



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Oconee Master Gardeners Association

Fall 2011

What's in the Fall Edition?

Late Summer Color with the
Gardener's Confidence Collection

The "Compost Pile" Bulletin
Board

Cooperative Extension Update

Time to Plan Your Fall Garden

Ground Covers

Plant Production at Lockerly
Arboretum

What's Happening with the
Fingerlings?

Mark Your Calendar!!!
September 27th, 2011

Join us as we venture to McCorkle Nursery in Dearing, GA to spend the afternoon with world renown horticulturist Mike Sikes. We will be treated to a tour of the UGA research facility and discover how plants in the patented "Gardener's Confidence Collection" are propagated. This trip is sure to be an afternoon of fun and education. Invite your friends! As always, anyone is welcome to attend any of our meetings or field trips.



The Oconee Master Gardeners Association is a group meeting monthly for the purpose of fellowship and for sharing knowledge about the world of horticulture and our environment. Anyone is invited to attend our meetings or events free of charge. We pay no dues and have no structured committees. If you would like more information, email Shawn at mosshappyness@gmail.com.



UGA Cooperative Extension Update

Just How Hot Is It?

There are many descriptive terms for how hot something is. My Dad used to toss about the adage, "Hot as a two dollar pistol," when referring to weather and other things. A friend has another descriptive term and... well... we just won't go there! Hot as... well Hades seems to be tossed about quite freely this summer. Being no expert on that subject and not wanting to find out first hand let's just say it has been HOT! This continued heat has been the bane of our lawns, gardens and landscape plants including trees. We gardeners and our power bills have suffered unduly as well.

Just how hot has it been? A question from a client spurred me to take a look see and I gathered the following data from the UGA Automated Weather Site for Eatonton. You can access this same information at www.GeorgiaWeather.net

Here goes:

May 2011 records indicate that our first day above 90 degrees came on 5-10 with a high of 90.9 degrees. We then fired off (pardon the pun) 13 more days above 90 degrees during the remainder of the month with 5-31 topping out at 95.0 degrees.

June 2011 reads like a chapter from "Dante's Inferno." June 1 saw the mercury hit 99.0 degrees and the following 21 days in a row had highs over 90. Toss in the last 4 days of May and that gave us an uninterrupted string of 26 days over 90 degrees with June 21 hitting 100.8 on the Fahrenheit scale. The only June day under 90 was the 23rd and we hit 83.3 and recorded .28 inches of rain.

July didn't disappoint those who seek the heat either. The first 14 days of July busted 90. July 2nd hit 98.2 degrees. We then had a 3 day break with temps at 79.0, 86.4 and 86.9 respectively. We then hit a bit of a roll. The following 28 days through August 14 were all over 90 degrees.

A quick summary shows May with 14 days over 90. June had 29 days over 90. July came in with 28 days over 90 and August so far has had 14. That gives us a grand total of 85 days of 90 degree plus temps out of the 96 days from May 10 through August 14. That is hot no matter what you call it.

As a side note the Georgia Automated Weather System is suffering from the same budget woes as Cooperative Extension in general. Many weather stations are slated to be taken off line beginning in late summer. Once they are gone it is doubtful we will ever get them back. You can follow up on this situation by clicking on the following link. <http://www.griffin.uga.edu/aemn/AEMN.htm>

Keith Fielder
County Extension Coordinator
Putnam County Cooperative Extension

Late Summer Color with the Gardener's Confidence Collection

By: Mike Sikes

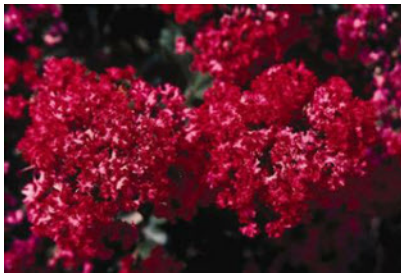
Late summer in the garden can sometimes be oppressive. Extreme heat and humidity can drive the gardener inside. Periods of drought can make one shut-off the hose and give up. It doesn't have to be this way. A well-planned garden can have color, form and texture throughout the year. With plants from the GARDENER'S CONFIDENCE COLLECTION and a little planning late summer color can be a breeze.

The GARDENER'S CONFIDENCE COLLECTION is an outstanding group of plants that delivers the highest possible performance in your garden. They are bred to have attributes of easy care, disease resistance, prolific blooms, beautiful foliage and interesting forms.

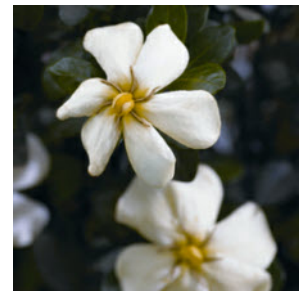
One of the newest plants in the collections is a mid-size (8-10 ') crapemyrtle named RED ROOSTER. This amazing red crapemyrtle is something to crow about ! The disease resistant foliage starts as a maroon-red in spring and transitions into a dark green. The brilliant red flowers thrive in the heat and humidity of late summer. It is the perfect plant to use as a specimen or grouping in any size garden. Deadheading or removing the spent flowers will encourage reblooming well into fall. Once established RED ROOSTER is very drought tolerant. It is hardy from zone 6 to 9.



If you are looking for a smaller size crapemyrtle for your garden consider the RAZZLE DAZZLE dwarf crapemyrtle series. These dwarf crapemyrtles explode into bloom in summer and linger into fall extending color throughout the seasons. The compact forms (3-5 ') are drought tolerant and excellent in a low maintenance garden. They also work great in containers for porch, patio and pool plantings. Varieties such as CHERRY DAZZLE, BERRY DAZZLE and STRAWBERRY DAZZLE even sound cooling and refreshing.



Add a flurry of whimsical snow-white fragrant blooms to your garden with the new PINWHEEL GARDENIA. This exceptionally cold hardy variety (zone 6) flowers from late spring through fall. The glossy, evergreen foliage provides year-round interest because it repeats bloom the pinwheel shaped flowers make a wonderful cut flower to enjoy in the home. It's smaller size of 4' by 4' makes it great for any size garden.



Hydrangeas are the star of the summer garden. Their big, bold blossoms of blue are cooling in the summer heat. Sort of like diving into a refreshing swimming pool. Many of the older varieties of hydrangeas only bloom once a year and only then if they didn't get frozen in the winter. However, the new repeat flowering variety MINI PENNY extends the blooming season into the fall. It's smaller size and repeat blooms makes it perfect for containers. Cut the blossoms for instant bouquets because MINI PENNY will soon be reblooming.



There are many other selections in the GARDENER'S CONFIDENCE COLLECTION that can add year round color and texture to your garden. Check out our web site at www.Gardener'sConfidence.com

Welcome to a garden you can count on.

Mike Sikes is the horticulturist and marketing coordinator for McCorkle Nurseries. He has spent more than 25 years in the horticulture industry. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia's School of Horticulture, is a certified master gardener, served as president of the Georgia Nursery Association, Friends of the State Botanical Garden of Georgia and Georgia Master Gardener Association. Mike is a wonderful speaker that appears all over the country sharing his vast knowledge of plants and creating a beautiful garden.

Time to Plan your Fall Garden

By: Dan Kelhoffer

With the thermometer hovering close to the century mark, it may seem a bit premature to be thinking about cool weather crops (or cool weather anything for that matter). Last year, however, I planted my Fall vegetables the last week in August. I had really good luck with Broccoli, Cabbage, Collards, Winter Squash and Lettuce.

A couple of thoughts concerning your Fall Plantings: First, it is a good time to have the Extension Office do the soil test that you may have been putting off. It takes 3 to 6 months for the soil to incorporate Lime, so adding this amendment in September makes the timing about right for your Spring plantings. Also, it is a good time to add Organic amendments, since any that you added in the Spring will have washed (or cooked) away. Cover the soil with an inch of Organic material (such as compost, manure, ground bark, etc.) and till it into the soil before planting your Fall vegetables.



In addition to the vegetables mentioned above, late August or early September is a good time to plant Spinach, Turnips, Beets, Radish, Onion Sets and Garlic.

Remember to soak the ground thoroughly after planting, since the soil will still be hot and the weather may not cooperate with the rain that your Fall crops need. Also, you might want to try water soluble fertilizers on your vegetables to give them a fast start.

For those interested in growing herbs, late August or September is a good time to plant Thyme, Rosemary, Sage and Parsley. Rosemary is a perennial and gets really big, if not trimmed occasionally. Sage will also survive over the Winter, as will Thyme.

Good luck with your Fall vegetable garden and remember "It's all about the SOIL"

Dan Kelhoffer is a Master Gardener from the 2010 class. He resides on Lake Sinclair in Putnam County. His vegetable garden is a beautiful sight as is his entire landscape.



Volunteer



OMGA members participate regularly in many volunteer projects. The ones listed below are ongoing projects which are supported by members. If you would like to help with one of the projects listed below, just email the contact person by clicking on their name!



The Lockerly Dirt Diggers (Baldwin Co.): Contact [Bradley Roberts](#)

The Dirt Diggers are a volunteer group that meets twice a month at Lockerly to help with gardening and landscape projects. This loyal group has become an invaluable resource to the upkeep and redevelopment of the arboretum. Our next volunteer day will be Wednesday, September 7th at 9am. Lockerly is located at 1534 Irwinton Road just a few miles from downtown Milledgeville. We encourage anyone in the community who has an interest in gardening to come join our group to share your horticultural knowledge and meet some great new people.

Putnam County Elementary School Garden Club (Putnam Co): Contact: [Lillian Butterworth](#)

The overwhelming success of the PCES garden club has resulted in a restructuring plan for this year. Students will be selected for a supplemental once a month after school event to complete work on the bird/butterfly garden and learn additional planting and gardening skills. Volunteers are needed to help with the after school activities. Additional information about scheduling will be forwarded as it is available.

Oconee River Greenway Project (Baldwin Co.): Contact [Alice Tenold](#)

Located on the river right outside Milledgeville on Hwy 49 W, the Oconee River Greenway provides an area for family picnics and relaxation. The native plant garden at the Greenway was designed and installed by the Oconee Master Gardeners Association with the assistance of the Oak Hill Middle School Aqueous Green Action Team. The OMGA native plant garden was designed to provide year-round interest. The fragrant spring and summer blooms of the sweetspire, clethra or summersweet, and the dwarf fothergilla attract butterflies and hummingbirds. The rosy pink late summer blooms of the muhly grass provide a nice contrast to the bright fall yellows of the summersweet and the tulip poplar, while the forthergilla and the sweetspire turn red and purple in autumn. Evergreen anise, holly, and wax myrtle serve as a winter backdrop for the red berries of the winterberry and provide food and shelter for the birds during the cold season. Events needing volunteers are held at the Greenway throughout the year. Alice and her husband Mike do a lot of the maintenance to the gardens so any volunteer help would be appreciated!

Andalusia Foundation (Baldwin Co.): Contact [Audrey Crumbley](#)

Andalusia the home of Flannery O'Connor is located off Hwy 441N in Milledgeville. The project at the historic home consists of general landscape maintenance, including a very old iris bed and nature trail, along with general pruning and debris cleanup. Workdays are scheduled as requested by the members of the foundation.

Critter Park (Putnam Co.): Contact [Ginger Clark](#)

Critter Park is located in downtown Eatonton on Marion Street. It is owned jointly by the city of Eatonton and Putnam County. During 2006, Better Home Town Eatonton was asked to turn the area into a park. The bicentennials for both the county and the city was to be celebrated in 2007. Several fund raising events occurred in order to provide a brick walkway, add benches, a drinking fountain, establish an entrance arbor, waste receptacles, a concrete pad for the gazebo and a bike rack. During the Hands on Georgia week in November 2007, Zelda Hughes and several other Putnam County Master Gardeners planted shrubs along the newly the fence and entrance area.

The maintenance of Critter Park is mainly done by the county with labor furnished by the prison workers. Under the diligent leadership of Marion Mahs, Master Gardeners have spent many hours grooming the park. There are scheduled work days but frequent maintenance is always needed. A planned workday will be upcoming in September or October and all members are invited to help with this worthy project.



Vaccinate Horses for West Nile Virus Now

West Nile Virus is showing up early in Georgia this year. Horses are highly vulnerable to this disease, and over a third of horses that get West Nile die. There is no treatment. If your horse has not already been vaccinated this year, call your veterinarian now and make an appointment to get the West Nile (and Eastern Equine Encephalitis) vaccination. There is no West Nile vaccine for humans, so disease prevention must rely on avoiding mosquitoes. Wear long sleeves, long pants, and insect repellent when outdoors. Encourage your neighbors to pour out any standing water in the community (mosquito larvae can complete their development in less than a cup of water in a tin can). Standing water that cannot be drained (ditches, for instance) can be treated with "mosquito dunks" or "mosquito donuts" (containing the non-toxic mosquito larva killer Bti). Cut back bushes and shrubs to increase air flow around the home and discourage mosquito flight. A third of horses infected with West Nile Virus will die; a third of those that survive will be paralyzed or have to be euthanized.

Professor N. C. Hinkle, Ph.D. (Nhinkle@uga.edu)
Dept. of Entomology
University of Georgia
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Athens GA 30602-2603
706-583-8043

For additional information contact Keith Fielder at the Putnam Co. Extension Office
Office: 706-485-4151 Email: kfielder@uga.edu

You Know you're A Master Gardener When:

You rejoice in rain...even after 10 straight days of it.

You have pride in how bad your hands look.

You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.

You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing.

Soil test results actually mean something.

IPM rules!

You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.

You look for gardens open to the public whenever you go on vacation.

Your non-gardening spouse is actually getting involved with your garden endeavors...digging ponds, building bird houses, watering, pruning, turning compost piles, planting...

And you definitely know your a Master Gardener when...

You are surrounded by terrific people who share your passion!

Created by Audrey, Emmitsburg, Md.

Why do potatoes make good detectives?
Because they keep their eyes peeled!!



Bert and Shawn Davis at
the world's largest baked
potato

Plant Production at Lockerly Arboretum

By : Jim Garner

Each year, as summer temperatures begin to moderate in September, the horticulture staff at Lockerly Arboretum in Milledgeville begins their annual production cycle for herbaceous perennials, cool-season annuals, shrubs, and ground covers. These plants are produced by a number of means in the Lockerly greenhouses and nurseries and are used for arboretum planting projects and our Spring Plant Sale. Assisting us in these endeavors are many dedicated volunteers who contribute their time and efforts to help us produce plants that will enhance the arboretum and provide us with much needed revenue. In doing this, we also seek to provide local gardeners with plant materials that may not be widely available in the area. This fall we will focus on the production of native shrubs and wildflowers, antique roses, conifers, and the top performing perennials from our flowerbeds.

There are three primary means of plant production at Lockerly - propagation by seed, propagation by cuttings or division, and production of finished plants from transplants or plugs we obtain from specialist propagators. We begin each year's production by sowing seeds of a wide variety of herbaceous perennials that can be germinated in the fall and over-wintered for planting or sale in the spring. Through the use proper techniques, we are able to produce high-quality perennials that generally flower this first year from seed. Later, seeds of cool-season annuals may also be sown for early spring flowering. Seed are sown in trays and placed in our greenhouse under conditions that promote rapid germination. When seedlings have reached the proper stage of development, they are transplanted to a finishing container, typically 4-inch square pots or 1-gallon nursery container. In late winter, sowing of heirloom vegetables and warm-season annuals also takes place.

Another way we start plants is from cuttings that are harvested from the arboretum and private gardens. Stem-tip sections of a variety of plant types are treated with a rooting hormone and stuck in trays that are placed in the greenhouse under intermittent mist until rooting is achieved. Roses, conifers, and other shrubs are produced in this manner, as are many hardy herbaceous perennials. Later in the season, tender herbaceous plants, such as geraniums can also be propagated in this manner. Once rooted, woody plants are generally transplanted and grown-on in our nursery. In many cases, more than one year is required to produce a finished woody plant.

In some cases, it is more efficient for us to begin with a plant that has been produced by a specialist propagator. Ferns, for instance, are typically propagated in laboratories by tissue culture, and we purchase small plants that are ready for transplant. Many herbaceous perennials are best produced using field-grown transplants from Michigan. Professional propagators often have advantages of a more favorable climate or specialized facilities that enable them to produce starter plants more efficiently than we could. By relying on the best techniques or sources, we are able to produce high-quality plants of almost any type and offer them to the gardeners of this area at very reasonable prices. And we can always use the help of interested volunteers in this endeavor. Please let us know if you are interested in helping us with our propagation program this year by contacting Bradley Roberts at 478-452-2112 or bradleyroberts@lockerly.org. Your participation can be very rewarding, and it greatly benefits our efforts at Lockerly Arboretum.

Jim Garner is a native Georgia gardener who holds degrees in Horticulture from The University of Georgia and Auburn University. He currently serves as the Executive Director of Lockerly Arboretum in Milledgeville.



Ground Covers

By: Marion Mahs

What is a ground cover?? The purpose of a ground cover is just that “to cover the area” and what works for one person is not satisfying to another person. I think we should consider ground covers as a permanent part of our landscape. Most of us have shady areas we want to have some type of growing plants. This is the best example of the purpose of a ground cover.

Here is what some authorities describe as a “ground cover”.

- Low growing plants requiring minimal maintenance and covering wide expanses
- Low growing plants that spread quickly to form a dense cover.
- An easy landscape plant
- Any plant that spreads quickly and is usually less than 24 inches in height.

All these statements are true and sometimes we don't realize that ground covers can be used in both sunny and shady areas.

Some plants for shade areas include:

Black Mondo Grass ‘*Ophiopogon planiscapus*’

Also called regular mondo grass. Slow growing and fairly drought tolerant.



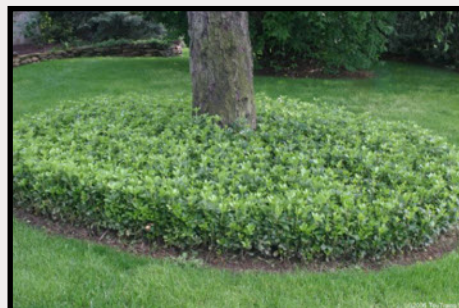
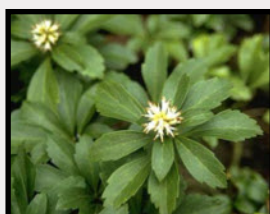
English Ivy ‘*Hedera helix*’

Fast growing, can be invasive, count on this plant covering everything-trees, etc. Sometimes used as a screen.



Spurge ‘*Pachysandra terminalis*’

Low and dense grower belonging to the boxwood family.



Some plants for sunny areas include:

Bugleweed 'Ajuga'

Many different varieties and colors available, fast spreader that can be rather invasive, blooms April through May



Yarrow 'Achillea millefolium'

Available in various colors and sizes. Fern like leaves and very colorful blooms.



Daylily 'Hemerocallis'

Many, many types available. Daylilies are rugged, adaptable, vigorous perennials that endure in a garden for many years with little or no care.



Plants that do well in shade or sun:

Liriope

There are many different colors and varieties. A member of the lily family. Some colors seem to leech out in direct sunlight.



One good thing about plants used as ground covers is most of these plants will grow in areas that nothing else seems to grow. Most are not fussy about their roots and they do not require much in the way of fertilizer or care. A bad thing is that most of these ground covers once established may (and probably will) spread to the point of becoming a problem.

Marion Mahs, a Master Gardener since 2007, says that his gardening knowledge is a "work in progress". He says every day is a learning experience and one day he hopes to be on the level with some of his mentors in the Oconee MG group. The one thing Marion is best recognized for is his volunteering in the community. He contributes many hours to projects in both Putnam and Baldwin counties.

The Compost File

A member bulletin board to post items to pass-a-long, sell, trade
or just tell to your fellow gardeners!

Lockerly Fall Plant Clearance Sale!!

Saturday, October 8th from 9AM to 1PM. Come help us reduce our plant inventory! Great deals and a special bargain section. Don't miss this chance to find the perfect plant for your fall planting season.

Olive Forge Herb Farm

It's not too late to plant an herb garden and we've got an assortment of perennial herbs ready to go. Rosemary, lavender, 4 varieties of oregano, catnip, valerian, maypop (Passionflower), mints, horseradish, elecampane, and stevia...to name a few culinary and medicinal herbs. We also have 1 gal. & 3 gal. hard-to-find plants one would have found in old Capitol Milledgeville's gardens... Pearl bush, althea, winter Jasmine. Our gift shop, The Still Room, is always stocked with herbal toiletries and culinary items plus beautiful items made by local craftsmen. We are Olive Forge Herb Farm, Brown's Crossing Rd., Baldwin County, and we're open every Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 9-5. Call 478-932-5737 or Google Olive Forge for directions

Georgia Mountain Sourwood Honey!! Putnam County Wildflower Honey!!

Rocky Hill Honey Farm
Rose Anne & Keith Fielder
rockyhilllocalhoney@live.com or 706-816-6482

Wanted!!

I'm seeking an old but running truck---cheap
Contact Linda Irvin: lindae@plantationcable.net

Hundreds of one gallon plastic pots FREE!!

Contact Keith Rowell at: (706)923-0031



A Busy Summer for the Fingerlings!

Congratulations to the 2011 Boot Camp Master Gardener Class! Join me in welcoming **Kathy Adams, Sandy Davis, Linda Ervin, Linda Henao, Will Holly, Debbie Johnson, Sherrill Jones, Lawrence Kenyon, Mark Lemons, Gayle Lewis, Hunter McComb, Wanda McKnight, Peggy McWhorter, Nancy Mittendorf, Cindy Mize, Susan Rutland and Mona Villa** to the friendship, education and satisfaction that comes with being a Master Gardener.

Jane Hersey treated the Gray Garden Club to a virtual tour through her Serendipity Gardens at Lake Sinclair during their July meeting. Jane expounded on the years of preparations and the labor of love both she and her husband Steve have invested in their lake side home. She gave us a detail explanation of the flora and fauna that abounds in the gardens. As Jane guided the members through the gardens she delighted us with tid bits on the acquisition for many of her plants. Through Jane's presentation the group learned many plants suitable to the climate of our region and she encouraged each member of her audience to cut from all plants, either for it's form, color or texture. Following the presentation Jane took cuttings from her gardens and proceeded to demonstrate how to combine and complement each cutting into a cheerful and light hearted arrangement. Many Thanks and much appreciation from Gray Garden club to Jane Hersey for a program well done.

The visit to Salamander Farms the home of **Debbie Waugh** proved to be a learning experience to all who attended. The opportunity to see that not only can we survive without many of today's conveniences but thrive with nature.

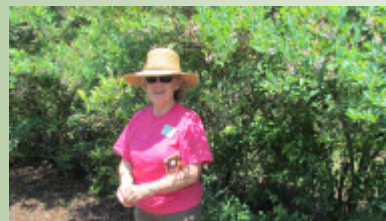


The staff of the Baldwin County Extension office provided us an great place for our July meeting. We were treated to an excellent educational program on venous and non-venous snakes by Jim Rodgers, owner of the Nearly Native Nursery. Jim strives to teach people that snakes are one of nature's creatures like us are trying to survive. All in attendance had the opportunity to gain a new respect for Jim's friends.





Our trip to visit the UGA Hort Farm and Plant Introductions Incorporated with Dr. Durr was a wonderful day! The heat was sweltering but the group hung in for the afternoon to learn as much from Dr. Durr as we could. He said we were real "troopers" for weathering the extreme heat. We were given the rare opportunity to purchase recently introduced plants for wholesale prices and he gave us freebies of some newly propagated plants.



Marsha Herren's
Lavender Cookies

- 1 C. Softened butter
- 1 C. Sugar
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 1/2 C. All purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. Baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. Salt
- 1 Tblsp. Organic lavender flowers

Line cookie sheets with parchment paper. In medium bowl of electric mixer, beat butter until creamy. Add sugar and beat until combined. Add egg. Beat in as much of flour as you can with mixer. Stir in remaining flour and lavender. Drop by teaspoons, 2 inches apart on parchment. Bake at 300 for 8-10 min. Cool on wire rack.

If you haven't eaten one of Marsha Herren's homemade cookies, you have missed one of life's treats. Nestled in the woods of Baldwin County, Darryl and Marsha Herren owners of Olive Forge are a remarkable couple. Olive Forge is the only true herb farm in Georgia. Their organically grown herbs are the ingredients for dried cooking herbs, vinegars, soaps and many other products that they have for sale. Having a place to buy fresh herbs is great but the best experience is visiting the relaxed atmosphere of their home and sharing with two wonderful people their knowledge and love for gardening. So on your next outing stop in and visit with them. It will be a refreshing experience.

Olive Forge
161 NW Brown's Crossing Road
Baldwin County
(478)932-5737
Open Thursday-Saturday 9-5

As we celebrate the one year anniversary of the newsletter, I want to thank everyone for their contributions to keep the items fresh, original and informative. I look forward to the next year and hope that many of our new members will help us with new ideas and items of interest. It has amazed me how we have grown in the last year. The newsletter goes out to more than 125 folks and grows weekly by only word of email so to speak. But as I have said before, the newsletter is only as good as the information sent to me by the members. So, keep me in mind when you go to a presentation or make pictures at a garden club meeting. I am always looking for interesting topics to pass on to our readers!

Happy Gardening!!

Shawn