

## 2016 Calendar

**9/8** Speaker and membership meeting. Gwd Library, 6:00 Membership Mtng, 6:30 Speaker Larry Metts, Metts Organix Farm.

**10/13** LMG Board Meeting, 4:30 at Gwd Library

**11/10** Speaker and Membership Meeting. 6:00 at Library, 6:30 for Speaker Donna Boozer talks about bees.

**12/8** LMG Board Meeting



### *President's Letter-Barbara Wells*

The small tan garden stake in my pot of mixed annuals reads "*Gardenitis Uncontrollus*". I think you can decipher the meaning of the two words. If we can decipher all, or at least most, of those sometimes torturous botanical names, then we can certainly figure this one out. Apparently I have an advanced case of this disorder... or so my friend said as she presented me with this stake as a gift. I admit that it's probably true. An advanced case of uncontrolled gardening? Most certainly. A disorder? Not so fast, my dear non-gardening friend.

Can gardening be taken to such an extreme that it becomes a disorder? I don't believe so, not as long as the whole sum of gardening continues to bring joy and satisfaction to my life. What a non-gardener may see as a series of chores to be endured, we gardeners see in a completely different light. It is true that some aspects of gardening definitely bring more joy than others. There are tasks I, like you, endure because they are a means to an end. I do not enjoy dragging hoses and sprinklers around when both temperature and humidity are hovering near 100. I do, however, enjoy seeing the result. My annuals and fall-blooming perennials endure the summer onslaught to recover and shine their little hearts out in the fall. The overall experience remains very rewarding to me and is therefore not considered a disorder. Or, put another way, there is no such thing as too much gardening.

As long as we're treading on philosophical garden ground and the uncontrolled, here's a related question: Can a gardener have too many plants? This one is a little tougher. How many plants are too many? When does "so" many plants become "too" many plants? Is it when so many plants have been bought there is little besides beans in the pantry? Or is it when there are so many you have to camouflage a new purchase from your spouse by sliding it into a very small gap in the mixed bed to become undetectable until you can get it in the ground? (Yes, I have done this.) Or, is the limit reached, and "so" becomes "too" when a gardener has more plants than he or she can possibly care for? I'll ponder these a bit and you can, too, if you so desire.

One last question. When do we have too many Master Gardeners? I truly believe the answer is never. Repeat: I believe there can never be too many Master Gardeners. Too many Master Gardeners would be like too much soft sunshine on a spring day. Imagine the results if the world were populated solely by Master Gardeners. Everyone would be working together to make their community a more beautiful place. Our wonderful world would become even more wonderful.

Realistically, I know we Master Gardeners will never take over the world. We do, however, have the power to help bring a few more Master Gardeners into the world. Our new class begins August 16 and is shaping up to be a great one, with 13 signed up so far. Many of us were just beginning our Master Gardener journeys this time last year or just a few years ago and we all can remember what it's like to be a "new person." Like all things new, the Master Gardener journey can sometimes be intimidating. I know you will all warmly welcome these new friends as you see them at Master Gardener classes, meetings, and workdays. New members bring new growth and new friends.

Two members of last year's class, Donna and Wally Sears, did a superb job on the Greenwood County

Library display in July. If you didn't get by to see it, you really missed out. Included were miniature raised garden beds complete with tools, a mason bee house, visual displays on composting and irrigation, and much more. Thanks to Donna and Wally!

We will have our next membership/speaker meeting on September 8 in the large meeting room at the Greenwood County Library. The speaker will be Will Metts of Metts Organix. The next meeting on November 10, also at the library, features our own Donna Boozer speaking on Honeybees in the Garden. As usual, time spent at the meeting plus travel time count toward your volunteer hours. Come and learn.

Keep a lookout for an email about a group field trip this fall. It's still in the planning stages, but we're aiming towards a destination close enough to home for a carpool day trip. This will be an opportunity to get some continuing education, spread our wings a bit, and just have fun together. Plus, more volunteer hours.

That about wraps it up for this month. Not too much is going on in these hot summer months, but again, how much is too much? In the end, I suppose we each have to decide this one for ourselves.

***"An addiction to gardening is not all bad when you consider all the other choices in life." Cora Lee Bell***

***"Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold." A child's song, often sung as a round, and attributed to Girl Scouts***

## **GWD LIBRARY WINDOW DISPLAY BY WALLY AND DONNA SEARS**



**Guess what's behind the small picket fence? Tiny raised beds for a fairy garden! The Mason Bee house in another window was inspiring. The display was removed on Friday July 29<sup>th</sup>, but the information will be saved for continued use. Slick hats!**

## JIMMY 'SCISSORHANDS' SHARES HIS ARTISTRY-Jimmy Mc Inville

Topiaries become addictive, you spend so much time planning and prepping. Then they always have to be bigger and better next year! So it was inevitable that I try my hand at traditional topiary art. By traditional, I mean training a bush into a desired shape. So after watching several YouTube videos, (SC 's own Pearl Fryar has several good ones), and reading a few articles, I started setting the ground work for my first topiary.

My target is a Japanese Yew that was already on my property when I purchased it 8 years ago. It's about 6'x4'. I've never been happy with its placement or look but I think I will like it as a pyramid.

Now I'm going to pass on to you what I learned from my research, step by step, and in pictures.

First, I cut three bamboo poles long enough to make a frame the size of the pyramid I planned to trim the Yew into. I connected the bamboo at the top with wire, measuring the distance between the three sides to make sure they were equal. I then sat the bamboo frame over the Yew. Remember, check twice, cut once, but then again this is a plant if I goof up it will grow back. I'll just have to look at my mistake till it grows! Ha Ha!

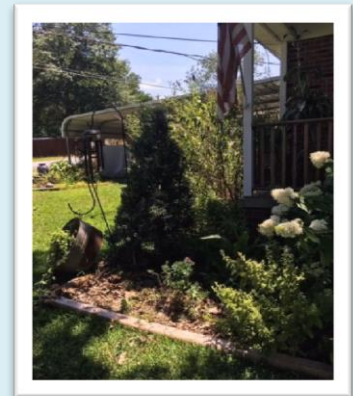
Next, it was time to make the first cuts. I used a hedge trimmer to cut the Yew back even with the bamboo, taking my time to stay even with the two bamboo pieces on each side. I had a few bare rough spots but according to Pearl Fryar they will fill in. After I finished all three sides I went back and cleaned up the stragglers with hand clippers. I removed the frame and tucked it away in the garage; it will be needed to maintain the shape.



Bamboo frame



frame over Aborvitae



Finished pyramid

Feeling inspired and pleased with my first results I decided to push my luck. I bought an Emerald Aborvitae to turn into a spiral.

First, I put the plant up on a table to get it at eye level, then I wrapped jute twine around it to get the desired look of the spiral I wanted to cut. I could move the twine up down till I got it in exactly the right place. Step back and look at the shrub from all angles or it's hard to get it balanced. Once I had the placement right, it was time to cut. I grabbed the hedge trimmer, started at the bottom and slowly carefully followed the twine up, cutting above the twine, it just worked better that way, careful not to cut too deep. You can always go back and clip more by hand but you have to wait for it to grow if you take too much. Sheep shears are great at the fine tuning here. I have another Yew and plans are forming for it this fall after the bee balm dies back; I warned you this was addictive.



Before



Twine Wrap



Spiral Completed

### **USDA Drought Conditions Map for South Carolina (see below)- Sandy Orr**

Janet Ledebuhr emailed the LMG this nifty drought monitoring map that can be accessed at the [droughtmonitor.uni.edu](http://droughtmonitor.uni.edu) website. A quarter of Greenwood County is in a moderate drought condition along with almost a fifth of the Southeast. I'd hate to see what "extreme" or "exceptional" drought is.

Central Spain has cold winters with intensely hot summers with little rain. A famous garden designer there makes these recommendations for planning a dry garden:

- 1) Choose plants with a low water requirement, not just "drought tolerance".
- 2) Encourage plants to root deeply by breaking up the soil deeply. Water infrequently and heavily. Sparse, frequent watering makes for surface rooting.
- 3) Plant when small. Larger container plants have shallow root systems.
- 4) Grow plants lean and don't fertilize them. Plants are tougher when slow grown.
- 5) Mulch keeps roots cool.
- 6) Group plants according to irrigation needs.

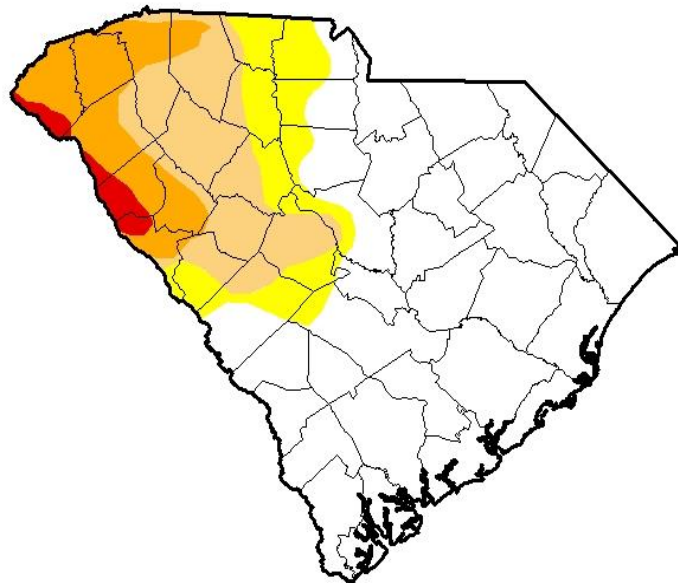
Another technique I use is from permaculture. I “chop and drop” everything in my yard except poison ivy. If branches drop, I chop the twiggy growth around plants so the lignin in the wood will feed the stems of my plantings. The leaves I chop from prunings give nitrogen around my plants and provide mulch. I also dig up mini-swales across the contour of the slope and stack up berms to hold water runoff. The plantings in these trenches need little irrigation.

I’ve noticed some plants that haven’t missed a beat this summer are thistle-like. Echinops and cardoons are looking good in my yard. Ornamental grasses also do well. Ann Barklow’s hirsute-leaved yellow phlomis in the City Garden is fine. Tap-rooted Queen Anne’s Lace (*daucus carota*) and ammi majus cope well. Nepeta (catmint) doesn’t know it hasn’t rained much in two months. Perovskia (Russian sage) laughs at cracked clay. Loropetalums are sanguine. Kniphofia are hanging on. Crocosmia rocks on. Dianthus can take it. Iris ignores 100 degree days. Gomphrena is coming into its own. Vitex is accustomed to the desert. Verbena Bonariensis waves merrily to bees and butterflies.

I like how President Barbara Wells handles her luscious garden with Tough Love. She waters a lot less frequently than I do, but she waters deeply. Maybe a periodic verbal threat of impending replacement helps make her plants compete better too.

## U.S. Drought Monitor South Carolina

**July 26, 2016**  
(Released Thursday, Jul. 28, 2016)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	65.16	34.84	24.76	11.04	1.69	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> 7/19/2016	65.16	34.84	24.76	11.04	1.70	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> 4/26/2016	55.09	44.91	1.66	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> 12/29/2015	99.66	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Water Year</b> 9/29/2015	26.80	73.20	31.76	10.91	0.00	0.00
<b>One Year Ago</b> 7/28/2015	14.26	85.74	47.53	0.03	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

**Author:**  
Brad Rippey  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



## STAND-OUT CONTAINERS/PLANTINGS AROUND THE TOWN



Melinda Fincham, of the new 13 member LMG class starting this month, cleverly potted up a Carolina Sapphire cypress with bright cerise vinca for a vibrant combination. Her window boxes are fulsome with spikey Angelona and drapey vinca. Hopalong Ann Barklow composed the canna pot at the Farmer's Market (below).



John Wham's annual profusion of sulfurous cosmos is so bright it sets your teeth on edge.



**A DIGITALIS AND AN ISOPLEXIS MET IN A BAR...** - photo by Barbara Wells



Like a foxglove, *Digiplexis* 'Illumination Flame', a cross of digitalis (foxglove) and isoplexis (a foxglove cousin), is a big girl. It blooms from summer to fall with reddish-orange, tubular flowers with yellow throats. Sterile flowers give a long bloom cycle. Tall 36" plants have dark-green digitalis foliage. Plant in full sun to part shade. Winter hardiness here is sporadic.

**BLISSFUL BEES DON'T READ DOUG TALLAMY'S BOOK-** Sandy Orr

I enter dangerous territory in our deeply divided country when I make the observation that cardoons are not native plants and yet the bees and butterflies throng these in preference to almost anything else. Despite them being native to Southern Europe, I've seen bees four deep on one cardoon head. Native plant purists will shudder, but my bees exult in cardoon's Italian taste. Like us, maybe they can't eat hamburger all the time and have to go out for a little pasta periodically. Don't look now, but butterflies are all over my South American *verbena bonariensis* too.



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## Lakelands Master Gardener Board/Committee Chairs

### **Voting Members**

#### *Executive Committee*

President: Barbara Wells

Vice President: ? Open to volunteers

Treasurer: Melody McInville

Secretary: Chris Moon

Past President: Donna Feldmaier

### **General Board Members**

Community Projects: Jimmy McInville and Donna Sears

Education: Linda Halsey and Wally Sears

Membership: Betsy Russ

Plant Sale/Fund Raising: Sandy Orr and John Wham

Programs/Speakers: Anissa Lawrence

Public Relations: Anissa Lawrence

Website: Vince Plotczyk

### **Non-voting Board Members**

Clemson Advisor: James Hodges

Email Blasts: Janet Ledebuhr

Facebook: Mary Jane Vivas and Marla Starling

Newsletter: Sandy Orr

Office: Vince Plotczyk

Social: Ella Wham

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