



MG SPROUTS

served by Henry County Extension and MGEVs

gamastergardener.org

Georgia Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program

In Spring 2016, Henry County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers Jim and Laura Parks coordinated the first session of the MG SPROUTS program at the Fairview Public Library. Since then, MG SPROUTS has been conducted by MGEVs through the local library system, with plans to follow their successful format in 2018. MG SPROUTS is a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer-led statewide, horticulture program created by UGA Extension's Georgia Master Gardener Program State Office for kids ages 6-8. Popular children's literature provides a base for each of the six sessions. Groups read a garden-related story aloud and explore the world of plants through hands-on horticulture, writing, games and other fun activities.



450

volunteer service
hours in 2017

19

MGEVs
contributed to
this project

The library system offered a solid foundation for the MG SPROUTS program by providing assistance in recruiting parents and children with posters, letters, and newspaper advertisements. More than 30 children, from both home school and public school settings, have participated in the program so far. While children, parents, MGEVs, and library staff gather in an indoor setting to read stories and carry out hands-on activities, children are encouraged to get outdoors with the knowledge they gain about gardening. Children particularly enjoy the composting lesson and are enthralled by the critters and materials making up the compost they marvel at in a glass jar. They then excitedly report back in later sessions, sharing about gardens or related activities they have started in their own backyards as a result of what they learned in MG SPROUTS.

Education also goes beyond the six-session program for the parents. Newsletters are sent home after each session that connect the parents to available Extension support offered at the local office, online resources, and programs, including the MGEV program. The librarians also pull books related to the session's topic, like composting, and create a display of additional resources. Parents and children continue to reference library resources even after the program sessions are complete.

When the program comes to an end, the children, “Sprouts,” are presented with notebooks, complete with their artwork, worksheets, certificate of completion, and recipes. MGEVs, librarians, and program attendees share their favorite recipes and copies are included in each notebook. In addition, postcards crafted during one of the sessions are sent to Henry County Extension agent, Frank Hancock. In Henry County, the MG SPROUTS program touches the lives of children and their parents as they learn about gardening and form a connection with UGA Extension, Henry County and MGEVs.



Children often return to the Fairview Public Library and share with Children's Specialist, Audrey Flynn, that they planted the seed tape they made during the program, or they remember all the fun they had during MG SPROUTS!

Laura Parks, Henry County MGEV, provided leadership in implementing MG SPROUTS in Henry County libraries. Laura enjoys seeing the children's excitement as they realize all the garden activities they can do in their own homes and backyards. She values encouraging kids to cultivate a love for horticulture.

**34 MG SPROUTS
attended 2017
programs**

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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