



Summer 2019  
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# Over the Garden Gate

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## President's Corner

by Mindy Wade

### Inside This Issue:

While it is months away from Thanksgiving, this month we all have a lot to be thankful for as Hall County Master Gardeners. We should be thankful for all of our wonderful volunteers who have "shared the load" through their volunteer activities at:

- Expo
- Garden Walk as garden owners and maintainers
- Wilshire Butterfly release and garden maintenance
- Gardens on Green hosting 2nd graders and garden maintenance
- Lovett Literacy Garden Preschool Story time and garden maintenance
- Extension Office conference room painting and garden maintenance
- Redbud programs and garden maintenance
- ABGG work efforts
- Elachee garden maintenance
- Alta Vista garden maintenance
- Victory Garden maintenance
- Jubilee Farms garden maintenance
- Cherokee Bluffs garden maintenance

You get the idea here--there is a lot of garden maintenance happening. While I am very thankful for the number of hours put into these efforts, I would like everyone to begin thinking of how we could provide the community with more education—not in lieu of garden maintenance, but as a compliment to our current efforts (Not looking to add to our maintenance load).

Are there members of our group who would - if asked - be willing to lead seminars on various topics? Give educational talks to the public? Could we offer programs through the libraries? At the Extension Office?

If you would be interested in helping to plan and move forward on this effort, please reach out to me at [Wademelinda@bellsouth.net](mailto:Wademelinda@bellsouth.net) or 410-960-4241. This isn't a commitment to speak or present, but to help plan this and move forward with when, where and how to bring more educational opportunities to greater Hall County.

Karin Hicks is anxious for us to begin offering educational opportunities to the public by way of Library talks, offerings at the Extension Office in the evening or on weekends, and any other exciting way we can come up with to educate the community. Step up and be a part of this planning. We are as good as we are because YOU are excellent, knowledgeable gardeners. Share that knowledge!! Please!

*Mindy Wade*

2019 HCMG President

### Write for Us!

Like to write? Have something to say? Your fellow master gardeners want to hear from you!  
Email Rick at [rsfreeland@charter.net](mailto:rsfreeland@charter.net) for details.

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Please submit your ideas, news, comments and questions to [rsfreeland@charter.net](mailto:rsfreeland@charter.net)

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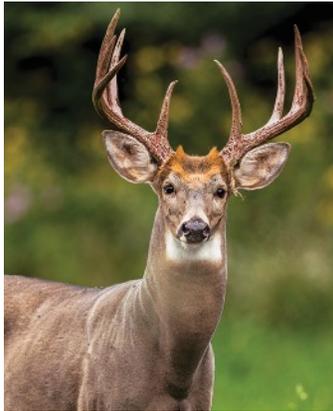
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**Hallelujah!** Spring has sprung: Hearts are a burstin', birds are a singin', the sun is a shinin' (at last) after a monsoon of a winter. Plants that were a floatin' are now trying to cling to wet soil so they can finally flourish. Bees are a buzzin', especially the native ones. Bees such as mason and leaf-cutter bees are busy pollinating any blossom that is available, especially apple trees and blueberry bushes.

I wonder where the enemies of my garden are lurking. As I sit on my deck overlooking what I laughingly call my garden site, I am trying to decide to do or not to do. Bambi and his relatives simply devastated my yard and garden the previous summer. They had the nerve to eat my tomatoes. I had done just what Ron B. told me to and they were awesome. What animal would eat these prized tomatoes? My deer that's who. Nothing has been sacred. Azalea leaves disappeared, even tender holly leaves were devoured. Any shrub

that would hold still long enough had their leaves eaten.

In my innate paranoia I envision Bambi and company watching me from the bushes and waiting to see when I am going to plant their evening buffet.



Thinking and hoping I will plant green beans, okra, melons and a cob or two. Yet they have the nerve to "huff" at me as I survey the damage they have done.

*Odocoileus virginianus*, as whitetail deer are formally known, live in a herd of 12 on my small property. No I am not telling any hunters where I live. Although they devastate my yard they are so interesting to observe. It is great fun to watch their babies run and play, watching their spots disappear as they

become young does and bucks.

Yes, I do feed them apples and carrots on occasion, so I create my own issues but the bottom line is I am not dependent on my garden for food. It's a "just to see if I can grow it garden." I will continue to support the local economy for my fruits and vegetables.

**Deer trivia:** Georgia is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading state in white tail deer hunting. No. 1 is Kentucky with an 84% chance of procuring a Booner deer. All of you hunters need to gas up and pack up and head to the bluegrass state before they are gone. Try a caravan, it's cheaper and easier.

After hours of research on how to get rid of deer, I have come to the conclusion there is no true deterrent. Human hair, urine, Irish spring DO NOT WORK! Water sprinklers *may* work, until the deer get used to it. I'm thinking about buying a paintball gun and marking them so I will know who the biggest offenders are. It will also help encourage

them to go to my neighbors yard.

Coyote urine may work, but how in the world do you get a sample? Any ideas?

The only thing that *will* work is a 10 foot fence...try and cost that out!!

So after numerous sleepless nights I have made my decision. I will surrender. Level my garden and plant wildflowers for my bees. I also know that deer will eat *anything* if they get hungry enough. Pray for my wildflowers, my bees and nature and remember the deer were here before we were. Make room for them.

NOTE; A Booner deer is a buck that scores over 170 typical or 195 atypical points on his rack.

### What the Heck?

#### Brevideciduous

A plant that loses all of its leaves briefly, so that it is leafless for only a short time, e.g. approximately two weeks.

When in a forest of the same species of mature trees, look straight up to the canopy and you might be fortunate enough to experience the phenomenon called “**crown shyness**”. Other terms for this are “canopy disengagement” and “intercrown spacing”, but those words aren’t nearly as intriguing as *crown shyness*!



This most commonly happens within stands of trees of the same age and the same species. When the crowns of fully grown trees don’t touch, ribbons of sunlight between the tree canopies make a map of their boundaries and create fantastic designs against the sky.

Scientists have been studying possible and probable causes behind this phenomenon since the 1920’s. It has been noted

that this spacing between the tree canopies could be caused by the wind. The wind skillfully prunes off young shoots when branches forcefully touch thereby reducing lateral growth. Research has shown that the constant abrasion of the growth nodules disrupts bud tissue so much that they fail to continue to grow. There is

also the matter of ‘tree intelligence’. Trees have a tendency to reduce competition with adjacent trees by maintaining space between branches.

Trees are stationary; they can’t relocate! A tree must find everything it needs and defend itself while remaining fixed in place. Trees need light to grow, of course.

In certain species, the tree will sense the amount

of light available for itself and its neighboring trees. Plants contain photoreceptors that are sensitive to certain regions of the light spectrum which enables them to detect how close their neighbors are. Their goal is to avoid being overcome by shade; they must have their share of the sun for photosynthesis. Each tree forces its neighbors into a situation that maximizes its own collection of life-giving resources and minimizes competition that would be harmful.

It is still not known for sure if crown shyness happens by accident or by design but it seems to be the result of an agreement between ‘rooted’ competitors with limited options. Smithsonian describes it as “a giant backlit jigsaw puzzle. A thin bright outline of light isolates each tree from the others”. I prefer to think that the beautiful patterns that crown shyness creates are by design...by Mother Nature.

Rain barrel class day finally arrived. It was a room full of gardeners and gardener want-to-be's. I always put myself in the want-to-be column.

A class on making a rain barrels, I am thinking. How hard could it be?

Outside the building were plastic barrels every where. It actually looked like a common carrier had wrecked in the garden and scattered barrels all over the grounds. Or maybe they were plastic barrel soldiers guarding the garden. Whichever one, there were barrels a-plenty.

The class was inside, and the room was packed, with a few folks standing. The instructor warned we would be using drills and if anyone needed help, please ask. Of course I am thinking, "Who has never used a drill?" I would later find out that probably a few people, and somehow the stars had lined up, placing them in this class.

We all received a little kit. Adaptors, faucet, gaskets, and, of course, everyone got the dreaded drill bits. After a barrage of

crazy questions, I kept telling myself that it must be true. No question is too stupid.

Finally, we moved outside. I set my kit on a barrel and walked away for a few seconds only to return and find someone else working on my barrel. Luckily, I found a lonely-looking barrel in the corner of the yard with a kit on top of it.



I grabbed a drill, inserted the small cutting bit and started drilling. Nothing to it - except when I drilled through the barrel the bit came out of the drill and fell off in the barrel. Over the years I have learned that on every project there is always a got-you moment. That unforeseen thing you did

not plan on happening that happens anyway.

So I am the only one unscrewing the cap on the end of the barrel and turning it upside down to shake the drill bit out.

It is very hard to shake a 65 gallon barrel indiscreetly. While I was attempting it, I heard an older lady comment to her even older friend, "Marge, I told you there would be someone else in this class that had never used a drill before!"

Well needless to say my pride was severely wounded. Betrayed by a big-box store drill bit.

I got my barrel and remaining pieces, and, wounded in my spirit, loaded up to head home. I waved at Miss Marge and her friend as I backed out of the parking lot. They glanced at each other and snickered.

All said and done rain, barrels are a great source of water for the garden. Just don't put too much faith in that package of store-bought drill bits.

Now if it would just rain.