

# Diggin' Dirt

Lowcountry Master Gardener Association



Spring 2013

## President's Corner

Welcome to the spring edition of Diggin' Dirt, the first of our quarterly newsletters to inform you of LMGA activities and provide you with informative articles.

Jenny Staton would love to get ideas and articles from you at treefrogfen@gmail.com.

Thanks, Jenny, for volunteering to be the editor-in-chief!

You can tell that spring is here by the number of Rent-A-Master Gardener requests we've had – over 20 calls as of this writing! Participating on an RMG team is a great way to get volunteer hours and, most importantly, fulfills your commitment to share your gardening knowledge with others. Interns take note: At least 20 of your 40 vol-

unteer hours should be in educational service, which includes RMG visits. Please contact your area coordinator to volunteer.

Very soon you'll be able to see and use our new and updated website, lowcountrymga.org. The Board recently voted to hire a website designer to improve the look of our website and make it more useful to both MG's and the public. The new website will provide the ability to register on-line for upcoming events, instructions on recording volunteer hours, and links to our project activities and photos. We'll let you know when the new site is up and running so you can check it out.

As you may have heard, after several years as our Northern Beaufort coordinator, Pat Lauzon is stepping down. Over the years, Pat organized numerous projects to carry out the LMGA's mission throughout Beaufort County. Our thanks go to Pat for all she's done for the LMGA – and the community. We'll miss her leadership and wish her lots of happy gardening in the future.

Thought for the day: Keep your knees dirty and your shovel clean.

—Bette Warfield

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## Knockout Roses— Not Impervious to Problems

Rose rosette disease (RRD) has been spreading through much of the wild rose population of the South. RRD is of great concern to the nursery industry and to many home gardeners because it is known to be lethal to the wild multiflora

rose, and is potentially lethal to many ornamental rose species and cultivars. It has long been known that the eriophyid mite spreads the disease, but the likely viral pathogen was only recently identified. There is no treatment, affected

plants should be destroyed. For additional information on identifying this disease, see the Virginia Cooperative Extension publication attached with this newsletter.

We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.

~Abraham Lincoln

## Fun Facts About Tomatoes



If you can answer some basic questions about tomatoes, you can answer about half the questions posed at the Farmers' Markets. Below are some things you may not know.

Tomatoes are native to South America, with the earliest ancestors of the plant coming from Peru.

The tomato was grown by the Aztecs and was called xitomatl ("plump thing with a navel").

Ever heard of a wolf peach? That's what the tomato's scientific name, *lycopersicon* or *lycopersicum*, means.

The tomato itself may not be poisonous, but tomato leaves and stems definitely are. In fact, the leaves and stems of all plants in the nightshade family are poisonous because they contain atropine and other toxic tropane alkaloids.

China is the world's largest producer of tomatoes, while

the United States is the world's second largest tomato producer.

By the mid to late 1700s, tomatoes were no longer believed to be poisonous and were in daily use in Britain.

In the 18th century, tomatoes were cultivated in what is now South Carolina.

[www.healthdiaries.com](http://www.healthdiaries.com)

## Bloomin' Bucks with Brent and Becky's Bulbs

### HOW IT WORKS:

It's simple...go to [www.bloominbucks.com](http://www.bloominbucks.com) (with no 'g') and from a pull down menu of all of the organizations registered, select to support the Lowcountry

Master Gardener Assoc.!

With one click, you are then sent to the Brent and Becky's Bulbs website where you can order whatever you want, in whatever quantity you

want...books, bulbs, tools, supplements, gift certificates...ANYTHING...and a percentage of all of the orders goes to the LMGA!



## Pecan Planting and Fertilization

Pecans (*Carya illinoensis*) will grow in almost any soil in South Carolina, except poorly drained soil, hardpan, or stiff clays, or thin sands with a high water table. Pecans are recommended for home landscapes from the Coastal Plains to the Piedmont, but are not recommended for

the mountains because of reduced yield due to late freezes. Air drainage is not so important for pecans as for other tree fruits, but avoid setting pecan trees in areas where there is no free air movement. Good air movement hastens leaf-drying and lowers humidity,

reducing the chance for diseases to occur.

Attached is the Clemson HGIC publications on pecans.

## Shitake Log Class

The event took place on March 14 and was attended by 26 MGs. Dave desJardin was the instructor. He is a MG and resides in HH but also has a farm in PA where he raises Shitakes and other mushroom types.

Several Water Oaks were cut down at Waddell to provide the logs for the students. The class consisted of an educational presentation on mushrooms and a workshop in which each student got a log to use in creating their own Shitake garden. The students drilled holes in the logs and then inserted

Shitake spore capsules in the holes with the use of a hammer. Once this was completed an application of cheese wax was applied to each inoculated hole to seal in the spores.

The logs will start sprouting Shitakes in about 6 months. The log itself supplies the spores with nourishment to support the sprouting process. Each log should produce several pounds of mushrooms and would last for several years. Many thanks to Al Stokes the Director of Waddell for letting us use the facilities meeting

by Rick Kurz

room and allowing us to cut down several trees. The class was limited to 25 MGs but we had over 50 apply to attend the class so those on the waiting list will be offered another class sometime in the future.

Special thanks to the MGs - Sandra Educate, Joe Allard, Sally Mays, and Pat & Dan Lauzon - who helped with cutting down the trees and then dividing them into logs.

Call Sandra or myself if you have any questions.



## Hours

Don't forget to report your hours at [www.clemson.edu/cemg/State.php](http://www.clemson.edu/cemg/State.php)

You can see that Rick and Sandra are working lots and are in the top 10 for the State!

### Top Users for 2013

#	Name	County	Total Hours
1 <sup>st</sup>	Janet LITTON	Charleston	306.75
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lee Hiers	Aiken	214.85
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Rick Kurz	Beaufort	198.90
4 <sup>th</sup>	Ted Simonetta	Dorchester	126.00
5 <sup>th</sup>	Claude Jackson	Lexington	118.50
6 <sup>th</sup>	Marcia Rosenberg	Charleston	113.50
7 <sup>th</sup>	Bobett Button	Greenville	108.00
8 <sup>th</sup>	Darren Sheriff	Charleston	100.25
9 <sup>th</sup>	Sandra Educate	Beaufort	97.00
10 <sup>th</sup>	Karen Eckert	Aiken	95.50

## Carolina Yards and Neighborhoods

There's no doubt about it. Successful garden and lawn care in South Carolina requires special knowledge and skills. The Carolina YardStick Workbook shows you how to create attractive and healthy yards by working with South Carolina's environment, rather than

against it.

This Workbook (attached) guides you through an evaluation of your yard and yard care practices. Each action you take (or have already taken) earns you "inches" or credits on the Carolina YardStick.

A yard that measures up to at least 36 inches is a Carolina Yard!

The payoff? A yard that meets your needs, enhances your neighborhood and helps protect Carolina's natural beauty and natural resources.





Laura Lee Rose  
Beaufort County  
Horticulture  
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[www.lowcountrymga.org](http://www.lowcountrymga.org)

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## Shitake Mushroom Workshop



## Officers

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### Area Project Coordinators:

Hilton Head  
Chris Rosenbach

Bluffton  
Gail Havens

Beaufort  
Sandra Educate, Pro Tem

I consider every plant  
hardy until I have killed  
it myself... at least  
three times.

~Tony Avent Owner,  
*Plant Delights Nursery*