

Diggin' Dirt

Lowcountry Master Gardener Association



Summer 2015

President's Corner

We've had a very busy this spring, with all sorts of Master Gardener activities going on around the County. North of the Broad, Lunch and Learn is drawing crowds to the Port Royal Farmers Market on Saturday mornings and our MG's have been landscaping Habitat for Humanity Homes (and giving the new homeowners tips on caring for their new plants). In the Bluffton/Okatie area, volunteers have been maintaining the grounds at the historic houses in Bluffton, the Port Royal Sound Maritime Center, Waddell Mariculture Center and Savannah Wildlife Refuge. On Hilton Head, MGs renovated the plantings at the Butterfly House/Garden at Honey Horn, as well as maintained the xeriscape and Hilton High school gardens. A plan to install landscaping at Habitat for Humanity homes on Hilton Head is in the works.

Our Rent a Master Gardener teams visited over 90 homes this spring! Besides carrying out our mission of educating our neighbors on good gardening practices, the dollars generated by this program fund the foregoing projects as well as financial assistance (\$4000 this year) to Clemson students in horticulture-related programs.

Many, many thanks to all who participated in these efforts!

We have 43 new MG graduates from spring classes in Beaufort, Hilton Head and Colleton County. Welcome to the LMGA! Complimentary membership is provided to all graduates for the remainder of 2015. We hope you will continue your membership in the future. Participating in one or more of the LMGA's projects (listed on our website) is a good way to get in the 40 hours

of volunteer service needed for certification as a SC Master Gardener. All the project leaders will be happy to hear from you and provide more information. Or you can always contact me, a Board member or your Area Coordinator.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, September 17, at the Bluffton Library. Please note that this is a change from the schedule sent out earlier in the year so that we can have our local camellia expert, George Cannon, speak to us about these wonderful Southern shrubs. We had a huge crowd for his presentation at the Port Royal Farmers Market in May. If you were unable to attend that presentation, you won't want to miss this one, particularly since fall is an excellent time to plant camellias. Watch your email for more details.

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The Gallivanting Gardener

Spring travel took this gallivanting gardener (aka GiGi) to Bellingrath Gardens in Theodore, Alabama, a short drive from Mobile. The estate was the home of Walter and Bessie Bellingrath, who in the 1920's purchased a fishing camp on the Fowl River bayou and turned it into a country estate. Interestingly, the gardens were laid out and planted several years before the house was built, and the house along the bank of the river is discreetly tucked in among the gardens. Bessie was instrumental in the creation of the gardens and, upon her death in 1943, Walter created a foundation to maintain them as a memorial to her.



The existing flagstone pathways, fountains, formal rose garden and conservatory were all part of the original design. In the 1960's, an Asian-American garden was added and later a boardwalk that winds through the bayou, offering visitors information about the area's wildlife and vegetation.

Late winter or early spring is an ideal time to visit Bellingrath Gardens be-

cause of the abundance of azaleas that surround the picturesque Mirror Lake and the numerous camellias (Walter's favorite flower) in the formal gardens that bloom from late November through early March.

During GiGi's late April visit, workers were busy installing spring seasonal plants, including angel wing begonias and yellow shrimp plants, in the Camellia Parterre to complement the numerous oak leaf hydrangeas that were in bloom. The house is also open for tours (Bessie was quite a collector — especially porcelain) and offers a wonderful view of the terraces that lead down to the Fowl River. Unfortunately, GiGi didn't have her camera with her and, being technology challenged, doesn't own a smart phone, so you'll have to check out the website for pictures (www.bellingrath.org).

Are you a Gallivanting Gardener? If so, tell us about your gardening adventures. Send them to our newsletter editor Jenny Staton to include in a future issue of Diggin' Dirt.



Rent a Master Gardener



Gardeners Beware

Summer is here and with it the Lowcountry's heat and humidity. Since we are outside for long stretches of time tending to our gardens, heat stroke (also known as sun stroke) is a very real danger. Heat stroke mainly affects those over 50 and results from prolonged exposure to high temperatures, usually in combination with dehydration. Symptoms include nausea, seizures, disorientation and sometimes loss of consciousness. Heat stroke can kill or cause damage to the

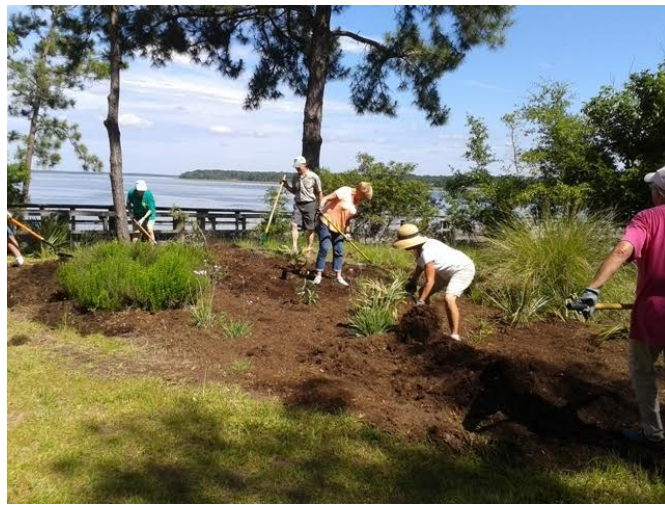
brain and other internal organs. To avoid this medical emergency, be sure to limit your time outdoors in the heat of the day and drink lots of water. If you suspect you are suffering from heat stroke, call 911 immediately. For additional information, see the WebMD website. Be careful out there!



Waddell Buffer Clean-up

We had Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists volunteers at Waddell Mariculture Center doing a Buffer clean up and mulch spreading. The *Zamia* (coontie) palms and *Farfugium*, native grasses, and Georgia mint are photographed and doing well.

MGs present were Terry Hill, Dave Frederick, Pat Cooke, Jim Nagle, Dave Moore, Myrna Horn, Gregg Campbell, Abbey Newton, Colleen Thompson, Sandy Guhl, Laura Lee Rose, Marilyn Shaw



MG's Visit Hampton Lake

We had a full house at the May 14 membership meeting at Hampton Lake. Thirty-three Hampton Lake residents joined us at the Hampton Lake Clubhouse for a presentation by Lyn Taylor on plants that thrive in the heat (and – in view of our recent winters, Lyn added -- the cold). After the presentation, six Hampton Lake homeowners, including MG's Betty Heath-Camp and Bill Camp, graciously opened up their lanais and courtyards for us to

enjoy. It was wonderful to see hibiscus, mandevillas, hydrangeas, fatsia and other plants most of us can't enjoy because of hungry deer. The trick is to build yourself a screened outdoor paradise – and paradises these were, including one with a waterfall cascading into the pool and tiki statues! It was a wonderful afternoon, and our thanks go to VP Betty Heath-Camp for making all the arrangements.

Some of the folks in attendance include:

Marilyn Shaw (master gardener), Susan Harden (master gardener), Bette Warfield, Linda DelCore (Hampton Lake resident), Deb Fuller (Hampton Lake resident), Kent Fuller (Hampton Lake resident), Joe Allard (Master Gardener.)





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Port Royal Farmers Market Lunch & Learn



John Huffman is the Greenhouse Manager for Stiles Harper and is an orchid hobbyist as well. Between them, they have over 3,000 orchids in the greenhouse. He also takes care of May River Orchids when the owners are out of town. He brought a LOT of orchids to show, and some to sell.