



# Over The Garden Gate

April 2022 | Volume XXV Issue II

## Garden Walk Returns in May

By Pat Bishop

With the coming of spring, we are all eager to be out of doors, and one way to enjoy it is to visit the gardens featured during Hall County Master Gardeners' Garden Walk on May 21.

Terri Andrews, chairperson of this year's walk, introduces us to what to expect as we have the opportunity to enjoy six outstanding gardens in Hall County, each giving us a different perspective on the art of gardening:

"Our Garden Walk is just around the corner, and our garden hosts and volunteers are busy working to make this the best garden walk ever. Each garden has something unique to offer any gardener. I'm sure that each garden visitor will be impressed and inspired. We'll now be using QR codes in the gardens to help visitors identify and learn about the beautiful plantings."

As you plan your visit to the gardens, you'll find in this issue a preview of what to expect. Included in each description is a little background on the gardeners and how their gardens evolved. Get out your map and plan your route.

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### **The Hinton Garden**

When Annette and Guy Hinton moved into their new home seven years ago, the gardens had pretty much gone to seed. Hours spent outside cured that problem.

A retired dietician and chef, Annette learned gardening from her farmer grandparents in Illinois. She tackled the front garden as she had to work around the grandfather trees that shaded most of the front. She immediately decided that she would not battle the shade, but rather, embrace it. With beds that surrounded the little existing grass, she designed the garden for her Master Gardener training to include evergreens, Japanese maples, and camellias, all the while working around the bald cypress that graced the lawn.

However, the couple's biggest challenge was in the back which they proudly refer to as their "self-made garden." With three acres spanning three streets in their neighborhood, they quickly decided to limit the major work to the immediate area behind the home's sunroom.



Annette and Guy Hinton welcome you to their garden for a walk.



Annette describes their garden as a "foliage and wildlife garden."

See GARDEN WALK, 2

## Dr. Mihm Shares Apple Facts

By Pat Bishop

Speaking at the Hall County Master Gardeners' February meeting, Dr. Stephen Mihm, associate professor at UGA, shared more facts about apples than seeds sown by Johnny Appleseed.

Dr. Mihm became interested in Georgia heritage apples with his work at the Heritage Apple Orchard located at the UGA Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center in Blairsville.

Did you know that all apples' lineage can be traced to the wild apples that grew in the Shan Mountain Range of Kazakhstan where bears helped spread them by selecting and eating only the sweet ones that eventually became fit for human consumption?

Other interesting facts that Dr. Mihm shared include the following:

- The evolution of the Silk Road carried sweet apples to Europe.
- Roman mosaics depict apple cultivations and grafting.



Dr. Stephen Mihm

Photo by Don Linke

- Between 1650 and 1700, New England became an “explosion” of apple cultivars, and Americans consumed a “staggering amount alcohol” as they enjoyed 200 proof cider.
- Thomas Jefferson was the first Southerner to experiment with apples.
- Native American tribes in the North Georgia mountains developed apple cultivars and planted vast orchards.
- North Georgia settlers recognized the value of these orchards that the tribes had to abandon when displaced to Oklahoma

- From 1623 to 2000, close to 7,000 varieties existed.
- In the early twentieth century, Georgia became the “hottest place for growing apples in the US.”
- Local popular varieties began to become rare when cultivars such as golden and red delicious were developed for easy shipping, a key to the economy in the 1930s.
- In the 1960s to 1970s, preservation of local apple varieties began when Creighton Lee Calhoun of North Carolina, researched and saved 300 to 400 varieties of Southern apples.

So why is Dr. Mihm a supporter of this preservation? He cited a number of reasons, including the demand from upscale restaurants to serve “the unique, not Granny Smith”; the growth in consumption of hard cider and spirits; the interest in agritourism by those Georgians who want to “get back to nature”; and, perhaps most important of all, the genetic material that will “provide resources for endangered cultivars.”

### Garden Walk

continued from 1

Annette and Guy worked on the back garden design for their Master Garden certification, with Annette laying out the pool configuration and Guy working with the plant design.

Guy has configured gravel walkways; built a fire pit surround by benches that he made from fallen trees; installed a water fountain; relocated hellebores planted by the original owner; and built a shed that shields the pool equipment and tools.

Recently, the back garden has been surrounded by a seven-foot fence so that it can flourish without interference from pesky deer. As an example of previous deer damage, you will find an aucuba with an unusual shape. Before the fence was installed, the deer had eaten the bottom half of the shrub, creating a shape that looks like a giant cocktail glass. The Hintons are happy to see that it is gradually filling itself in and hope that within the next year, it will regain its full shape.

Annette describes their garden as a “foliage and wildlife garden.” She hopes that visitors will understand their garden is foliage that thrives in shade, not meant for sunny slopes.

When you visit the Hintons' garden, expect to enjoy garden paths that wander around a bubbling pool and through garden gates; pay close attention to the labeled plantings; admire the use of vintage gates and statuettes; note shade-loving plants and ideas about deer resistant planting.

See GARDEN WALK, 3

## Garden Walk

Continued from 2

**The Sloyer Garden**

Linda Sloyer describes her garden as “a holy place,” for her parents and she and her husband have tended this garden for over 45 years. In 1994, when she and her husband moved back to the home where Linda grew up, the house and gardens had sat unattended for six years after her parents passed.

Linda became a Hall Master Gardener in 2015, although she has gardened since her youth. When she was a little girl, her father gave her a packet of radish seeds, and when they sprouted in two days, she was hooked on gardening and became “a lover of the earth.” Part of her Master Gardener contributions today include working with the Junior Master Gardener program for fifth graders at Riverbend Elementary, and she enjoys every day that she can pass along her gardening knowledge to children.

A retired learning disabilities teacher and teacher-of-teachers, Linda and her husband carved paths up the hill behind their home, clearing out dead growth to create a sloping garden, defining garden beds with piles of rock left by her father, and digging water pools for accents and sound. She has tended the giant Professor Sargent camellia (*Camellia japonica* ‘Professor Sargent’) that her mother planted in the 1970s, planted trees to fill in the gaps, and added perennials and annuals for color. In her garden, she has hosted celebrations of life, weddings, and parties.

On your garden visit, expect to see



Linda Sloyer became “a lover of the earth” at an early age.

an “old garden woodland” accented by mature trees, camellias, Natchez crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia* ‘Natchez’), and a grandly shaped Japanese ‘Seriyo’ maple (*Acer palmatum*). As you approach the arched gate at the end of the driveway, look to your right for the stately crape myrtles and honeysuckle. Walking up the sloping hill to the back of the garden, you’ll pass a grandiflora magnolia that Linda did not even know existed until a storm went through several years ago and destroyed three large oaks.

As you circulate throughout the garden, be sure to catch the variety of plants in each of the six large rock-lined beds. In one, will be hostas and ferns of multiple varieties; in another, hydrangeas; another, Florida sunshine anise and bramble ferns. Be sure to check out the Southern smoke tree that Linda has named “Grace.” And do not miss the daylily bed that holds 17 different varieties. Make note of the mature fatsia that sprouts new growth from the ground and the “contorters” such as the whipcord (*Thuja plicata* ‘Whipcord’) and Harry Lauder’s Walking Stick (*Corylus avellana* ‘Contorta’). Look for the 120 burgundy glow ajuga spilling on-

to one of the terraced slope. Be sure to note the star of the show: the Japanese yew (*Taxus cuspidate*).

Not only is Linda’s garden filled with an abundance of evergreens, perennials, and annuals, but also it comes alive with whimsies such as colorful windmills, a bird house made from the home’s original mailbox, three wagon wheels from her grandfather’s farm in Winder, a moss-spotted picnic table, a comfortable wooden rocker, and a sign that tells us to “sit long, talk much, laugh often.”

Linda explains that her garden “ain’t no botanical garden,” but it is a “walking, talking, wine-drinking” place for enjoyment.



Linda inspects the star of the garden: the Japanese yew.

See GARDEN WALK, 6

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# Native Shrubs and Trees Serve Many Roles

By Karin Hicks

As I walk around my neighborhood, I see yard after yard that are complete dead zones for pollinators. These highly manicured landscapes don't have a limb or leaf out of place, every plant meticulously sheered with not a bloom in sight. Even worse are the invasive plants intentionally planted. Now more than ever, it is critical that every homeowner, farmer and commercial property owner plant native plants that serve important ecological functions that are otherwise being destroyed with all the development in our area and are void in our neighborhood landscape designs.

I challenge you to take inventory of the plants in your landscape and evaluate how many support pollinators. Nectar and pollen plants are important food sources for these adult insects. But you can take your garden to the next level by providing food sources for the larval stage. How many host plants are included in your landscape? Did you know that many of the host plants for Georgia butterflies and moths are trees and shrubs?

Native trees and shrubs serve many roles. They provide sheltering habitat for wildlife such as nesting birds. Their plentiful blooms provide ample pollen and nectar for the foraging pollinators and frequently serve as host plants for numerous lepidoptera species. They also create a bounty of berries and nuts in the fall to feed the birds and other wildlife through the winter.

Whether you live in an HOA neighborhood or rural property, ornamental plants provide a means to improve your local environment. Choosing na-

tive ornamentals over non-native is a commitment to support these imperiled insects. There are numerous options that can be included in a formal or informal design while adding diversity to your landscape. Here are a few to consider:

## TREES

**Tulip tree** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) grows between 50 to more than 100 feet. The tree has long, straight trunk with large showy flowers and star shaped leaves that turn bright gold in the fall. It serves as a larval host to our state butterfly, Eastern Tiger swallowtail. The flowers are also valuable for birds, bees and butterflies.



**The tulip flower provides valuable sustenance for birds, bees and butterflies.**

**Dogwood** (*Cornus florida*) is a nectar source for pollinators who are attracted to the white or pink flower. Red berries develop in fall, supporting many birds and is host to the spring azure butterfly. This tree grows anywhere from 20 to 40 feet and does best in well-drained, acidic soil in partial to deep shade.

**Catalpa** (*Catalpa bignonioides*) tree grows between 25 to 40 feet in wet to

moist soils. It has large heart shaped leaves with clusters of ruffled flowers that support bumble and carpenter bees. Is often host to the catalpa sphynx caterpillar.

**Red Maple** (*Acer rubrum*) grows 50 to 100 feet tall in full sun to partial shade and moist soils. It has colorful fall foliage and red flowers in early spring. It is a good resource for bees and birds and provides caterpillar food for many showy moths such as rosy maple and cecropia moth.

**Wax Myrtle** (*Morella cerifera*) is a low maintenance tree/shrub that grows 15-20 feet. The glossy green leaves are aromatic. Inconspicuous flowers appear in spring with grayish white fruit forming on female plants in summer. It is host to red banded hairstreak. These tough, durable shrubs make excellent screens and informal hedges.

**Black Cherry** (*Prunus serotina*) tolerates wide range of soil pH conditions. The pendulous white flowers are a nectar source for many solitary bees. Growing up to 72 feet tall, it serves as larval host for numerous butterflies and moths.

**Sassafras** (*Sassafras albidum*) is host to the spicebush swallowtail butterfly. It grows 30-60' tall and suckers freely, often forming thickets. The bright green, aromatic leaves have three shapes and turn yellow to orange to red in fall. The sassafras requires male and female plants to produce dark blue berries on red stems.

See NATIVE SHRUBS, 6

## Book Review: *A World on the Wing*

By Russell England

Can you imagine any migratory bird flying over 7,000 miles non-stop? While carrying a backpack? Seems incredible, but the bar-tailed godwit has been documented doing just that. A shorebird, this godwit makes its incredible journey across the Pacific Ocean from Alaska to New Zealand. The backpack? A tiny geolocator, a transmitter that logs incredibly precise GPS locations every few minutes and stores these locations so they can be downloaded to a computer once the bird is recaptured.

The godwit's incredible journey is just one of many astounding avian feats that have been documented in recent years using miniaturized electronics in ornithological studies around the globe. This and many others are described in *A World on the Wing* by Scott Weidensaul, a self-taught amateur who has volunteered with dozens of studies involving capture, recapture, tagging and data recovery of many species of birds. He is a professional nature writer, having authored nearly 30 books, including one Pulitzer Prize finalist.

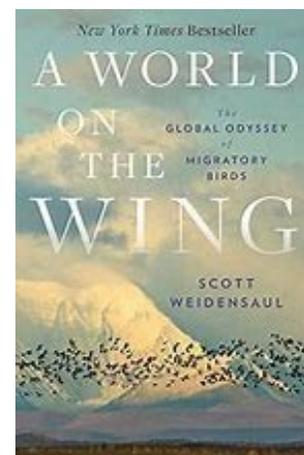
Almost all migratory birds make their journeys entirely on instinct without help from parents or other adults who have made the trip before. Only a few groups of birds, including waterfowl and cranes, travel in multi-generational flocks. The rest are genetically endowed with the ability to know what direction to travel, for how long, and the time of year they need to begin their journey. I will not attempt to explain the details of

what is known or postulated about how birds navigate, but suffice it to say it has to do with quantum mechanics and magnetic fields.

While the book is primarily about migratory birds, it also describes long endurance flights of non-migratory species. For example, the frigatebird of the Galapagos Islands may range far out in the open ocean while foraging for food. A sleep research study by Germany's Max Planck Institute attached EEG sensors to monitor frigatebird brain activity and GPS trackers to monitor their movements. The study revealed the birds' foraging trips lasted an average of six days and some lasted as long as ten during which the birds covered more than 1,800 miles.

A wandering albatross, with its 11-foot wingspan may travel 74,000 miles while circumnavigating Antarctica two or three times without touching land. These birds nest only every other year, laying a single egg and raising only one chick. They compensate for a low reproduction rate by living a long lifespan. The oldest known wild bird of any species is a Laysan albatross that was banded as an adult in 1956 and at the age of at least 69, is still returning to Midway Atoll in the Hawaiian chain each year to nest.

Killing migrating birds for human consumption represents a major threat to many species in some parts of the world. The island of Cyprus lies at the nexus of great migratory flyways connecting central Europe to



Africa and the Middle East. Although illegal, trappers use mist nets at night and sticks coated with glue, along with loudspeakers playing recorded birdsongs to lure the unsuspecting birds to the traps. An estimated one to three million birds are trapped annually on Cyprus alone. Millions of birds are also taken in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, France and Italy. Killing of migratory birds is also widespread across Asia.

These days, the thought of eating songbirds is somewhat abhorrent to most of us in the United States, but prior to the passage of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act in 1918, market hunting for many species of songbirds was widespread. A former co-worker of mine told me years ago that his family ate robins when he was growing up in southern Georgia.

While market hunting is an obvious threat to birds, loss of habitat is perhaps a more serious, but subtle, threat. Collisions with buildings, predation by feral housecats and pesticides also take their toll.

The book is well written and easy to read. It is available in the Hall County Library system.

## GARDEN WALK

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**The Sowers Garden**

In one of Gainesville's 1950s neighborhoods, Carol Sowers' garden sits behind her home atop a rocky ridge, surrounded by a mature forest area. Sounds as though not much gardening can happen here, right? Think again. Carol has "a little bit of everything" encircling a green space that she says is just a "common 1950s design." However, her garden is anything but "common."

A retired elementary science teacher, Carol became a Master Gardener in 2010, one of the first things she did when she retired. That was 12 years ago, and she's still an active

gardener. She volunteers with Elachee's Nature Academy and the Junior Master Gardener program. She says she "can't sit inside," always volunteering or working in her own garden of 20 years.

When she moved to her home, she learned to work with the mature trees and shrubs left by previous owners. She decided that she had too much shade, so she chose to "embrace what was back there." Working with the center green space, she refined and developed the beds that encircle it.

When you arrive at Carol's garden, you'll see the mature camellia, the weeping red bud, and pine straw that gradually moves forward each year to create a wider left bed. Following the path to the back garden, you'll come upon part of the three-quarters acre lot (a rarity in downtown). At the gate, the beds begin.



A showpiece of Carol Sowers' garden is the colorful garden shed.

The koi pond sits by the gate, surrounded by an interesting plant that Carol says is a cross between fatsia and ivy. Japanese rose (*Kerria japonica*) climbs over the fence and up the magnolia. Native azaleas planted by the previous owner fill spaces under the mature trees.

See GARDEN WALK, 7

## NATIVE SHRUBS

Continued from 4



A bumble bee is attracted to the Black Locust's blooms.

**Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)** is highly attractive to birds, butterflies, hummingbirds and bees. It serves as larval host for silver spotted skipper butterfly.

## SHRUBS

**Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)** serves as host plant for Henry's elfin butterfly and grows 10 to 20 feet.

Flowers appear in spring on separate male and female plants. Plant in average soil in sun or part shade, but gives more fruit production in full sun. Yaupon makes a great screen or windbreak.

**American holly (*Ilex opaca*)** is valuable to honey bees, birds and butterflies while serving as larval host for Henry's elfin butterfly. This shrub prefers well-drained, acidic soil and can grow up to 60 feet. Evergreen leaves provide a nice backdrop to the red fruit.

**Winterberry (*Ilex verticillate*)** grows 6 to 12 feet and bears bright red or orange fruit in fall and winter. This shrub is dioecious. Birds and bees use winterberry as berry and nectar source while it serves as a

host and nectar plant for butterflies.

**New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*)** is a small shrub with fragrant white flowers that resembles a spirea. The flowers attract many pollinators, including hummingbirds. This shrub thrives in extremely poor soils, as it is able to fix nitrogen from the air with the help of symbiotic microorganisms. It is the host plant for spring azure butterfly.

Help encourage your community to add more diversity in the landscape, be it at the front entrance to a subdivision, around the community center, along roads or in home gardens.

For a comprehensive list of host plants for Lepidoptera go here: [BackyardButterfliesbrochure.pdf\(georgiawildlife.com\)](http://BackyardButterfliesbrochure.pdf(georgiawildlife.com))

**GARDEN WALK**

Continued from 6

A showpiece of the garden is the colorful garden shed. Carol explains that she was about to have it removed, for the roof had fallen in. However, a repairman replaced the roof, rewired it, used the original door as a window, built shelves, and added a new door to create a potting shed par excellence. Here, castor bean, coleus, dusty miller, aucuba, and luffa sit under grow lights, waiting to be planted in the warmth of spring.

Being a quilter, Carol says that her garden is a “patchwork” of “a little bit of everything.” Each section of the garden has a theme, but each complements the other. Look for these “blocks” as you tour Carol’s quilt:

**Fairy**--Tiny ephemerals such as

shooting star, wild ginger, and blood root surround the miniature Japanese maple.



Carol constructed and stacked the colorful “quilted” bed for annuals.

**Quilt**—Metal flamingos, Flo and Mingo, gracefully curve under mature trees. Carol constructed and stacked the colorful “quilted” bed for annuals.

**Storm Damage**—Several years ago, a neighbor’s tree fell into her garden during a storm. She’s now working

on reviving damaged plants and adding new ones.

**Vegetable**—Carol built the raised beds that hold garlic, English peas, broccoli, herbs, and lettuce.

**Deck**—The decaying stump of a fallen oak tree looks like an outdoor sculpture as it sits surrounded by ferns, aucuba, and hellebores.

**Bonsai**—Ten years ago, Carol took her first bonsai class at Plant City Bonsai in Clermont. She now has bonsais of Japanese maple, redwood, azalea, and juniper.

Before you leave Carol’s garden, be sure to stop at the plant swap at the top of the driveway. Here, take home a pass-along plant donated by fellow Master Gardeners. Who knows? That one just might become part of your “potpourri of stuff,” just as those that Carol has brought into her garden.

**Cresswind Community Garden**

On a cold day in March, I visited Cresswind Community Garden for the first time. Sarah Galshack, a Cresswind resident and a past president of Hall County Master Gardeners, greeted me for a tour. As we entered the garden, Dave Rusk, another Hall County past president, conducted a class on bulb growing, surrounded by Cresswind residents enjoying the class and the warm sun. Immediately, I could surmise that this garden was a community effort managed by community members.

A Master Gardener transplanted from Volusia County, Florida, Sarah

became a Cresswind resident in 2008 and has not shelved her gardening yet. Even though she does not participate too much in the digging and planting these days, she continues to share her garden interests and knowledge through the garden club’s administrative side. She actively organizes events, writes for the community’s newsletter, designs new plantings, and helps to support the HOA landscape standards.

The garden, fondly named “Common Ground,” consists of 59 raised beds that residents rent by the year to enjoy digging in the dirt and getting back to nature. They grow anything from perennials, to annuals, to seasonal vegetables. Members work individually and as groups to



Sarah Galshack greets visitors to the Cresswind Community Garden.

maintain the surrounding growth, but the garden is not limited to only garden club members; residents are invited to social events such as scarecrow contests, plant sales, and community parties.

See GARDEN WALK, 8

**GARDEN WALK**

Continued from 7



Cresswind Community Garden has been recognized as a “Monarch Waystation.”

recognized as a “Monarch Waystation,” and last year’s efforts saw the release of over 200 adult monarchs.

To meet the challenge of the pesky deer, the club recently installed a seven-foot fence that surrounds the beds. Dave has plans for the garden’s next beautification project: to enhance the fence by planting flowering vines such as clematis and Carolina jasmine along the posts.

Outside the fence is the Serenity Garden. Once an unused space of wild undergrowth, this space now has been enhanced with native plants and walking paths. In 2019, the club members began cleaning the growth, removing non-native plants. This garden rests under mature trees and has been replanted with native growth. Following the path, visitors can sit on the restful benches, enjoy the flowers, and watch the birds fly in and out of their houses placed throughout the garden. Sarah describes this garden as a “peaceful respite from the busy world.” In-

deed, it is.

When you visit the garden, enter through the “Common Ground” gate and take note of the variety of individual raised beds. Stroll down the paths to the shed and the pollinator beds. Along the way, note the identifying markers. You should pass beds labeled “perennials,” “peony/dahlia,” “herbs,” “succulents,” “gladiolas,” “daylilies,” and “pollinators.” Take a rest in the Serenity Garden. On the other hand, you can start your tour in the Serenity Garden and then finish at the pollinators.

Truly a community effort, the Community Garden at Cresswind Lake Lanier has something for everyone. Sarah explains, “The guiding intent is to showcase flowers that grow successfully in our plant zone 7 as opposed to having elaborate landscape designs.” In that sense, the garden becomes a demonstration garden not only for enjoyment, but also for education.

See GARDEN WALK, 9

**Pruning Can Be a Major Spring Chore**

By Pat Bishop

Josh Fuder, Cherokee County extension agent, gave Master Gardeners attending March’s meeting some hints on one of spring’s most challenging chores: pruning.

As Fuder dug into his bag of gardening tools, he emphasized the importance of keeping our gardening tools clean and well oiled with mineral oil. He suggested that we also use a sanitizer such as Lysol spray or wipes to keep tools free of diseases by reminding that you “cannot sanitize dirt,” so it’s important to wipe off the tool, then sanitize it.

Before pruning trees, it is important to define why the pruning is needed by considering structure, defects, damage, landscape

risks, weight, and reshaping. To keep a tree healthy, Fuder says, “It’s all about access to sunlight.” Keeping in mind this axiom, decide how you can best protect and improve that life quality of your trees by considering why they need pruning to begin with. Late winter is a good time to prune; however, the most excellent time is midsummer when trees are displaying a “growth flush.”

When pruning an ornamental shrub, consider the flowering stage, need for improving or changing the shrub’s shape, and appropriate size. Fuder gave several basic premises for pruning shrubbery: (1) If a natural shape is preferred, thin from the inside of the plant; (2) Removing dead branches will not rejuvenate a plant; (3) When shaping and trimming a hedge, create a sloped triangle effect with the top slightly smaller than base of plant to allow for sunlight through the shrub.

Pruning can be a challenge for many gardeners. However, Fuder shared these reassuring words, “You’re probably not going to kill it, so go ahead and prune it.”



Correctly pruned and shaped hedge

“Pruning Ornamental Plants in the Landscape,” Bulletin 961, UGA Extension

Below are two useful publication regarding pruning published by UGA Extension:

“Basic Principles of Pruning Woody Plants,” Bulletin 949

“Pruning Ornamental Plants in the Landscape,” Bulletin 961

**GARDEN WALK**

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**The Lovett Garden**

Separating Kathy and Lee Lovett’s private gardening endeavors from their public contributions is a difficult task. The love of gardening and all things positive seem to flow from one facet of their lives to another. Master Gardeners since 2004, they move from one project to project as fluid as the seasons flow together.

When the Lovetts moved into their residence in Cherokee Forest, no “plant material existed except for foundation plants near the front door.” Kathy explains, “When we moved here from across town four years ago, each side of our property was lined with Bradford pears. We immediately had them removed and began working on landscape plans,” which also included removal of Leyland cypresses and improvement of back drainage. Now, adorning the



The Lovett’s enjoy the giant cherry trees in their front garden

front lawn is a resting place under two giant cherry trees enhanced with seating and gardens are beginning to flourish.

After removing the invasive trees, their next major work was amending the back garden. At move-in time, the “new” back garden was nothing but red clay. With planning and design, they have turned this red clay pit into a lush display of bloomers and evergreens.

Along one side leading to the back, you will find anchor plants of evergreens and soft touch hollies.

Kathy’s specialty plants, the coral

bark Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum* ‘Sango Kaku’) bookend native fothergilla shrubs “appreciated for their white bottlebrush blooms in the spring and for their leaves of multi colors in the fall,” describes Kathy. Teddy Bear magnolias (*Magnolia Gloriana* ‘Southern Charm’) lead you to the back garden where on the far left yellow peonies (*Paeonia* ‘Bartzella’) add brilliant color.

Camellias such as Black Magic (*Camellia japonica* ‘Black Magic’), Taylor’s Perfection (*Camellia X williamsii* ‘Taylor’s Perfection’), Bob Hope (*Camellia japonica* ‘Bob Hope’), and Sandra Deal (*Camellia japonica* ‘Sandra Deal’) fill the garden in late winter with a variety of blooms. When I asked Kathy which was her favorite, she jokingly responded, “Oh, to name my favorite camellias is like having to name the favorite child. Please don’t ask me to do that!”

Newly installed, the stone patio gives the couple a resting place in the day to enjoy their work.

See GARDEN WALK, 10

**Gardens on the Green**

**Lovett Literacy Garden**



Kathy and Lee Lovett might have a young home garden, but that does not mean they are new at gardening. As retired educators, Kathy and Lee explain that they “have always known the value and importance of literacy skills.” Becoming Master Gardeners in 2004, they immediately began to combine their love of learning with their love of gardening.

Gardens on Green developed when Lee was serving as deputy superintendent of Hall County Schools. Kathy said to Lee, “We could put a

garden out there,” meaning the grounds of the school board office on Green Street. They developed the idea, and the superintendent gave them permission to “go for it.” Their plan was to offer teachers another way to encourage literacy skills and allow students to enjoy the gardens.

In 2008, the garden began to evolve with the implementation of various “sub-gardens.” The Garden of Winners reflected plants that were deemed Gold Medal winners by

See GREEN, 10

**GARDEN WALK**

Continued from 10

Shasta daisies, Kathy’s “favorite personal flowers,” intertwine along the bank. The Becky (*Leucanthemum x superbum* ‘Becky’) stands two to three feet in height, and the newly planted smaller Snowcap daisies (*Leucanthemum x superbum* ‘Snowcap’) decorate with swaths of blooms. Lenten roses and a number of hosta varieties con-

tinue the landscape. Look for the Coast Leucothe (*Agarista populifolia*) that should reach a mature six-to-eight feet height at maturity and produce tiny white blooms similar to lily-of-the valley.

Another newly planted area gracing the driveway includes the pollinator garden and the evergreens. Happy Return daylilies (*Hemerocallis x ‘Happy Returns’*) bloom throughout the summer to enhance the colorful bed.

“Our goal is to create a landscape with year-round interest, including pollinator plants and my favorite flowers—daisies, peonies, and hydrangeas,” declares Kathy.

The Lovett’s home garden is a young one, but a stroll around the home’s perimeter will give the visitor ideas for blending evergreens, perennials, and annuals. Examples abound that will inspire and stimulate the imagination.

**GREEN**

Continued from 10

the University of Georgia Extension. Another was a “dinky little butterfly garden” started with milkweed and later developed into a full pollinator garden. Another area developed into a “large native garden” that fellow Master Gardeners tend today.

Children from the Promising Futures Program began visiting after school for their one-hour recreation that included gardening. Kathy then decided that the garden “could and should reach more children,” so she proposed that Hall County second-grade students, whose science curriculum includes a study of life cycles, be invited to visit the gardens.

Again, with administrative approval, the program expanded to allow 45 to 80 children to attend the garden where they rotate experiences in the vegetable beds, pollinator garden, compost beds, native garden, and nutrition station.

Not to limit garden experiences to second graders, Kathy and Lee proposed that the Lovett Literacy Garden adjacent to the schools’ administrative offices be developed for K-2.

Planning began in 2015, and students began attending and enjoying the thematic sites throughout the garden. Picture books offer children opportunities read fairy tales and nursery



“The Tiny Seed” gate welcomes visitors to the Lovett Literacy garden.

rhymes that come alive in the garden. Students can run up Jack-and-Jill hill or explore the tunnel beneath it; they can cross Billy Goat Gruff’s bridge; they can enjoy the tales of Peter Rabbit. Master Gardeners and retired teachers sit on the “throne” while they entertain students with read alouds of children’s books. The program has grown to allow up to 80 Hall County students to explore nature and develop their literacy skills.

Both gardens are supported by

Kathy’s fund-raising activities and the school district. She raises funds by writing successful grant applications, soliciting community donations, selling bricks, and hosting concerts.

As you visit Gardens on Green and the Lovett Literacy Garden, try to remember what it was like to experience the inquisitive nature of childhood. Select a book from the reach-in library; sit under a tree; enjoy the words through the eyes of a child; watch the butterflies as they circle the pollinator garden.

*Advanced tickets, which can be purchased at the Hall County Extension Office or online, are \$15; tickets can also be purchased the day of the walk for \$20. Terri Andrews suggests that you consider inviting your friends, neighbors and family members to join you to visit these six gardens during Garden Walk, May 21: “This is a great way for visitors to experience what HCMGs are doing in the community and ‘In Our Own Backyards.’ Mother’s Day is just two weeks before this event, and tickets are a great idea for a gift! Come join us for this wonderful day of enjoying our fellow MG’s works of art.”*

# A Garden Scavenger Hunt: Can You Find These Hidden Garden Treasures?

By Pat Bishop

As you visit each garden during your Garden Walk, look for these hidden garden treasures. The only prize here is the thrill of the hunt....and maybe if you're the winner of your group, your friends will take you to lunch.



1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_



4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



8. \_\_\_\_\_



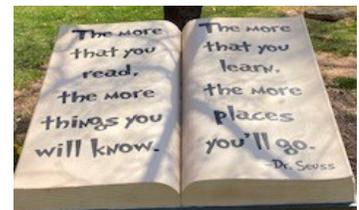
9. \_\_\_\_\_



10. \_\_\_\_\_



11. \_\_\_\_\_



12. \_\_\_\_\_