



A Bit of Dirt!



A Newsletter by the Gwinnett Master Gardeners Association

November/December 2004

Volume 11, Issue 5

2004 Reviewed, 2005 Projected by Shannon Pable, V.P.

Wow, what a fantastic year we've had! I first would like to thank three of our 2004 Board members who will be leaving office. Many thanks to our President, **Gayle Hayes**, for her vivacious personality (and very colorful wardrobe!!!) who kept us laughing and inspired so many of us! Also, thanks to our extremely dependable dynamic-duo, **Sarah Goss** and **Marion Monk**, Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. It will be hard to replace you.

We have so many new projects at hand and so many wonderful Master Gardeners helping out. I'm so proud of the hard work so many of you have contributed! I am looking forward to the numerous opportunities for our group, especially with the gardens at McDaniel Farm. We will also continue to have our meetings, and possibly other social functions, at the Bethesda Senior Center. As well as volunteer opportunities, we, the 2005 GMG Board, are looking at a possible 2 day field trip for the group...more on that in 2005.

The 2005 GMG Board has already had their first planning meeting on t. 21st. Strong emphasis will be placed on PR...getting our name out into the community and getting

some of our 'shy' members to participate, again! We will utilize our newsletter, web-site, listserv and more to accomplish this. Our newsletter will be used primarily to announce special dates and to hi-light GMG projects. Please, take the time and submit your info to **Jan** and **John Bailey**.

We are also looking forward to financially contributing to some very worth while community projects. Because of the great success of the last couple of GMG plant sales (special thanks to the 2004 plant sale team, **Terry Russell** and **Dan Smith**) and **Sarah's** fine treasury skills, we have a good amount of money in the bank. So, if you have a garden project in need of funding, please contact **Renee Beard**.

We need everyone's help with the following:

Hospitality: **Sue Shaw** needs a co-chairperson.

Projects: Please fill out your project forms or encourage others and send to **Renee Beard**.

Historian: Please take photos, document your work, make story boards. We need a good 'scrap-booker' as our Historian.

Newsletter: Send photos and stories to **Jan** and **John Bailey**.

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Hyper-Toofas The Natural Planters

Leah Clancy shared her skill with **JoAnn Elmore** and **Jan Bailey**, in constructing these unusual planters that are almost indestructible.

The planters will be sold at the 2005 Plant Sale as part of the featured 'yard-art' section.



The first work-day went so well, **Leah** scheduled a second work-day to give **Sarah Goss** and **Marion Monk** a chance to try their hand.



According to instructions, the hyper-Toofas are constructed of equal parts cement, sand and peat moss moistened to the correct consistency for molding. These containers can be finished or left natural as the completed product requires and are ideal for outdoor planters. A fine example of 'yard art'.

Planting Seeds for Future Clean Air

by LaDonna Benedict, MG

LaDonna Benedict, with help from her son, Clay, and members of his budding ecology club at Peachtree Ridge High School participated in the 'Clean Air Campaign' at Rebecca Minor Elementary School on September 20, 2004. Their assignment was to create a display that would show how plants can clean the air, present it in a way that children would understand and could be used for a walk-through audience of up to 400 people.



LaDonna, a Gwinnett MG, and six AP seniors researched and compiled a presentation showcasing fifteen live plants labeled by name and what toxins each filtered, an experiment in two large jars showing plants oxygenating air and illustrative posters explaining both photosynthesis and how indoor plants filter out three commonplace toxins: benzene, formaldehyde and trichloroethylene. A recorded rendition of "Listen to the Land" played in the background.



The favorite part of the exhibit for the children, though they range in age six to eleven, was the same lure that appeals to gardeners everywhere...getting their hands satisfactorily dirty while planting a perennial seed in a little cup and dreaming of the flower that will emerge someday.



It was humbling to see the glow of happiness and expectation that a simple little seed and a cup of dirt could bring to their eyes. The parents were impressed by how many toxins were possibly inhabiting their homes, but happy to know that plants could be a green solution. It was a night the seeds for future cleaner air were planted.

New Gwinnett Daylily Society Forming

The Daylily Society of Greater Atlanta is organizing a chapter for Gwinnett County. For information call, **Bobby Higginbotham** at: (770) 972-8588

McDaniel Farms Grand Opening

At 10:am on October 9th, everything came together for a successful opening. Steve Pettis looked great in his overalls and straw hat. Many MG'ers dressed country.

Kathy Parent said that Gwinnett Master Gardeners devoted considerable effort to plantings all around the property and garden. The GMG booth was right up front to assist visitors.



Mark Zeigler's 4H'ers had a marvelous animal display and craft table at the barn.

From this beginning, there was a delightful series of displays, hay-rides, climb-on tractors, story-tellers and exhibits for children and adults. One of the favorite opportunities for the kids was the chance to plant different kinds of seeds in the garden. McDaniel Farms is a good addition to Gwinnett Parks.



GMGs Volunteer at McDaniel Park

Steve Pettis called for volunteers to prepare the Park grounds and gardens for opening day.



Plantings were set around the house and grounds to give a 'lived-in' feel to the Farm.



GMGs were busy tilling and preparing the gardens for flowers and vegetables.



Our GMG Volunteers put on a good show and had a good-old-time getting ready for the kids to plant their seeds in the gardens.

GMGs at Bethesda Senior Center

by Sharon Mathews

Recently, we revived our Bethesda Senior Center Project. I mean we got the paddles out and shouted "CLEAR"! We started with 14 volunteers, great camaraderie, hard work and of course lots of laughs.



Later, after a small work-day, we hit again with 16 volunteers. Using the same strategy as earlier, our patient is flourishing. The butterfly garden is complete and the other flower beds are on the mend.

A HUGE THANK-YOU TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS, who accumulated approximately 150 man-hours.

The staff at Bethesda says thank you to the Gwinnett County Master Gardeners for a job well done...beyond their expectations.

**GMG work-days
mean things are getting
done and everyone's
having lots of fun!**

2005 GMG Board Members

I am pleased to announce our 2005 GMG Board members:

Executive Board:

- President: Shannon Pable scpable@charter.net
- Vice President: Mike Wiesenthal roycecloud@hotmail.com
- Treasurer: Bobby Higginbotham bhigginbotham@mindspring.com
- Secretary: JoANN Elmore jg.elmore@worldnet.att.net
- Correspondence Sec.: Karen Alexander klalex@charter.net

Committee Chairs:

- Field Trips: Sharon Mathews sclull@hotmail.com
- Historian: open? * Please sign up if you like to 'scrapbook'!
- Hospitality: Sue Shaw lbear201@charter.net
- Newsletter: Jan and John Bailey janjohn1806@att.net
- Nominating Committee: Marlene Hedges mhgardener@earthlink.net
- Plant Sale: Jay Trevari jtrevari@bellsouth.net
- Projects: Renee Beard frenee@mindspring.com

So, fasten your seatbelts, get ready for 2005, and let's rock!!

'VP' Submission by Shannon Pable

An Experience is My Vision

by Jay Trevari, MG; 2005 Plant Sale Chair

When Jan Bailey asked me if I would like to write an article about my 'vision' for the 2005 plant sale, honestly, I panicked. How could I, a novice in every way, possibly have a vision that seasoned MGs would identify with. I could write about how I hoped we would be a financial success, so we would have funds for future endeavors. I could write about the importance of teamwork and how one person can not do it all, that the success of the sale depends upon the knowledge and efforts each of us can offer. I could even write about how each year we build upon the successes and, yes, even the few failures of previous committee's efforts. All these are worthy goals and thoughts to have, but a vision? I began thinking back upon my brief time with the MGs and how much I have learned and how much I have yet to learn. I thought back to when I accidentally stumbled upon the Gwinnett County Master Gardeners 2003 Plant Sale and had the fortune to speak with Michele, Sarah and Marlene. They were so friendly and eager to share their knowledge with me. I'm sure they thought my questions so basic, but they did not make me feel inadequate at all. I asked about the club and how does one become a member? I signed up that day!

A smile crept across my face when I realized I did have a vision. A vision of future MGs who may happen to be at the 2005 Plant Sale. So, when you are tending to that tiny seedling or adding that final detail to the birdhouse or answering that simple question from some new homeowners about the best way to grow flowers in the shade, realize that you may be the one to discover and *cultivate* a new Master Gardener or, perhaps, even a future Plant Sale Chair.

Rain Barrels & Water Conservation

with Karen Alexander, GMG
Speaking at October, '04 Meeting

Karen Alexander spoke on gardening techniques using rain water. Her business is about water conservation and as a ready source for rain barrels, she can help with set-up information and details on how to get the most value from rain-water collection. **Karen** can be reached at e-mail: klalex@charter.net.

County water will probably be restricted more in the next few years. Rain-water transports nutrients better than hard, chlorinated county water. Sensitive in-door plants respond better to 'clear' water that's free of 'purification' chemicals.



Postmaster: Return Requested



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A publication of the Gwinnett Master Gardeners Association

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