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## Sylacauga Grows dedicates fruit orchard

Emily Adams

Feb 3, 2012



Sylacauga Grows dedicated its fruit orchard Thursday. Pictured from left, are Margaret Morton, executive director of Sylacauga Alliance for Family Enhancement; Bill Roberts with his new shovel; Taylor Logan, SAFE project manager; and Mayor Sam Wright. Photo by Denise Sinclair/The Daily Home

**SYLACAUGA – Sylacauga Grows hosted a dedication service for its fruit tree orchard Thursday.**

The service, held at the community garden in Sylavon Court, honored those who made the orchard possible as well as those who purchased a tree.

“It took a lot of blood, sweat and tears to make this garden and orchard a success,” said SAFE director Margaret Morton. “I can’t think of a better community coming together to meet the needs of its citizens. It is an honor and a privilege to recognize everyone that made this possible.”

Mayor Sam Wright said the orchard and garden are the result of community members working together.

“Small cities couldn’t make it without people like this,” Wright said. “SAFE is involved in so many things that bring people together to accomplish what the community needs.”

Morton presented garden director Bill Roberts with a shovel as a thank you for his dedication to the orchard.

“Bill has been here day in and day out, no matter the weather,” Morton said. “He and the other angels in this garden are the reason we are here today.”

The orchard, run by SAFE, has about 30 apple and pear trees. Each tree was planted in honor or memory of a person or group.

“The community response has been overwhelming,” said SAFE project manager Taylor Logan. “We planted nine trees in November, 13 in December, and I’m glad Bill got a new shovel because we’re getting ready to plant 20 more.”

Logan said they will eventually plant eight types of fruit trees, including persimmons, figs and pomegranates.

Since the community garden began three years ago, SAFE has harvested three tons of produce. Morton said the garden, which spans about five acres, is a testament to Sylacauga’s citizens.

“Everything you see here is a voluntary effort,” she said. “It was all done together, and it will continue to grow in the years ahead.”

Pastor Bryan Taunton opened the dedication with a prayer. “We dedicate this orchard to you Lord and the many lives that will be touched.

Sylacauga Grows fruit orchard dedication honor roll of trees read aloud by Morton were:

- In honor of — John and Teresa Callaway; State Sen. and Mrs. Jerry Fielding; John and DeAnn Floyd; Jim Jones; Mickey Orton; Dr. Joseph B. Morton, Margaret Morton; SAFE Board of Directors; SAFE staff; Sylacauga Housing Authority; and Ted and Shirley Spears.
- In memory of — Lois Field, Frank Horton, Jay Hudson, James Ezra Jones Jr., Northern C. 'Bunk' Sinclair; Robert Spees, Sylvia Spees, Glenn Stephens and James Tucker.
- Given by — Coosa Valley Medical Center and Jeff and Vanessa Green.

Winter crops include collard and turnip greens, broccoli and onions.

The group sells produce baskets for \$5 each as available. It also offers garden beds for community members to grow their own food for \$5 a year.

Trees are still available at a cost of \$50, which includes a personalized marker placed at the base of the tree.

For more information or to purchase a tree, contact Sylacauga Grows at 256-245-4343.

Contact Emily Adams at [eadams@dailyhome.com](mailto:eadams@dailyhome.com).





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