

HIDDEN



TREASURES

All In the “TREASURE Forest” Family

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The term TREASURE Forest means many things to many people. To Roy and Mary Reeves' family of Roanoke, Alabama, it means family involvement. Mr. and Mrs. Reeves purchased their first tract of forestland in 1968 and immediately began actively managing the 226 acres. Timber stand improvement cuts were made and 43 acres were planted in pines on cleared land that the local Boy Scout troop was allowed to use for camping. This tract has been called the “Boy Scout Land” since then and in fact, the Boy Scouts still use the property for gatherings and camping.

The Reeves purchased more land on two other occasions bringing the total area to 336 acres. Hurricane Opal took its toll on 90 acres in 1995, but the area was harvested and re-planted. Now family and friends enjoy hunting abundant deer, turkey, squirrel, and rabbit on the property.

Aesthetics is important to the Reeves family as well. One of the most strikingly beautiful places on the property is an area along a stream with large boulders jutting out of the ground as if guarding the stream and hardwoods. A firebreak along the ridge between the natural pines and the hardwoods provides easy access to this area.

It is evident that the Reeves practiced multiple-use forestry before it became popular to do so. Mr. Reeves first became aware of the TREASURE Forest program in 1996 through Alabama Forestry

Commission personnel servicing a cost-share referral. His interest in the program was sparked and he was invited to sit on the County Forestry Planning Committee. The property was certified as a TREASURE Forest in 1997. The Reeves' property has hosted two forestry tours and 6th grade classes from Handley Middle School have also visited for the last three

Forest in 1999. Recreation in the form of hunting and camping for friends and family is the secondary objective and one of the old farm buildings now serves as a bunkhouse for hunters and campers. An extensive system of fire lanes and access roads doubles as linear wildlife openings in many areas. Little Wehadkee Creek and Wehadkee Creek form the

east and south property boundaries respectively. The most notable natural feature is a large outcrop of rock. This nearly flat area of rock is one of the recognized habitats for Little Amphianthus or “pool sprite,” an endangered species of small flowering herb.

The Walker property has undergone several changes in the last ten years. A three-acre lake was built and stocked with bream and bass. The Walkers

then built a house overlooking the lake. Pine trees replaced cattle on about 25 acres. The south 40 acres is mainly upland hardwoods through which Meachum Creek flows. Overlooking the creek, the lake, and the home place from the south is a hill with a marvelous stand of northern red oak and scarlet oak that virtually glows red in the fall. A one-day “Becoming an Outdoor Woman” program was hosted at the Walker's place last spring. Their property was certified as a TREASURE Forest in 2001.

As the Reeves family continues to grow, they are definitely making the TREASURE Forest program a “family tradition.”



Carrying on the Reeves TREASURE Forest family tradition (l to r): Benji Whaley, Tia W. Whaley, Seth Walker, Casey Prince, Katina R. Walker, Kem Walker, Roy Reeves, Mary Reeves, Sabra R. Burns, Steve Burns, Leigh Burns, and Luke Burns.

years. The county FFA forestry judging competition was held here in 2000. Mr. Reeves served two terms as Chairman of the planning committee and soon afterward was instrumental in starting a TREASURE Forest county chapter, of which he is the Chapter President. But the story does not end there.

Mr. and Mrs. Reeves' two daughters, Sabra and Katina, each have families and TREASURE Forests of their own. Sabra and Steve Burns own 145 acres of forestland that they acquired in 1990. Katina and Kem Walker have 80 acres.

The Burns property, a mix of planted pines, bottomland hardwoods, and natural pines, was certified as a TREASURE