



# Three County Master Gardeners' Association

## Newsletter

December 2011

### Our Executive Board

*President:* Rosemarie Sells, rosemariesells@yahoo.com,  
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*Treasurer:* Ed Novak, edvisor@aol.com, 770-267-3853

*Secretary:* Shirley Turner, sturner@harrisonpoultry.com,  
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### County Coordinators

*Barrow County:* Charlotte Phillips,

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*Walton County:* Jean Selph, willowoaks@hotmail.com,  
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*Newsletter Coordinator:* Margaret McCollum,  
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### President's Corner

Seasons Greetings Master Gardeners,

Have you been enjoying the beautiful fall in all its splendor? This year more than ever I've been aware of the way the trees have slowly changed colors and just given us one glorious display after another. It is hard to say good bye to the summer garden but some fall planting will bring some spring surprises and as master gardeners I think we are always expecting something to come up or at least survive the winter. Speaking of winter, we are quietly moving toward December where it all begins and our Quarterly Christmas Party is coming up soon. The location will be different thanks to the efforts of Charlotte Phillips and the kindness of the Winder Women's Club. We will hold our Christmas Party, Thurs. Dec. 8th, at the Winder Women's Club at 6:30pm. The club will afford us warmth and better sound for our program. The address of the Women's Club is--- 15 West Midland Ave., Winder which I think is in the downtown

area. The Barrow County 4-H Club would like to do some caroling for us and we certainly look forward to being entertained. Bring your favorite dish and we will put it all together and feast and fellowship. Honestly last year's food was almost too good to be true.

Also, I believe Donna Hut has mailed out some ballots for us so that we can vote in our 2012 Three County Master Gardener Board. Please bring them with you, and if you lost it, I believe we will have some available. You will find out what a productive year we have had and how many opportunities await us. Master Gardeners are always learning, always sharing, always serving in their communities....some of the most generous people on earth. I can only say "Thanks for your Giving" at this holiday season and I can't wait to see you on the evening of Dec. 8th. Rosemarie

### **Nana's Garden**

By Rosemarie Sells,  
Association President &  
Master Gardener

Once upon a time there was a grandmother of five who had a fleeting thought of having a garden with her grandchildren. The story takes place down highway 11 about 5 miles out of Monroe on the road to Social Circle. 2523 Whitney Road to be exact, the Clegg residence. Since "Nana" had become a Master Gardener several years ago, she was supposed to know everything, but alas, I didn't. We had to pick a spot and analyze the soil. Stay away from the red clay and look for a good place in the sun and make sure we can get to water even if we have to tote it, which we did in buckets, and don't mess up the yard for goodness sakes. My last gem of wisdom was to plant some things that would come up fast so as not to disappoint the children. Before I had time to ponder the whole idea too long, it had caught on and here comes Mr. Bill Clegg, Sr. (the other grandfather) over on his big tractor and my son-in-law followed him with a Kubota something or other. We hit great topsoil and they turned it over at least 12 inches. Too late to back out now.

I began with Andrew, the 6 year old who was in Kindergarten. Messing around with tools like the weasel really appealed to him as we picked out a place to plant some radishes. It seemed reasonable to give each grandchild their own row to plant something they might like and this was a pretty good plan. After we sowed the very fine seeds and patted them down, he said, "This is excellent" which was music to my ears. After 2 or 3 weeks, we harvested radishes and promptly took them to Mrs. Dally's kindergarten class for Show and Tell along with some bowls and ranch dressing so everyone could

have a taste. It was a nice surprise, especially since Andrew had planted them with a just a little help from Nana. This week I asked Andrew how he felt about doing the garden and growing the radishes as he rode along in my back seat. *"It was weird," he said, so of course, I said, "What do you mean?" He told me that he expected the radishes to be sweet, like a fruit, but they were not. So we had a good learning experience about this pretty red vegetable. We watched those pretty round shapes emerge from the ground and it was a joy to pull them up and see how different they were.*

The next row went to Ashley, the 10 year old, and we decided on lettuce since she really likes to help out in the kitchen and most everyone likes a good salad. We went for the variety pack so we could see the "Spring Mix", baby spinach and all. Ashley did a nice job of sowing the seed carefully and since it was around April, or early May, I knew it wouldn't be long before we would see some action. After she helped tote the buckets of water and we had a little rain, the green reward came. We picked 4 or 5 times, even using the lettuce to complement some sandwiches for the family and guests. I'm always amazed at lettuce myself and it did not disappoint us.

Ashley also had a lot to do with planting some butterbeans and I'll save her comments on the garden for later.

Next came Abby, who is 11, and she always surprises me with her profound thoughts. She and I have had some good moments sketching as well as planting flowers. Among other things, she loves onion rings so you can guess what she wanted to plant. Here I go to Buckles Hardware and pick out a little bundle of onion sets. Do I have much experience with this? Very little but we give it our best shot. Our yield was small and we decided something had come along and stolen them out of the garden. Just a small garden reality---there are some villains, but she got over it and we put our expectations on the butterbeans.

Then came Aaron, the 13 year old musician par excellence, and he decided that squash casserole was a good reason to plant squash. He went to get a haircut with his Papa and promptly made the comment, "I've got to get back to plant squash", and I was waiting on him. We made little hills and so enjoyed talking about why you do things the way you do in a garden. Holes were made with his fingers and in went the seeds. I think we did 3 to each mound. Then we waited, not to be disappointed, this time. Those plants had a good flat spot in the sun in good soil and we picked yellow gold. Looking back today, Aaron commented when asked about the garden experience, that he accidentally put too many squash seeds in those holes but other than that, everything was a good experience.

Teenager with an interest in working in the garden is a winning combination to me. He also enjoyed helping his dad set up a sprinkler system to help us out toward the end and he helped me with a scarecrow.

Then Ashley and Abby helped me plant a row of butterbeans. We should have done more but space was a priority. They decided to show me a dance called the Cupid Shuffle and performed it on top of the row. That's a delightful way to "plant-a-row" and pats it down. Maybe a little too much pressure but they still came up and showed their stuff. What a learning experience for Nana. A little dancing in the garden is perfectly all right. That was the part Ashley loved the most. Me too!

Nana sneaked in about ten tomato plants that I had grown from seed and then we went on to sunflowers and watermelons. Presently we are harvesting these big yellow suns planted with bird seed and enjoying bringing them to the table. Later the birds can feast on them. Andy helped with the sunflowers and they are real show-offs.

Lastly, Miss Mandy, who is 8, helped me with lots of chores, but the watermelons were her specialty. We planted 4 to 6 plants and not all of them lived....but the one that did became the family pet. Everyone enjoyed going out and seeing how big this melon was going to get. Speculating and speculating until finally the day came when we could speculate no more and had to pick it and cut it round the kitchen table. It probably weighed close to 5 pounds so there was plenty for everyone to have a generous slice. Needless to say, Mandy's favorite part was planting the melons and doing some watering she says. I'm enclosing a picture of this happy moment when the melon was shared.

Now for Nana's favorite part---it had to be the neat conversations I had with each of the grandchildren as we worked alongside of each other and shared thoughts about gardening and life. Yes, it took a lot of time, but it is time I will never regret, making memories in the garden and just being a part of their lives....no doubt a great blessing. Well, what about my garden? ---it is still there waiting on me!



## I Like Vines

By Dora Fleming, Master Gardener  
& Newspaper Columnist

I like vines. Most of them bloom and they bound up out of the ground enthusiastically reaching out for something to climb. And they seem to me very creative about their system of attaching themselves to whatever they find that will assist them in their quest to get up off the ground.



Some vines like Poison Ivy and Virginia Creeper, grow clinging roots which adhere to tree trunks or other promising obstructions in their path. These plants are among the genus of vines that will grow away from the light, enabling them to “find” the shady sides of large trees or rock outcroppings.

One of my favorite climbing adaptations for vines are the little adhesive suction cups used by the Climbing Hydrangea, *Hydrangea anomala* subsp. *petiolaris*. The flowers on this plant look like tiny Hydrangea blooms and the plant is purported to cover brick walls quickly. Probably this is true, but I have never been able to get one to live for longer than a week or so no matter how carefully I plant it or search for just the right site for it. I've given up.



Lots of plants use a curling tendril to establish purchase wherever they want to go. Gourds do this and even produce a little spring between the plant and whatever it uses for a support. This works to the plant's advantage, I suppose, in windy situations that might send the whole thing plummeting downward.



The Clematis genus doesn't bother with tendrils or clingy roots, but twines its limbs about whatever it wants to climb. Morning Glories and many of the annual vines like Moon Flower, *Datura wrightii*, send their new growth upward and loop around whatever they find. I try to encourage these vines to



grow where I want them, but they will only climb clockwise.

Some vining plants don't even attempt to climb—Periwinkle is one of these. Ground Ivy, *Glechoma hederacea*, L is another. (My brother TOLD me not to plant Ivy down by the creek in my Georgia garden.) The vigor of the plants in this genus makes them ideal as groundcovers or a monumental nuisance that must be routed out.

Bougainvillea, *Bougainvillea Spectabilis*, doesn't use any of the usual methods, but lets its thorns hold it up. Climbing Roses do this too. Works for them. I don't even want to talk about Wisteria, Kudzu, and Japanese Honeysuckle.



### Three County Master Gardeners' Association Treasurer Report

By Ed Novak, Treasurer & Master Gardener

Account with BB&T      Checking 1305 (61305)  
Available Balance: \$2,292.51  
Posted Balance: \$2,292.51  
Interest Paid (YTD): N/A  
Interest Rate: N/A  
Posted Transactions Last 30 days:  
10/12/11 Check # 1012 \$341.50  
Balance \$2,292.51  
10/4/11 Deposit \$513.60 Balance \$2,634.01

### DECEMBER

Flower: Holly, Narcissus, Poinsettia



*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to everyone!*