



President's Message

By Linda Griebel



January was another very busy month for gardeners. Even though we had some really cold temperatures, we also received some much needed rainfall. Because there were also some moderate days, I was able to start transplanting several trees that had grown too large in their propagation beds as well as three flowering cherry trees for which my husband bargained. The intention is to add more pollen and nectar sources for our honey bees. Just want to provide lots of available blooms to keep them feeding close to home. When I also found several bags of bargain bulbs, I dug holes and installed Dutch irises, anemones, and even some tulip bulbs (will consider those as annuals since they usually don't survive the heat of summer). Still lots to do... February will be the time to accomplish pruning of winter dormant plants as well as more digging and installing large shrubs.

Some CAMGA events had to be rescheduled due to rain, but we always stay on track for indoor plans. Our first Lunch and Learn for 2015 was nicely presented by our own Maria Pacheco-West and was so well attended that we set up an additional table and chairs for attendees. Seems the day of the week is making a difference and there is a great line up for the rest of the year. Don't miss the all-new topics and interesting speakers. The Lunch and Learn committee is coming up with innovative ideas to accommodate the attendance since we expect this trend to continue.

If you missed the January meeting, Vice President Lee Borden pulled together lots of information about what we as master gardeners can do to fulfill our mission, including many board members who told about their responsibilities and what's available to peak your interests. There was a lively discussion about volunteer hours and what actually counts. Remember that you can count contacts if you work directly with an event, but not if you just attended and didn't present or perform other direct service to individuals. Of course if you need further clarification on what to attribute to volunteer time for an unusual activity, you can email Mallory for a final determination. There's still time for you to join committees to help accomplish the many tasks of our organization. We do welcome new ideas and approaches. Everyone has something to share in one capacity or another. Thanks to everyone who brought delicious food for the break. Another thank you to those who shared items for door prizes – always added excitement at the end of our jam packed meetings!

Ann Hill has created another excellent resource for members - in addition to an electronic copy already emailed, the printed association directory will be available for pickup at February's meeting. Be sure to get yours when you attend.

Applications for the fall intern class are available – there's a cover sheet with data about the class. Be sure to keep one with you to give to potential master gardeners. We'll also have recruitment flyers for you to take to events and to email to interested individuals or groups. If each of us shares with others what we enjoy about master gardening and just recruits one person for the class, we'll have enough to fill the room with interns. See you in the gardens. *Linda*

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Message from Mallory

By Mallory Kelley

Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests

Starting Seeds Indoors

Many home gardeners become discouraged starting their seeds indoors because the plants become weak, spindly, leggy or even die of diseases. It's not that difficult to grow good quality seedlings at home, but there are some important things you need to know before you begin to ensure success.

When asking yourself, "Is it time to sow seeds?" It is always better to lean on the side of being too late rather than too early. Keep in mind that you can continue to grow seeds throughout the summer to have a succession of vegetables in your garden rather than planting them all at once. When picking a start date to start seeds, calculate based on the average date of the last frost for your area. Then according to the seeds you are growing count back the number of weeks to when you should sow. Plants like beans, okra, carrots and corn should be seeded directly into the soil, but other plants like tomatoes, egg-plant and peppers respond well to a head start indoors.

One advantage to starting seeds indoors is that you can order from a reputable source and select varieties that you would most likely not be able to find in the garden centers. From the "heirloom" varieties to the latest hybrids, starting seeds indoors opens a whole new world of plant varieties and types of vegetables to try.

Now that you have the seeds and know when to sow them, what should you sow them in? Select containers that provide good drainage. If you use containers you have previously grown plants in, it is best to wash them in a 10% bleach solution to remove any fungi or bacteria. Then select a growing media that is sterile and free of weed seed. It is best to start seeds in a media that is labeled "Seed Starter Media." Always make sure to moisten the soil well before you sow any seeds and prepare all of your labels to identify your plants ahead of time.

Very few seeds need light to germinate so it is not necessary to provide light to the media and seeds until after they germinate. If the seeds are very tiny you may want to cover them lightly with vermiculite. As a rule of thumb, plant seeds a depth of two and a half times the diameter of the seed.

For good germination, the seeds will need warm soil and humidity. To create the humidity place a clear plastic bag over the container or a clear lid to hold in the humidity. If you see water dripping inside it is too hot and wet and could cause disease problems so make sure to vent the lid or cover if it is too warm.

The best place in the home to put your container with seeds is on a warming pad to warm the soil or if you do not have a warming pad place the planted container on top of your refrigerator. Your seeds will need to remain moist and humid and should begin to germination in 10-12 days.

Once the seedlings germinate you can remove the cover that you have over them creating the humidity and place them directly under lights as close as you can without touching for 14-16 constant hours to prevent them from becoming long and leggy. No fertilizer is needed until after the first set of true leaves appear. Then use a water soluble fertilizer at half strength every 2-3 weeks.

If you sow the seeds in very small cell packs or sow all of the seeds together in one container you would then need to transplant them into bigger containers as they grow. This transplanting should be done early and carefully to avoid damaging the plants delicate roots and stems. Then once your plants get larger and stronger and it is close to planting time outdoors you should begin to harden off your plants by taking them outside for a few hours a day and bringing them back indoors. This is done to prepare young plants for the harsher environments outdoors such as the full sun, wind, and varying moisture.

When the day finally arrives to plant outdoors, a cloudy day with little wind is the most ideal.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 2015

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1



*Bonsai
Sign-up
Deadline*

2

*Governor's
Mansion
Work Day*

3

*Learning
Garden
Work Day
Advisory
Council
Clanton*

4

*Lanark
Work Day*



5

6

*Bugs
Webinar*



Pesticides

7

9

*Governor's
Mansion
Work Day*

10

*Learning
Garden
Work Day*

11

*Lanark
Work Day*



12

*Pruning
Lessons*



13

14



*Valentine's
Day*

15

16

*Governor's
Mansion
Work Day*

17

*Learning
Garden Work
Day
CAMGA
Meeting
Honeybee
Management*

*18 Lanark
Work Day*



*Horticulture
Day
Arrowhead*

19

20

21

22

23

*Governor's
Mansion
Work Day*

24

*Learning
Garden
Work Day*

25

*Lanark
Work Day*



26

27

28

JANUARY MINUTES

By Rosemary Mobley, Secretary



The January 2015, Central Alabama Master Gardener's Association (CAMGA) meeting was held January 20, 2015, at the Elmore County Extension Auditorium in Wetumpka, Alabama. Linda Griebel called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. She welcomed Dianne Illarmo, a guest of Ann Hill, and Corinne Lauredson, a new member. Next, Linda recognized the Vice-President, Lee Borden, who developed the presentation, "CAMGA Volunteer Opportunities."

Lee introduced the presentation by giving the mission of master gardener programs, which is educational outreach of horticultural information. He also spoke about the partnership between CAMGA and Mallory Kelly, Regional Extension Agent, Home Horticulture. He explained that master gardeners accrue volunteer hours not only to grow as gardeners, but as a means of justification for resources expended by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Lee asked Rhona Watson to provide an overview of "Reach for the Stars," a volunteer service hours recognition program. Next, Lee invited two interns, Mike Harber and Sandy Rosamond, to share their perspectives on volunteer service hours. Mike commented that his preference included hours spent in community projects, such as Japanese maple pruning with Dr. Shell in Tallassee. Sandy talked about her love of gardening, and that she learned volumes from volunteering at the Community Learning Gardens, Lanark, and the Governor's Mansion.

These comments segued into overviews by several chairpersons of volunteerism within CAMGA committees. Mary McCroan described opportunities to investigate new ideas about gardening on Thursdays in the Community Learning Gardens. John Barnes spoke about the Projects Committee, which initiates activities, such as the trainer-of-trainers Birdbath Class, and meets monthly, usually the Monday before the CAMGA meeting. Becky Brown shared that in connection with the intern class, volunteer hours are earned by working as mentors, test graders and in providing lunch services. She also urged everyone to use the cover page of the application as talking points in recruitment of new interns. Carol Rattan explained that the annual Plant Sale, held on the first Saturday in May, will provide numerous opportunities to earn service hours. Marjorie Hannah discussed volunteer activities of the Hospitality Committee that provides refreshments for meetings; helps with set-up and take down of tables and chairs; coordinates door prizes; decorates for the Christmas party and Intern Graduation; and greets guests and new members. Mary Ann Hatcher talked about the support provided to Help-line volunteers. Sandy Rosamond encouraged everyone to earn hours at Lanark gardens in Millbrook on Wednesdays. Mary Long urged members to send in human interest articles on gardening to the monthly newsletter. Writing articles is another service option available to members. Volunteering at the Millbrook Farmers' Market was highlighted by Rick Ohlson. Phil Easter spoke about the 5 "W's" and 1 "H" when submitting publicity which is routed through him. A question and answer session followed.

After the break, Linda convened the business meeting at 11:15 a.m. She announced dates in 2015 that the Extension office is closed. These are: January 2 and 19, May 25, July 3, September 7, and December 19-31. Next, Linda explained that Lee Borden is the point of contact for use of the CAMGA laptop and projector. CAMGA meeting dates and Lunch and Learn dates are the first priority for use of this media. She noted that parameters for use are detailed on an Instruction Sheet in the side pocket of the storage case.

Lee Borden reported on programs for February and March, 2015. He announced that Marilee Tankersley will be the speaker on February 17, 2015. She will provide information about the Wetumpka Impact Crater with implications for gardeners. On March 17, 2015, Jim Davis will present "Bees and Your Garden." Lee has prepared a website, <http://bit.ly/camga012015> where the Power Point presentation, "CAMGA Volunteer Opportunities," is available. He invited members to contact him at lee@divorceinfo.com with ideas for future topics and or field trips.

The next order of business was to approve the December minutes, with noted additions. Bonnie McCormick made the first motion to accept the minutes, Amanda Borden made the second, and the minutes were accepted as written by all present.

Becky Ashurst gave the Treasurer's report for December. The balance as of November 30, 2014 was \$11,244.60. Income for December included Christmas lunch-\$780.00, Cookbooks-\$30.00, Dues-\$1,115.00, and Food Pantry Donation-\$177.00 which totaled \$2,102.00. Expenditures for December were A library book-\$28.93, Mulch and ant killer-\$ 63.04, Elmore County Food Pantry-\$177.00, Caterer with tip-\$998.00, and Stamp-\$24.19 which totaled \$1,291.16. This left a balance as of December 31, 2014 of \$12,055.44. Phil Easter made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Penny Arcenaux made the second, and it was carried by all present.

A discussion about the contribution to Elmore County Extension to help defray CAMGA printing costs and other needs followed the treasurer's report. Katrina Mitchell confirmed that local offices were responsible for printing expenses. Rhona Watson made a motion to contribute \$300 to Elmore County Extension and to revisit in six months, Mary McCroan made the second and the motion was carried by those present.

Gale Wheeler-Leonard shared that cards were sent to Bob Brown and Joan Johnston for illnesses. She asked those present to call her at 334-514-2968 when they are aware of members who are ill. Gale also noted that the next Advisory Council meeting is February 3, 2015. Linda stated that an alternate to the Advisory Council Representative was needed. She asked for members to let her know if interested in serving as alternate.

John Barnes reported that the Projects Committee scheduled a work day in the Community Learning Gardens on January 29, 2015. They plan to add soil to the future butterfly garden. Jane Mobley is preparing the design for this garden. On February 12, 2015, pruning lessons will be provided in the learning gardens. The bonsai class is scheduled on March 5, 2015. Rhona Watson announced that the class size is limited to 20 and that 3 slots are unfilled. However, those who wish to participate should pay the \$18.00 fee by February 1st. This committee also plans to plant the butterfly garden on March 12, 2015.

Amanda Borden reported that a work day to handle a lot of digging up, transplanting, and some pruning at the Governor's Mansion is scheduled on March 2, 2015. In case of rain, the work day is scheduled on March 9th. She will have a sign-up sheet at the February meeting.

Charlotte Hall spoke for the Lunch and Learn Committee. The meeting dates changed from the second Wednesday to the second Tuesday of the month, beginning in 2015. The January, 2015 session, "Monthly Gardening At-A-Glance", conducted by Maria Pacheco-West, showed an increase in attendance to 50, which included 22 master gardeners and 28 other community members. The session on February 10th is titled "Seed Magic," and will be conducted by Brian Cooley. Charlotte shared that Jason Powell is scheduled for the June session. His topic is "Tough as Nails Plants for the South."

Candy Jones updated the group on her newly formed position as Advanced Master Gardener Liaison. She has planned a meeting with Mallory Kelly and those holding advanced certificates to chart a course of action.

Ann Hill passed around a draft of the CAMGA 2015 Membership Directory and asked for any edits to be submitted to her by January 23rd.

Carol Rattan reported that she will have sign up sheets at the next meeting for those interested in helping with the Plant Sale. She reminded everyone to help with plant propagation for the May event.

Marjorie Hannah shared that her contact is by phone, at 334-361-7152. She had sign-up sheets available for help with the Hospitality Committee.

Katrina Mitchell announced that those who currently receive hard copies of the Extension Newsletter should re-confirm receipt of this publication with Carol Pugh. She noted that the newsletter is available by e-mail, and that Carol will add your address to the list upon request.

Linda emphasized the need for all members to actively recruit interns. She reminded everyone that the background check is not included on the paper application for new interns, instead it is prepared online. Also, she stated that the deadline for submission to the January newsletter is January 26, 2015. Linda announced that, in the event of rain, the Japanese maple pruning activity scheduled on January 23rd will be rescheduled on Friday, January 30, 2015.

Door prizes were awarded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m. Fifty-seven [people](#) attended. Respectfully submitted, Rosemary Mobley, Secretary

Governor's Mansion Report by Amanda Borden

In January, volunteers at the Governor's Mansion weeded a number of beds and the greenhouse, deadheaded hydrangeas, removed dead material from plants, and trimmed the rosemary. The semi-annual Governor's Mansion work day has been sched-



uled for March 2, with a rain date of March 9. Lots of help will be needed with relocating plants and pruning, so all interested CAMGA members are urged to participate. There will be a sign-up sheet for the work day at the February CAMGA meeting, or contact Jane McCarthy or John Barnes.



(L-R): Jane McCarthy, Amanda Borden, Sandy Rosamond



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS by Judy May



Working in the learning Gardens January 6th were Amanda Borden, Linda Griebel, Terri Chambliss, Sandy Rosamond, Cheri Bedford, Joyce Vella, Rod Douglas and Mary McCroan.

On January 15th, no work was done in the Learning Gardens due to rain, so Rod Douglas discussed Bluebirds with Sandy Rosamond, Cheri Bedford, Terry Chambliss, Joyce Vella and Linda Griebel.

Attending the Projects Committee meeting January 12th were Linda Griebel, Jane Mobley and Rod Douglas.

Phil Easter did the promo for Lunch and Learn on WSFA-TV on Monday, January 12th.

Lunch and learn this month featured Maria Pacheco West speaking on "Month by Month Gardening". Helping with set up and take down were Sandi Adkison, Carla McCune and Debbie Kelso.

Marie Updike attended the Lunch and Learn in Montgomery January 7th where arborist Russell Stringer gave a presentation about tree planting and pruning.

On Saturday January 10th, Marie Updike joined with other members of the Chattahoochee Valley Daylily Society for their meeting held at the Columbus Botanical Gardens. They are making plans for the annual Daylily Festival and Flower Show to be held on June 6, 2015.

In late December, Marie Updike and her family spent the day at Callaway Gardens, Pine Mountain, GA where they had a self guided tour of the holiday floral and topiary displays at the Sibley Horticulture Center, a 5-acre lush greenhouse complex and conservatory. Then they visited the amazing butterfly house and ended the evening with a drive through the Fantasy of Lights.

On January 14th Jane Mobley gave a wonderful presentation on Herbs to the 25 members of the Blue Ridge Garden Club.

Working at the Governors Mansion this month were Amanda Borden, Jane McCarthy and Sandy Rosamond.

Bringing food to the monthly meeting were Gale Wheeler Leonard, Mamie Long, Iva Haynie, Linda Griebel, Rhonda Miles, Penny Arceneaux and Marjorie Hannah.

The February Advisory Council meeting will be held at the Alabama Power Conference Center in Clanton on Tuesday, February 3 at 10:00. Chilton County Master Gardeners will be setting up the room for our use. This will also include our new sign-in table. Please look for it and register your attendance before you sit down. Also, now is the time to verify your association's information on the list. Please note any changes and/or corrections. The membership list will not be circulated.

As usual, coffee and snacks will be provided for early arrivals. If you would like to bring a snack to share, it will certainly be appreciated.

Attached is the meeting agenda (PDF format). Please print a copy of it and bring it with you to the meeting, along with a copy of the minutes that Sherilyn has sent out. We no longer distribute these items at the meeting. Also, please remember to wear your name badge. This is very helpful to both old and new members.

I look forward to seeing you all in Clanton on February 3.

Ginny Holland
AC Chair
Alabama Power Conference Center

Address:
Clanton Alabama Power Conference Center
2030 7th Street S
Clanton, AL 35045

(Agenda on page 18)

Featured Plant of the Month - February

By Jane Mobley

Back in the fall I visited a gardener who had three of the loveliest shrubs growing by his greenhouse entrance. They were displaying amazing fall color. It was not the blazing red or glowing orange that most of us think of as spectacular autumn color. It was much more subtle than that. I recognized the plants as being of a type that I had planted several years ago when I was looking for something to plant that would bloom in the shade and would help cut down on erosion on a bank. This specimen was also a native southern heirloom; so I knew it probably would be hardy. I had planted it and pretty much forgotten it after determining that it was doing well there. After a time other things grew up around it. Thus, out sight, out of mind.



Sure enough, I went home from my friend's garden and dug through the branches and found my plant in all of its glory. What a shame that I had not planted it where I could have been really enjoying it all this time! I had paid attention to the tag as far as sun, water, and soil requirements, but had neglected the importance of the small note - outstanding fall color. It seems that there is more to the rule, right plant, right place, than I had thought. The plant - fathergilla. I now will be on the hunt for another to plant where I can watch it after all the flowers start to fade.

There are only two species of Fathergilla, *Fathergilla gardenii* (dwarf) and *Fathergilla major*. The two major differences are size and the fact that their habitats do not overlap in nature. Both species are deciduous shrubs that form clumps due to spreading by underground stems. Both bloom early in the spring before leafing out. Their flowers are white and form dense clusters resembling bottlebrushes. There are no petals, only the stamens are showy. Flowers are honey scented or licorice scented. Their leaves are oval with a wider tip than base. Autumn color develops from the tips inward with colors being a mosaic of yellow, orange, and magenta all turning to scarlet just before leaf fall. Both species are basically disease and pest free. The dwarf species grows from 1-3' tall and wide with *F. major* reaching heights and widths of 4-10'.

These plants require full sun to partial shade preferring just morning sun. They grow in zones 4-8 and like rich, acid, loose soil. They like consistent moisture with the dwarf species requiring more moisture than *F. major*. If well mulched, they are relatively drought tolerant, particularly *F. major*. They do not require much pruning, but, if pruned, it should be done just after flowering. Seeds are double dormant and require both a warm and cold pretreatment. They also may be propagated by softwood cuttings taken between May 20 and June 20 and then misted for two months.

If you would like to grow plants for great fall color as well as early spring bloom interest, I would highly recommend trying some Fathergilla. These species are on some endangered species lists. Getting them from sources that have not wildcrafted them is important. Planting them in your yard would be helping to save some beautiful natives.



ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIENDS WHO ARE GARDENERS TO SIGN UP FOR MONTGOMERY MG CLASS.

Our first class is February 5, 2015 at the
Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Office, Montgomery; 13 weeks of classes
Deadline to submit application, February 1, 2015

Fee \$125.00

Download application at:

<http://www.capcitymga.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/ANR-1155.pdf>

Call 334-270-4014/4133 at Montgomery ACES office for further information

Mail completed application to:

Mail to: Montgomery County Cooperative Extension Service
Eastmont Shopping Center
5340 Atlanta Highway
Montgomery, AL 36109

Do you want to take on the role of making you and
your community more sustainable?

Join us for the *Sustainable in the City* workshop.

When: Saturday, February 7, 2015

Time: 10am - 2pm

Where: 3603 Weems Road, Columbus, GA 31909

Cost: \$50 for members, \$60 for nonmembers

Description: We will hear from University of Georgia Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent, Wade Hutchinson about the Basics of Backyard Chickens. Learn how to get started, some key elements to think of before you start and the basics of a backyard flock management. The day will continue with a session on creating a Backyard Orchard. Our specialist will cover the basics of starting your own fruit-bearing plants in the urban setting. Which ones work best, how do you take care of them and problems you might encounter will be covered in this session. Join us for a delicious lunch on the grounds of the beautiful Columbus Botanical Garden brought to you by Cheerful Occasions. Continue learning in the afternoon with a session on Backyard Bees. It's easy! Learn from the pros how you can support our precious pollinators by becoming a beekeeper and receiving the gift of honey as a bonus. Small changes can make big impacts in our environment. Come learn how to be a change-maker!



To register:

by phone contact Amy at 706-327-8400

online at columbusbotanicalgarden.org

in person at 3603 Weems Road,

Columbus, GA OFFICE HOURS: M-F 9am - 5pm

Check us out on social media !



Submitted by Marie Updike

LUNCH AND LEARN BY CARLA MCCUNE



Our first Lunch and Learn of 2015 was filled to capacity as we began on our new day, the second Tuesday of each month! We were entertained and informed by our own Maria Pacheco-West. Just when gardeners are all depressed about the cold dreary winter days ahead, Maria dropped in to remind us there is plenty to be excited about in the garden year round! This Lunch and Learn was jam packed with wonderful advice from Maria's personal gardening experience, along with handouts including John Scheeper's seed list and her own special recipes for wonderful garden sprays. She shared gardening tasks for us to get going on and keep going on from January through December.

In January: Maria had an extensive list of gardening tasks for us to tackle. Among them was to transplant dormant trees, keep compost piles turned and use cut up magnolia leaves to help add nitrogen, finalize decisions on seeds needed to be ordered from our favorite seed catalog. She reminded us these often take weeks for delivery so early ordering is a must if we want seedlings in time for planting just after last frost. We should prune dormant trees to get them ready for spring growth. Maria also roots oak leaf hydrangeas in January. If rooted in January, she says, the oak leaves will require rooting hormone and will need protection from cold in the garage or out of harsh weather (cool place: not too hot, not too cold). She says the ones she roots in January do much better than those done in summer, and Lanark only has about 5 million so she should know!

In February: Maria's gardening tasks to include here were planting indoor seeds and using her famous chamomile spray (recipe included at L&L) to prevent damp off. Maria reminded us February

is a great month to get out and clean up wooded areas not accessible in warm months secondary to the possibility of unwanted encounters with stinging insects and snakes! She also fertilizes her acid loving plants during this month usually with the organic fish emulsion. She usually will give the evergreen trees a snack at this



time too, digging shallow holes at the drip line and putting the fertilizer in the hole to prevent it from just running off with a rain. She does her deciduous trees later. February is also the month for pruning regular roses.

In March: This month Maria says to begin to use the compost we so diligently turned all fall and winter and place it around our roses. She also suggests most winter vegetables will be finished at this point so they can be cleaned out and the beds can be

prepared to receive the spring plantings. She says Pee Gee hydrangeas can be cut back now (about 1/3). These may also be rooted and placed in cold frames for a few weeks before warmer weather arrives. Maria also recommends March as the month to gingerly begin weaning plants out of the greenhouse. She reminded us nights must stay above 50 degrees F. before it is truly safe to pull everything out of most greenhouses.

In April: Maria proclaims this a BUSY month! Just to name a few of the garden tasks she recommends: feed the oak leaf hydrangeas 8.8.8., begin new compost piles, feed our perennials, spray preventive fungicide on

plants (Maria likes organicide or neem oil), plant vegetables (most seedlings can grow in the ground at this point), water well but only when needed so plants get a good start on deep roots (good preparation for drier, hotter months ahead), prune azaleas after they finish blooming, get out tomatoes, squash, etc... when temperatures are above 50 degrees. She says we can also do soft cuttings to root such as begonias and coleus. Many times in April we can just put them in soil and water them well!

In May: Maria feeds the mop head hydrangeas and at Lanark this is a BIG job! She says once these lovelies get a snack they GO and GROW so if done too early there is a risk of a frost that will burn the new growth. Waiting until May is prudent. She advises us not to over-water our plants in May and continue to take cuttings to make wonderful new plants. Maria also continues her quest to eradicate the bugs and fungi with her wonderful sprays in this sweet month of gardening magic. . In June: Usually the beginning of the tough watering season is upon us, and Maria reminds us we need to pay



Maria PW and Debbie Kelso

close attention to temperatures as we garden for both plant and person! Water requirement for our growing friends will generally increase during these hotter, drier months ahead and Maria is a proponent of learning HOW our sprinkler system runs and is being used. She suggests this learning/refresher task be on the agenda for the month of June for the serious gardener. Knowing how our sprinkler systems should operate and how to adjust their effectiveness can prevent costly adjustment and repair bills and suffering plants while we wait for repairs! Also on Maria's list of to-dos this month is adding to and turning the compost piles. This is a major summer task in general and June is no exception. Another task for June, she says, is to get cuttings from hard stem plants like viburnum, Pee Gee hydrangeas, roses, camellias. . In July: Maria advises water deeply and when needed. Also, this is a good time to get cuttings of all hydrangeas and gather the hydrangea flower heads for drying. Her tip on how to get a great blue color from the mop head flower head is to gather them green with just a slight blue eye for drying. Dry them in a dark, well-ventilated (fan) room for 24-48 hours and the blue color will appear! July is the month Maria dead heads stokes asters and day lilies (once bloomers, not the repeat blooming variety). She cuts them both back hard after the blooms are spent, the leaves grow back beautifully and last all summer and fall. She also recommends July as a good a time to begin a second summer garden.

In August: Maria says this is a great time to give evergreens a shot of iron. In addition to maintaining all we have planted over the spring and summer, this is also the time to get spring bulbs ordered. She suggests all pruning done in August should be light so new growth doesn't get burned in an early freeze. Also by the end of this month all hydrangea rooting should be completed for the year.

In September: Maria's advice kept on coming. This month she says is a good time for light pruning, placing compost around trees and getting beds ready for the winter garden. She also reminded us to clean the greenhouse and any pots we may need to use for winter in 10% bleach solution to get them ready to receive plants for winter. This is a good time to root plants we want to keep and have for next spring like coleus and begonias. Check the greenhouse heater and any grow lights to be sure they are in good working order this month.

In October: Maria says to get out those winter flowers, the parsley, the snaps, etc. She also says here in the south we can simply spread poppy and larkspur seed and not cover them with soil as they do north of us and have great growing results! She recommends plants that have been out for the summer get a nice bath and a bug spray before returning indoors for cooler months. She says spring bulbs should go in the ground in October and by the end of October everything that needs to be in a cold frame, greenhouse, or indoors should be there.

In November: Maria suggests we be certain the heaters/lights in greenhouses are functioning correctly and that we water the plants in cold frames and greenhouses. She also suggests November is a great month to clean and repair garden tools.

In December: Maria has deemed this the dream month...we dream about the garden to be. This is the month we plan our spring garden. We look at the seed catalog, the gardening magazine and...!

Please join us next month on February 10th (the 2nd Tuesday) when Lunch and Learn will bring you Seed Magic presented by Brian Cooley.

Annual Master Gardener Conference



MARCH 23RD—25TH, 2015
CULLMAN CIVIC CENTER 510
5TH ST. SW, CULLMAN, AL
HOSTED BY BLOUNT AND
CULLMAN COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS

WOW! The Alabama Master Gardeners Conference is early this year! But that gives us plenty of time to celebrate the 25th Conference of our organization, not to mention time to implement all that we will learn from the outstanding slate of speakers and workshops we have lined up for this conference. We hope you will join us as we host “Gardening...WOW!” on March 23rd, 24th, and 25th, 2015 at the Cullman Civic Center in Cullman, Alabama.

The conference will begin with a terrarium workshop on Monday afternoon given by internationally renowned Tovah Martin, followed by a smoked chicken and fish fry dinner. Monday night. In addition, Blount and Cullman Counties have some amazing sights to see. Some are well known, like the Ava Maria Grotto in Cullman and the Covered Bridges of Blount County, and some are local treasures just waiting for you to discover, like the Palisades Park in Oneonta and the CCMG Demonstration Garden in downtown Cullman. We have several more features within a two-mile radius of the Civic Center that you can easily explore if you come early or stay later.

Conference registration is open to the public, so invite your gardening buddies and come discover new ways to put the WOW! in gardening.

LODGING

Cullman County Civic Center and Suggested Hotels & Campgrounds

Cullman County Civic Center 510 5th St SW Cullman, AL 35055 (256) 734-9157

Hampton Inn Cullman 6100 Alabama 157, Cullman, AL (256) 739-4444; \$109 Dbl Queen/King

Holiday Inn Express Cullman 2052 Hayes Dr. NW, Cullman, AL (256) 736-1906; \$99 Dbl Queen/\$109 Suites

Comfort Suites Cullman 2048 St. Joseph Drive NW, Cullman, AL (256) 255-5999; \$89 Dbl Queen/King you will not receive the above rates if you call the 800 numbers for the above hotels!

Cullman Campground 220 County Road 1185, Cullman, AL (256) 734-9794 \$23.10 daily/\$99 weekly 30 amp; \$25.30 daily/\$110 weekly 50 amp. AAA available

Sportsman Lake Park 1544 Sportsman Lake Park Rd. NW 256-734-3052 \$24.70 Camper/\$15.72 tent (11)

See *Garden Pathways* for complete information.



All Bugs Good and Bad

2015 Webinar Series

February 6 Pesticide Strategy: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Kaci Buhl

March 6 Fire Ant Management Using Baits

Dr. Lawrence "Fudd" Graham

April 3 Common Termites of the United States: Biology, Behavior, and Management

Dr. Robert Puckett

May 1 Beneficial Garden Helpers *Dr. Kris Braman*

June 5 Insect-borne Diseases Affecting People

Dr. Nathan Burkett-Cadena

August 7 Management of Japanese Beetles and Other White Grubs

Dr. Juang-Horng "J.C." Chong

September 4 Bees, Wasps and Hornets - They're All Different *Dr. Charles Ray*

October 2 Keep Ants and Cockroaches from Ruining Your Holidays *Elizabeth "Wizzie" Brown*

November 6 Let's Beat the Bug! New Things to Know about Bed Bugs *Dr. Stephen Kells*

December 4 Wildlife in the Backyard - a Double-edged Sword *Dr. Scott Hygnstrom*

For more information on the series and how to connect to the webinars, visit: extension.org/pages/72197.

Brought to you by these extensions: Communities of Practice: Imported Fire Ants, Disasters, Pesticide Environmental Stewardship, and Urban IPM.



RECRUIT A CANDIDATE FOR CAMGA SEPTEMBER INTERN CLASS



- Identify just one person who likes growing things or would enjoy learning more about gardening.
- Share plants or do a home visit (could be a prospective candidate).
- Talk about your love of plants to others and detail how much fun master gardeners have.
- Tell how our instructional programs can benefit homeowners and how we assist Extension in educating and dispensing horticultural information at events (how to access the Help-line, etc.)
- Invite one prospective candidate to attend a monthly meeting or Lunch and Learn with you. Select a month in which the topic (presentation) might be of interest to that person.
- After the meeting, encourage that person to take, complete, and return an application / put the application in their hands.
- Do a presentation to an organization - give out at least one application for mg intern class
- Share the application and information sheet via email (also, direct potential candidates to master gardener website)

If each CAMGA member gives out only one application and even half of those distributed applications are returned by the deadline, we will have a fall class!



February 14

Helpline News By Mary Ann Hatcher



It's that time again to sign up to work the Helpline. We begin answering calls on Thursday, March 5th from 8:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Helpline will be operated each Thursday through August 27th. We perform a great service to our fellow gardeners and serve as a liaison to the Extension service, i.e. Mallo-ry.

Just a friendly reminder for the **INTERN** class. As of this date, Jan. 21, 2015, only 10 of the 16 interns have signed up to work the Helpline. There are 7 dates with 2 slots open and 4 dates with 1 slot open through July. If you need help with signing up, please call 334-300-5512 or email spgcrkgirl55@yahoo.com.

The Master Gardener Service Report Login page is the gateway to the Directory, Hours of volunteer service, and the Helpline. Click on the Helpline tab to

gain access to the calendar signup page. Slots 1 and 2 have "Either" listed and can be used by either an **Intern** or **Master Gardener**. Slot 3 has "MG" listed and should only be used by an **Advisor**. I am looking forward to working with you on the Helpline!



At left: Helpline luncheon at 2015 planning session.



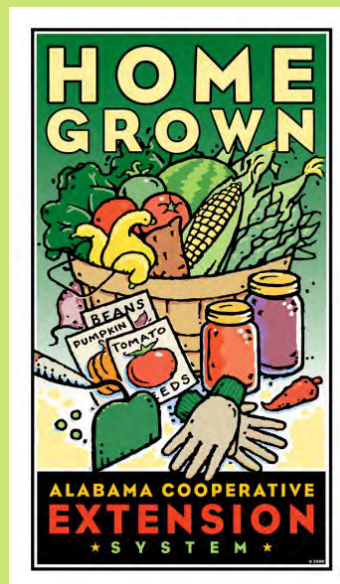
Start planning for the CAMGA Plant Sale

CAMGA Members and Interns, it is time to start thinking about our plant sale – yes, in the dead of winter. Clean off that dining room table, set up your grow lamp, and start some seeds! At least, that's what I do towards the end of January. Our plant sale is May 2nd, and we will need all hands on deck to donate plants to for the sale, organize, provide tents, trailers, and time to make our annual fundraiser a success. Thanks to Mary McCroan, we've had fresh mushroom compost delivered not only for our raised beds, but for our potting needs for the plant sale. It is located behind the shed area. Please use it only for potting plants for the sale. Please start thinking about how you can help, and mark the 1st and 2nd of May on your calendar! Linda Armour-Scott did a wonderful job with organization this event last year, I want to follow in her footsteps, and improve where we can. If you were involved last year, please consider lessons learned and let me know what you think we can do better. Thanks in advance for your support of this major CAMGA event!

Carol Rattan
Fundraising Chair



LEARN HOW TO PRUNE FRUIT PLANTS APPLES, FIGS, MUSCADINES, PEACHES, PEARS & PLUMS



To sign-up or for more information, contact the Tallapoosa County Extension office at 256-825-1050. Cost is \$5 per person. Payment is required by Friday,

REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ County: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail address: _____

_____ # of Participants X \$5 = Total Amount Enclosed: _____

Make check payable to: **Alabama Cooperative Extension System Tallapoosa County Extension Office**

Return Registration Form and Payment by February 13, 2015 to: **125 North Broadnax Street, Room 23 Dadeville, AL 36853**



Learning Garden Report By Mary McCroan

January has been a fairly quiet month for the learning gardens. There isn't much to plant, and since the recent freezes, not much to harvest either. One bright spot is the collards which are still looking pretty good and tasting great. Chop those rascals up, sauté in just a little olive oil and then simmer for 20 minutes or so in chicken broth--yum! We have been neatening things up with some weeding and mulch and by the time you read this, adding a bunch of soil to the raised beds. Unfortunately our blue bird walk day was rained out--sort of. Rod showed up along with three other interns (Cheri, Terry and Joyce) and they, along with Linda, spent two hours on a rainy morning (sitting inside!) listening as Rod shared a wealth of knowledge about cavity nesting birds. We had rescheduled the blue bird walk to the next week, but Rod was recovering from that nasty flu bug that has been making the rounds. We will try again soon. Volunteers so far for January include John Barnes, Linda Griebel, Mike and Shawn Harber, Virginia Pruitt, Rosemary Mobley, Amanda Borden, Cheri Bedford, Terry Chambliss, Joyce Vella, Rod Douglas and Mary McCroan



Cheri Bedford, Amanda Edwards, Sandy Rosamond, Terry Chambliss, Joyce Vella, Virginia Pruitt love working in the Learning Garden.



At left: Mary McCroan's orientation to Terry Chambliss and his son, Shawn. At right: Amanda, Rosemary, John and Virginia perform maintenance in the herb garden.

**Advisory Council Meeting
February 3, 2015 10:00 – 12:00
Alabama Power Conference Center Clanton, Alabama
Agenda**

1. Welcome – Introductions and sign-in
2. Approval of November AC Meeting minutes
3. AMGA BOD report
4. ACES report
 - a. New ACES logo
 - b. Submitted association projects
5. Other AC business
 - a. SOP Review
6. Open Discussion on Concerns, Activities, Projects, etc. of LMGAs
 - a. AMGA awards programs
 - A. Reach for the Stars - How to count hours for members that at some time lived in other states
 - B. AMGA Awards submission changes
 - C. AMGA Project Funding
7. Association Monthly Programs
 1. How to find speakers and topics
 2. Staying with strictly horticultural topics versus digressing into other topics that are related to gardening in some way
 3. How far in advance to set up speakers and n
 4. Notify the membership who and what will be presented
8. Announcements
 - a. 2015 Conference update
 - b. 2016 Conference update
 - c. 2017 Conference update
 - d. Huntsville Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale – April 16 HBG members only; April 1719 open to the public. For more information go to www.hsvbh.org.
 - e. Mobile County MG events for 2015 – a few brochures are available
 - f. Next Advisory Council meeting will be Tuesday May 5, 2015 at 10:00A (location TBD)
 - g. Other announcements
8. Adjourn



The Master Gardener Bonsai Class is still on schedule for March 5, 2015, and a few slots remain. The cost of the class is \$18.00, and the deadline for payment is February 1, 2015. Sign up now to insure a place in the class! (Contact person—Rhona Watson)

Bluebird expert shares with Master Gardeners



Rod Douglas



On a Learning Garden 'rain-out day,' Rod Douglas took volunteers inside and shared his extensive knowledge about our beautiful friends, Bluebirds.

CAMGA *Garden Buzzzz*
Mary Long— Editor
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Elmore, Alabama 36025
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NEXT MEETING

FEBRUARY 17

**MARILEE TANKERSLEY
WETUMPKA CRATER**

10 A.M.

EXTENSION

10:00 A.M.

**Mark your calendars for
the
Alabama Master
Gardener Conference
in Cullman, Alabama.**

March 23-24-25

(Details on page 12)