



## *From the Ground Up*

Fresh fruits and veggies! Is there anything better? Okay, a side of Swiss dark chocolate would be graciously accepted but it's not so pleasant to pick and eat cacao straight from the tree. So I'll stick with harvesting the fresh blueberries, blackberries and strawberries - one for the bucket and one to eat now. If only my peach tree would produce fruit a bit larger than a plum - not that the birds and deer seem to mind the size.

KUDOS to everyone who has (and will) work in the PAR gardens. Thanks also to the committee chairs who organize the work schedule. It's a wonderful way to get your hours and work the times around your own schedule. Pam Bracken and I learned quickly that working the garden before work is much better than trying to harvest okra at 4:30p in the heat and humidity of a Georgia summer.

We have teamed up for the past few years to work the PAR garden at Clarke Middle and it's always exciting to see the fresh produce collected especially knowing that it will be shared with families who are struggling through rough financial times. The amount of produce being delivered to the food bank is wonderful. Gardeners do love to share. How fantastic! Every year I hear of gardeners adding an extra row or two just to ensure that they have plenty for friends and neighbors. Isn't that the basic idea behind community gardens; small communities getting together to keep fresh food on the tables for several families.

Our friends in Winder are having a bumper crop of squash, cucumbers and peppers with plenty to share. The hot peppers I left behind but the squash barely saw the light of day before they were sliced, thrown into a skillet with onions and became my dinner. Craig, my husband, still isn't about to try squash even after 35 years of living in the South. That's OK though, I'll gladly share his portion with you.

Enjoy being in your gardens and sharing your bounty!

Andrea Tedrow

**Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm holding up  
until your back gets used to it. -- Unknown**

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**Next Meeting July 19th, 5:30 PM at SBG**

Ronnie Dean will be presenting a program on reptiles in our gardens.

**June Meeting:** More than twenty of your fellow master gardeners braved the heat and had a wonderful time at the home and garden of David Hoechst out in Jackson County. David has a lake in the back and it was a beautiful setting. His vegetable garden is a sight to behold. Even with the drought and heat everything looks great. The day-lily patch was beautiful sight. He said that the peak had been the week before, but you couldn't prove it by me. They were absolutely beautiful. There are hundreds of varieties and they looked to be in full bloom. Those of you who missed this meeting missed a treat. Thank you David, for sharing with us!

George Watson said one of the highlights (other than the good food) was watching Doris Braswell and me shoo a big old milk cow back into the pasture  
Jean Colquett

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**PAR – Clarke Middle School**

We are off to a great start with production at Clarke Middle. Through June 20, we've harvested 131 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables for the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank. Thanks so much to the more than 30 AAMGA volunteers who have already worked in the garden this season and/or have signed up to work there as the summer goes on. There are only a few more weeks open in August and October, so please contact Pam Bracken if you would like to volunteer. It's a great way to get in some hours at your own convenience . . . early in the morning, late in the afternoon, and on any day of the week! There is always work to be done!



**AAMGA:** [www.ugaextension.com/clarke/anr/aamga.html](http://www.ugaextension.com/clarke/anr/aamga.html)

**GMGA:** [www.georgiamastergardeners.org](http://www.georgiamastergardeners.org)

**Oconee Plant-A-Row Update**

The Thomas Orchard/Oconee PAR plot was tilled, & re-tilled and planted June 9<sup>th</sup>. Big thanks to Frank Johnson & Helen Wenner for help in planting tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, okra, squash & zucchini. Paula & Jerry Thomas have planted the back half of the plot & added an irrigation line that they have generously allowed us to tap on to. As we approach production I will e-mail out a calendar for weekly sign-ups. If you are not already receiving updates and are interested please e-mail me & I'll add you to the list.

John Q.... quack17@bellsouth.net

**Adopt A Highway Project**

On Saturday, June 11, we were able to complete the AAMGA clean-up job on MLK Drive in about an hour and a half. Andrea commented on how much cleaner this stretch of road is now than a few years ago! I forgot to take a picture but many thanks to the volunteers: Carol and Bob Wolf and Andrea Fischer. I have scheduled the litter clean up dates for the rest of the year. We are scheduled for Saturday, August 27 and Saturday, December 3 so please mark your calendar now. It would be nice to have a few more volunteers. Carole Holmes

**New Deadlines: Announcements and Newsletter Contributions****Weekly Announcements:**

By 8:00 PM on Mondays

**Newsletter Contributions:**

By 8:00 PM on the 23rd of each month

Written articles: in WORD

Photos: as jpeg attachments

To: AAMGAlistserv@gmail.com



-Watch for standing water which will harbor mosquitoes. Look "up" when searching for hiding places. Knotholes in tree trunks and sagging gutters hold water and are commonly overlooked mosquito egg repositories.

-If you discover a snake in your garden, don't kill it—identify it at [www.enature.com](http://www.enature.com). It is comforting to know that almost all snakes you see are nonpoisonous.

-Hanging baskets dry out fast during hot months but may shed water when you irrigate. Try soaking the basket in a tub of water instead. Failing that, place a pin-pierced liter bottle into the foliage to drip water into the soil.

-Remove faded flowers from annuals and perennials to encourage continuous bloom. Cut back any rampant growth. Remove fallen leaves and debris, which can harbor insect pests and disease organisms.

-Put out a hummingbird feeder if you have not already. Make your own feeding solution: 1 part sugar to 4 parts water.

-White fluffy "cotton" on hosta or coneflower stems is evidence of plant hoppers. They are mostly harmless and can be washed off with a hose.

-Stake tall flowers like gladiolus, lilies, phlox and dahlia. Use stakes that are large enough to support the plant, but are not too conspicuous. Use soft twine or Velcro-like ties to secure the stems to the stake.

-Plant seed collected from daylily, iris, blackberry lily and hollyhock immediately. They germinate quickly and yield small plants by fall.

-Finish any needed pruning on azaleas and rhododendrons. They require at least three months to set bloom buds for spring.

-July 4<sup>th</sup> is the latest time to clip chrysanthemums to keep them short and stocky. New growth will produce stems that bear flowers this fall.

-Inspect verbenas, butterfly bush, foxglove and rose for bronze leaves caused by spider mites. Thoroughly spray with horticultural oil or a systemic insect killer.

Compiled by Jean Colquett

#### AAMGA Treasurer's Report Activity 05/17-06/20

Beginning Balance:	\$16,574.21
Deposits:	0
Debits: Check 1399 - Stroud Elementary	[57,61]
Check 1400 - T..Morrison speaker & out-going President gifts	(69.26)
Check 1401 - C. Wolf -Clarke PAR costs	(273.98)
Check 1402 - Kings Bridge MS Grant	(330.72)
Check 1403 - H. Gray-Jordan mtg costs	
April & May	(51.53)
Total:	\$783.10

End Balance \$15,791.00 Available Balance \$15,791.00

Marigold Festival plant sale an rain barrel money will e deposited and included in the next report.

\*Not yet cleared or encumbered



I was able to attend a great training during June in Tifton, GA concerning sustainable weed management. I am thankful we didn't spend too much time outside, the soil temperatures in Tifton are averaging between 110 and 115 degrees each day. Those temperatures are not only tough on us when we are in the field but are really rough on crops, especially any which may have gotten a late start in the ground.

During the training we were able to see some great examples of non-chemical weed management such as cultivation, water management, fallow tilling and cover crops. There were also some interesting presentations on what doesn't work so well. I really enjoyed the training because there was information provided which is helpful for the backyard grower and for a farmer with 5 to 100 acres. There really are some great new tools out there to make organic farming and gardening easier.

One of the best concepts we discussed was the use of cover crops and planting into the crop residues. Cover crops are selected based on the season and what is needed from the cover crop. Some crops are selected because they mine nutrients from lower depths in the soil, others fix nutrients and others help with erosion or weed suppression. Cover crops are not as feasible for a backyard gardener but for the small farmer there are devices which flatten or crimp the cover crop (killing the crop). A home gardener can mow the cover crop at the same time as a farmer would to accomplish the same goal.

You do have to time the mowing at the correct time in the life cycle of the cover crop. The concept is to mow the crop when energy is being focused into the early flowers and reproductive cycle. If you mow too early the energy will still be concentrated in the roots of the plant and regrowth will occur. If you mow too late the cover crop could produce seeds (which will be weeds during the growing season) and will not have the same nutrient benefits for the next crop.

After a certain number of weeks (depending on the type of cover crop utilized) a crop will be planted into the residue. The residue acts as a mulch, fertilizer and prevents weed seeds from germinating, giving the crop an advantage early in the season. It is great to see how all parts of sustainable farming work together and I am thankful I was able to see so many different practices firsthand. It was much easier to see the pros and cons of each management system when everything was grouped together with the researchers present for questions. Let me know if you have any questions about weed management, this was one of the best trainings I've attended in a while!

Amanda Tedrow

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