the backyard so this will get a real workout at least twice a year.

As you can see from the photo, the Root Slayer has serrated edges and a forked tip, all of which are honed. They make short work of removing containerized annuals or anything



There's also a Root Slayer shovel!  
It's on my Christmas wish list!

## Membership

Elouisa Stokes (81)

**Membership**—It is that time of year again. We have 197 members this year. Let's make 2020 the year of 200 members again. We will begin taking 2020 membership at the October meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>. You will need to renew by December 31 to remain an active member. The cost of Active Membership this year is \$30. If you wish to be an Associate Member, the dues are \$40. The Membership Form is on line so if you fill it in before you come, it will make the line shorter. You can also pay by Paypal at [mginfo.org](http://mginfo.org). Scroll to the bottom of the main page at [mginfo.org](http://mginfo.org) and click on Forms and Applications. Then decide if you want to pay me by mail or in person or on-line with Paypal. Paypal will charge \$1 but the US Postal Service will also charge you to send it to me. You can mail it to me at 2415 Glenn Street, Huntsville, AL 35801. If you want your membership cards, enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope and I will send them to you. You can also pick your cards up at any meeting. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you again soon. Elouisa Stokes, Membership Chair

## Field Trip to Jules Berta Winery

Allyson Hofer (W'04)

On Saturday, July 27th, approximately 20 MGs and friends met at Jules Berta Winery in Albertville, AL. The outing was ably coordinated by MG Bill Fuller. Mr. Berta gave an interesting talk about how his ancestors in Hungary were longtime vintners, and how he grows and harvests his grapes and explained about all the varieties of wine available. After a wine-tasting and lunch of homemade pizza (one of the pies was “farm to table”) and salad, guests went to the shop and made their purchases.



## Ask A Master Gardener at the Farmers Market

Ann Tippie (W'12)



With little exception, the Madison County Farmer's Market hosts a team of MGNA volunteers to answer questions regarding the master gardener program, the intern class and general garden questions every Saturday until the end of October. They pass out literature about the class and what Master Gardeners do. The walls of room at the east end of the farmer's market are covered with posters depicting our many projects.

The second Saturday of each month, through November, we have a “make and take” class. We will resume these mini-workshops in January. In the spring, we intend to have pH soil testing the last Saturday of each month through mid-summer.





# Garden Whimsy Make and Take at the Farmers Market

Ann Tippie (W'12)

On July 13, sixteen people participated in MGNA's first "Make & Take" at the Madison County Farmer's Market. Everyone had a good time and went home with some unique creations called "garden whimsies". To add to the fun, it was the annual "Corn Fest" at the Farmer's Market. Quite a few master gardeners and interns showed up to help with the whimsies, man the information table and shuck, cook and serve the corn. Walt Lindblom cooked the corn while Cyndi operated the drink station.



## Corn Fest





# *Hypertufa Class at the Farmers Market*

Ann Tippie (W'12)

On August 10, MGNA held a “make and take” class on hypertufa. Jim Braun of Decatur provided the materials and instruction to 25 people. The attendees were made up of master gardeners, interns and the general public. Everyone went home with two vessels they had made.



## *Hummingbird Talk and Bird House Painting*

Ann Tippie (W'12)

On September 14, approximately 22 people gathered at the Madison County Farmer's Market to hear a presentation on hummingbirds by our own Melissa Kirkindall. The presentation lasted about 40 minutes and was very informative as well as entertaining. Afterwards, about 13 people stayed to paint birdhouses. It was a fun and educational morning.



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## *Annual Award Nominations*

Barbara K. Stansky (W'17)

August 2019 - Accepting written Nominations from members for year end awards. 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)). (For a full list of the awards see the Membership Handbook page 30.)

**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.



The Demonstration Vegetable Garden at the Huntsville Botanical Garden has focused largely on education and demonstration this year. We planted our traditional gardens - square foot, raised beds, containers and row garden beds.

We also built and planted a Key-hole garden and a no till row bed garden. Some beds were experimental – one side would be tilled and the other side not tilled. Which side grew more vegetables? To our amazement, the “tilled” side grew faster, produced more and produced longer than the “no-till” side of the bed. We also experimented with Alabama Red Okra. We planted two rows side by side; one side was cut back in late summer and the other side allowed to grow undisturbed. After 4 weeks, our ‘cut back’ side has not started producing again, but stay tuned, you never know. Okra will grow anywhere. We grew 2 beds using the 3 Sisters method, which the rabbits and squirrels enjoyed immensely. Several raised beds were designated and planted with heirloom, hybrid, determinate and indeterminate plants. Some tomato plants were ‘topped’ while others had their suckers removed. The topped tomatoes were directly planted and the suckers were rooted – all of these grew much to our delight. We demonstrated

several different ways to trellis and stake vegetables, including the ‘just let it go where it wants to’ method. Also known as the ‘I didn’t get the tomatoes staked before they grew too tall’ method.

In addition to having explanatory signs up in the garden, we maintained a weekly garden blog. The QR code directed readers to our very own website.

Have you heard of the compost method Hugelkultur? It is a composting method that uses large pieces of rotting wood as the centerpiece for long term humus building decomposition. Want to see one? Come check it out at the DVG. We also have a demonstration of solarizing a bed. When some of our beds didn’t produce well, we did a soil test. Much to our surprise, the soil test was relatively okay. We have concluded that we must have several compacted beds and plan to address that this fall with tilling and cover crops. The lack of lushness was concerning, until visitors were happy that our garden looked like theirs. Many others have visited the garden this summer as well – a hawk and her baby, butterflies, tomato horn worms, squash bugs.....

Our great volunteers faithfully volunteer, rain or heat. We have



given numerous tours and answered many questions during visits to the garden. We still have a lot of work to do this fall – planting fall and cover crops, tilling, bed clean up and pruning of our blue berries and fig trees. We are at the garden on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from about 8 until 10am, stop in for a tour or come to help weed, either way we would love to see you at the DVG.

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



# Morris Update

Carolyn Wade (W'12)

Morris P-8 School garden program has started its 7th year with a bang. As we have done the past three years, we are once again working with Jan Coryell Mahone's class of 5<sup>th</sup> graders every Wednesday at noon. They are such a great group of kids this year – very polite and excited to be learning about gardens and our environment. On our first day, we had them each list in their garden journals 3 or 4 things they would like to learn about or study this year. Lets hope we can get through the list before May. We tackled one item today. Someone wanted to learn about cotton, so on my way into town today I stopped and picked a few cotton stalks for class. The students were beyond excited.

Our main lesson for this week was composting. After discussing compost, what goes in and comes out, and the benefits, we made edible compost piles – then devoured them, even the grass (colored coconut) and worms (gummy of course). The children will collect compost items in their compost bucket once a week at breakfast and lunch, then bring it to class to add to the compost bin.

The other 3 fifth grade classes are rotating monthly to weed and care for the courtyard. I meet with them at least once a month to discuss what needs to be done and what can be planted. These classes are composting, maintaining the bird baths and feeders, picking up litter and maintaining our water feature. If you would like to volunteer to garden with 5 students each Wednesday afternoon for about 30 minutes please let me know.

Stephanie Boyd, a recent Intern, has taken on 2 sixth grade special needs classes in a similar manner. The teacher, Liliana Peinder, is excited

to be working with us. Stephanie and her group of volunteers meet with the 9 students on Tuesday afternoons. Some of these students were in our class last year, so Stephanie is hoping to avoid repeating any of last years lessons. While still a work in progress, we are excited about this new experience. Mrs. Peinder is hoping to incorporate a weather station, worm bin, composting and rain water collection in her class times. The second class of 6<sup>th</sup> graders is meeting with Stephanie once a month and will be given lessons to experiment with until the next meeting date.

Herb and Terry Lewis are meeting with us to design a birding trail for the school. Plans also include a wildflower bed and pollinator gardens. Stay tuned - exciting things are happening.

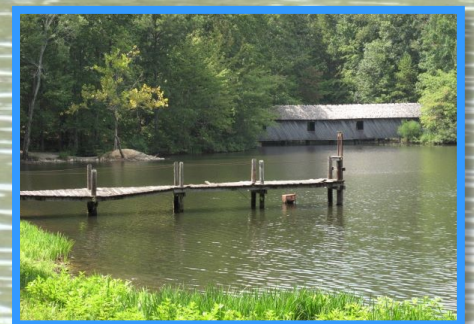
If you would like to volunteer with any of the groups, Tuesdays at 1:15, Wednesdays at 12:15, or Wednesdays (with 5 students) please let us know, the kids (and the adults) would be most grateful.





# *MGNA Annual Picnic*

## *7 September 2019*





## *AMGA Website Help Wanted*

Sue Khoury (W'13)

The AMGA website needs WordPress administrators who can post articles and photos to the website on a monthly basis. The AMGA website is nowhere near as active as the MGNA site, but we do need people who understand WordPress well enough to upload documents and photos and link to them. I've found an AMGA member who can probably serve as the webmaster but she'll need 2 or 3 admins to do the posting. Please email me, [suekhoury@knology.net](mailto:suekhoury@knology.net), if interested. It should not entail more than 2 hours per month, and often much less. Thanks in advance.

## *Horticultural Therapy*

Gloria Uhl (W'12)



The Stumpery Project was introduced by Master Gardener Gloria Uhl to show the Day Care Clients how differently gardens can look by adding whimsical items such as ordinary stumps (which are taken from trees which were cut down and chopped into different shapes). Placing the stumps in various garden sights throughout the garden can show off the many flowers that are now blooming.



The Horticultural Therapy Master Gardeners helped the Senior Center Day Care Clients paint pallets of different colors. The pallets were then used to lean against the brick wall at an angle. Owen and Jean, along with many of the Master Gardeners, supervised the clients while they painted the pallets yellow, red and blue. After the paint dried, the clients were instrumental in helping to plant gourds in large pots. The pots were then placed behind the pallets and, as they grew and produced gourds, they interspersed themselves up and through the pallets.





# 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
<b>October 17</b>	<b>All About Pumpkins – decorating, famous pumpkins,</b>	<b>Gloria Uhl &amp; Cookie Kruvand</b>	<b>HBG Anderson Education Classroom</b>	<b>10:00-12:00</b>
<b>Nov. 21</b>	<b>Soap Making Demonstration</b>	<b>Doty Henry &amp; Pam Price</b>	<b>Madison Co Extension Office</b>	<b>9:30-11:30, 2:00-4:00</b>

# Calendar of Events

## October

**Oct 3 AMGA Fall Seminar –** “Gifts from the Garden” Locust Fork Baptist Church 30580 State Hwy 79 Locust Fork, Al: [Sheri-lynosborne@bellsouth.net](mailto:Sheri-lynosborne@bellsouth.net)

**Oct 5 Open House** at the Farmers Market October 5<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 pm.; 1022 Cook Avenue, Huntsville, AL [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

**Oct 5 Herbs 101:** 9:30 am - 12:00 pm; Murray Hall, Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Ave, Huntsville.

<http://hsvbg.org/event/herbs-101/>

**Oct 7 MGNA Board of Directors Meeting.** 12 pm - 2 pm, Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Ave, Huntsville. [president@mginfo.org](mailto:president@mginfo.org)

**Oct 10 MGNA Monthly Meeting.** 6 pm, Speaker: Ms. Thompson with Harvest to Health, Murray Hall, Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Ave, Huntsville. [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

**Oct 12 Halloween and Fall Birdseed Ornaments** 10 am - 2 pm; Farmers Market 1022 Cook Avenue, Huntsville [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

[See prior page for workshop schedule](#)

## November

**Nov 11 MGNA Board of Directors Meeting.** 12 pm to 2 pm. Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Ave, Huntsville. [president@mginfo.org](mailto:president@mginfo.org)

**Nov 9 Painted Santa Gourds** 10 am - 2 pm; Farmers Market 1022 Cook Avenue, Huntsville [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

**Nov 14 MGNA Monthly Meeting.** 12pm - 2pm pm, Presenting badges to the new Intern graduates; Murray Hall, Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Ave, Huntsville [www.mginfo.org](http://www.mginfo.org)

## December

**No MGNA Monthly Meeting. Due to Christmas Social.**

**Dec 9 MGNA Board of Directors Meeting.** 12 pm to 2 pm, Madison County Extension Office, 819 Cook Ave, Huntsville. [president@mginfo.org](mailto:president@mginfo.org)

### The Christmas Social;

Mark your calendars for Thursday Dec. 5 from 6-9 pm for the Master Gardener's December meeting with installation of new officers, awards, dinner and surprises! It will be at Our Lady Queen of the Universe Catholic Church's Joy Hall 2421 Shady Lane Drive, N.W., Huntsville. Directions- Go North on the Parkway, turn left on Oakwood Avenue, turn right onto Pulaski Pike, go about ½ mile, turn left onto Sparkman Drive, go about ½ mile and turn right onto Shady Lane and you will see the church on the left. Around Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> a sign up Genius will be sent out to all.

**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 1st Qtr. ISSUE IS Dec. 15, 2019**





Master Gardeners of North Alabama

Alabama Cooperative Extension Sys-  
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