



President's Message

By Linda Griebel



Yet another month has slipped by – where does the time go when you're having fun? The only event at which we represented CAMGA was Hydrangea Fest at Lanark, but hopefully all of us are touching potential master gardener intern candidates and putting paperwork into their hands at other times. Don't forget to explain what we do and relate how much we accomplish while enjoying the camaraderie and education. Bring guests to Lunch and Learn sessions as well as to meeting. Thanks for continuing to recruit for our fall class!

Regarding our June Lunch and Learn with Jason Powell, it was standing room only and he was terrific. Many of us who work in the Learning Gardens were suitably impressed that he mentioned many of the wonderful and hardy plants we are already growing. The L&L team does such a terrific job at bringing in new topics and speakers to share knowledge as well providing information on new plants.

Now that CAMGA has a nice camcorder, we'll be able to expand our educational capacity with more videos related to the horticultural topics that we teach. And you'll soon see the new website that was approved at the June meeting thanks to a hard working committee who have decided on a provider and are working on the formatting.

At the June meeting, Candy Jones did an excellent presentation on how to move toward achieving Advanced Master Gardener status. Her PowerPoint broke down the approach and explained steps you can take. You should have already received an email with the revised specifications. If you couldn't make that meeting or need a paper copy of the directions, be sure to talk to Candy if you're interested in getting started. It is a rewarding experience to pursue one or more topics extensively.

It's hot out there – be careful, my gardening friends! But, as much as the air conditioning feels great, there's still also a lot to do, including pruning tasks by mid-July for spring bloomers and keeping things watered when we don't get regular rainfall. Getting out early in the morning serves me well, but I also don't have a problem with the heat – yet! If you need to spray insecticides, remember that performing this should be done very early, well before temperatures go over 80 degrees or you'll burn the plants.

Our first day starting at 7:00 am in the Learning Gardens went very well, especially since we had some physical tasks to perform after the fence holding up the Malabar spinach fell over onto the sweet potato fencing. There were lots of hands and muscle to add strong metal posts and to bring the plants back into a standing position. We do appreciate everyone jumping in to accomplish that feat.

I hope everyone enjoys the 4th of July! Happy Independence Day.

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Message from Mallory

By Mallory Kelley

Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests

Controlling Weeds in Flower Beds and Vegetable Gardens

A weed can have many definitions, but its true definition is “a plant out of place”. Some weeds are more than just irritating eyesore, some can be aggressive and very difficult to control. Especially in perennial flower beds it is very important that you stay on top of weed control. If weeds get out of hand your only method of control is hand weeding. In the case of an annual bed, since you will be pulling out plants seasonally that does allow more options in controlling weeds in between plantings and with a preemergent.

Overall, the best way to prevent or control weeds in your gardens is to mulch. Mulch truly is one of the best things a gardener can do far beyond just the benefits of weed control. Adding mulch helps add organic material and nutrients as it breaks down, creates a barrier between soil fungi and diseases and also helps retain moisture to the plants. All gardeners know weeds love vegetable gardens. There's plenty of sun, the soil is great, water is plentiful, and no competition between rows. So what exactly should you do to control them?

If weeds are in your vegetable garden, beyond mulching, the old proven method of hand pulling, hoeing and tilling are best as many weeds are close to the vegetable plants and you have to be careful about using herbicides. In selecting a herbicide, Roundup is best. Roundup kills all vegetation and starts working immediately. The great thing about this herbicide is that it only affects the green plant tissue it comes in contact with. Once roundup touches the soil it becomes inactive so no need to worry about it getting into the water and affecting other plants. For best results apply roundup when weeds are actively growing. For very hard to kill weeds it will more than likely take multiple sprays before you kill the weed, but generally weeds begin to wilt within hours and are dead within one to two weeks. Spray roundup when air is calm to prevent drift to desirable plants. One gallon covers approximately 300 sq. ft. Even on a calm day, be sure to use a piece of cardboard or plastic to shield your vegetable plants or shrubs and reserve one sprayer specifically for herbicides so you do not chance residues remaining in the tank. Roundup can also be used in the landscape around trees and shrubs, but again, make sure to shield all desirable plants from any drift. If you begin to see leaves on plants in your garden or landscape have a puckering in between the veins and a distorted look it is more than likely the result of herbicide drift. Trifluralin is an active ingredient that can be used as a preventative for weeds in both the vegetable garden and also in shrub beds. If applying in a vegetable bed the application needs to be made at least 6 weeks before planting of any seeds and then can be applied once all plants are up and actively growing for continued control. **When using Herbicides-Always read and follow label directions.**

In the shrub bed, I am often asked about using landscape fabric. This will work well for the first year or two, but will more than likely cause you much more work than just pulling weeds years down the road. Eventually, the mulch breaks down and forms soil build up on the fabric and weeds will begin to grow on top of the fabric. As years pass the fabric will become weak, rip and tear and then when you finally decide to remove the fabric it is almost impossible. So my best suggestion is to stay away from the weed fabric in the landscape.

The best method I have found in either the vegetable garden or in the landscape bed is to use thick sheets of newspaper around your plants and then cover with a layer of two to four inches of mulch (pine straw or pine bark). The newspaper and mulch will keep weeds out from Spring to Fall (depending on how thick) and it will add nutrients to your soil while inhibiting weed growth. The more you control weeds this year, the less of a problem they'll be next year.



CAMGA June Lunch and Learn By Charlotte Hall

"Tough as Nails Plants for the Southern Garden" – Jason Powell

Jason Powell of Petals from the Past played to a full house at our June Lunch and Learn



program on Tough as Nails Plants for the Southern Garden. With an overflowing crowd of anxious plant lovers listening, Jason recounted how he established his business that concentrates on strong, reliable plants that our ancestors once grew. Instead of concentrating on the common, easily available plants that are offered by most retail outlets, Jason studied at Texas A&M under a professor who specialized in antique plants – those that will survive in a given area over a long period of time. Most all of us have seen an old homestead place that has many plants still living and blooming even after the house structure has long been gone. Those are the plants of interest that are grown at Petals from the Past.



Our area has a lot of rainfall and a lot of humidity which means lots of plants do not do well in this environment. So, Jason's wife, Shelley (who also has a master's degree in horticulture from Texas A&M), scouts local areas for different plants that can survive and prosper in these conditions. They grown 85% of their plant material and practice the philosophy that "the closer to home that plants are grown, the greater success the plants have of prospering."

Jason brought many of the tough as nails plants for the South with him to let participants see exactly what some of these plants look like. He elaborated on several categories.

For spring flowering annuals, which require fall planting, he recommended the following: larkspur, poppies, cornflowers, Johnny jump-ups (grandmother of the pansy plant), and viola. These seeds need to be spread from mid-October to first of November and all are great for re-seeding.

Spring bulbs that do well here: Narcissus such as Ice Follies, Snowflakes which are similar to the lily of the valley, tete-a-tete narcissus, daffodils, crocus, hyacinths and crinum lilies.

Antique roses, old garden roses (OGR) – any rose variety which was introduced prior to 1867 (the first year the modern hybrid tea was introduced) – are known for their fragrance, shape and disease resistance. Jason pointed out that disease resistant is not the same as disease free as resistant means the flower can slough off blackspot and other rose diseases and still survive. There are several classes of antique roses such as China, Bourbon, Centifolia, Garden teas, and a few others. Recommended varieties: Old Blush, Old Blush Climbing, Climbing Pinkie (thornless and keeps blooming in the heat), Mutabilis, Katy Road Pink (can survive Canadian winters and Texas summers), Duchesse De Brabant, Sweetheart Perle and Rose Peggy Martin – a thornless, strong rose which was one of two plants that survived 20 feet of salt water from Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, LA.

Recommended perennials: Lenten rose – shade perennial, flowers in winter, pink, white or red, deer resistant; hardy blue plumbago – shade perennial, dappled light or sun, drought tolerant, deer resistant; Bear's breeches – shadier perennial, purple and white, drought tolerant, great foliage; Creeping Heliotrope – spreading, honey bee plant which grows only 6-8 inches tall, blooms April-frost, tolerates drought and survives neglect; Red Hot poker – drought, sun and heat tolerant, red or orange spikes and hummingbirds love it; Blue Star Amsonia – blue flowers with attractive seed pods, gold fall foliage, basically pest and maintenance free. Others are: verbena, salvia (or sage) with suggested varieties of Autumn Sage Pink, Raspberry, La Trinidad pink and Henry Duelberg – all of which are low maintenance, heat tolerant, and bloom from spring until frost, Blackberry lily, and chrysanthemums.

Jason suggested using herbs in the borders such as rosemary (Tuscan Blue), Bulbing fennel (Catmint), Creeping thyme (Lemon Mist) and Texas tarragon which is a member of the marigold family and blooms in the fall.

Favorite Southern shrubs that endure heat and humidity are hydrangeas with new white sun varieties becoming popular such as Annabelles and Limelights, Sweet Mock Orange (English dogwood), Virginia sweetspire (which can handle wet roots and will colonize – Henry's Garnet variety), and spirea (Anthony Waterer variety which will continue to bloom all summer, if deadheaded).

Popular fruit plants: Blackberries – Kiowa, a self fruitful (self pollinating) plant that needs trellising and produces fruit up to 3" long, Blueberries – rabbit eye variety which requires two plants for cross pollination and need to be planted 6 feet apart, Figs – LSU purple variety which is a very reliable, prolific producer of early to late crops – spring,

summer and fall and is a great disease resistant plant.

Jason held a question and answer session for individual requests and graciously stayed until all individual's questions were answered - patiently and professionally responding to the barrage of attention and seeking of personalized knowledge.

If you are having problems with insects chewing and demolishing your treasured plants, attend next month and hear Anthony Yarbrough from the Capital City Master Gardeners address this problem with his presentation "What's Bugging You" on July 14th at 12:00. Cool refreshments of tea, water and lemonade will be served!



HELPLINE NEWS By Mary Ann Hatcher



Boredom is never a problem for the Helpline as we assist clients with their gardening concerns. Calls and Office visits have continued at a steady pace throughout the month of June. Interns working the Helpline this month were: Cheri Bedford, James May, Peggy



Gelpi, Corky Butts, and Linda Queen. Master Gardener Wanda Ivey worked the Helpline, also. Serving as Appointment Reminder was Sharon Potts. Advisors were Mary Ann Klatt and Mary Ann Hatcher.



July 2015

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	2	3	4 <i>Independence Day</i> 
5	6 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	7	8 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	9 <i>Learning Garden Work Day</i>	10	11 <i>Medicinal Plants</i>
12	13 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	14 <i>Lunch And Learn What's Bugging You</i> 	15 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	16 <i>Learning Garden Work Day</i> AU <i>Medicinal Plants</i>	17	18
19	20 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	21 <i>CAMGA Mary McCroan Creepy Crawlers</i>	22 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	23 <i>Learning Garden Work Day</i>	24	25
26	27 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day</i>	28	29 <i>Lanark Work Day</i> 	30 <i>Learning Garden Work Day</i>	31	

JUNE MINUTES

By Rosemary Mobley, Secretary



The June, 2015, Central Alabama Master Gardeners' Association (CAMGA) meeting was held June 16, 2015, at the Elmore County Extension Auditorium in Wetumpka, Alabama. Linda Griebel called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. She recognized a guest in the audience, and asked Lee Borden to introduce the program speaker. Lee reminded participants to use the evaluation forms. Then, he introduced Candy Jones, CAMGA Master Gardener, and Past-President of CAMGA. Her topic was about the Advanced Master Gardener Certification.

Candy explained that she and a committee of CAMGA advanced master gardeners (AMG) reviewed existing guidelines and worked for several months to clarify the process identified for obtaining advanced certification. AMG committee members included: Amanda and Lee Borden, Jim Davis, Linda Griebel, Candy Jones, Mallory Kelley, Mary McCroan, Jane Mobley, Maria Pacheco-West, and Rhona Watson. This committee's efforts resulted in a revised edition of the "Advanced Master Gardener Certification", to be used by advanced master gardener candidates in Mallory Kelley's region. This document is available to all CAMGA members on the web site.

Candy noted that potential candidates are master gardeners with the desire to pursue specialized knowledge in a self-chosen aspect of horticulture. As part of the process, candidates contact the AMG Coordinator, Candy Jones, to discuss options for a course of study. Next, an AMG mentor is assigned to assist the candidate in preparing the application for review by the Extension Agent. The mentor also advises the candidate throughout all aspects necessary for obtaining certification. Of course, the Extension Agent is the final approval authority for certification. There is the expectation that advanced master gardeners will assume a leadership role among master gardeners in the community.

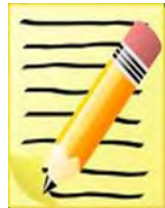
During the presentation, various AMG committee members highlighted details, such as: a requirement for 40 hours of training; eligibility of training completed within the last three years; and the possibility of online training. A question and answer session followed. At the conclusion, Linda Griebel recognized Candy for her leadership in coordinating the AMG Committee.

After the break, Linda convened the business meeting at 11:09 a.m. She shared a book of essays on gardening written by master gardeners. Next, the President noted that Sally L'Abbe had explored several options in connection with a CAMGA-sponsored seminar, but could not continue chairing this initiative. She asked members to consider revisiting the seminar initiative next year. Mary McCroan expressed the importance of sponsoring regionally-recognized speakers.

Linda asked participants to react to the format for the Alabama Master Gardener Association (AMGA) annual conference. Currently, the conference lasts 3 days and 2 nights. Discussion followed with a recommendation that 2 days of meetings should be held, as 1 day is insufficient time. Also, another recommendation was to avoid offering a single session limited to 25, when the attendance is 350-400 people.

The next order of business was to consider the May Minutes published in the June Newsletter. The Minutes were approved by acclimation.

Rhona Watson was recognized to give the Treasurer's Report for May, 2015.



The balance as of April 30, 2015 was \$9,987.42. Income for May included: Plant Sale-\$3,548.50. Total May income was \$3,548.50. Expenditures for May were: Postage- \$15.89 and Plant Sale - \$70.20. Total May expenditures=\$86.09. This resulted in a balance, as of May 31, 2015, of \$13,449.83. The Treasurer's Report was approved by acclamation.

Linda reported for Becky Brown and encouraged members to continue recruiting interns. She also spoke for Gale Wheeler-Leonard, and shared that Jane Mobley's mother-in-law passed away in June. Then, Linda read a thank-you letter from Southern Homes and Gardens regarding the help from CAMGA members in providing gardening information to the public. Mary Ann Hatcher reported that the Helpline is operating well. She expressed thanks to all those involved.

Sandi Adkison shared that 60 participants attended the Lunch and Learn held in June. The July 14th session will feature Anthony Yarbrough, and the topic is "What's Bugging You?"

John Barnes gave the Projects Committee report. The YMCA project is on hold until fall. Linda Griebel and Jane Mobley volunteered at the CAMGA information table at Lanark Hydrangea Fest. The master gardener Plant Swap is scheduled at 10:00a.m., October 9, 2015. Participants should bring 5 established plants to swap for other plants.

Mary McCroan stated that the Community Learning Gardens are making progress. Volunteers helped cut a failing crepe myrtle in the front of the County Extension building. Plans are to replace this tree with a native plant. A fig tree was added near the vegetable garden.

Linda recognized Lee Borden who shared information about July and August meetings. On July 21, 2015, the topic is "Creepy Crawlies in Your Garden." Mary McCroan will be the speaker. The Intern Graduation and August 18th meeting will take place at Mulder Memorial Church. Mallory Kelley is slated to bring chicken fingers and CAMGA members should bring a covered dish to the August meeting. Graduation interns do not bring food since we are treating them.

Lee also updated everyone about the video purchase approved at the May meeting. He presented to attendees the Canon Vixia HF R600 camcorder and Zoom H2n digital audio recorder. He noted that some accessories, such as a cable and data card, are advisable to include with the equipment. Phil Easter made a motion to spend an additional \$71.00 on accessories for the camera and audio equipment. Candy Jones made the second and the motion was carried by all present.

Next, Lee discussed the possibility of developing a CAMGA web site. He recommended the domain name: CAMGA.net. On the positive side, a web site will allow CAMGA to develop web-based training which would enhance the educational aspect of the CAMGA mission. Also, the web site will assist in recruitment of new interns. The down side includes start up and yearly costs associated with a web site. R.J. Arceneaux made a motion to form a committee to research the options of web site development, to spend up to \$300, and to report back to membership. Rod Douglas made the second, and the motion was carried by all present. Those who volunteered to serve on this committee were: Lee Borden, Corky Butts, Ann Hill, Betty Stricker, Rhona Watson, and Anida Wishnietsky.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m. Door prizes were awarded. Forty-five participants were at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemary Mobley, Secretary

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS by Judy May



Attending the Projects Committee meeting June 15th were John Barnes, Linda Griebel, Rod Douglas, Johan Beumer, Janet Lewis, and Lois Pribulick.

Phil Easter did the WSFA- TV promo for Jason Powell's Lunch and Learn and also wrote an article on Ground Covers for the July issue of River Region Living magazine.

The June 9th Lunch and Learn featured Jason Powell speaking on Tough as Nails Plants for the South. There were 60 attendees; 36 Master Gardeners and 24 others.

Maria PW wants to thank all who helped for the Hydrangea Fest. She was very ill herself and had to rely on Master Gardeners and interns Carla McCune, Norman Turnipseed, Ann Hill, Peggy Gelpi, Judy May, Don Hoover, and Jimmy May. Helping during the successful Hydrangea Festival were the fabulous Master gardeners and Interns: Ann Hill, Carla McCune, Don Hoover, Sharon Potts, and her husband Jerry, Sally and Joe L'Abbe. Maria says a special thank you to Linda Griebel for working the Master Gardener table.

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

Mary Long gave a Hydrangea presentation at Southern Homes and Gardens on June 20.

Linda Griebel and Jane Mobley hosted the CAMGA table at Lanark Hydrangea Fest. Linda Griebel attended the State Advisory Council meeting on June 9th.

Bringing refreshments to the CAMGA meeting this month were Connie Willis, Penny Arceneaux, Angela Peltier, Barbara Wallace and Bonnie McCormick.

Working the Helpline this month were interns Cheri Bedford, James May, Peggy Gelpi, Corky Butts and Linda Queen. Master gardeners Sharon Potts, Wanda Ivey, Mary Ann Klatt and Mary Ann Hatcher also helped.

Learning Garden Volunteers this month were Cheri Bedford, Terry Chambliss, Cindy Beumer, Linda Griebel, Rod Douglas, Peggy Gelpi, Jane Mobley, Candy Jones, Amanda Borden, R.J. Arceneaux, Lavonne Hart, Don Hoover and Mary McCroan.

Carol Rattan hosted some Girl Scouts at her home and garden on June 7th, to help them earn their Gardener and Flower badges. Three girl scouts, a younger sister, and three moms took a "tour" of the gardens, enjoyed blackberries and blue berries off the vine, cut flowers to make dried flower bookmarks and flower arrangements, dyed some carnations, learned about the general study of botany, and about medicinal herbs and flowers. Then they planted some coneflower seeds for them to take home, nurture, and eventually plant in the prayer garden at church. It was great fun!

Web Master Announcement

The Service Reporting web site where you log your volunteer hours has a new web address: <https://ssl.acesag.auburn.edu/mgmanager/login/>



If you go to the old address it will take you to the new address. For those of you who find the site by saving it as a favorite on your browser, just go to the old site and save it again as a favorite. It will save the new address. Then delete the old favorite.

For those of you who create documents for CAMGA, such as the directory or information sheets, please update to the new link.

Contact me if you have any questions.
Thank you, Anida

ALABAMA MEDICINAL PLANT GROWERS ASSOCIATION (AMPGA) CONFERENCE

Topics on how to produce medicinal herbs, where to find medicinal herbs markets, how to identify medicinal plants in your backyard & how to utilize them for common ailments Two field trips: 1. Medicinal plant experiments at Agricultural Research Station Alabama A&M University 2. Medicinal plant tour at Green Mountain, Huntsville Demonstration: Innovative indoor farming of medicinal herbs. **SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2015 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM AGRICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER AUDITORIUM, ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY** Fee: \$35 (includes light refreshments, lunch and tours) Contact: Rao Mentreddy at 256-372-4250 or srinivasa.mentreddy@aamu.edu; Phyllis Light at 256-931-0351 or phyllisdlight@hotmail.com; Russell Bean 334 -687-2532 or rbean@mytu.tuskegee.edu Open to the public and all those interested in medicinal herbs, the medicinal herbs market, and how to produce and utilize medicinal herbs. limited scholarships are available through the Small farm Research Center, AAMU. Contact Jamarkus Crowell at (256)-372-4424. Collaborating Partners

Garden Pathways Information:

In addition to a new editor, **new guidelines** for submissions are being put into place beginning with the summer issue. Please read the following information carefully.

Criteria for Garden Pathways:

All articles and local MGA Happenings should be sent to: **Patricia Peoples, Garden Pathways Editor, amganewsletter@gmail.com.**

Garden Pathways will be published quarterly:

- Winter (Jan – Mar): Submission deadline: Dec 15, Distribution: Jan 15
- Spring (Apr– Jun): Submission deadline: March 15, Distribution: April 15
- **Summer (Jul – Sep): Submission deadline: June 15, Distribution: July 15**

(The deadline and mailing dates for this one issue are being extended. Deadline for submissions will be Thursday, June 25 and anticipated distribution date will be July 25. Back to regular schedule with the Fall issue.)

- Fall (Oct—Dec): Submission deadline: Sept 15, Distribution: Oct 15

Criteria for submissions to *Garden Pathways*:

- General articles will be limited to 300 words or fewer.
- Local MGA Happenings (Around Alabama) will be limited to 200 words and one picture each. Please share not only what has happened but also on what will be happening before the Fall issue.
- For all articles and photos submitted:
 - Check that cited sources are accurate and that proper credit is given
 - Identify Master Gardeners as such
 - Double-check the spelling of all proper names.
 - Confirm the names of locations, projects, etc.
 - Identify people in photos (left to right, standing, sitting, however you list their names), and if possible If possible identify photographer.

Thank you all for your continued commitment to making AMGA and *Garden Pathways* the best they can be!!
AMGA Communications Committee
AMGA Officers and Board of Directors

You could win \$100, all you need to do is send us your pictures!

Have pictures of your livestock and barns? Maybe some of the tractor or combine? What about your garden or crop fields? Send them to us and we'll pick ONE winner per category to win \$100! It's that easy. We want to decorate our office halls with pictures from you, our customers and farmers. It's your labor and hard work that keeps our business going and we want to celebrate that by displaying your photos in our halls. We may even use some for our magazine cover! Please send your pictures in high resolution to mailchimp@alafarm.com. Currently, there is no deadline on this contest. We have gotten several pictures in so far, but want to continue through all seasons. We will send out a ONE MONTH notice before closing the contest. Good Luck and Happy Farming!

What are the different methods and impacts of pruning tomato plants?

Side shoots, or “suckers,” are additional fruiting stems that emerge on tomato plants at the junctions of the main stems and leaf stems. Some folks recommend that gardeners prune tomato plants by removing all tomato suckers; I disagree. Contrary to what many think, suckers don’t sap energy from the main tomato plant, and allowing them to develop will not delay fruiting or ripening of any tomatoes from the main stem. Judicious removal of some suckers, however, will lead to more controlled growth and make supporting the plant easier, especially with an indeterminate variety.

Essentially, suckers are the tomato plant’s way of passing on its genetic heritage by producing as many seeds as possible: More branching leads to more flowers, which lead to more tomatoes, which lead to more seeds, which, to a plant, mean survival.

Removal of suckers could have implications for overall yields. Each sucker allowed to grow will provide additional flower clusters, and hence create additional chances for fruit set. Sometimes during the season, the majority of the flower clusters on a tomato plant’s main stem will open when the temperature or humidity isn’t suitable for pollination, which can result in blossom drop. If you’ve pruned tomato plants by removing all suckers, then the plant will bear only a handful of fruit, with no method available for the plant to produce additional flowers after the hot weather has passed. If suckers would’ve been maintained, the number of flower clusters would’ve increased, and flowers on those additional growing shoots likely would’ve opened later under more suitable conditions, thus increasing the yield of the plant.

Tomato suckers that are allowed to grow will also furnish additional foliage cover. In climates where searing sun regularly beats down on exposed, developing tomatoes, sunscald poses a definite concern. Because direct sun isn’t needed to promote ripening, the shade cover provided by the suckers’ foliage is beneficial.

Ideal management of suckers is somewhat dependent on the type of tomato. Determinate tomato varieties grow to a genetically predetermined height and width, and then produce flowers at the ends of their branches. In a sense, they are “self-pruning,” and any removal of suckers would reduce the potential yield of the plant. An indeterminate tomato plant, however, extends its main growing stem indefinitely and will generate suckers at each point of a leaf stem attachment. Indeterminate tomato plants can quickly grow out of control because the suckers themselves go on to produce suckers, so a plant can become dense and complex by midseason.

Skillful “topping” of fruiting tomato branches and stems at particular heights is a way of controlling growth. Because more flowers form than will pollinate and ripen before the end of the season, topping will also ensure that a plant doesn’t put energy into developing tomatoes that will never get a chance to ripen properly. Removing the top of the plant is also an excellent way to prevent plants from becoming so top-heavy that they topple in storms or develop kinks in their branches.

An easy way for gardeners with long seasons to extend the harvest even further and put removed suckers to good use is to cut and root some of the suckers. Suckers root easily and can be planted in early summer. They will yield tomatoes that are clones of those of the plants they were taken from. To do this, cut a 6-inch-long sucker from one of your healthy plants and put it in a glass of water. After it has a nice set of new roots, pot it up in fresh potting mix and allow it to adjust in a shaded location for a few weeks before setting it into its final digs. Some gardeners have found that suckers will root directly in the garden if placed in a shaded area. Keeping the rooting suckers out of direct sun is important. Typically, a tomato sucker will root and begin to show renewed growth in a few weeks at most. Often, a sucker planted in damp soil will wilt just a bit until new roots begin to grow.





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Collaborating Partners

America the Beautiful

O Beautiful for spacious skies

for amber waves of grain;

For purple mountain majesties

Across the fruited plane!

America! America!

God shed His grace on thee,

and crown thy good with brotherhood

from sea to shining sea.

Should CAMGA Build Its Own Web Site? by Lee Borden

Quick: where's the CAMGA web site? Can you locate it? Yes, we have a web site; it's hosted by ACES.edu, and its URL is <http://www.aces.edu/mg/Elmore/>, but it won't work unless you capitalize that E in Elmore! Anida Wishnietsky is authorized to make changes to it, but the web site must conform to the ACES "look," and she can make changes only while she is sitting at an ACES computer.

You've asked a small group of us, Ann Hill, Rhona Watson, Anida Wishnietsky, Betty Stricker, Corky Butts, and me, to decide together whether it makes sense for us to reserve our own domain name and build our own web site. If our answer to that question is yes, you have authorized us to commit to spend up to \$300 per year to maintain it. This would pay for reserving the domain name as well as for a server to host the site. Anida is acting as our chairperson and facilitator. Watch this newsletter for updates!

Report from Video Purchase Team by Lee Borden

In May you authorized our team, consisting of Charlotte Hall, Anida Wishnietsky, Bob Brown, and me, to look into purchasing a camcorder that CAMGA members could use. Our work is more or less complete now, so here's a summary.

We agreed at the outset that (a) the device would be used primarily by amateurs with little appetite for or experience in using high-level photography techniques like manipulating depth-of-field or white balance, and limited access to sophisticated editing software; (b) the audio quality is every bit as important as the picture quality, and (c) it is too soon to know how CAMGA members might eventually use the equipment.



One of our first questions was whether to purchase a DSLR (basically, a nice digital camera) instead of a camcorder. The big advantage of the DSLR is the drop-dead gorgeous video it produces in the hands of a sophisticated user. However, we decided the camcorder was better for CAMGA, because (a) the DSLRs in general don't produce good sound at all; (b) at the higher resolution needed to bring out that gorgeous video quality, disk storage space can get to be a real issue; and (c) most CAMGA members are not sophisticated users but would prefer instead a simple user interface.

Another question we confronted was how to enhance the audio quality when we wanted top-flight sound. We were guided by the often overlooked principle that most people shopping for video spend more than

they should on video quality and less than they should on audio quality. We explored purchasing a wireless microphone, and we agreed to purchase a camcorder that will accommodate a wireless mike, but we agreed to rely on a digital audio recorder instead because it's easier to produce great audio with it. This will require that we synchronize the recorder to the video from the camcorder in the editing process, but if we take a few simple steps as we shoot the video, synchronization is simple with quality editors and possible with all.

Here's the equipment we agreed to purchase:

[Canon Vixia HF R600 camcorder bundle](#) consisting of the camcorder, a small case, a 64 GB SD card, an SD card reader, a spare battery, and a pocket tripod. The pocket tripod was a tinkertoy and lost one of its legs early in its life, but Amazon graciously agreed to replace it with a [sturdier, more versatile tripod](#) at no charge to us. The [manual for the Canon Vixia HF R600 camcorder is available online](#).

[Zoom H2n digital audio recorder](#). If you have a geeky streak, you'll enjoy reading about the quality and versatility of this little guy. We will enjoy using it. You can get a taste for the difference it makes in sound quality watching this quick little video we shot using the equipment - <http://bit.ly/1ISrdKQ>. Make sure you set it on the highest video resolution. The [manual for the Zoom H2n is available online](#).

[Lavalier microphone](#), [earbuds](#), [USB cable](#), [32 GB SD card](#), and [windscreen](#) for the Zoom H2n. The windscreen is the only item we have not yet received; it's currently heading our way across the Pacific.

You authorized us at the June meeting to purchase a nice floor tripod, but we won't need to do that because of the generosity of CAMGA members. Both Cheri Bedford and Betty Stricker volunteered to donate a tripod. Because Betty and I live close together, I saw her's first and loved it, so that's the one we're using. Here's the text of my message to Betty about the tripod:

Hi Betty. On behalf of the Central Alabama Master Gardener Association, I wanted to express my deep appreciation for the new, factory-sealed Argus 58-inch bubble level tripod you so generously donated to CAMGA today. This is ideal for our purposes and will do away with the need for us to spend \$40 on a tripod as we were planning. This is another in the long list of ways you keep finding to make CAMGA stronger and help us fulfill our teaching function. Bravo!

The cost of all the purchases together was \$521.

(Lee Borden, cont.) I told you above that our work is "more or less" complete. The "more or less" part is to accommodate our developing training so CAMGA members will know how to use this sophisticated equipment and make beautiful videos. We'll be sharing news with you about that in the days ahead.

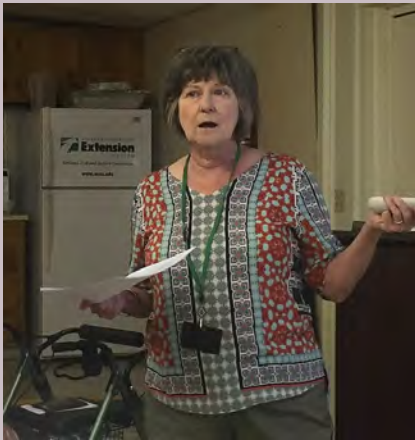
In the meantime, if you would like to get started, we're eager to help you. Email me at lee@divorceinfo.com, and I'll check you out on the equipment and discuss options with you for using it. If you've not done this before, think in terms of a 2-3 minute video about a relatively narrow horticultural subject. If you can't imagine keeping it that short, just narrow the subject a little more. The way people search on the Internet nowadays, narrowly focused videos do well and are a great way for us to fulfill our teaching mission.

I want to thank Charlotte, Anida, and Bob for the zeal and dedication with which they have pursued their deliberations. They served you well. Thank you too to Cheri and Betty for their cheerful generosity. And I need to say a special thank you to our president Linda Griebel, whose idea it was that we pursue this initiative.

Programs Update by Lee Borden

On June 16 former CA

MGA president Candy Jones (right) talked about the leadership our group has provided throughout Alabama in training, equipping, and developing Advanced Master Gardeners (AMGs). To our knowledge, we have more AMGs than any other Master Gardener Association in the state. And now we have taken a leadership position again by reworking the procedures for becoming an AMG by making them simpler, clearer, and less ambiguous. The new guidelines are set forth in the program document Candy and her team have developed, which Mallory and ACES have cleared us to begin using.



Any CAMGA member who has a passion for a horticultural subject area should begin by reading the new program document, which Anida Wishnietsky made available to all CAMGA members by email immediately following the meeting. After reading through the document, [contact Candy](#), and she will match you up with a mentor who will help you define your subject area focus and ensure that there is a need for your expertise. Volunteers will help you through each step of the process, but final approval of your Advanced Master Gardener status will rest with Mallory.



Here are your ratings for the June meeting:

- Interesting topic? 4.35 out of 5.
 - Presentation Quality: 4.45 out of 5.
- Business meeting useful? 4.32 out of 5.

In July Mary McCroan will talk with us about the creepy crawlies in our garden and why most of them are good to have around. I need to act quickly and decisively to stamp out the rumor circulating throughout CAMGA that Mary plans for part of her program to include a showing of [Snakes on a Plane](#). Not true. Not true.

And in August we will gather to welcome and honor our interns as new Master Gardeners in a graduation ceremony.

Our tentative program schedule and each meeting's evaluation results are online and available for your review at <http://bit.ly/camgaprograms>.

The four members of your camcorder purchase team - Bob Brown, Anida Wishnietsky, Charlotte Hall, and I - have more or less finished our work. You authorized us in the June meeting to spend an additional \$71 to bring the total purchase cost to \$561. There's a separate article in this newsletter about the purchases that make up the package and how we selected them.

Ongoing Article for Learning Garden By Mary McCroan

Our first project this month was to put trellises lengthwise along both sweet potato beds and start training the vines to a vertical habit. There is a lot of discussion if you look online about the pros and cons of trellising sweet potatoes. On the "con" side, the sweet potatoes need help to climb and not allowing them to root means no potatoes further out from the center. However, depending on your growing conditions these secondary locations can not only produce only very small potatoes, but can rob the main crop of nutrients and mean those potatoes are small also. That may not be as important in Alabama with our long growing season. On the "pro" side, trellising means that the vines are not sprawl- ing all over the garden and there is more room to grow other things. And it concentrates nutrients on the potatoes growing at the center of the vine to assure that they will be good size. We are also trellising the Mala- bar Spinach. All of these crops are growing vigorously and have already hit the top of their trellises.



We thought the fig tree Linda planted last year had not made it through the winter, so Linda brought out a replacement just in time to notice new growth on the old one. No prob-



lem--we have room for two fig trees. Next winter we plan to provide some insulation so our babies don't die down to the ground again. This is a common problem for very young fig trees.

This month we also removed the Natchez Crape Myrtle from the right side of the Extension Office entrance. Crapees are normally very hardy and easy to grow, but this tree had struggled from the time we planted it--no idea why, but it was time for it to go.

Also, RJ harvested the garlic this month, and if you haven't pulled your yet, it is probably time. And the last of the lettuce was harvested and the plants removed--getting good tasting lettuce out of an Alabama garden in last June is doing pretty good!

Congratulations to all Learning Garden workers who have contributed their time this year. The gardens made a great impression Jason Powell from Petals From The Past. He spoke very highly of our Veggie, Herb and Butterfly gardens.

It's getting really hot now with temperatures approaching 100 degrees. So for the rest of the summer, Learning Garden work



hours will be between 7 am and 10 am. Of course you don't have to come out that early! Come whenever it suits your schedule. There won't be any major projects until it cools down and we start our fall garden. For now we will just be doing a little pruning, weeding and harvesting each week.

More photos—last page



Governor's Mansion Report by Amanda Borden

In June, volunteers at the Governor's Mansion weeded beds in the portico area, the front yard, the herb garden, and the Serenity Garden. They limbed up holly trees and did some trimming of azaleas. Jane McCarthy chose shady areas for as much of the work as possible due to the extreme heat we have experienced this month.



In the photo: (L-R) Jane McCarthy, Amanda Borden, Mirenda Tatum in the Serenity Garden



Mark your calendars for Blount County Master Gardener's Fall Conference Blount

October 1, 2015 9:30 am – 3 pm

Palisades Park, D. S. Loyd Building, 225 Palisades Park, Oneonta, AL 35121

More on this later

Featured Plant of the Month - July By Jane Mobley

Indian Pink



The July plant of the month is

Indian Pink, ***Spigella***

marilandica. This is one of the plants that Jason Powell talked about in his presentation, *Tough As Nails Plants For the South*, given for us at our Lunch and Learn in June. It is a unique southern heirloom plant that is often overlooked in our modern gardens and was recognized by only a few at our meeting.

The Indian Pink will do well in shade and part shade to sun and gets 18 - 21" tall and wide. It forms clumps and bears tubular-shaped red flowers with yellow insides in the spring. It is an uncommon native wildflower that grows in the moist woodland areas of the southeast. It is a long lived, hardy, herbaceous perennial having emerald green ovate leaves that are opposite on the stems. Leaves do not have their own stems but are joined directly to the main plant stems.

Indian Pink flowers are unlike any that you probably have in your garden. The elongated tubes forming the flowers are constricted at the top. Above the constriction the five points of the flowers flare outward showing the bright yellow of the insides. The flowers are about two inches long and grow atop stiff stems. Flowers are pollinated by hummingbirds. They are also favorites of butterflies. A fairly long blooming period in late May and early June is followed by a sporadic show of flowers for the rest of the season. Flowers may be dead headed for more blooms.

These plants are fairly easy to grow in average, medium wet, well drained soil in sun to partial shade or shade. I have found that they do fine with only a couple of hours of dappled sun and am trying some new ones in a little more sun to see if I can get even more flowers. It is said that, if happy, one clump can boast over 75 flowers.

Indian pinks can be propagated by root cuttings planted in deep rich soil. Rootstock should be collected after the flowers fade. There are some herbal uses for the root. Roots have also been used by the Cherokee and other American Indian tribes for ceremonial rites to induce visions and foretell the future. The plants spread by rhizomes. Plants or cuttings should be planted by July for best success in gardens, and they should not be transplanted once established. All parts of the plant are poisonous if ingested.

Advanced Master Gardener Certification

Many are becoming Advanced Master Gardeners... You Can Too

Our Vision

The Advanced Master Gardener program motivates those with special gardening interests to develop those interests into specialized knowledge areas for the benefit of others.

Advanced Master Gardener Certification (Local management program procedures under ACES-REA, Mallory Kelley)

The purpose of an advanced Master Gardener Program: • To train and support certified Master Gardeners in specialized areas of horticulture. • To invest in motivated volunteers. The ACES wants to encourage MG's to extend their knowledge in a garden related specialty for which they have a special interest or passion (with approval from the sponsoring ACES Home Grounds Agent). • To develop partnerships for program delivery. This specialized group of volunteers becomes valuable partners with the ACES Home Grounds team in their educational outreach. • To enrich other community projects with specialized, knowledgeable volunteers.

A critical part of the program is that Advanced Master Gardeners are willing and able to share their passion and advanced knowledge via public speaking forums such as giving seminars or demonstrations. Advanced Master Gardeners may also reach out to the public by writing articles for newspapers or journals. Advanced MGs assume a leadership role among MGs and within their communities.

Roles and Responsibilities

a. The Advanced Master Gardener (AMG) Committee is comprised of all existing Advanced Master Gardeners in the local Master Gardener Association (MGA). The AMG Coordinator for the local MGA (appointed by the Extension Agent), with a minimum of two AMGs will form a quorum to perform the following responsibilities: i. Review applications from AMG candidates and recommend for approval to the Home Grounds Extension agent. ii. Although all AMGs will mentor AMG candidates, each AMG candidate will be assigned a dedicated mentor from the AMG Committee. The mentor will assist the AMG candidate in preparing their application for review by the Extension agent. iii. After the Extension agent approves the candidate's application, the mentor advises the candidate as needed through completion of their certificate. iv. Attend a presentation given by the AMG candidate or review materials intended for publication and provide constructive feedback to verify that the AMG Candidate has achieved basic competency in their chosen area and demonstrated an ability to share that expertise prior to executing the community outreach portion of their AMG application. v. Review the completed study outline from each AMG candidate and make recommendations to the Home Grounds Extension Agent for award of AMG certification. .

b. Advanced Master Gardener Candidate The AMG Candidate will propose education material (classes, seminars, webinars, etc) that will raise their level of expertise in their chosen topic and document those materials as part of their application. ii. The AMG Candidate will propose how they will conduct outreach to share their expertise, how this will benefit the mission of ACES and the Master Gardener program, and document that plan as part of their application.

c. Home Grounds Extension Agent i. The Extension Agent is the final approval authority for an AMG Candidate's application. ii. The Extension Agent is the final approval for award of the title "Advanced Master Gardener". iii. The AMG Committee's main purpose is to assist the Extension Agent with administration of the AMG Program. If a MGA does not yet have any AMGs to form an AMG Committee, these responsibilities are performed by the Extension Agent directly, or assistance can be requested from the AMG Committee from another Association.

Training materials/Study outline.

d. An AMG application documents at least 40 hours of proposed training. This training will be individual to each AMG Candidate. The intent is to prepare the AMG candidate to be a resource to the MG Program, to ACES and to the community at large. This training must be accomplished prior to award of AMG status. b. Training offered by ACES or AMGA for MG's may be counted as part of the Advanced MG certificate if it is part of their approved study outline. c. Training completed within the last three years may be included. Training older than three years may be included with a waiver from the Extension Agent.

Training may include reading books, journals or online research. e. Training may include online courses. f. Hands-on training such as working with a professional in a field related to the AMG specialty may be included. g. Training may include attending workshops, classes and seminars at professional conferences, universities or other forums. h. The AMG candidate is encouraged to be creative, think "outside the box" and propose other ideas for training in their application. i. The AMG training plan may sometimes lack specificity as seminars on a particular topic may be anticipated but not yet scheduled. For example, seminars on pruning are usually offered every year by ACES, but the specific date, location, and exact nature of the seminar (fruit versus ornamentals for example) may not be known. j. The AMG candidate may take advantage of unforeseen training opportunities that occur and amend their training plan with concurrence from their AMG mentor and final approval of the Extension Agent. k. Make sure to document all completed training in the online Master Gardener Service Report for accurate record of accomplishments.

Community Outreach a. An AMG application documents a minimum of ten hours proposed community outreach. This must be accomplished prior to award of AMG certificate. b. Outreach may include a presentation during a MG meeting, teaching an intern class, giving a workshop at the state conference, etc. c. Outreach may include conducting public programs (Garden Club, other civic groups, or the general public)... d. Outreach may also include writing informative articles for newspapers, magazines or journals. All information must come from research-based (Extension or other reliable) references. e. The AMG Committee will review the AMG Candidate's Community Outreach materials and presentations prior to presentation or publication to the public.

The Advanced Master Gardener Application will include a. Name b. Address c. Phone d. Email address e. Date and location of initial MG certification f. Planned start date of advanced training g. Master Gardener lifetime hours accumulated to date h. A study outline per paragraph II i. A description of plans for outreach per paragraph III.

AMG responsibilities after award of AMG certificate. a. AMGs will document their hours using the online Master Gardener Service Report system for tracking volunteer hours. b. AMGs may be asked to teach MG classes, develop community projects related to their new area of expertise, enrich existing projects, etc.



Millbrook Farmer's Market

The Millbrook Farmer's Market has completed it's first month with great success. We have been talking to local folks, answering their questions, and helping them to find the answers to the strange things they bring to us. We can still use some volunteers for July and August so take a look at your calendar and find a Tuesday morning to come, socialize, and have your pick of some great local produce. You don't need to be an expert. We have information about a lot of subjects and handouts to

show folks how to look up their issues on the aces.com site and how to contact our Help Line. We also recruit prospective members to our upcoming class.

We had a previous member, Anne Slaton, come by and then volunteer on a following Tuesday. If any of you know her she is ripe for rejoining our ranks. Her number is 334-285-7887.

If you need some hours and are not up to digging in this heat, the MFM is a great way to put in some relaxing time. Give me a call and I can set you up.

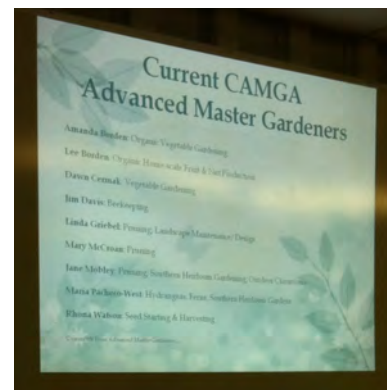
Rick Ohlson
334-233-7425



Linda and Jane at Hydrangea Fest



The L'Abbe's at Hydrangea Fest



Maria



Learning Garden



Beautiful Crinum in Learning Garden



Learning Garden



Candy tells how to become Advanced MG

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NEXT MEETING

JULY 21

10 A.M.

MARY MCCROAN

CREEPY CRAWLIES IN THE GARDEN



Linda showing off new camera.