



Play in the Dirt *served by Bartow County Extension and MGEVs*

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Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program

In 2017, UGA Extension, Bartow County, Master Gardener Extension Volunteers (MGEVs), and 4-H volunteers joined forces to offer the two-day summer camp, “Play In the Dirt.” This camp began in 2014 as a summer gardening day and evolved into a two-day camp. Targeted at 5th–8th grade students, and advertised through the school system, about 20 youth attend camp each year. The goal of the camp is to interest younger generations in the joy and satisfaction of “playing in the dirt.”

The program was planned and implemented by 18 Bartow County MGEVs, with support from 4-H volunteers who provided an additional 267 hours of volunteer service. Master Gardeners and 4-H volunteers collaborated on the best lessons for youth

that involved hands-on activities to promote interest in gardening, landscape design, and botany. MGEVs served as instructors and helping hands as they carried out the camp’s activities designed to make learning fun, generate enthusiasm about horticulture, and create future gardeners.

Youth were invited to come have fun playing in the dirt with MGEVs and 4-H Volunteers at the Bartow County Extension office. Program attendees spent two days absorbed in fun-filled activities. They did several activities with herbs, such as making “mud” pudding; creating herb gardens with basil, chives, and oregano; and then making personal pizzas flavored with these herbs. Campers also crafted yard and home garden art, like pine cone flowers, and painted environmental scenes, complete with fun facts about butterflies in the garden. In addition, they had the opportunity to learn about hydroponics, landscaping, native plants, vegetables, and botany.

Local businesses supported this youth program by donating supplies used to create some of the crafts, therefore lowering the cost of the program. Participants went home with more knowledge about horticulture, basic planting and maintenance skills, and yard art, herb gardens, and lots of memories.



313
volunteer
service hours
working with
4-H in 2017

18
MGEVs
contributed
to this
project

The Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program prepares volunteers to support UGA Cooperative Extension in delivering gardening information to Georgia's citizens and communities. Since 1979, Master Gardeners and UGA Extension have helped Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible.

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