



**Master Gardener
Volunteers
of Cobb County**

**Junior Master
Gardeners at Birney
Elementary**



Project Location: 775 Smyrna-Powder Springs Road, Marietta, GA 30060

Project Workday: Tuesday, 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Project Chair: Linda Hlozansky (770-432-5345) **Co-chair:** Judy Kelley (770-841-7638)

The Birney Elementary School Junior Master Gardeners follow the curriculum and workbook produced for the Junior Master Gardener Program by Texas A & M University. This is a two-year, weekly program that teaches elementary school children all

germinated in the garden where discarded pumpkins were placed last fall. The students now maintain three gardens, vegetable, butterfly and perennial, as well as a water feature. The dual focus of the program is the activities outlined in the workbook reinforced by hands-on experience in the gardens.



In the spring of 2011 the children had a garden tour of their own. They showed off the Birney garden to the faculty and the children in the After School Program. Each gardener was assigned to docent an area of the garden. They told their classmates everything they could about the plants including such sage advice as never to eat parts of plants unless you are sure that the plant is edible.

In the Fall of 2011 forty-five volunteers from a local church, MGVOCC, parents, teachers, and children came out to get the garden in order. They painted murals on the garden wall, painted the picnic table and seating and pulled grass out of the rock walkway and flower beds. This was all to get the garden in top-notch order for a visit from Better Mornings Atlanta, CBS 46.

the important Master Gardener topics related to gardening, the environment and ecology.

At Birney the participants are from third to fifth grade. The number of students has grown each year. In 2010 they began planting vegetables in the raised beds provided by MGVOCC. The vegetable garden now has radish, lettuce, cabbage, Swiss chard, and onions, but by far the most interesting part of the garden is the baby pumpkin plants that have

Whether it's spinach and radishes in the spring or sweet potatoes in the fall, As always, one of the favorite activities of the students in the Junior Master Gardener program is to eat what they grow.

Volunteers are welcome to work with the children during the school year as well during the summer to help harvest warm weather vegetables as well as keeping the perennial garden weed free.

The mission of the MGVOCC is to advance the horticultural education and practices of its members and to promote the knowledge of and interest in gardening to the members and to the public.

For more information contact Carolyn Gentry, Master Gardener Coordinator at the Cobb Extension. Phone: 770-528-4070