

Helping with the home, garden and more

It isn't tough to find help at the University of Georgia/Cobb County Cooperative Extension Office.

In fact, about 75,000 people get assistance from both county staff members and a host of volunteers each year.

"County Extension staff and volunteers are the best of the best," Director Hope Warren said. "These individuals are not only here to help you in our many areas of outreach but they are truly dedicated and personally passionate about their specialty area. It is much more than just a job. It is a calling."

These workers, totaling 16 paid staff and about 300 master gardener volunteers, provide a variety of services, including educational seminars, environmental programs and youth leadership. The office works in the areas of family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth and urban agriculture/horticulture.

"Family and consumer sciences is the source for information on parenting, child care, financial resilience and healthy, safe and affordable housing; with a strong emphasis on health and healthy lifestyles, chronic disease prevention, food safety and food preservation," Warren said.

Support for home gardening includes soil testing, insect identification, plant disease diagnosis, proper installation and care of the landscape, as well as trouble-shooting landscape problems.

Free seminars, clinics and demonstrations are provided to the public on a variety of horticultural and family and consumer sciences topics. Residents can also get free publications on hundreds of topics by phone, Internet or office visit, Warren said.

Cobb County master gardeners are residents who received horticultural training from the University of Georgia through the Cooperative Extension Service. In return for this training, they provide educational opportunities to other county residents.

In 2013, master gardeners made in excess of 18,500 contacts throughout Cobb, donating more than 17,000 volunteer hours. The volunteer services they provided were valued at \$322,000.

The 4-H youth program provides in-school and after-school programming as well as a community club to help kids learn and develop life skills. Participants also attend the five different 4-H camps across the state.

The Cobb County Extension office is located at 678 South Cobb Drive, Suite 200, Marietta. You can call the office for assistance or with any questions at 770-528-4070.



Special

Upcoming Extension events include:

A free class on "Seed Starting for the Vegetable Garden" is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., **Feb. 24**, at the Cobb County Extension Office.

The Gardener's Night Out event "Getting Ready for the Spring Vegetable Garden" will be held 7-8 p.m., **March 10**, at the Mountain View Regional Library, Marietta.

The annual Cobb County 4-H plant sale fundraiser is happening now. The last day to order plants will be Wednesday, **March 11**, and the pickup will be held 10 a.m.-2 p.m., March 21, at Jim R. Miller Park in Marietta. Plants available include blackberry, raspberry, muscadine, pomegranate and ferns. Payment must accompany orders. All sales are final. More information is available at cobbextension.org.

The class "Orchids 101" will be held 1:30-3 p.m., **March 19**, at the Cobb Extension Office.

The free Lunch and Learn event "Clean Green this Spring" will be held at noon, Thursday, **March 12**, at the Cobb Extension Office. Call 770-528-4070 or email uge1067@uga.edu to register.

County town hall meetings begin anew

Board of Commissioners Chairman Tim Lee is holding a series of town hall meetings in each district to start off the year. The public is invited to attend any of the meetings to get updates on county projects or ask questions of the chairman.



District Two -- 6:30-8 p.m., Monday, **Feb. 23**, East Cobb Regional Library, 4880 Lower Roswell Road, Marietta

District Three -- 6:30-8 p.m., Thursday, **March 19**, East Cobb Senior Center, 3332 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta

District Four -- 6:30-8 p.m., Wednesday, **April 29**, South Cobb Community Center, 620 Lions Club Dr SW, Mableton

For more information, call the chairman's office at 770-528-3305.

Commissioner Lisa Cupid will deliver the State of District Four Address on Thursday, **Feb. 12**. There will be two opportunities, at noon and 6:30 p.m., to discuss all of District Four's accomplishments in 2014 and plans for this year. The meetings will also be chances to share information about how local businesses can work with the Atlanta Braves. Both of the meetings on Feb. 12 will be held at Presbyterian Village, 2000 East-West



Connector, Austell. For more information, call 770-528-3312 or visit cobbcounty.org/cupid.

District Three Commissioner JoAnn Birrell will host her first town hall of the year 6:30-8 p.m., Thursday, **Feb. 19**. The spotlight will be on the Georgia Department of Transportation's Northwest Corridor Express Lanes project. This meeting will be held at East Cobb Senior Center, 3332 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta. For more information, call 770-528-3317 or visit cobbcounty.org/birrell.



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SPECIAL/Peter Yund

Ballpark renovated

The Atlanta Braves, Cobb County officials and baseball fans young and old recently celebrated renovations to Fullers Park with a special ceremony renaming the field in honor of Braves Hall of Famer Chipper Jones.

The park's baseball field was revitalized through the generosity of the Atlanta Braves Foundation and the rehabilitation will benefit Eastside Baseball League, which had 159 baseball teams and 1,746 participants in 2014.

Field improvements include a re-graded infield, an added infield mix, laser grading for proper drainage and rebuilt pitching mounds. On-deck circles and new netting at the backstop were also purchased and installed. The property for Fullers Park was purchased in April 1967 and development of the more than 50-acre park was completed in June 1974.



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