

THYMES

MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2021



President: Ron Drechnik

Hi Everyone,

Hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving. Ours was nice but quiet. We had the usual Thanksgiving turkey dinner and watched a few movies. No football in this house!

There's not a lot of gardening going on at the Drechniks this month. I have most of our gardens covered and put to bed. We still need to clean up the front gardens along the house after these recent hard freezes. I have been working on our potting shed, trying to get the interior finished so we can move our gardening supplies out of the garage! I have been putting up the shiplap for the walls. It's going very well and looks great.

Not a lot to say about Master Gardeners this month. Just a reminder about the Awards Banquet on December 7th at 2:00 at the Art Circle Library's Cumberland room. Hope to see everyone there. You will need to get your hours in by the end of November and remember doing it online is very easy. If Fred can do it; anyone can! (Sorry Fred) Those hours will be used to determine awards.

Well, that's about all. Happy dreaming about next year's gardens.

Vice President: Linda Ferris

My forsythia is still hanging on to its yellow blooms. The leaves are gone! The hydrangea looks sad with all the dead leaves, but I have learned to leave them alone until spring when they will once again *spring forth* with growth.

The leaves have (finally) finished falling from the big trees. I looked out one very windy day, and the grass and driveway looked like one big brown area covered in crispy leaves! I blew the leaves off the driveway, and then ran the lawn mower over those on the grass to produce small pieces that are left in the grass. There were so many, however, that the lawn mower couldn't handle it! So I raked some of those and spread them around an area that doesn't grow grass and left them to mulch. Many times, unfortunately, the wind blows so hard that the leaves I so carefully left under a row of trees by the road get blown away. So, there are always places to put the leaves, but they may find their own homes.

We headed to Atlanta for Thanksgiving with my son and his family and one nephew and his family. I baked a special recipe for our traditional orange bread (yum). I also made a pear/cranberry relish that everyone who likes cranberries likes! I have another tradition--a dip called Bar Cheese. I make that for every holiday and everyone loves it. I also made an apple pie! Busy! But it was great to be with everyone.

December's meeting will, of course, be our awards banquet and MY farewell as vice president! I've enjoyed getting the speakers and learning all the new ideas they brought to us. I leave the position with the very capable Rhoda Hiller, who has held an officer's position in the past.

Thanks, everyone, for your support over the last two years.

Sue Partch: WEED WRAP-UP

This could be another weed description--heaven knows there are a seemingly endless amount of them--but the former teacher in me says there should be a wrap-up to the series, a summary, a what-did-you-learn. I hope you learned something or at least found an interesting bit here and there. But, as this wasn't a class and you aren't my students, I thought instead that I'd talk about what I learned.

I improved my on-line research skills for one thing. I discovered the names of weeds I've been pulling unidentified for years, most notably ragweed. I've often wondered just what it looked like and now I know. Also, I'm apparently not allergic to it, as I've been yanking it out with no ill effects for a long time.

I never considered the animal life that feed on these plant's leaves, seeds, and roots and feel a little guilty now--quickly quashed--when I pull out big handfuls of their potential food. I have wondered, occasionally, about food sources of the ancients and survivalists and now know that, not only are many wild plants edible, they often contain needed vitamins and minerals. Did you notice--every weed I wrote about had edible leaves. Of course, some weeds are deadly, so proper identification is very important.

I found interesting and sometimes amusing Native American and old European beliefs about medicinal and magical properties of these plants. And that some of these beliefs continue today in the natural foods and medicines community. In addition, some of the chemicals in certain plants are actually used in modern medicines. And, on the whimsical side, there is a site dedicated to honor the much maligned dandelion.

In my earliest articles I mentioned that I would try certain things. I find I am either reluctant or lazy or both because I failed in most of that. I did do a few things. I tried chickweed in a salad; it got lost in the other flavors, but a piece by itself proved to be pretty tasteless with a bit of bitter aftertaste. My husband didn't get any dandelion greens, but he did make some dandelion flower jelly; very pale and mild flavored. I have yet to make candied violets, but I did imbed violet flowers in ice cubes; my sisters were suitably impressed with the visual, but less so with the limp flower in the mouth after the cubes melted. As usual, fleabane appeared in some of my summer flower arrangements. I did none of the medical *maybes*.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to write these articles. By doing so, I've learned things I wouldn't have bothered to investigate for just myself. And, thanks to those of you who have said something to me about one of the articles; it's nice to know they are read and maybe even appreciated.

Many thanks to Sue for her interest in and unique delivery of *weeds* we have all met and sometimes cultivated.

Meet our Members, November, 2021

Alan Baker: Treasurer

Alan and his wife Jackie moved to Fairfield Glade from Northern Illinois in 2000. He was born in Southern California. He retired from a career in various Tech companies where he dealt in training, customer service and management. *No wonder he is so good at our website management!* He and Jackie do not have children but have 5 dogs and 7 cats (all rescue animals).

Alan has been a Certified Master Gardener since 2003 and took his training here in Cumberland County. His favorite part of the training was learning about landscaping. Alan stated he enjoys residential landscaping and had to adapt to the plateau and its challenges, as it is very different from Southern California and Northern Illinois. As Gregg as often stated, the best way to learn is to teach and that is exactly what Alan did. He offered to teach a landscaping class for CCMG, did much research, learned a great deal, and shared that knowledge with others. He team taught with master gardener Carol Burdett. He would consider himself somewhat of an expert in the area of landscaping.

Alan and his wife learned early on that with just the two of them, vegetable gardening produced much excess, not to mention all the neighbors' contributions, so he never did much vegetable gardening.

Alan currently is serving as treasurer and will be the treasurer for 2022. This is his 6th time as treasurer! He is also the Web master. Alan has also served in many other capacities, some of which have been: president, secretary, MG class instructor, Speakers Bureau, Help Desk, publicity chairman for the 2004 Spring Garden Show, email coordinator and several others. When asked about future plans regarding serving in CCMG, he quickly responded *anything* although he has some physical limitations these days. Alan feels he excels at and enjoys being a part of master gardener administration.

Alan has a list of ideas for classes in the future: landscape design, perennials for the Plateau, conifers for the Plateau, plant identification tools (a review of smart phone apps), native tree identification, Woolly Adelgid management, and water gardens.

Additional interesting facts about Alan are: he's learning to play the guitar, he was a Naval officer, serving in Vietnam, and has also raced sailboats in the past.

Rhoda Hiller

Rhoda and her husband Mike moved to Fairfield Glade from Indiana in 2010. She had lived in Ohio prior to that and was born in Pennsylvania. She retired from a career as a heavy equipment and crane operator at a steel mill for 33 ½ years! Rhoda and her husband share 4 children (3 girls and one boy), 7 grandchildren (2 girls and 5 boys), and 8 great grandchildren (3 girls and 5 boys), plus one on the way! They have a miniature labradoodle named Lucy which she is proud to say is very spoiled.

Rhoda has been a Certified Master Gardener since 2010 and took her training in Cumberland County. Her favorite parts of the training were the trip to the Upchurch home, where they learned about the pruning of fruit trees, and the trip to Sid Morgan's for a hands-on, raised-bed, vegetable gardening experience. Her favorite part of CCMGI is the camaraderie, as well as the diversity of experiences from the members. She stated she has made some good friends through the organization.

Rhoda's favorite types of gardening are perennials and house plants of which she has many. She feels as if she is always learning and does not consider herself an expert in any area.

Rhoda was president of Master Gardeners in 2019. More recently, she helped to freshen up the Kinder Garden, taught a rock painting class for kids and would have taught a pumpkin painting class for kids but was in quarantine. She loves working in the Kinder Garden program and has been one of the storytellers for a number of years.

Rhoda's creative hobbies include painting on wood and glass, quilting, and craft-type building projects.

Some interesting facts about Rhoda: she is a Baptist preacher's kid, she is involved in a number of church volunteer programs, is a member of the FFG garden club and states she is *addicted to volunteering*.

Rhoda would like to see and be involved in classes involving crafts, such as: cloth pumpkins, kids' rock painting, kids' pumpkin painting, and possibly something involving gnomes. She stated she thinks people really enjoy classes when they can take home something they made.

Thanks to Rosie Drechnik for sharing the *scoop* with us.