

# Extension news

Surry County Center

July 2017

## Inside This Issue

Surry County ECA Annual Achievement

2017 ECA Scholarship Recipients

Vinedressers

Tips for Tomatoes

Garden Tour

4-H Teen Trip

2017 4-H Congress

2017 Volunteer Appreciation

Snake Season?

Calendar of Events

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## Surry County ECA Annual Achievement Program

Surry County Extension and Community Association (ECA) members gathered for a night of fun and celebration at their 80th annual achievement program on June 1. The theme "Who Done It" tied back to the member's accomplishments during the past year and a murder mystery dinner theater.



The Extension volunteer Service award was earned by Sue Chandler of the White Sulphur Springs ECA club. Sue was involved in a variety of different projects, including making journals for the families of patients at Hospice House, cutting out individual vision screeners for use by students at our local school and making Christmas tree decorations for the Mount Airy Library and Cooperative Extension Office Christmas trees. The Community Volunteer Service award was presented to Goldie Sparger of the Beulah ECA club. Goldie is a familiar face at Northern Hospital, Yokefellow, Beulah Ruritan Club, local fairs and other community events where she shares her time and talents. Each of the eight Extension and Community Association clubs were recognized for their accomplishments. A special thank you to each of the Surry County ECA members who gave a combined total of **12,964 hours** of volunteer service to our community during the past year.



For more information about ECA, contact Cooperative Extension 336-401-8025 or by email at [carmen\\_long@ncsu.edu](mailto:carmen_long@ncsu.edu).

ECA Club presidents were honored for their service on June 1 at ECA Awards and Achievements Night. They are: (left to right) Carole Simpson, Tammy Mabe and Pat Crissman (Siloam), Marilyn Geiger (Pilot Mountain Achievers), Jean Hardy (Salem Fork), Goldie Sparger (Beulah) and Ann Davis (White Sulphur Springs).

## Congratulations 2017 Surry County ECA Scholarship Recipients



Joy Hemming, adviser to ECA County Council presented a youth scholarship to Grace Leann Wall who plans to attend Surry Community College for two years and transfer to continue studying grief counseling.



Joy Hemming, adviser to ECA County Council presented a youth scholarship to Michael "Blake" Flinchum who plans to attend Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.



The adult scholarship was presented to Sally Southard who is enrolled in

a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program at East Carolina University by Joy Hemming, adviser to ECA County Council.



# Vinedressers Look at Muscadines and More

The month of June provided a unique opportunity for the Vinedressers (vineyard owners, operators, and wine makers). NC State University Muscadine specialist, Bill Cline, talked to the group about various muscadine cultivars for wine and juice to fresh market varieties. Muscadine production is different than bunch grapes typically seen in Surry County. Much research is being done to determine how far west in North Carolina muscadines can be grown successfully. Traditionally, they are not recommended in the “mountains”.

Dr. Hannah Burrack, entomologist with NC State University held a walk through at the Surry Community College teaching vineyard. She helped the group identify insects currently present in the vineyard along with giving tips on what insects to look out for in the near future. Management options were discussed from watching Japanese beetle damage to implementing a spray program for leafhoppers to minimize transmission of the deadly Pierce’s disease. She also informed the group of beneficial insects in the vineyard. The picture below shows an example of a *Ceratina* bee species referred to as small carpenter bee and the tunnel it created in a pruned cane. Interesting enough, the bee makes its nest in dead tissue and lays eggs in the tunnel providing enough provisions of pollen and nectar to survive. The bees do not injure the twigs or canes themselves and are likely taking advantage of tip die-back following pruning. Wow, how awesome is nature!



# Tips for Successful Tomatoes

There is nothing like a tomato sandwich on a hot summer day. Wouldn’t you agree? Tomatoes are one of the most popular vegetables in the home garden. Many gardeners have great success with tomatoes, however, some have challenges every year as they try to achieve red, ripe tomatoes. Success will come if you use some proven gardening methods.



Staking tomato plants are a must in my book. While I prefer staking, caging is also acceptable. Staking will provide larger tomatoes but quantity may be a little less. Stakes should be about 6 feet in length and placed 1 foot in the ground. Use strips of cloth, nylon stockings, or string to tie the plants up. Tomato cages are often too small to provide adequate support. (This is why I prefer staking.) Cages taller than 4 feet work pretty well. Consider using a 5 to 6 six-foot length of hog wire or concrete reinforcing wire to make a wire circle 22 to 24 inches in diameter. Remove the bottom couple of rings of horizontal wire so that the ends can be pushed in the ground.

As the plants grow suckering is important to promote fruiting and prevent shading inside the plant. Many tomatoes will produce large side shoots that will grow vertical from the base, competing with the main stem. Remove these suckers as soon as you notice them. Once the plants have started to set fruit, side-dress with 2 to 3 tablespoons per plant of a complete fertilizer such as 12-4-8, 12-6-6, or 16-4-8. Continue this every 4 to 6 weeks throughout the growing season. Do not place the fertilizer closer than 4 to 6 inches from the stem to avoid fertilizer burn.

The last tip for this year’s tomato season is to provide enough water throughout the season. Our rainfall does not always give us enough water or at the right time. Tomato plants need one inch of water per week. So, make sure plants are not drought-stressed. This will help prevent blossom end rot issues. When it is dry calcium is not taken up well and becomes low in tomatoes and they may form a black area on the blossom end of the fruit. Mulches of straw, bark, or composted leaves will help conserve moisture. Good luck!

# Mount Airy Blooms Garden Tour

Extension Master Gardeners have not slowed down this summer. They were involved in the Mount Airy Blooms Garden Tour on June 10. Booths were set up and Master Gardeners were available to answer questions from participants on the tour. They each had a particular topic they were sharing to interested gardeners. Some of those topics included: Color Wheel in the Garden, Container Gardening, Edible Landscapes, Managing Garden Pests and Diseases, Native Plants for Piedmont Gardens, Planting to Attract Pollinators, and Vermiculture. There were over 300 tickets sold for the garden tour.



Photo Credit: Andy Winemiller

# 4-H Teen Trip to Washington D.C.

On June 12<sup>th</sup> three youth from Surry County made their way to the United States Capital of Washington D.C. Those that attended included Rebecca Cahall, Sydney Tucker, and Laken Williams. We met 21 other youth from surrounding counties for a four-day adventure touring our nation's capital.



On our first day, we traveled into the city for a behind the scenes tour of the Capitol building with Congresswoman, Virginia Foxx. During our tour of the Capitol we sat in the House of Representatives and Senate Galleries during a vote. We watched as the voting process took place and a couple of local house bills were passed. On our second day, we visited the Smithsonian Natural History Museum and then made our way to Ford's Theater where we learned all about Lincoln's presidency and assassination. After our visit at the Theater we toured the Holocaust Museum which was a very moving and powerful experience. Our second evening ended with a trolley tour of the Monuments by Moonlight. During this tour, we saw the Iwo Jima, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lincoln, Vietnam Veterans, Korean War and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials.

On our third day, we started off at Arlington National Cemetery where we saw Kennedy's gravesite, watched the changing of the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and visited the Robert E. Lee house and museum. We then made our way back into the city where we attended a meeting with representatives from Senator Thom Tillis and Senator Richard Burr's offices. Afterwards, we took the circulator bus to watch the Washington Nationals versus the Atlanta Braves baseball game. On our last day, we went into the city and visited the Smithsonian Air and Space museum. Here we saw the original Wright Brother's Plane and many other historical artifacts including early navigation tools and learned about our nation's first trip to the moon.



Overall we had a wonderful trip and learned so much about our nation's history and our nation's capital.

## NC 4-H Congress 2017



4-H Congress will be held from July 29-August 1 on the campus of NC State University in Raleigh for 4-Her's ages 13 and older. This is a jam packed few days full of leadership activities including great speakers, workshops, dances, service projects, and lots more! You don't want to miss out on all the fun and exciting opportunities. Scholarships may be available. **Registration is required by Monday, July 3rd.** Call 401-8025 or email Whitney (whiney\_collins@ncsu.edu) for more information.

## 2017 Volunteer Appreciation

Our Extension volunteers are invaluable to the work we do here in Surry County. "Thank You" to each one of you who help us make differences in the lives of the citizens here in the county. We hope you enjoyed the volunteer event and were able to leave with a new sense of "color" as we explored each of our personalities. It is the uniqueness of us all that makes the world so beautiful.

A special thank you to Joy and Alei Barlow for supplying the beautiful flowers for this event! The hydrangeas and butterfly bush flowers were phenomenal.

## Snake Season?

Snakes cause a problem to many folks just by their presence, however, it's not necessary to kill every snake that



is seen. Most of the 37 species of snakes in North Carolina are non-poisonous and are, in fact, extremely beneficial due to the large number of rodents that many eat.

There are only 6 species in NC that are poisonous: copperhead, water moccasin, coral, timber rattlesnake, diamondback rattlesnake, and the pygmy rattlesnake. Telling the difference between poisonous and non-poisonous snakes can be done by observing the eyes or the tail of a live snake or its skin. The eyes of poisonous snakes have cat like slitted pupils and they have a single row of scales on the tail following the anal opening. Non-poisonous snakes have round pupils and double rows of scales. Coral snakes have round pupils and look a lot like the scarlet king snake, but red bands touch yellow bands (yellow touches red, you're dead). The triangular shape of the head is not always a clear indicator of a poisonous snake as many species of snakes can, when disturbed, make their head and neck swell. All snakes can bite!

Snakes have found you because they're looking for food or their habitat has been disturbed. There's no known chemical repellent that can be sprayed, or otherwise put out to prevent snakes from entering a house or even a yard. Control is most successful by cleaning up any areas that snakes or their rodent prey could live in or under such as piles of boards, trash, or bushy areas.

If you do get a snake in the house, you need to check for areas where it could have entered, maybe around the foundation or where utility lines enter. Block off this access, and if necessary, use rat size glue boards to catch any animals remaining in the house.

Get medical attention if bitten. Try to stay calm and remember what the snake looked like. Death is rare for bite victims, but complications from swelling can result in limb loss.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Surry County Beekeepers Monthly

### Meeting

July 10, 2017 / 7:00 p.m.  
Surry County Extension Center, Dobson

## Master Gardener Monthly Meeting

July 12, 2017 / 12:00 Noon  
Surry County Extension Center, Dobson

## Vinedresser Meeting

July 20, 2017 / 6:00 p.m.  
Surry County Extension Center, Dobson

## Fall Gardening Workshop

July 24, 2017 / 6:00 p.m.  
Elkin Public Library

## Advisory Council Meeting

July 25, 2017 / 6:00 p.m.  
Surry County Extension Center, Dobson

## ECA County Council Meeting

July 27, 2017 / 10:00 a.m.  
Pilot Mountain State Park



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## 4-H Summer Programs

### Acting Out

July 6, 2017 / 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### Bugs Galore

July 11, 2017 / 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

### Linville Caverns

July 14, 2017 / 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

### Insect Investigation

July 17, 2017 / 8:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

### Under the Sea

July 18, 2017 / 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

### What's Cookin'?

July 19, 2017 / 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### Geology Rocks

July 20, 2017 / 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### Bubbelogy

July 24, 2017 / 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

### Minute To Win It

July 25, 2017 / 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

### Everyday Is Earth Day

July 26, 2017 / 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### **Accommodation Statement:**

For accommodations for persons with disabilities, contact the Surry County Center at (336) 401-8025, no later than five business days before the event.

### **Disclaimer**

Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county Cooperative Extension agent.

**Special Note: Registration for events listed in this calendar are required unless otherwise noted. Register by calling (336) 401-8025.**

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