

◆ A BIT OF DIRT ◆

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FALL, 1996

Issue 12

The Newsletter of Gwinnett Master Gardeners



A BIT OF DIRT is published quarterly. Editors are Brenda Adams and Gail Martin. If you wish something published, please contact us at 466-4665 and 381-2513.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Sept. 9, Monday night, 7 PM at GJAC. Guest speaker will be Arty Schronce, Horticulturist for Hastings. He will talk on "White Trash Gardening". Bring your seeds and plants for the pass-along

Oct. 14, Monday night, 7 PM at GJAC. Guest speaker will be Dean Paler who started the Flowery Branch Seed Co.

Nov. 18, Monday night, 7 PM at GJAC will be our year-end party. Our guest speaker will be the incomparable Penny McHenry, President of the Hydrangea Society. Come join us to celebrate a good year and to meet this special lady.

Fall is not the end of the gardening year; it is the start of next year's growing season. The mulch you lay down will protect your perennial plants during the winter and feed the soil as it decays, while the cleaned-up flower bed will give you a huge head start on either ing seeds or setting out small
ants.
—Thalassa Cruso

Even if something is left undone, everyone must take time to sit and watch the leaves turn.

—Elizabeth Lawrence



Don't Forget!

PLANT SALE

October 11

See page 4 for
details.



UPCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Sept. 5-8 - Atlanta Fall Home Show. Cobb Galleria Centre, (across from Cumberland Mall)

Sept. 6 & 7 - Fall Fern Sale, Dekalb College, 10:30 - 4:00.

Sept. 14 - Exhibits entered for Gwinnett County Fair 8:30 - 11:00 AM. Fair is Sept. 12 through 21.

Sept. 19 - GPPA 7:30 PM Atlanta History Center. Hugh & Mary Palmer Dargan. "New Ideas Inspired by Classics".

Sept. 19 - Ga. Master Gardeners going to Callaway Gardens.

Sept. 21 & 22. "Refining the Garden" Symposium by GPPA.

Sept. 28 - Penny McHenry & Lee May at Garden South for their Fall Festival.

Sept. 27 & 28 - Native Plant Sale at Dekalb College. 11:00 - 4:00.

Oct. 5 - 9 AM Hyper-tufa PARTY at Brenda's house. Call 466-4665.

Oct. 11 - Gwinnett Master Gardeners Plant Sale at GJAC.

Oct. 24 - GPPA meeting 7:30 PM at Atlanta History Center. George Sanko & Thelma Glover, "Academy Awards of Native Plants".

Nov. 7 - Atl. Bot. Garden: 7:30 PM. "Plant Exploration in China" P.Meyer.

Minutes of Meetings - Summer 1996

June 10, 7:00 PM at GJAC

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM by Brenda Adams.

New Business:

Beverly Howerton introduced Michael Burel, a recent graduate of the 1996 MG class. Michael announced that there would be a Garden Tour and Wine Tasting at Sweetbottom Plantation on June 22nd. It would benefit Canine Assistance. Volunteers are needed from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM. One Master Gardener will be in each garden to answer questions and direct people. Each volunteer can bring a friend for free. Call Michael if you can help.

Beverly announced that Pam Folks needs volunteers in the Extension Office on July 1 and 2. Master Gardeners are also needed for Ag Showcase '96 on Sat. June 29 from 10 AM to 12 PM.

The Extension Office received a postcard from Necessary Organics. MGs can receive a free sample kit of Concern Products by calling 1-800-447-5354.

Program:

We watched a video taping of the cable television show "A Gardener's Diary". This episode featured Grace Holland and Grace Harris of Buford, GA. It was entitled "Amazing Graces" and showcased their gardens and their friendship. The "Amazing Graces" are Friends of Gwinnett MG's.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM for a plant and seed swap. It was such fun that we decided to have a swap at every MG meeting.

July 8, 7:00 PM at GJAC

New Business:

Don Freidus announced that the greenhouses at Creative Enterprises were almost completed. About half of the irrigation system is installed. Fifty tables are ready and 12 more tables will be coming. The pansy stock (10,000 plugs) should arrive on August 7. We will be able to purchase the pansies for our plant sale. The target date for the plant sale is October 11. Pam Folks will get approval from Phyllis to have the sale on that day. She will also see if we can get permission to put signs around GJAC announcing the sale.

Pam Folks announced that a video of Creative Enterprises has been started.

Pam Folks also announced that a trip to the State Arboretum is being planned. Their staff will demonstrate how to distinguish between different types of trees and how to prune trees correctly. More information will be provided later.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM for refreshments and a plant/seed swap.



August 12, 7:00 PM at GJAC

New Business:

There was no new business.

Program:

Robert Brannen presented tonight's topic on Water Gardening. His slide show discussion covered all of the details of a backyard pond, including:

*where to locate your pond-sun vs. shade

*attracting wildlife

*maintenance - probably less than a lawn

*running water

*construction techniques

*liners, pumps and fountains

*pond plants

Robert's slide show presented a variety of beautiful ponds in all shapes, sizes and styles. We especially enjoyed the slides of his own new water garden. Handouts were available for additional information.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Submitted by Jan Hansen, Secretary

PARTY !!!

ATTENTION: On October 5, Saturday, at 9 AM there will be a Hyper-tufa Party at Brenda Adams home. Details and a map will be given at the Sept. 9 meeting. Easy Instructions will be given. You must sign up as space is limited. 466-4665.

The Extension Line.....

Program Update Creative Enterprises is probably the project that has had the most activity during these past couple of months. Of course, the greenhouse is up and running, thanks to the leadership of Don Freidus and to the hard work of his intern Lisa and the entire staff of CE. The pansies look great and the Dept. of Agriculture has given Don and the greenhouse the "green light". Things are coming together for a very deserving group which sees that all people are productive and deserve the quality of life that we all hope for.

Not only is the greenhouse becoming productive, but many Master Gardeners are working hard at landscaping "around" the greenhouse which will make the entire enterprise more appealing to potential customers. If any of you have any "gold medal" plants, sprigs, cuttings, divisions, etc. please thin them out in their direction. We do have some money to spend on the landscaping project but it won't go very far! The landscaping will involve the use of several huge boulders which we have pulled out of the woods, construction of a pond, and planting barberries (Rosy Glow or Crimson Queen), foundation shrubs, clump liriopse, daylilies, and of course annuals and perennials. Directly in front of Creative Enterprise is a large area of grass where we are hoping to involve landscape students from Gwinnett Tech. We thought the first priority would be to beautify the greenhouse area.

In addition to these activities, the videotaping has begun at Creative by Media Services at GJAC. They have been out on two different occasions to videotape some preliminary "before" shots and will be coming out several times to tape interviews with some of the Master Gardeners involved with the greenhouse. A target date of

the completed video is January 1, 1997. To avoid working in frigid weather, we are planning to do the landscaping around the greenhouse during September and October. This will also be a good time for us before we become involved in all of the school programs.

If you have any suggestions or want to help specifically in any of these CE projects, please let me know. Also, if you have any plants donate, call me. I will come and pot them up! Thanks again for all of the help from everybody. The CE projects certainly take the lead in any worthy cause I can think of!

By Pam Folks

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
 ☆ *If you have any extra* ☆
 ☆ *"Georgia Gold Medal* ☆
 ☆ *Plants", please donate them to* ☆
 ☆ *Creative Enterprises* ☆
 ☆ *via Pam Folks.* ☆
 ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



CONFESSION

The riotous squash vines know, eggplant and ghosts of marigolds all privy to the secret. Manuals, blue lights, organic supplements can't disguise my dis-ease, my black thumb status in the garden.

Armies of borage, blackberry vines and clover, bivouac nearby; they wait for slugs to wear me down. As defeat becomes evident, I run, leaving summer to slaughter the glass-grown children. Inside, I rewrite the history.

I lack the passion that drives buttercups, the pagan madness in jimson weed's press; my moments of doubt betray me to Nature.

As cool weather signals contest's end, I poke among waist-high weeds for the few bug-rejected trophies, my winter consolation.

Catherine McGuire



This time of the year, if your garden looks like mine, you look out the window and see some frightening things: plants that are either black, or brown, or maybe just sickly-looking. Hopefully, most of these will be back next year.

Meanwhile, this is the season when there will be a lot of dried material in the garden and nearby fields and roadsides. There are some that will beautify our homes for months to come if chosen carefully. Below are a few ideas that I have used in my home in times past or plan to use this year:

Miscanthus and Pennisetum grass, flowering seed heads.....African Blue Basil has beautiful seed heads or any of the other basil. I saw a wreath made entirely of ABB seed heads.....Salvia argentea, Mexican Sage flowers dry very nicely indoors.....Echinacea (Purple Coneflower), Filipendula (Queen of the Prairie), Thimbleweed and Pycnanthemum tenuifolium, Clematis seed heads.....fresh Salvia farinacea flowers dry nicely. Red seed heads from Jack in the Box are nice this year..... Dry Zinnia blossoms; I cover mine in Borax from the supermarket.....Rose hips can be very pretty; especially from Rugosa Roses.....New Jersey Tea seed heads would do well in a wreath.

Brenda Adams



FALL CALENDAR

The fall season is upon us, and its time for more work in the garden. This is the best time in the South for many gardening tasks we've put off all summer.

Fall planting of trees and shrubs begins now, and carries through all winter. During the warmer months of fall, try to plant container plants, but when the weather cools off in late October and November, bare root plants may be planted. Be sure to water newly planted shrubs and trees frequently unless there is ample rainfall.

Roses need a little pick-me-up feed now after struggling through our hot, dry summer. If mildew is a problem now that cooler nights are with us, you may want to spray with a good fungicide. The planting of new roses should wait until January or February. Once the roses go dormant and lose their

leaves its time to remove old mulch from around them and add fresh mulch. This will help to control blackspot next summer.

October and November are bulb planting months. Bulbs of tulips, narcissus, crocus, and other spring bulbs are ready and waiting. This year why not try a few kinds that are new to you, such as ranunculus, frittelarias or lycoris. Give each new bulb a little bulb food at the bottom of the hole, and spread bulb food around established plantings.

Halloween is the time to sprinkle seeds of poppies and larkspur in the beds where you want them next spring. Another good spring bloomer you can plant now is the bachelor's button, one of the prettiest blues in the early garden.

Lawns should be fertilized and reseeded if necessary. Annual rye grass may be sown on Bermuda and Centipede lawns if you want all year green grass.

Rake up your leaves and add them to the compost, or shred them and use as mulch around azaleas, camellias and other shrubs and trees.

Camellia sasanqua and early varieties of *C. japonica* will begin to bloom now. Make sure they are well watered, and mulch if needed.

MG PLANT SALE

The Annual Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale will be held on Friday, October 11, 1996. The sale will take place in front of the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center.

We will be selling pansies grown for us by the folks at Creative Enterprises in their new greenhouse. We're working on other plants and/or bulbs that we might sell as well. If you have any plants that you would like to donate to the sale, please do so.

We will begin setting up the plants and tables at 8:00 a.m. The plant sale will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. We need volunteers who would be willing to give us two to four hours of time, both in setting up and handling the sale. We also need those of you with vans or trucks to help bring the pansy flats from Creative Enterprises.

A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the next MG meeting. If you can't make the meeting and do want to help, please call Gail Martin, 381-2513.



1996 HOME GARDEN EXHIBITS

1. Exhibits can be entered Saturday, September 14th from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
2. Exhibits must have been grown by the exhibitor.
3. Items must be picked up between 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Sunday, September 22. The GCL&FA, Inc. will not be responsible for lost, damaged, or unclaimed exhibits.

PRIZE MONEY SHOULD BE PICKED UP AT THIS TIME.

4. Prize Money - 1st place - \$3.00; 2nd-\$2.00; 3rd-\$1.00. Exhibits with no competition will receive 1st place ribbon with 2nd place prize money.
5. Exhibits not listed may be displayed. Classes can be added if sufficient entries at check-in. In some classes, ribbons may be awarded but no prize money.
6. Exhibitors are responsible for attaching their name, address and class number to their exhibits. No special tag is required. This should be done at home. Tags are available at the Gwinnett Extension Service.
7. Exhibitors may prepare their exhibits by cleaning, washing and polishing or waxing.
8. ***YOUTH 15 YEARS AND UNDER ARE ENCOURAGED TO ENTER THE 3 YOUTH CLASSES.***

TAG EXAMPLE:

JANE FAIRGOER
2222 CARNIVAL AVENUE
FUNCITY, GA. 555-5555
ENTRY: CLASS # 49
SQUASH - YELLOW (3)

PLEASE MAKE SURE ADDRESS IS CORRECT FOR OUR MAILING LIST FOR FUTURE FAIRS.

CLASSES:

1. APPLES - (6 in a basket)
2. BEANS - LIMA (HANDFUL)
3. BEANS - STRING (HANDFUL)
4. BEANS - OTHER - (HANDFUL)
5. CORN - INDIAN - BEST DISPLAY
6. CORN - CORN - WHITE - 6 EARS
7. CORN - YELLOW - - 6 EARS
8. CORN - MISCELLANEOUS - 6 EARS
9. CORN - BEST STALK
10. EGGPLANT (1)
11. FEED - HOME MIXED - 1 PINT
12. GOURDS -ornamental(best display)
13. GOURDS - LONG DIPPER (1)
14. GOURDS - MARTIN TYPE (1)
15. GOURDS -miscellaneous other
16. HAY - BERMUDA - 1 BALE
17. HAY - FESCUE - 1 BALE
18. HAY - LEGUME - 1 BALE
19. HONEY/SORGHUM (1 PINT)
20. IRISH POTATOES - RED - 6
21. IRISH POTATOES - WHITE - 6
22. MUSCADINES - (1 PINT)
23. OKRA (PINT)
24. ONIONS - BUNCH
25. PEANUTS - 1 SINGLE PLANT
26. PEAS - CROWDER TYPE (handful)
27. PEARS - (6)
28. PEPPER - BELL - (3)
29. PEPPER - BANANA (3) hot/sweet
30. PEPPER - HOT TYPE - LONG (3)
31. PEPPER - OTHER (3)
32. PEPPER - POTTED
33. PUMPKIN - SMALL PIE
34. PUMPKIN - TAN (1)
35. PUMPKIN - ORANGE (1)
36. PUMPKIN - LARGEST
37. PUMPKIN - ORNAMENTAL
SEEDS (In Pint Jar - DRIED)
38. BUTTERBEANS
39. BEANS - OTHER
40. CHESTNUTS
41. PEANUTS
42. PEAS
43. SMALL GRAIN
44. OTHER - MISCELLANEOUS
45. SQUASH - ACORN
46. SQUASH - BANANA
47. SQUASH - BUTTERNUT
48. SQUASH - CUSHAW
49. SQUASH - YELLOW (3)
50. SQUASH - TURBAN
51. SQUASH - OTHER
52. SUNFLOWER - LARGEST
53. SWEET POTATOES (6)
54. TOMATOES (6)
55. TOMATOES - NOVELTY (PINT)
56. WATERMELON - ICE BOX
57. WATERMELON - LARGEST
YOUTH - 15 & UNDER
58. DECORATED FRUIT OR
VEGETABLE
59. GARDEN BUDDIES
Scarecrow/ garden companions
60. GARDEN DRAWING - (NAME .
AND AGE ON FRONT)



YOU MIGHT BE A GARDENER !

If you know more about the plants in your neighbor's yard than you know about the people who live there.

If you've ever gone out to your yard at night with a flashlight.....

Two words: Mailbox Plantings.

If it's easier to recall your first and last frost dates than your spouse's birthday.

If you've ever laid awake at night thinking of ways to get rid of rabbits. Or chipmunks. Or deer. Or Japanese beetles. Or.....

If you've ever asked for a load of manure as a birthday present.

If you don't like to discuss religion, but will argue passionately about pesticide use.

If you have more than three kinds of shovels, hoes and rakes.

If you've ever used the good set of sheets to cover plants before a hard frost.

u have no idea what the inside of a manicurist's shop looks like.

If you've ever picked up your neighbor's trash by mistake thinking it was bagged leaves.

If the County Extension Service's number is set on your speed dial.

If you own more than two gardening gloves without their mates.

If you've ever spent time at a Christmas party discussing composting techniques.

If you received a bouquet of roses and then tried to determine the variety.

If at least three nursery owners know you by your first name.

If you have more pictures of your garden than of your kids.

If you've ever practiced saying Latin words before going to a nursery.

If the stack of magazines in your bathroom are all seed catalogs.

If you've ever carried a ladybug from inside your house to your backyard,
then you just MIGHT be a GARDENER!

rpts from Genie (Computer Gardening) Library

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES AND GRASS - LIKE PLANTS

This time of the year, one most fully appreciates ornamental grasses that we may have half-heartedly planted at some other time—maybe when our case of Spring Fever was at its height. But grasses can be very beautiful at all times, even when they go dormant in the winter. Breezes stir through large clumps of pampus, miscanthus and even the weeping Lovegrass of our roadsides, making them come alive with their graceful motions.

There can be interesting seed heads which can be left on the plant, adding new dimensions to the winter garden or brought into the house for decoration.

Carexes, commonly called sedges, are also very worthy additions to the garden. Some are evergreen like the *C. morrowii* 'Variegata'. Carex is usually a lover of damp soil but some do quite well in regular soil. Carex glauca is a lovely color of blue, but is not evergreen.

Whatever your choice, please do include some of the many kinds of grasses available either mixed with your perennials, as specimens on their own, or alongside your waterway.

Some Sources of Ornamental Grasses:

Kurt Bluemel, Inc. Nurseries
2740 Greene Lane
Baldwin, MD 21013

Limerock Ornamental Grasses
R.D. 1, Box 111-C
Port Matilda, PA 16870

Niche Gardens
1111 Dawson Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

For Buffalo Grass, mentioned by Walter Reeves, call 1-800-759-1520.
PROMOTE NATIVE GRASSES!