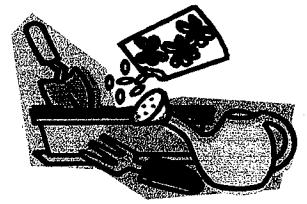




A Bit Of Dirt!



A newsletter for and by The Gwinnett Master Gardeners

Volume 11, Issue 3, Summer 2004

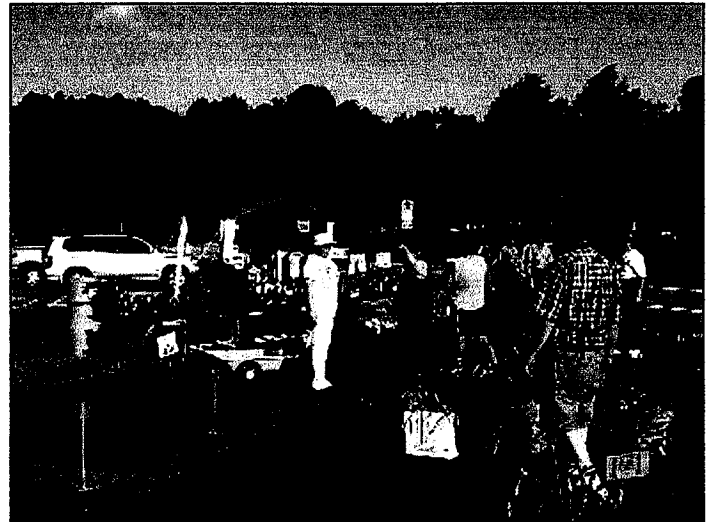
PLANT SALE 2004

By Dan Smith, 2004 Plant Sale Chairman

Our sale this year was a tremendous success due to the efforts of our MG'ers. Everyone co-operated and worked hard to get things done: potting, bringing in the plants for our sale, setting up the plant sale area, pricing, transporting customer's purchases and clean-up.

After our sale, we had a meeting to discuss recommendations for our 2005 sale. The committee suggested several things that could be done, notably that the plant sale committee be permanent and work year round to expand and improve our sale.

This sale could not have succeeded the way it did without the outstanding efforts of all our MG'ers. A wheel is only as good as the spokes that turn it!



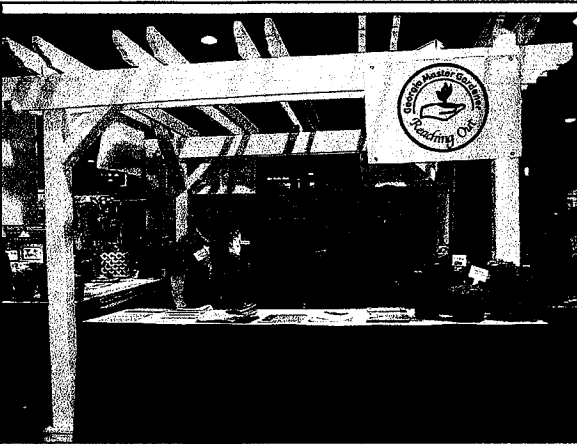
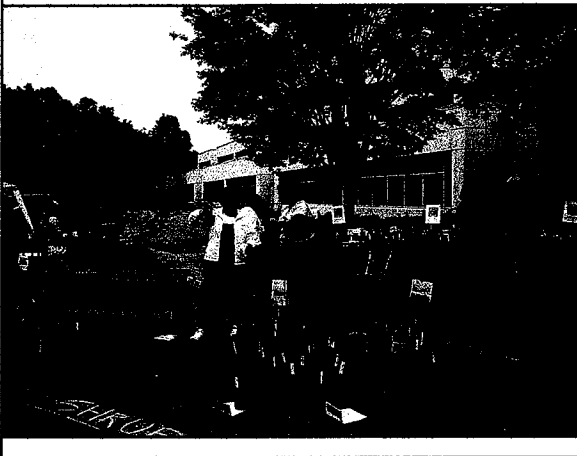
Plant Sale volunteers group photograph at 7:AM on the opening morning Friday, April 30th. The previous evening was a flurry of activity setting up tents and tables as these and other volunteers set out plants that were checked for labels and price. Glen Armstrong was heard to say, "This is the best I've seen it".



OK, where do we put these...?



The Plant Sale volunteers worked diligently to haul, label and price the plants and get them located in the correct category for display. Our GMGs provided a dazzling array of plants of many kinds that made selection a delight. Large purchases were delivered to the car.



Left to right: Theresa Schrum, Native Plant Society was visiting with Marlene Gillman, Karen Depew, Terry Russell, Carol Kilroy, Suzanne Girone, Kathy Parent and Cindy Harris.

GMG PLANT DOCTORS CLINIC SOUTHEASTERN FLOWER SHOW 2004

By Kathy Parent

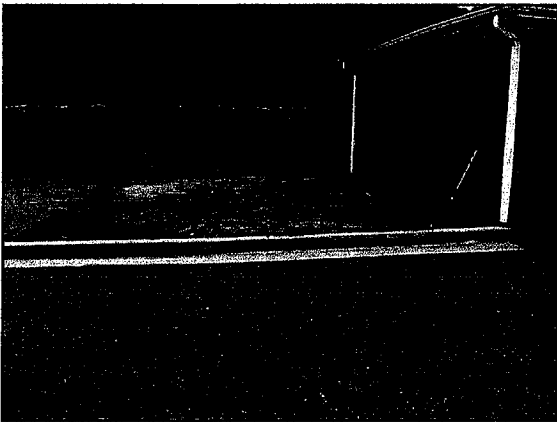
Theresa stopped at our exhibit to visit with our Plant Doctors when there was a shift change. We had two shifts that day - Friday, February 20th., and we all were there at the same time for a group picture. It turned out to be a busy day for all. We had some good questions asked and met a lot of fun gardeners.



PALISADES DAY CAMP

**By Steve Pettis, Natural Resources Agent
Gwinnett County Extension Service**

On May 18th **Dan Willis, Sue Shaw, Peggy Moss and Steve Pettis** met to install a vegetable garden at Palisades Day Camp, a summer day camp for children. They planted heirloom veggies that were donated by **Jack Payne "The Tomato Guy"**. **Cindy Harris and Vines Nursery** donated 10 bags of mushroom-



compost and wooden stakes. The kids will water and maintain the small garden during their weeks at the day camp. Thanks to all who helped out.

Seasonal Good Eats

Strawberry Refrigerator Jam

(store jam in plastic containers)

No need for canning equipment and can be stored in the refrigerator for a month.

- 4 cups halved strawberries
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice

Combine strawberries and sugar in medium saucepan and bring to simmer over medium-high heat, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for 1 hour or until thick, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice. Cool to room temperature. Yield: 2 cups (serving size: 1 tablespoon. Calories: 30

McDaniel Farms

Garden Project Team

By Steve Pettis, Natural Resources Agent

Team members should be prepared for **late August / early September**. Our volunteers will implement some previous plans for agroeconomics (the management of land and crops). We will be asked to prepare plantings in a variety of locations around the property and orchard. Part of our service will include pruning of native shrubs and preparation of naturalized areas for esthetics. Information regarding Team meetings will follow. If you would like to join the Team, e-mail:

John Bailey at: [janjohn1806 @att.net](mailto:janjohn1806@att.net)



Fun With Invasive Plants (A Contrarian's View)

by Mike Wiesenthal, GMG Secretary

An invasive plant, by definition, is one that infringes, spreads and crowds out other 'more desirable' vegetation...but, can't invasive plants be handsome? Should we not try to appreciate these plants as well? Never use 'creeping'-ivy, '- sedum or '-jenny in the landscape?!? If liriope has a mind of it's own and decides to wander in all directions, who is to blame? We've all heard the expression, "Better to use 'so and so' in a container or it will get away from you"...one just has to stay on top of aggression. An ivy **won't** climb a tree if you don't let it. Bamboo?...put it in an area where it doesn't influence plants around it (or neighbors, for that matter). If a new shoot pops through the earth in a spot that doesn't work for you, that's the time to either share it with a friend or perhaps, play the role of serial killer in the backwoods. An avid gardener can always stay ahead of a winsome runner, and isn't that the fun of working in the 'yarden'? Would you never plant vinca major because, over time, it grows and grows...and grows? One just has to enjoy the pleasure of containing its exuberance for random sprouting...it's called 'Spring cleanup'! And raspberries?...you pay a price for those wonderful cereal additions if you don't stay on top of them.

How about pond plants?...water celery, dropwort and parrot's feather are all 'invasive' if left unchecked through the Summer. They keep your pond clean and aerated if you work with them and your fish will love their shade.

Someone once told me not to plant a chameleon plant (looks like multi-colored ivy in the open), but it's a slow grower and can be controlled, if one is attentive. It's reddish-tinged foliage goes well with many annuals. I put it among a rocky environment...just to let it know 'who the real boss is'!! I love Chinese wisteria...oh, my!

To sum up, using a little Round-up (no endorsement implied), a weed 'whacker', a pair of pruners and even a lawn mower can make working with 'invasive' plants a good thing. And, remember, not all 'invasive plants are evergreen, which means the seasons take care of some deciduous darlings just by a flick of the weather calendar. Now, go out and plant some gooseneck loosestrife, black-eyed Susan's or morning primrose among your wild violets...and ENJOY.



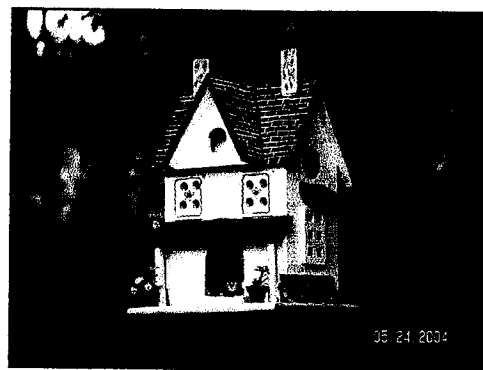
Yard Art

Beauty and Creativity

By Jan Bailey

One way to brighten your yard area is with 'yard art'. It can be anything from flagstones to garden flags, vases, pots, baskets, bowls, and boxes. Birdhouses, baths and feeders are available in a wide range of creations and it's great fun to create them yourself, with your family.

Wind chimes, bells and gongs, also, are perennial favorites that can be used anywhere. They come in styles that range from elegant to whimsical.



Outdoor illumination is very popular and boasts a wide variety of candle-holders, lanterns, torches and all sorts of normal, low-voltage and solar lights.

Flags, wind socks and all sorts of outdoor furniture, accent pieces like small tables, unusual benches and chairs are readily available. Most outdoor furniture is weather-resistant. Statuary also makes a wonderful focal point.

Think of your yard as a room of your home and decorate it! You'll be as comfortable and content as can be, while enjoying the beauty and peace of God's world. Jan





GMGs PLANNING FOR PLANT SALE 2005

****Yard Art Creations****

By JoAnne Elmore and Jan Bailey



NOW is the time to support 'YARD ART' creations for next year's PLANT SALE. Keep a lookout for SALE ITEMS, end of year BARGAINS at stores, flea markets and garage sales.

We are planning on creating a wide variety of items to sell. Since our budget is small and our dreams are big, we need all the help you can give. We are asking for your support by way of talent and materials. Listed below are items on our 'project list' that we hope you will look over and give us your ideas and help in getting these items and materials together.

WOOD PRODUCTS

(birdhouses / yard stakes and signs)

Need carpenters to build birdhouses or ready to decorate birdhouses. We need scrap wood for yard & garden signs and plaques. We need handy-crafters and painters to decorate.

CLAY POTS AND PLANT BOWLS

(new / all sizes and shapes)

These pots and bowls will be decorated and sold empty or filled with indoor houseplants. We sure could use the help of handy-crafters, painters and flower arrangers as finishers.

UNIQUE BASKETS

(indoor and outdoor)

The baskets will be used to create arrangements that are for outdoor display (weather-resistant) or indoor home and office decoration using mostly live plants with ornamentation. These were great fun to put together and were very popular at our 2004 sale.

HYPERTUFA TROUGHS

(outdoor planters for year-round display)

Unlike terra-cotta, hypertufa containers/troughs can be left out-doors through cold winters and are becoming popular with container gardeners or just to decorate a patio. We need 'molds' (boxes, bowls and pans) preferably two-piece/off-setting sizes that provide 2" to 3" of space to mold moss and mud into planters. This is a great project for crafters.

GOURDS

(for birdhouses and hanging planters)

If you grow gourds...save some for our sale. Gourds need to be 4" or larger (especially for birdhouses), stored to dry away from moisture (they get moldy) for a few months. Volunteers could help clean and decorate the gourds into lovely creations.

STEPPING STONES

(yard and garden accents)

These are made with pieces of glass, pottery, marbles and shells; popular and fun to make.

If you are a creator of lovely things (and we know who some of you are!), please share with us. More information to come on workdays. If you have questions or suggestions call us:

JoANNE Elmore, (770) 978-2819

Jan Bailey, (770) 979-0185