

### Association Dues

Dues for 2021 were due by Feb. 28, 2021. If you haven't paid your dues yet, please send a \$20.00 check payable to FCMGA, to:

Kay Fisher  
1905 Port Royal Ct.,  
Lexington, KY 40504

### Newsletter Committee

Susan Miller, Chair  
Mary Miller, Co-Chair  
Sharon Bennett  
Nancy Boland  
Stacy Decker  
Debbie Johnson

What is a weed? A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

### Prez Sez

Happy Summer! COVID cases are down, folks are getting vaccinated, and people are beginning to publicly gather. Like you, I am ready for it to be over. I miss seeing my MG friends and am looking forward to an opportunity when we can gather. Jamie and Carrie have been talking about possibilities and how we might safely gather. So hopefully there will be news to share soon. Enough about that subject.



Our spring was beautiful this year. Everything seemed to stay in bloom longer. If you are a golfer or hang around golfers, you know that the famous part of the Masters course is called "Amen Corner." I had a miniature "Amen Corner" in our backyard with the azaleas, dogwood trees and lush greenery. It was gorgeous and is pictured here.

Now we are heading into the summer months. Since we are still limited in Master Gardener activities, I decided to do some gardening around my church. We have planted a vegetable garden and are now working on a beneficials garden. It has been so much fun to work with fellow parishioners. Doing volunteer work offers an opportunity to tell folks about Fayette County Extension and all it has to offer. Some of them are taking Jamie's Toolbox classes and now have their own gardens.

Please let us know if you have found opportunities to put your gardening passion to work with other groups in the community. Just send a summary to me at [annhenry0909@gmail.com](mailto:annhenry0909@gmail.com). We will find a way to share it with other Master Gardeners.

There is a letter from Susan Umberger on the next page. Susan has resigned from her role as FCMGA Board president after years of wonderful leadership and service to our organization in many different roles. The board members, Jamie and Carrie have been important in making this a smooth transition for Susan and me. Thanks to everyone for your help and support during this change. I hope we can all get together soon. Stay tuned.

Happy Gardening,

*Ann Henry*



## **A Letter from Susan Umberger to Master Gardeners**

Hello all,

After much thought and discussion, I have decided it's best if I resign from the FCMGA Board. I hope I can explain some about the details of my thinking below.

I had surgery in early May to remove the right lobe of my thyroid. It had a nodule that, thankfully, was totally benign. About the first good cancer news in two years!

Hopefully, this will enable my hematology doctors to go ahead with plans for a bone marrow transplant. I must be in remission for that procedure to take place, and thankfully, even with this delay, I continue in that state. After tons more tests, when I finally do get to the transplant stage, it's a month long stay in the hospital, followed by 6-8 months of Covid like restrictions, only more so. Isolation from everyone except Rhea for at least the first 3 months, no gardening, laundry every day, wipe everything with bleach wipes, food cooked to death--I literally have a book of restrictions. Infection prevention will be my mantra. Home health care will be a new norm for a while, until it's safe for me to go to clinic health care. But with all this, it's my chance for a cure, or at least longer-term remission, so I have to take it.

I can't see where my staying on the Board as President can possibly do any good especially as things begin to open up. I wish everything about this illness could be different. Most of the cards and notes I have received were from the EMG's, and I can't even begin to say how touched I was, and how I still look at them on down days.

But I hope for many good days ahead, and will still be an EMG as long as I can! In fact, I am making lists of different public gardens and Arboretums that I'd like to visit, starting in 2022, as part of my "look forward" list. You all, and this organization, have meant the world to me--a source of so many dear friendships, so much learning, so many happy days.

Thank you for all of that and my love to all of you,

*Susan Umberger*

DO YOU KNOW? What popular houseplant has the common name that's also the name of an arachnid? See answer at the end of the Newsletter.

## Unexpected Gardens



You might say Judy Worth has a neighborhood garden. Because it's the only sunny spot in her yard, she just planted the easement in front of her house between the sidewalk and street. After years of maturing and adding things, it's a lovely sight to share with the neighbors. Her philosophy sums it up. "Less is more, more is better, and lots more is absolutely the best."

When her neighbor's kids were young, they frequently stopped by to help with little garden chores. "A couple of them who are in college now have become plant lovers," says Judy. So the love of gardening has spread from that easement.



June means daylilies are blooming!



## Extension Gardens

Our Extension Gardens have continued to thrive despite COVID restrictions. Jake Karnes is heading up the vegetable gardens with a large crew that has been hard at work in both the summers of 2020 and 2021. The current group includes: Natalie Gray, Ann Henry, Julie Hurst, Kenneth Johnson, Genie McFall, Sandra Fitz, Kathleen Newcomb, Kathy Heineman, Jane Peters, Nancy Starkweather, David Uckotter, Marguerite Waddel, Faith Fiene, Tee Bergman, James Kolasa, Chen Tai, and Jake Karnes. In the summer of 2020, masks were required garden equipment!



Beehives have been added to the garden area and are being tended by a 4-H group.

The Herb Garden also continues to flourish in raised beds. Herb Garden volunteers are Beverly Freeman, Vange Lear, Susan McDaniel, Pat Petro, and Susan Sither. The Flower Garden is tended by a small and diligent crew, including Anne Lowe, Ric McGee and Judy Worth. They meet on Wednesday mornings and would love to have you join them.



**Peony Magic – many of us remember our mothers or even grandmothers growing peonies, and we still love them!**



Ann Henry's scarlet peony



Jan van Leeuwen peony from Marilyn Gall



Marilyn Gall's pale pink peonies



Celebrity peony from Marilyn Gall

## DARE TO LOVE HONEYSUCKLE

by Susan Miller

Just let me say that we might have the most honeysuckle per acre of any land inhabited by humans in Kentucky. When we first bought our farm thirty-five years ago, we had to bulldoze our way in. Shortly after, an invasive plant “specialist” came out and brought a few other troubleshooting plant buddies to see it with the idea that they might help us figure out a way to get rid of it. They all shook their heads and expressed sympathy.

For all the honeysuckle bashers, just think of a few good things about it. With its delicate flowers and delightful scent, it’s a nostalgic reminder of childhood - pulling out the sweet pistils and licking the nectar in the spring. Bees love the flowers and birds feast on the red berries in winter. Our goats love that foliage more than any feed we could buy. However, they only eat the leaves, not the woody stems, so it grows back bigger than ever. And the best feature of all, it’s free landscaping.



It’s an understatement to say you have to be the kind of person who enjoys a rustic atmosphere to appreciate all of this. We trim ours like a hedgerow now, and it has grown tunnel-like over the driveway - a delightful bonus, and quite dramatic when you drive in. Dare I say, the more we have, the better it looks? You can’t have just one honeysuckle bush. We just have to explain to onlookers that we’re embracing the natural look. But someday, we might have to bulldoze our way out.



**Answer to Did you know? - Spider Plant**