



President's Message

By Linda Griebel



Hope everyone had a terrific holiday season, especially with family gatherings, good food, and lots of cheer. As we anticipate another gardening year, there'll be activities, educational, and volunteer opportunities for all. Be sure to communicate your interests to any officer or board member if you have needs or any new ideas. I'm sure we can work together to accomplish almost any task.

New Vice President Lee Borden has already set up informative programs for our monthly meetings – you can read the partial list in the minute's section. Let Lee know if you have any topic or speaker ideas for additional programs.

Candy Jones is developing the new role of Advanced MG liaison and will do a presentation on this topic at an upcoming meeting. In the meantime, she needs input from those CAMGA members who have already achieved advanced status or who are currently working on that area. Even if you're not advanced, I'm sure she'd welcome your inquiries so she can locate answers. Since there is flexibility regarding subject selected, we'll all be on a learning curve on this, but Candy's task is to get the information together to enable members to proceed with their development.

In the planning stages for the year, another new Chairperson who'll need your participation is Marjorie Hannah who has taken on the important function of coordinating refreshments at the meetings. I know we always enjoy the treats prepared by different members at break time. So, don't forget to sign up for your turn.

Those who were able to make the December meeting were treated to a brief visit from Santa, but his busy schedule prevented him from staying for the whole meeting. Entertaining us with seasonal music on the piano were Mary Long and Carol Rattan. My personal thanks go to Carol for not only setting up the facility and delicious lunch, but also for organizing the event for our enjoyment. We do appreciate those who spent extra time making it all look so festive and cleaning up afterward.

Last, but not least, on behalf of CAMGA, I would like to give a very large thank you to the intern class of 2014 who surprised and delighted the membership with a gift card from Petals to be used for the Learning Gardens. Those interns present at the function expressed gratitude from the entire class for all of the work that members (and new friends) contributed to make their experience comfortable and enjoyable. THANK YOU, INTERNS, FROM ALL OF CAMGA!

Have a Happy New Year. See you in the gardens...

Linda

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 2015

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3
4	5 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	6 <i>Learning Garden Work Day</i>	7 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	8	9	10
11	12 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	13 <i>Learning Garden Workday Lunch 'n' Learn</i>	14 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	15	16	17
18	19 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	20 <i>CAMGA Meeting</i>	21 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	22	23	24
25 <i>Newsletter Article Deadline</i>	26 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	27 <i>Learning Garden Workday</i>	28 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	29	30	31

DECEMBER MINUTES

By Rosemary Mobley, Secretary



The December, 2014, Central Alabama Master Gardener's Association (CAMGA) meeting and annual Christmas party was held December 16, 2014, at Mulder Memorial Methodist Church, Wetumpka, Alabama. Linda Griebel called the business meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed visitors. She thanked Carol Rattan, outgoing Vice-President, for securing the meeting site and making the necessary arrangements for the Christmas party. Linda recognized a new member who was present, Jerry Belcher. She explained that Santa's visit was cut short because of his busy holiday schedule.

The next order of business was the swearing-in ceremony of officers for 2015. The officers for 2015 are: President- Linda Griebel, Vice-President- Lee Borden (not present), Secretary- Rosemary Mobley, Treasurer- Rhona Watson, and Advisory Council Representative- Gale Wheeler-Leonard. Candy Jones read the oath of office and the officers were installed.

Rosemary Mobley, Secretary, reported on three revisions to the November Minutes as printed in the December Buzz Newsletter. The changes are: 1. Replace the title, *October Minutes*, with the title, *November Minutes*. 2. In the description of the cinnamon fern, the fern receives its name from "cinnamon-colored spores" rather than "younger fronds" and delete "which start out bright green before turning cinnamon in color." 3. Two paragraphs were omitted which contained the motions of approval of the October Minutes. In addition, a report from Lee Borden, incoming Vice-President, was excluded. These paragraphs are as follows:

Carol Rattan will end her tenure as Vice-President at year's end and Lee Borden will become the next Vice-President. Lee is already planning for CAMGA's meetings in 2015. In January, 2015, there will be a spotlight on the various committees and functions of CAMGA. Mary Lee Tankersly will speak about the Wetumpka Impact Crater and implications for gardeners in February. The March meeting will feature Jim Davis, who will share information about the role of bees in pollination, and health benefits of cooking with honey. In April, Suzanne Sykes is slated to provide information about daylilies. Auburn Medicinal Plant Garden, with Tia Gonzales as speaker, is tentatively scheduled for May. The June meeting will feature information on achieving Advanced Master Gardening qualifications, and will be chaired by Candy Jones, newly established Advanced Master Gardener liaison. Lee also discussed additional topics considered for future meetings: "Attracting Beneficial Predators to Gardens," "Longleaf Pines," "Gardening in Dry Places," "Raising Mushrooms," "Taxonomy," and "Harvest for Health." Peggy Gelpi will help with the Harvest for Health program for CAMGA.

Becky Ashurst gave the Treasurer's Report for November. The balance as of October 31, 2014 was \$11,052.60. Income for November consisted of payments of \$132.00 for Christmas lunches, and \$60.00 for cookbooks. The total November income was \$192.00. There were no expenditures for November. This left a balance, as of November 30, 2014 of \$11,244.60. Candy Jones made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Rhona Watson made the second, and it was carried by all present. Becky announced that the deadline for paying local and state dues is December 31, 2014. Current interns do not pay dues for next year.

Linda Griebel represented the Projects Committee and spoke about plans for 2015. Jane Mobley is finalizing the plan for a Butterfly Garden at the Elmore County Extension Learning Gardens. Recently, the perennials were removed and stored in pots, as preparation for future amendments to the soil in the raised bed. This committee will schedule a workday in 2015 that will include, replanting of the perennials, adding new soil, and the planting of abelias in the Butterfly Garden. 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. Plans for the project at the Elmore County Municipal Courthouse are still on hold. Linda noted that the January Projects Committee meeting date is changed to January 12, 2015, as the Extension Office is closed on Monday, January 19, 2015, for the Martin Luther King state and federal holiday.

Ann Hill, who consistently lends her many abilities in the preparation of the CAMGA Membership Directory and Information Guide, asked members to notify her by e-mail at annfitchil@gmail.com of



any address or e-mail changes. Also, members may send updated photos to Ann before the end of December. Dues paying members will be those listed in the Directory; which is a reminder to pay dues in a timely manner.

Becky Brown shared that Graduation Day for the 2014 Intern Class is scheduled for August 18, 2015, at Mulder Memorial Methodist Church from 10:00 a.m. until noon. The dates for the new 2015 intern class are scheduled weekly on Thursdays from September 10, 2015 through November 19, 2015. The hours for the Thursday classes are 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Current interns, Sandy Rosamond and Terry Chambliss, volunteered to coordinate lunches for the 2015 class. Bob Brown will continue to coordinate with test graders and to provide assistance with a multitude of behind-the-scenes tasks. Becky reminded members that the recruitment of new interns is already gearing up for 2015. Updated recruitment material will be available in January. She expressed thanks to Mallory Kelly and all of the members who helped with the 2014 class in any way.

Linda reported for the Lunch and Learn Committee that the December Lunch and Learn Program, conducted by Phil Easter, was a great success with 22 attendees. She reminded everyone of the day change to the second Tuesday of the month. The first program, Monthly Gardening at a Glance, will be held on January 13, 2015. The new schedule will be e-mailed out as soon as it is finalized, and members can help distribute.

Jane Mobley announced that the Scrapbook for 2014 will be completed after including photographs and commentary from the Christmas Party. She will accept submissions of photos until the end of the year. Jane thanked those who have made contributions of content to the scrapbook.

Gale Wheeler-Leonard shared that a card was sent to Joan Johnston due to her illness, and to Sandra Gilley, whose mother passed away. She urged everyone to call her when they know of illnesses of CAMGA members.

Rhona Watson reported that volunteer hours for 2014 should be entered on the web site by December 31, 2014. Members should contact Rhona Watson or Anida Wishnietsky for help with this process. Recording volunteer hours is a means for providing useful data to the Extension Service that assists with future services and programming. In addition, these hours are included in the Reach for the Stars Program, which recognizes member for their contributions through volunteerism.

Mary Long encouraged members to submit newsletter articles and pictures by December 20, 2014. She shared that Jane Mobley planned to send an article about a "mystery plant" and that human interest stories about gardening are always welcomed.

Intern Joyce Vella was recognized, and along with interns present at the meeting, made a presentation and gift to CAMGA, from the 2014 intern class. Representing the class of 2014, Joyce expressed gratitude for all of the ways that CAMGA members supported the class. They also spoke about the excitement in learning about "keeping the earth pretty." A token of their gratitude was a Petals from the Past gift card to be used for the Butterfly Garden at the Extension Learning Gardens. Linda expressed gratitude for the gift and encouraged interns to join committees and stay active in CAMGA events.

Becky Ashurst reported that she will bring the monetary and food gifts from CAMGA members to the Elmore County Food Bank after the Christmas party.

Before closing, Linda thanked Mary Long and Carol Rattan for their piano performances of seasonal music that put the group in the Christmas spirit. She also expressed more gratitude to Carol Rattan and the various committees for their efforts with the Christmas party. Door prizes were awarded, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m. Sixty-one [people](#) attended. Respectfully submitted,



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!

Governor's Mansion Report by Amanda Borden

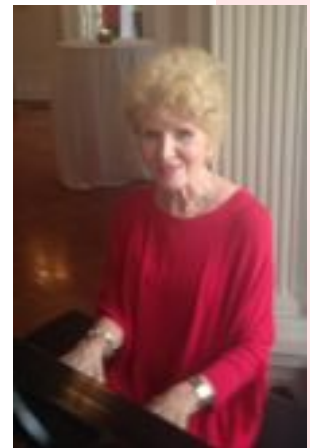


During December, volunteers tidied up front and side beds in preparation for the holiday open houses to be held at the Governor's Mansion. They trimmed sago and windmill palms in front of the bungalow, cleaned up day lilies at the portico, and removed tree volunteers from the beds in front of Hill House. On December 10, volunteers were invited to a "Coffee and Cookies" reception at the Governor's Mansion, where they had an opportunity to visit with Governor and Mrs. Bentley. Master Gardeners are taking off December 22 and 29 due to the holidays, but they will be back with gusto in the New Year. Those pictured above are Jean Smyth, Peggy Funk, Jane McCarthy, Sandy Rosamond and Amanda Borden.



* * * * *

Another event took place at the Governor's Mansion in December. The Garden Club of Alabama held a Christmas tea at the mansion hosted by Mrs. Bentley. This is an annual event for garden clubbers from all over the state. Many **Master Gardeners** were present at the event which happens each year right before the Christmas tree lighting. Mary Long entertained on the Steinway.





SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS by Judy May

Jane McCarthy, Sandy Rosamond and Amanda Borden volunteered at the Governors Mansion during December.



Maria says thank you to: Carla McCune, and Ann Hill (Ann helped with decorating the Hill home, at Lanark for Christmas) and interns: Darla Tiesling, Terry Chablis, Joyce Vella, Corky Butts and Sharon Cleary; these volunteers came out last month and were amazing! They helped me get some long over due pruning started, cleaned up the Formal garden after the first freeze went through and have been wonderful to work with. If you like getting outside on a cool day to whack over grown bushes and dig up and divide bulbs, then please come join us in January; we can really use your help!

Phil Easter did the promo for Lunch and Learn on WSFA-TV December 8 and did the Lunch and Learn on Christmas plants and Forcing Bulbs on December 10th.

Decorating for our Christmas meeting and luncheon were Sharon Potts, Angela Peltier, Iva Haynie, Candy Jones, Sandy Rosamond, Catese Chaffee and Katrina Mitchell. Staying to help with clean up were: John Barnes, Penny and R.J. Arceneaux, Judy May and Cheri Bedford. Linda Griebel did the slide show and Carol Rattan and Mary Long provided music. Tom Jaworowski served as Santa.

Attending the Projects Committee meeting this month were Linda Griebel, John Butler and Johan Beumer.

Working in the Learning Gardens December 2nd were Rod Douglas, Sandy Rosamond, Joyce Vella, Terry Chambliss, Rosemary Mobley, Virginia Pruitt and Linda Griebel.



Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,

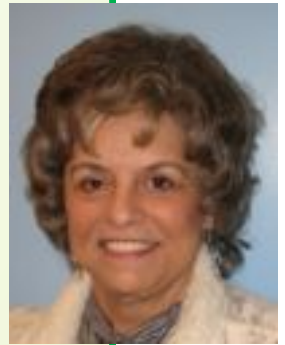
I am in need of a capable, reliable, strong worker for a part time position (at least 12-15 hours per week, sometimes more) working with me here at Lanark. Pay is \$7.50 per hour. If you know someone (must be at least

16 years old) who would like to work outdoors doing weed-eating, mowing, clearing trails, pruning trees and helping to plant larger plants and generally helping me to keep Lanark clean and neat, please have them call me at: 657-9414 to set up an interview. No prior experience is necessary, only a willingness to learn, take direction and work hard and have fun doing it is all that is required. Please do not have them call the office as I may not get the message; my cell phone is the best way.

Thank you, **Maria, 334-657-9414**

Featured Plant of the Month - January

By Jane Mobley



The purpose of this column is for us perhaps to learn something new about an odd plant or a plant with an odd feature that will do well in our zone. It is an encouragement to break free of the limited kinds of plants that we would have were we to rely on the typical landscape designer. It is an encouragement to pay attention to underused plants that would be happy to find a place in our yards. If you have a suggested plant for this column, please contact Jane Mobley. Harry Lauder's Walking Stick, *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta'

This month's featured plant might be described as really strange or even bizarre or outlanish. It is not a plant for the faint of heart. Personally, I think that it is just another example of the sense of humor one occasionally finds in nature such as the platypus of the animal world. It is kin to the hazel, but it does not produce nuts. An explosion of twisted and contorted limbs characterizes this plant. (Not to mention the corkscrew trunk.) It would make a fine addition to one's Halloween décor. It grows well in zones 4 – 8 and is not typically bothered by any pests or diseases. The main complaint with the plant is that it suckers profusely. Those suckers, however, if from a non-grafted plant, can be used to easily propagate more of these interesting plants with unconventional friends. A sucker can be layered to start a new plant in autumn. After planting, one of the shoots of a baby plant should be selected so that the shrub/small tree just has one trunk growing upright. It may have to be staked for a period in order to give it a treelike form. Future suckers should be removed. In the past most of these plants have been grafted, but now many are grown on their own roots. If your plant has been grafted, do not try to layer it. If you are grafting one, do so in winter. Harry requires a well-drained soil, acidic to slightly alkaline and full sun to part shade. It is not really a prickly plant. (It has been known to grow in clay.) Fertilize with a Rhododendron type fertilizer



every six weeks from April through October. Once established, it needs only occasional watering during a really dry period. Enjoy this floral curiosity as a specimen plant or a large container plant, and appreciate it for providing winter visual interest and the fact that its branches are great in flower arrangements.

December CAMGA Meeting



Joyce Vella introduced our interns Sandy Rosamond, Cheri Bedford, Terry Chambliss, Lavonne Hart, Corky Butts, and Mike Harper.

The interns of 2014 presented a gift card from Petals from the Past to CAMGA and their volunteers as a thank you for all the help and guidance through their classroom section of the Master Gardener. The interns expressed how they enjoyed every class and the amount they learned. They are looking forward to the next phase of volunteering and learning.

Above: Linda Griebel shows our new display board. This is the one Rosemary Mobley used to display CAMGA activities at the ACES AG Conference in Mobile last spring. Pictured on the board are all of our projects and activities

At right: Candy Jones 'swears is' our officers for 2015: From right: Linda Griebel, President; Rosemary Mobley, Secretary; Rhona Watson, Treasurer; Gayle Wheeler-Leonard, Advisory Council Representative. Not pictured is Lee Borden, Vice-president.



LUNCH AND LEARN WITH PHIL EASTER



Photo by Marie Updike

Tis the Season to Keep Blooming by: Deborah Kelso

Phil Easter made a delightful presentation on caring for Christmas plants and how to force bulbs into “out of Season” Bloom. We are all very familiar with the poinsettias- *Euphorbia pulcherrima*. Be careful even bringing these little ones home not to expose them to low temperatures. Sit them indoors in a sunny window (South, East or West). They require a constant 65-70 degree daytime temperature and 60 degrees at night. Avoid drafts, but like humidity. Water when the soil is dry to the touch. In April, gradually decrease watering and move them outdoors into filtered sunlight through the summer. On October 1, give them darkness from 5 PM to 8 AM and then a sunny window during the day. Continue to water and fertilize through November. In the last week of November stop the darkness treatment. Stop fertilizing on December 15 and enjoy the blooms.

The Christmas cactus-*Schlumbergera bridesii* or *Zycocactus* is next in the spotlight. This one needs a bright but indirect sunlit North or East facing window. It requires extra humidity, well-drained soil in a container and to be watered sparingly. To get them to bud temperatures need to be between 50 and 60 degrees. In mid-October keep them in the dark about twelve hours at night for at least 6-8 weeks. Limit the watering at this time. As the buds appear, increase the light and humidity and water slightly more often.

Rosemary-*Rosmarinus officinalis* is both evergreen and fragrant. It can be pruned and trained to look like a miniature Christmas tree. Place it in a South or West facing window for six hours of direct sun, supplement with fluorescent light. Do not water until the top 2 “ of soil is dry. Then water thoroughly; needs humidity; fertilize no more than 1-2 times a month with a liquid fertilizer. Use a fan for air movement to prevent powdery mildew or make two and trade every two weeks with the one outside. Neem oil is used for insect control. When harvesting, snip immediately above the stem joint. (Continued)

(Lunch and Learn) Lemon Cypress-*Cupressus macrocarpa*- “Goldcrest”, for a bit of lime color. Looks like a

miniature Christmas tree. Hardy outdoors in Zones 7-10 with five hours full sun. Indoors: Place near window with maximum light. Water as needed to moisten but not wet and feed regularly with acid fertilizer. It is best to rotate outdoors as with the Rosemary.

Cyclamen is a little less traditional, but adds color to a room. Place it indoors in bright light but not direct sun. The rich, fast-draining soil should be consistently moist and in the winter. It requires high humidity and regular fertilizing during winter growing. The ideal temperature is between 50-65 degrees. During the summer, allow it to go dormant in a cool, dark place; water sparingly. New growth will begin at the end of summer.

Rieger Begonias-*Begonia x hiemalis* is another welcome



Photo by Marie Updike

winter beauty. Place indoors in bright, indirect light year round. They are photoperiod bloomers (short days and long nights). Water when the top ½” soil is dry. After blooming, reduce amount and frequency of watering. Fertilize weekly with liquid fertilizer. Temperatures must be lowered to around 60 at night to initiate buds. Switch to high phosphorous fertilizer at that time.

Forcing bulbs is convincing the bulb that it’s spent enough time in dormancy to start growing and blooming. The following bulbs can be forced: Amaryllis, Crocus, Daffodils, Freesias, Fritillaries, Glory of the Snow, Grape Hyacinths, Hyacinths, Irises, Paperwhites, Scillas, Snowdrops, Tulips, etc.

The bulbs must be kept at about 35-40 F degrees for 11-20 weeks depending on the bulb type. The exceptions for the chilling rule are: Amaryllis, Freesias and Paperwhites.

Chill before and after planting in an onion bag, nylon stocking or loosely closed paper bag, Not in a Plastic Bag. Store away from fresh fruits and veggies which give off ethylene gases which can damage the bulb. Pot in shallow containers to show off blooms. Fill container ¾ full with regular potting mix and place bulbs closely but not touching with root side down (Daffodils and Paperwhites: 1-2 inches apart). With the Tulip, place flat side toward outside of pot. Finish filling container with soil until just the tips of the bulbs peek through. (Amaryllis should have the entire neck above soil level). Water in well and keep moist. Place in a cool, dark place to allow the roots to develop. When the tips begin to show growth, move to a sunny, warmer location.

Some bulbs like the Paperwhites don’t require soil to grow in. Just place the bulb on pebbles in a shallow bowl. Water to just below the base of the bulbs. Roots will soon develop to support the foliage and flowers.

HAPPY★NEW★YEAR



Learning Garden Report By Mary McCroan

December has been another quiet month in the Learning Garden. Our biggest project was to dig up the Four Season Garden that occupied the raised bed in front of the kitchen/meeting room. This was a great garden with interest in all four seasons. However, after a few years some plants had died, others had taken over part of the garden and had to be removed and others just needed to be divided. In addition, the soil in the bed had decomposed and sunk far below the rim of the bed. So our concept for moving forward is the following:

- Jane Mobley is creating a design for a butterfly garden .
- We removed all of the plants and will now top off the beds with fresh soil
- We will replant the bed using many of the old plants and some new ones in accordance with Jane's design.
- Flowering shrubs near the side door into the Extension Office building will also be part of the butterfly garden design.
- Left over plants will be sold at our Spring plant sale.

Members may also have noticed that the waterfall in the shade/water garden has not been running for several days. It seemed like the water level has been dropping faster than just evaporation can explain, so I am in the process of using some extra waterfall foam to make sure we aren't losing any water around the sides of the stream or waterfall. The project was delayed by a bit since I needed to order some more foam online, but it arrived a couple of days ago and I should get back out pretty soon to finish up.

The fall veggies continue to do well and I picked few collard leaves just a few days ago to chop up and enjoy for my veggie dish at dinner. The leaves are so large it only takes a couple of leaves per person and they are so nutritious. And they are really easy to prepare: just cut out that center rib, roll them up, chop, simmer in a little olive oil a few minutes until they are done shrinking up, then simmer in chicken broth until they are as tender as you want. I've had collards I bought at the store, both fresh and frozen, and they just don't compare to cutting a few leaves and cooking them that night! The greatest thing about the fall garden (I guess I should say "winter garden" now) is no bugs!

Please call Mary McCroan with any questions about the Learning Garden at 312-0679 or send me an email at mqm@mccroan.com.



It's a little late but hurry and get your dues in to Rhona Watson and perhaps you still have time to get your name in the CAMQA Directory !!

New Lanark Work Team



These interns, Corky Butts, Terry Chambliss, Darla Tiesling with Maria Pacheco-West have decided to make their Lanark workday on Tuesdays. They became close friends while working on volunteer hours during the intern class and want to keep the fun going and build on their rapport in 2015.



Please remember to bring refreshments for the January meeting if you are on refreshments list. Thank you!!



Christmas Party 2014



A great time was had by all who attended the 2014 Christmas Party at Mulder Methodist Church in Wetumpka.



Carol Rattan and Mary Long entertained with Christmas music at the party. A big **THANK YOU** to Carol and the Mulder Church for arranging this wonderful venue for our party.



LEARN BASIC HONEY BEE MANAGEMENT

Six week class from 6:00-8:00 pm at Elmore County Extension Auditorium 340 Queen Ann Road, Wetumpka, AL 36092 Hurry ~ Classes start February 17 Continuing on Feb 24, March 3, 17, 24 & ending March 31 Only \$50 per person if paid by Feb 1 deadline; \$75 if received after Feb 1 (You will receive instruction from practicing master beekeepers, First Lessons in Beekeeping book, + annual membership in CABA)

**CENTRAL ALABAMA
BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
BEGINNING BEEKEEPING CLASS**

Submit payment to Central Alabama Beekeepers Assn c/o Myles Wright, Treasurer
1318 Woodward Av, Montgomery 36106

CENTRAL ALABAMA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION www.cababees.org Questions?
Call CABA

President Allyson Andrews at 334-799-2254

Promoting beekeeping & positive apiary management practices through education
Includes: Honey bee biology and behavior, types and use of equipment, where to put your hives, honey production and processing, disease diagnosis and treatment, and lots more Classes taught by certified MASTER BEEKEEPERS Support and future access to local beekeepers through member association including monthly meetings with timely topics and informative monthly newsletters

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I apologize for this abbreviated form of the newsletter. My hard drive was corrupted after I had finished the January news and I had to start from scratch on December 30. I know I have left some things out so if you had an entry for this month and it's not in here, send it for the February newsletter. If you wrote an article that looks a little different it's because I couldn't recover your original article and I had to improvise. I am getting a separate hard drive to save all newsletters in the future so this won't happen again.



CAMGA Garden Buzzzz
Mary Long— Editor
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**NEXT MEETING**

JANUARY 20

EXPO OF COMMITTEES

10 A.M.

EXTENSION

10:00 A.M.

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

March 23-24-25