



Master Gardener Thymes

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!!!2008 MASTER GARDENERS' PLANT SALE A SUCCESS!!!

By Ann Mendelson

The Plant Sale at the Farmers' Market on April 11th and 12th was a great success for the Master Gardeners. Proceeds given to Louise Powell at the end of Saturday amounted to a little over **\$1300!!!**

There are so many people to thank and I hope that I will not miss anyone. First of all, thanks to my committee members: Joe Upchurch (who was "in charge"), Paul Drew for providing a place to house the plants the week of the sale and for helping with the sale, Gail Gregory, Chris Moffett, and Kathleen Kapsalis for volunteering their time to work at the sale as well as for their plant and artistic contributions. A big thanks to Sharon Alvarez Cathy Buchanan, Mr. O'Dell and James Hodges whose connections to the Farmers' Market provided us a place to sale our plants. John Babb, Joe Upchurch and myself provided trucks to transport the plants from the Sunshine House to the Farmer's Market on Friday morning. John's large truck was a great help. Others who also helped at the sale over the two days included Carol Scales, Donna Boozer, Carol Fritz, Gail Murph, Julie Marshall, Linda Halsey, Bryan Wesson, Tommy O'Dell, Sue Moore, Stuart Menaker, Terri Mostiller, Miriam Smith, SuSu Wallace, and April Prater.

A particularly large and impressive thanks to John Wham who brought in a truck load of plants he had grown and contributed to the sale!! Not only that, but he provided beautiful calligraphy cards for all his plants which gave the name of the plant, perennial or annual, growing conditions, etc.! In addition to the truckload of plants, he also

contributed three beautifully hand painted gourd birdhouses!! Then he stayed most of Friday and returned on Saturday and answered customer questions about his plants. Kudos to John.

We did not get a list of those who contributed plants so I cannot name everyone who did. However, I would like to mention some of the ones I was aware of. Gail Murph's husband Lee dug up some beautiful phlox which sold quickly. Donna Boozer brought fig tree plants as well as many other things including bags of worm castings. We sold all the bags Donna brought and could have sold more!. Julie Marshall, Chris Moffitt, John Babb, Paul Drew (his wife's African Violets were beautiful) also provided many plants.

To those of you who contributed time and/or plants but were not mentioned here, I apologize. We will need to keep better records next time so that no one is omitted. Each year our Plant Sale is more and more successful and that is because of ALL of the Master Gardeners. Thank you all for supporting our fundraiser. Each year it gets better and better!!

Looking for Volunteers for Senior Voucher Distribution at the Farmer's Market

Submitted by James Hodges

Eating good is an important part of health. Many master gardeners raise their own vegetables, fruits and nuts just for this reason. Our own SC Department of Agriculture has been involved in a nutrition program for seniors for the past 7 years. Greenwood Farmer's Market has participated in a program called "Senior Nutrition or Vouchers" during this time. Currently, 1400 low income seniors receive \$25 each to purchase fresh vegetables at our market. This totals \$35,000.00 coming to Greenwood County. Redemptions rates at our market have averaged 95%

or more during this period.

This source of customers and cash has helped our Greenwood Farmer's Market maintain a consistent group of vegetable growers. This grant program and the annual plant festival, help our market to grow and provide good food and plants for our area.

This year the Market must provide volunteers to distribute the vouchers at the market. The annual procedure is to use the opening 3 days to distribute vouchers at the market to seniors. This is not a small task. Ten to twelve volunteers are needed at any one time to process each form. On opening day at the market each year 600-800 people receive voucher checks. Clemson Extension is aiding the market in this effort.

I am looking for volunteers to help at the market in this project. Dates and times are given below. The primary dates for the distribution are **Saturday June 14, Wednesday June 18 and Saturday June 21st**. Times are 7AM-Noon on each of these days. I will have a sign-up sheet available at the Mall office (942-8664) on Thursday-Fridays, at the Park Plaza office 942-8590 or you can e-mail me. We can use volunteers for entire market 5 hours or for short blocks of 1, 2, 3 or 4 hours.

This is a very important program for the market and seniors so we don't want to lose this opportunity. Please help if you can. We will provide training for volunteers.

June 21st is Festival of Flowers with volunteers needed at Park Seed, but hopefully we can provide volunteers for both locations.

Butterfly Garden Design Request for Greenwood Christian

I am currently working with a teacher and parent at the school trying to install a small butterfly garden and work with the children on live butterfly larvae. If anyone is interested in volunteering let me know.

Vegetable Garden at Burton Center

Steve Odom and I helped the Burton Center recently to start a vegetable garden. They will be expanding their planting of later vegetable crops over the next month or so. We will probably be asked to help them again from time to time teach their clients how to do additional planting and maintenance tasks in the garden. Anyone interested in helping occasionally can send me an e-mail or call me at the office.

Mall Report

Submitted by Ken and Betty Reece

Mall Office Hours totaled 349.75 for the 1st quarter. There were 11 active volunteers. Questions range from lawn grass weeds to when and how to plant vegetables.

A Fungus Among Us

submitted by Bibbi Lee

Until we warm up and growth begins again, it's easy to see all the hitchhikers in our forests and gardens. Algae, lichens, and mosses grow on trunks, limbs and twigs of many trees and shrubs. Algae are the simplest of green plants, growing where there is sufficient moisture on trees, shrubs, soil, rocks, and walls. Lichen has a fungus and an alga living in association with one another to give the appearance of a single plant. They come in several forms: crusty gray, green, yellow and white growths or leaf-like or a horsehair-like tuft hanging from a branch. Mosses are green plants somewhat similar to algae except they have a complex structure that resembles stems and leaves. They all contain chlorophyll and make their own food.

The presence of moss in lawns means something is preventing the grass from growing in a normal vigorous manner. Soil compaction, too much shade, low fertility, poor drainage, or poor soil weaken the growth of grass and allow moss to thrive.

Moss, lichen and algae growing on trees are not usually a cause for alarm, though heavy growth may have a suffocating effect and can reduce the sunlight reaching the leaves. Opening up the plant canopy of trees and shrubs by pruning allows better air circulation and light penetration, and improving plant vigor will help control these growths.

Some fungicides will kill algae, moss and lichens, but you must find the plant you want to spray listed on the label. This is especially true if using on turf. Organic sprays include some of the copper fungicides and lime sulfur sprays. The dormant season is a good time to apply these sprays, following the label directions for application methods, mix rates and control. Be careful not to get them on evergreen plants nearby. Even if chemical controls are used, the growths will remain attached and visible for some time.

In short, cultural controls are the best solution if you don't like these hitchhiking growths, as it will be cheaper and easier in the long run to correct the cause of the problem. Some people like the color the growths add to the shrubs and trees during the winter, and some have learned to love their lawn "moss garden", feeding it a 50/50 buttermilk/water mix to help it grow. Adding a garden gnome is optional!

In-Ground Irrigation System (Does it really help with plant growth?)

Submitted by James Hodges

Those of us who drag a hose and/or sprinkler around our yard to water flower beds, our vegetable garden, dry lawn areas or a new tree long for that golden apple called an in-ground automatic irrigation system.

I have a strong caution about these "automated" systems, particularly when it comes to lawns. I visit homes with just as many lawn problems that have in-ground irrigation systems as those that have none. Too much water, irregular distribution, poor designed systems, damage to heads, drainage from heads and no clue about how much water is actually going on the lawn are typical discoveries I find.

I have never had anyone I visited actually be able to tell me how much water they applied to their lawn each week in inches. I water 30 minutes on all my zones 3 times per week is a good answer many times compared to whatever the installer set it on 2 years ago. I am not trying to be mean or too critical because I still can't program my 15 year old, out of date VCR, but the Golden rule of any horticulture treatment is "Do No Harm".

If you don't use an irrigation system correctly then excess or inconsistent watering can do more harm than relying on natural rainfall.

Setting an automatic irrigation system without a management plan is akin to setting the cruise control on your car every time you drive in all driving situations and expecting it deliver you without harm to your destination. We all understand that it is impractical to use the cruise control in many situations and it needs to be shut down. When the cruise control is on, we must continue to steer the car, use the brakes, monitor our fuel and other safety instruments and watch for traffic hazards as we travel. If we run into rain, we slow down and usually cut the cruise off.

We make the mistake of adding "automatic" to the name "irrigation system" because we can program it to come on at many different times of the week and time of day to deliver water without dragging those hoses and sprinklers around, but "automatic" does not directly equate to correct. I am not going to drag out the hoses unless the lawn, flower bed, garden or shrubs show an obvious need for water because it takes time and effort. The result of automated systems is that we too often err on the side of excess water, which can increase disease above and below ground on our heavy clay soils.

If you currently have an automatic irrigation system here are a few tips:

1. Get a rain gauge. Record rain events so you can adjust your "automated" system as needed on a daily basis. No, this does not mean you change the system every day, but if you had ½ inch of rain yesterday and ¾ inch today, then shut your system off for 4-10 days depending on the current weather and temperatures.

2. Get a garden calendar to record rainfall and to mark yearly startup and shut down times. (Your irrigation system should not be on automatic early in the spring or past late summer). Warm season grass needs to go dormant in the fall before severe freezes arrive to prevent cold damage.

3. Learn how to cut the system on and off. Then learn the basics of operation, such as resetting times or shutting off or running certain zones.

4. Test the output of your system "tuna or cat food can method" by setting out containers to catch water for a specific time period. Record the amount of water in the cans at 15, 20 or 30 minutes cycles and keep it in your calendar for reference.

5. Learn how to use your finger (biological moisture meter). An old screw driver can be helpful on clays. If you can make ½ inch squares with your fingers out of your clay soil why would you water? If you can't make squares because the material runs through your fingers, cut the system off for a week or check for a leak.

6. Physically check (walk around) to different

areas to check for wet or dry areas so that you can adjust your system "swish test".

7. Remember the extension agents retort "It Depends" when setting water application rates. Our MG book calls for 1 inch of water per week for lawns during the year. That may be ½ to ¾ of an inch in early spring and early fall when temperatures are cooler and as much as 1.5 inches in mid-July when temperatures are hitting 100 every day.

8. Watch your system operate occasionally to check for damaged or broken emitters and use it to improve your lawn and rest of your landscape.

Joe Lamp'l's Gardening Smart

Submitted by Jane Price

On March 27, my sister, Linda Kellam, and I traveled to Columbia for the Midlands Master Gardeners Association's 18th Spring Symposium. The title of the symposium was "How Green Is Your Garden?" The keynote speaker was PBS's own Joe Lamp'l who spoke on, what else but, gardening smart. Here are the key points of his talk:

1. Eliminate water waste
 - a. Check leaky spigots
 - b. Water at the appropriate time
 - c. Water on target
 - d. Use drip irrigation and soaker hoses
 - e. Put buckets in your showers and sinks to catch water
 - f. Use rain barrels
2. Protect Watersheds from soil pollution
 - a. Mulch
 - b. Use dry creek beds
3. Healthy plants are not chemically dependent
 - a. Put the right plant in the right place
 - b. Have healthy soil
 - c. Use discretion when getting rid of pests—remember only 3% of insects are pests
4. Compost
 - a. Use your grass clippings (green waste)
 - b. Leave grass clippings to fertilize lawn
 - c. Shred paper into compost (brown waste)
 - d. Use "cow pots"—dried composted cow manure
 - e. Use soy, corn, or rice pots
5. Landscape to maintain biodiversity
6. Garden to protect the environment
 - a. Gas-powered lawn mowers, weed-eaters, etc. cause pollution

- b. Look for alternatives
 - i. Battery operated
 - ii. Electric

7. Plant the seeds of change beyond the boundaries of your garden
 - a. Grow and buy organic foods
 - b. Talk, Talk, Talk

If you have never been to the symposium in Columbia, it is worth the trip.

We did not like the format of the talks as well as the one in Greenville. The break-out sessions were too short. However, they did have a much better selection of plant vendors. The door prizes were good, as was the lunch. One thing that they had, which the Greenville symposium did not, was a garden tour. It was beautiful! A plant that I was unfamiliar with was the epimedium. If you have a Plant Delights catalog, check it out.

The Glory of the Garden

By Rudyard Kipling

Submitted by Linda Kellam

Our England is a garden that is full of stately views,
Of borders, beds and shrubberies and lawns and
avenues,
With statues on the terraces and peacocks strutting by;

But the Glory of the Garden lies in more than meets
the eye.

For where the thick laurels grow, along the thin red
wall,
You will find the tool- and potting-sheds which are the
heart of all;
The cold-frames and the hot-houses, the dungpits and
the tanks,
The rollers, carts and drain-pipes, with the barrows and
the planks.

And there you'll see the gardeners, the men and
'prentice boys
Told off to do as they are bid and to it without noise;
For, except when seeds are planted and we shout to
scare the birds,
The Glory of the Garden it abideth not in words.

And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,

And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that
grows;
But they can roll and trim the lawns and sift the sand
and loam,

For the Glory of the Garden occupieth all who come.

Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made

By singing:—"Oh, how beautiful!" and sitting in the shade,

While better men than we go out and start their working lives

At grubbing weeds from gravel-paths with broken dinner-knives.

There's not a pair of legs so thin, there's not a head so thick,

There's not a hand so weak and white, nor yet a heart so sick,

But it can find some needful job that's crying to be done,

For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth every one.

Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till further orders,

It it's only netting strawberries or killing slugs on borders;

And when your back stops aching and your hands begin to harden,

You will find yourself a partner in the Glory of the Garden.

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees

That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees,

So when your work is finished, you can wash your hands and pray

For the Glory of the Garden, that it may not pass away!

For the Glory of the Garden, that it may not pass away!

Confessions of a Goldilocks Gardener

Submitted by Jean Anderson

I love flowers and all kinds of growing plants and I know there is a lot of work involved in keeping them looking nice. But, I HATE weeding, and if I don't spread mulch as I go, the weeds come back quickly. It takes me forever to mulch my beds. Sometimes, especially when weeding a row of vegetables, I SWEAR that the weeds grow back on one end by the time I get to the other!

Another thing I really don't like to do is spray, whether it's for bugs or disease. It seems sometimes like I'm wasting my time (although I

know I'm not), when, like weeds, the bugs come back so quickly! I don't like to use strong chemicals in my garden, although I'm not yet strictly an organic gardener. Since I have dogs and cats and I don't want to hurt them or any beneficial insects, I use the mildest things I can. But it sometimes seems that nothing short of a flame thrower will get rid of the bugs. For example, one particular flower bed of mine gets infested, at times, with whitefly. I spray, most of them disappear, but not for long. I understand that it needs to be done on a regular basis, but it seems to be a losing battle. And, of course, we ALL know about battling Japanese beetles!!!

Why "Goldilocks" gardening, you might ask (especially since I'm a brunette)? Well, I'm not as dedicated as many gardeners I know. The weather has to be "just right" for me to get myself outside to work. It can't be too hot or cold or I can't make myself get going. Once I'm outside, on the other hand, I can't get to a stopping place. I keep going until I absolutely have to stop. And even a trip to the mailbox or car finds me pulling weeds or checking on the progress of something recently planted. Now I KNOW some of you can relate to that! Maybe I'm not the ONLY Goldilocks gardener in the club, hmmm?

A swarm of bees in May

Is worth a load of hay;

A swarm of bees in June .

Is worth a silver spoon;

A swarm of bees in July

Is not worth a fly.

~ Old English Rhyme

Garden Quotes

"My garden is an honest place. Every tree and every vine are incapable of concealment, and tell after two or three months exactly what sort of treatment they have had."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

"I appreciate the misunderstanding I have had with Nature over my perennial border. I think it is a flower garden; she thinks it is a meadow lacking grass, and tries to correct the error."
Sara Stein

"A doctor can bury his mistakes, but an architect can only advise his client to plant vines." Frank Lloyd Wright

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