



**FLORENCE COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS
ASSOCIATION**

FROM THE GROUND UP

"Sowing The Seeds of Love For Gardening"

May 2014

From Our President: Tom Pantos

Where has the year gone? It seems like only yesterday, I was frantically trying to get my gas grill back up onto the bed of my pickup truck before a very threatening thunder/ lightning storm moved in upon us at the Lynch River County Park picnic and plant exchange meeting last June. The June meeting is the first official program set up and conducted by the incoming Association officers for the coming year. The last meeting of the year for officers is that of hosting a dinner for the new graduates of the Master Gardener classes taught by Florence County agent Tony Melton. These new graduates will receive a Certificate of Completion at this meeting and the newly elected Association officers will be introduced. The date for this meeting is Monday, May 19 beginning at 6:30 pm and is held at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center. FCMGA members are asked to bring a side dish or a dessert while the main dish and drinks will be furnished by the Association. I would like to encourage all members and their spouses to make a special effort to attend this function and help welcome aboard the new graduates. As I end my year as co-president of the FCMGA, I would like to say thank you all for allowing me an opportunity to serve the members of this wonderful Association. I hope you all enjoyed the year as much as I did. God bless, good luck and happy gardening.

Tom

Happy Gardening



April Meeting Highlight

Bekki Medsker from the Pee Dee Beekeepers Association was the guest speaker for the April meeting.



FROM THE GROUND UP

FCMGA OFFICERS

Co-Presidents:

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Master Gardener Coordinator:

Anthony 'Tony' Melton 661-4800 x112
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DUES REMINDER

The FCMGA By-Laws require a member's dues be paid in order to vote on any issue brought before the Association. Dues are \$10 and can be paid at the next meeting or mailed to:

Janet Bugbee
1923 Penn Farm Road
Timmons ville, SC 29161

Quotation Corner

"The man who has planted a garden feels that he has done something for the good of the world."

Vita Sackville-West

Upcoming Events

FCMGA Meeting

Monday, May 19
6:30 PM

Join us as we celebrate the graduation of the 2014 Florence County Master Gardener Program. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Don't forget that this meeting is at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center.

Moore Farms Botanical Garden

Must Have Summer Annuals

Thursday, May 8
9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Registration: \$20 per person

For more information, contact Rebecca Turk at rturk@moorefarmsbg.org

Florence Symphony Orchestra Music in the Garden

Friday, May 9

Cocktails at 6:00 PM, Concert at 7:00 PM

There are various ticket options.

For more information, contact the Florence Symphony at 843-661-2541.

From Garden To Vase

Saturday, May 10
9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Registration: \$30 per person

For more information, contact Rebecca Turk at rturk@moorefarmsbg.org

Turf Installation

Thursday, May 22
9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Registration: \$25 per person

For more information, contact Rebecca Turk at rturk@moorefarmsbg.org

Riverbanks Zoo and Garden

Adult Garden Workshop: Lush Containers

Saturday, May 10
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Registration: \$40 garden members

Click [here](#) to register

Down to Earth with Clemson Extension

Horticulture experts from Clemson Extension will be on site to answer gardening questions, diagnose plant problems, and accept soil samples for testing.

Saturday, May 10
10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Brookgreen Gardens

Dirt 'n' Details

Horticulture program series

Tuesday, June 10
12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM

Free with garden admission

FROM THE GROUND UP

May In The Garden

GENERAL

Mulch trees, shrubs, and flower beds.

Keep vegetables and plants weeded. A cultivated soil absorbs rain better. Apply 3 inches of mulch to retain moisture.

Herbs: If you do not have a sunny bed near the kitchen, grow your herbs in a pot. Try basil, thyme, oregano, chives, and parsley.

Root cuttings of chrysanthemums, mint, basil, hydrangeas, and other herbaceous perennials. Take 3-4 inch stem cuttings of new growth, leaving at least 2 sets of leaves. Dip the cut end into rooting hormone. Tap to remove the excess and insert into a container with moist, porous soil. Firm soil lightly. Keep soil moist and you will have a new plant in approximately 10 days!

Thin seedlings as recommended on the seed package.

Pull spent plants and replant area to prevent weeds.

Stake plants while young to prevent breaking.

Compost disease-free grass clippings and organic wastes.

Treat fire ant mounds according to insecticide labels.

LAWNS

Planting: Warm-season lawns can now be planted, replanted, or rejuvenated with Bermuda, Centipede, St. Augustine, or Zoysia grasses.

Fertilizing: Fertilize warm-season lawns once they have completely greened up according to soil sample recommendations.

Special Care: Be sure to follow the recommended mowing height for the type of grass in your yard. Check the mower blade and keep it sharpened. De-thatch centipede lawns.

VEGETABLES & FRUITS

Planting: Sow warm-season vegetables and herbs, including basil. Transplant warm-season seedlings. Plant heat-loving watermelons, okra, southern peas, sweet potatoes, and pumpkins (only varieties which matures in 120 days).

Fertilizing: "Side dress" corn and other heavy feeding crops with nitrogen. Use no more than 1 lb. of nitrogen per 100 ft. row. Blueberries should be fed now with acid-based fertilizer at a rate of 1/2 cup per plant. Water thoroughly.

Irrigation: The secret of growing onions is to keep them watered. Regular watering helps blueberries throughout their growing season.

Special care: Stake tomatoes and peppers while plants are small. Mulch heavily now. This will keep soil temperature stable, and preventing blossom-end rot. Do not use fertilizer or pesticides when plants are stressed, water first! Watch for pests and treat when found.

Harvest: Harvest strawberries every 2 days. Harvest herbs before flowering for best flavor.

TREES & SHRUBS

Planting: Complete major planting, delay future plantings until fall. Plant container-grown trees and shrubs.

Irrigation: Newly-planted trees and shrubs will require more frequent watering as the roots have not had time to grow into the soil. Water every 5-7 days without rain.

Special Care: Faded yellow leaves with green veins on gardenias, azaleas, etc. are a sign of chlorosis, an iron deficiency. This can be cured with an application of iron sulfate or an acid-based fertilizer, containing iron, around the plant. Look for lace bugs on azaleas. Insecticidal soaps may give some control of young lace bugs. Consult [HGIC](#) for other control options.

FLOWERS

Planting: Plant summer annuals, perennials, and your containers. To minimize shock from strong light, protect your seedlings until established with newspaper, baskets, or small branches. Plant seeds for cosmos, four o'clocks, and sunflowers in the garden.

Fertilizing: Fertilize roses after the first bloom. Make monthly applications to annual and perennial beds.

Irrigation: Water new plants regularly. A soaker hose is more efficient and keeps water off leaves and flowers.

Prune: Remove faded flowers from annuals and perennials and pinch back mums.

FROM THE GROUND UP

State Advisory Board Meeting

By Janet Bugbee

March 31, 2014

There were 11 Master Gardeners from across the State and Dr. James Blake, MG State Coordinator and Sara Pachota, State MG Program Assistant present at our first State Advisory Board Meeting held in Columbia, SC on March 31.

James Blake – Master Gardener Coordinator

He is very involved and has done so much thus far, considering that MG activities consist only 20% of his work load, another 20% goes to the Master Naturalist Program, and the remaining 60% goes to his duties as the Extension Associate in Consumer Horticulture for Pickens County and as an assistant Professor at Clemson University.

There were a lot of new changes mentioned coming to the Master Gardener Program statewide.

We were asked to send Dr. Blake email addresses from our association that were not receiving his communications. If there are any MG's not receiving emails from Dr. Blake please send me your email address to pass on. Make sure you add Dr. James Blake to your contacts or addresses.

Some of the changes to the Master Gardener program include a new revised manual that will soon be available. It is now being edited by three individuals including Sara Pachota, an MG from the upstate, and an MG from Atlanta who took the online class who works with HGTV.com. The manual will be punched for a three-ring binder, and will be available in 2015. This will make it easier for future changes when required.

Our state MG logo has changed to a Palmetto tree with the crescent moon. It will be appearing in all communications to MG's and is now on the MG website.

Due to confusion among those taking the online horticulture training course, Dr. Blake has changed the name of the course to the "Home Horticulture/Master Gardener Training Course".

We discussed having a new volunteer release form which will be implemented soon and made available to MG coordinators. All MG's will be required to sign the form in order to be a Clemson volunteer. It will state that Clemson will not cover MG volunteers for any injury or health issue due to serving as a volunteer and that volunteers are not paid by Clemson. It will be a one-time signature with one copy kept at the county level and another copy sent to Dr. Blake for his files.

Our association should check into carrying a small Liability Insurance policy just to be protected against any claims in the future, where we are working with the public.

Dr. Blake is also planning on developing standards across the state for the MG face-to-face class. He will be working with all coordinators on this.

Recertification requirements were discussed and after your initial certification from doing 40 hrs. of volunteer service after the MG training class, you are required to volunteer 40 hrs. every year there-after, if you want to be considered "certified" MG.

There will be a new statewide MG name badge with the new logo. The badges will have an insert for including your name, county, and any other information such as merits earned, from volunteer service. Each association can decide if they want to change to the new badge or keep what they have.

FROM THE GROUND UP

State Advisory Board Meeting Continued

A new volunteer online reporting system was discussed. The new system will be modeled after the Master Naturalist system and hopefully will take effect in 2015. It will be more “user friendly”, simpler to use, and more functional. It will have drop down boxes with less options, and less confusing.

We discussed having a statewide MG association. It might help stimulate interest and involvement in areas which may not be as active or involved as others.

A MG blog was started the first of April in which would allow you to opt in providing information that would benefit all associations. Go to: <http://scmgblog.wordpress.com/> and subscribe. Any concerns or information that could be shared by all Master Gardeners.

A Facebook page has also been established as of the first of April. To log in, just go to <https://www.facebook.com/SCMasterGardener> and make sure to “like” it.

An Events Calendar has been established and will contain all MG association events and could be accessed by the MG’s. It is added as a link to the MG state website. Any events we have can be added by submitting PDF form provided. It includes all statewide associations.

The Carolina Yards plant database was discussed which includes approximately 300 plants. It can be linked through the website: www.clemson.edu/cy/plants . Most are native, but not all of them.

A new program called Carolina Schoolyard Program is coming. The purpose will be to teach teachers online about having a schoolyard garden. It would assign coordinators or MG’s to teachers to apply for the online program.

Even though it sounds like a lot of changes coming, it will take time to get everything implemented for our use. I will keep you posted on all matters.

