



President's Message

By Linda Griebel



Spring has arrived with brilliant colors. Seems like we went from cold to hot too quickly, but living in the south always has its challenges. Thrills have moved from azalea and forsythia blooms to a multiplicity of roses, irises, deutzias, amaryllis, and so many other species. Each day I walk around having visually pleasing experiences, capturing floral displays with my camera. Fragrances and sights abound. Hummingbirds are visiting the coral honeysuckle and other feathered friends flit in front of me, especially when I work around shrubs where they are sitting on nests. The rain has really brought out the best in our landscapes. Oh, did I forget? It also has delivered a delightful crop of weeds with which we have to deal frequently.

April witnessed lots of master gardener activities. John Barnes and I talked briefly with approximately 450 students at Farm City Day at Extension. There were lots of CAMGA volunteers at Lanark's Floral Weekend. A few of us staffed a CAMGA table at SH&G on several Saturdays where we helped individuals with gardening questions as well as recruited for our fall intern class. Some of us even experienced a very interesting and enlightening herb walk and talk at Lanark with Darryl Patton. And other members shared their horticultural knowledge and gardening experience through presentations.

We're been pushing plants starting with hosting a public plant swap at Earth Day celebration in Wetumpka. Although the day started off wet, it magically cleared up around 7:00 when the event kicked off. It was fun meeting other gardening fanatics and most of us took home something new. Also, our annual plant sale is underway. By the time you read this, we'll be in full swing at the sale on pricing day or actually marketing plants. Carol Rattan has done an excellent job of coordinating with lots of help from everyone. I hope to have news of positive results by the next meeting. Thanks to all who raised plants or secured donations of some to sell. Hope you also purchased something new to add to your landscape.

Of course, we were deeply saddened by the loss of long time member Bill Long, but he will be remembered for his contributions to our organization and his warm personality. Our hearts go out to Mary during this time.

See you in the gardens. Linda

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Message from Mallory

By Mallory Kelley

Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests

Are Fire Ants Invading your Lawn or Garden?

If you're from the south, you are already too familiar with fire ants and when it comes to insect pests, fire ants are probably on the top of your list. Fire ants entered Mobile, Alabama by ship in the 1930's and have since been marching their way across the southern United States. They will inflict a painful sting and can injure or even kill animals and humans. To effectively control fire ant populations there are several things you need to understand that will help you make the right decisions on when to treat, how to treat and what to treat with so you are not wasting your time and money.

Many people try to control fire ants by treating individual mounds. Mound treatments can be expensive if you count the amount of labor it takes to treat each mound. If you have used mound treatments before, you have probably realized after treatment that another mound has now popped up nearby. This is the result of the ants moving to escape your insecticide application. To be effective, the mound treatment must kill the queen, otherwise, the colony will survive and more than likely move. Many nests are often undetected until after a heavy rain when they build their mounds up above the ground to escape the rainwater. It is usually more effective and less expensive for homeowners to treat the entire yard with a product designed for broadcast application than individual mound treatments. Also there are home remedies that you have either heard of or might have tried. Drenching a mound with two to three gallons of almost boiling water eliminates ant colonies about 60 percent of the time, but it will also kill the plants around the mound. This method is labor intensive and the hot water must be handled carefully. Home remedies such as; applying instant grits, molasses, aspartame or club soda to ant mounds, do not work. Pouring chlorine, ammonia, gasoline or diesel fuel on mounds can contaminate the soil and groundwater and is dangerous.

There are so many different insecticides out there for fire ant control that it is hard for anyone to know what to purchase. I recommend you narrow the search down by applying a broadcast bait. Baits contain active ingredients dissolved in a substance ants eat or drink. Some bait ingredients affect the nervous system. These include abamectin (Ascend® Fire Ant Bait, Award® II Fire Ant Bait, Clinch® Fire Ant Bait), indoxacarb (Advion® Fire Ant Bait), metaflumizone (Altrevin™ Fire Ant Bait Insecticide, Siesta™ Insecticide Fire Ant Bait), spinosad (Fertilome Come and Get It! or Payback Fire Ant Bait), and fipronil (MaxForce FC Fire Ant Bait Killer). Some affect the metabolism (hydramethylnon Amdro® Fire Ant Bait, Pro bait®). Other bait ingredients interfere with reproduction or growth. These include methoprene (Extinguish® Professional Fire Ant Bait), and pyriproxyfen (Distance® Fire Ant Bait or Esteem® Ant Bait). A relatively new type of bait combines two active ingredients, hydramethylnon and methoprene (Amdro® Kills Fire Ants Yard Treatment Bait or Extinguish® Plus Fire Ant Bait).

To be effective, baits must be fresh and applied when ants are actively foraging. To determine if the time is right for treatment, place a small amount of bait in the area to be treated and see if foraging ants remove it within an hour. Because ants collect bait and return it to the colony, very little insecticide is needed. Baits are ruined by water, so do not water baits after application or apply when rain is expected.

The price in baits will vary by their active ingredient and how quickly they will kill the colony. Also remember to always read and follow the label on any insecticide product. Some baits are not labeled for edible plants so they are not acceptable for fruit orchards or home vegetable gardens. Only a few bait products are specifically registered for treating imported fire ants in home gardens, such as, Fertilome Come and Get It (spinosad). The bait product Extinguish® Professional Fire Ant Bait, which contains methoprene, is registered for use in "cropland." Esteem® Ant Bait (pyriproxyfen) is another bait that is registered for use near 400+ edible food crops. Other bait products not specifically registered for use inside home vegetable gardens can be applied outside the garden's perimeter. Foraging ants from colonies both inside and outside the garden will collect the bait and take it to their colonies. For home lawns or gardens, calculate the area to be treated and how much is recommended for application to that area and apply using the smallest spreader setting that al-



lows bait to flow. A handheld spreader will work great and it may not seem like you are applying enough, but it only takes a little! Applying baits once or twice a year will reduce the colony by 80-90%.

For more information on fire ant bait products, please visit: <http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/A/ANR-0175-A/ANR-0175-A.pdf>

If you have questions about fire ants or any other garden related topic, our Master Gardener Helpline is here to help.

March through August the Alabama Cooperative Extension System offers a Gardening Helpline for the general public each Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. This helpline is operated by Master Gardener Volunteers who use research based information to best answer all of your gardening questions.

If you've got home garden questions, we've got answers!

Call 1-877-252-GROW (4769)

Interested in learning more about seasonal gardening topics? Please join us for the FREE Master Gardener Lunch and Learn Program in your area. These are EVERY MONTH from 12:00-1:00, Bring a Sack Lunch, Drinks Provided:

This month's topics and locations:

Montgomery: The 1st Wednesday of EVERY month

Topic: Beneficial Pollinators and Native Bee's

Armory Learning Arts Center on Madison Ave.

Wetumpka: The 2nd Tuesday of EVERY month

Topic: Luscious Lawns

Elmore County Extension Office Auditorium

Prattville: The 1st Thursday of EVERY month

Topic: Hydrangeas

Christ Lutheran Church on Cobbs Ford Road

Programs Update By Lee Borden

On April 21 Suzanne Sikes from the Pike County Master Gardeners talked to us about daylilies, including their origins and their development. She described the anatomy of a typical daylily and how growers typically develop new varieties by crossing one with another. We learned the difference between diploid and tetraploid daylilies and how the innovation of tetraploid daylilies has ramped up the number of possible varieties from thousands to millions.

Here are your ratings for the April meeting:

- Interesting topic? 4.66 out of 5.
- Presentation Quality: 4.58 out of 5.
- Business meeting useful? 4.69 out of 5.

On May 19 Sue Webb will teach us how to incorporate native plants and small trees in our landscapes to make them not only more authentic but also more resilient.

And in June Candy Jones will convene a panel to talk about the many opportunities available within CAMGA for advanced certification.

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

We now have a new projection screen for you to use for your presentations! Large groups tend to have their own screen, but smaller groups like garden clubs often meet in someone's home where we can't always depend on finding a nice blank light-colored wall. Our screen is an Elite 72" roll-up screen that fits in most autos and is ideal for those smaller groups. It will be stored at the extension office and can be checked out along with the projector and computer. Just email me at lee@divorceinfo.com and I'll fix you up.



May 2015

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 May Day Plant Pricing Day	2 PLANT SALE !!!
3 Mother's Day	4 Montgomery Botanical Garden Work Day Governor's Mansion	5	6 Lanark Work Day 	7 Learning Garden Work Day	8	9
10	11 Governor's Mansion Work Day	12	13 Lanark Work Day 	14 Learning Garden Work Day	15	16 Armed Forces Day 
17	18 Governor's Mansion Work Day	19 CAMGA Meeting	20 Lanark Work Day 	21 Learning Garden Work Day	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day Governor's Mansion Work Day	26 Farmer's Market Begins	27 Lanark Work Day 	28 Learning Garden Work Day	29	30
31						

MARCH MINUTES

By Rosemary Mobley, Secretary



The April 2015, Central Alabama Master Gardener's Association (CAMGA) meeting was held April 21, 2015, at the Elmore County Extension Auditorium in Wetumpka, Alabama. Linda Griebel called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and recognized guests. Next, she asked Lee Borden to introduce the speaker, Suzanne Sikes. Ms Sikes is a Pike County master gardener with expertise in daylilies. She and her sister-in-law, Julie McClure, are carrying on a family tradition of raising daylilies, started by their matriarch, Sara Sikes.

The daylily is a popular perennial because it is hardy in a wide range of climates, suitable for many landscapes, and known to bloom from late spring until autumn. Early in her presentation, Ms Sikes shared that daylilies originated in Asia, with Chinese wood block prints of daylilies dating back 1,000 years. Daylilies were included in inventory records of sailing ships that arrived in North America in the mid- 1700's.

Modern daylilies originated from 10 varieties, and were yellows and shades of orange. Dr. Arlow Burdette Stout (1876-1957), a botanist and geneticist at the New York Botanical Gardens, worked on hybridizing the 10 varieties of daylilies. He produced over one hundred viable daylily hybrids, revolutionizing nursery breeding and popular interest in daylilies. The highest award a cultivar can receive is the Stout Silver Medal, given annually in memory of Dr. Stout, who is considered to be the father of modern daylily breeding in North America. The speaker noted that Sara Sikes received this award in 1995 for the daylily, Neal Berrey.

Using photographs of various daylilies, Ms Sikes explained that daylilies are diploid or tetraploid. Diploids have two sets of identical chromosomes in each cell and tetraploids have four sets of chromosomes. Characteristics of tetraploids include large flowers and intense colors. Pink flowers, spider, and double daylilies are consistent with diploids. She added that daylilies require six hours of sunlight daily, well-drained soil with a ph of 6.5, and one inch of water a week. There are over 60,000 varieties of daylilies. The speaker responded to a number of questions at the end of her presentation. Prior to the break, Lee distributed evaluation forms and encouraged participants to respond.

After the break, Linda convened the business meeting at 11:07 a.m. Lee Borden reported that the program for the May 19, 2015, meeting will be conducted by Sue Webb, and her topic will be, "Native Plants in the Landscape." Candy Jones is scheduled to facilitate a panel discussion on Advanced Master Gardener certification at the June 16th meeting. Lee also shared that the CAMGA board approved an expenditure of \$168.00 for a projector screen.

Mary McCroan encouraged everyone to enjoy the butterfly garden in the Community Learning Gardens. She stated that Terry Chambliss built a raised bed in the vegetable garden. Also, there is an emphasis on vertical gardening this year in the Learning Gardens. Mary addressed the reality that weed fabric helps, but does not eliminate weeds!

The next order of business was to approve the March minutes. Gale Wheeler-Leonard made the first motion to accept the minutes, Nancy Tribble made the second, and the minutes were accepted as written by all present.

Rhona Watson gave the Treasurer's report for March. The balance as of February 28, 2015 was \$11,418.95. Income for March included Dues-\$72.00, and Bonsai Class-\$72.00 which totaled \$144.00. Expenditures for March were a Donation to the Auburn Endowment Scholarship Fund-\$1000, and Bonsai Class-\$50.29 which totaled \$1,050.29. This left a balance as of March 31, 2015 of \$10,512.66. Amanda Borden made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Judy May made the second, and it was carried by all present.

As a part of the Reach for the Stars program, Rhona presented a silver star to Charlotte Hall, a gold badge to Phil Easter, and a platinum badge to Jane Mobley. These awards were in recognition of numbers of volunteer service hours.



John Barnes reported for the Projects Committee. Some completed activities included the Lanark Floral Day on April 11th. The CAMGA booth was represented by John, his wife, Jane Mobley, and Mary McCroan. Lois Pribulick and Virginia Pruitt were also available at the CAMGA booth with a hands-on seed-planting experience for young children. Children left with seeds in pots and instructions for care. On the same day, Linda Griebel and Rhonda Miles set up a CAMGA table at Southern Homes and Gardens (SH&G) to answer gardening questions. CAMGA members are scheduled for additional Saturdays at SH&G. The seeds procured by Marie Updike were used in the Learning Gardens. The remaining seeds are to be used in 4-H projects.

A Plant Swap is scheduled on April 25th at the Recycle Center in Wetumpka. CAMGA members will also recruit for the intern class at this event. Linda had T-shirts to distribute for those who signed up to attend. Future activities include the Hydrangea Fest, scheduled on June 13th at Lanark in Millbrook. The possibility of a future partnership with the YMCA will be discussed at a meeting scheduled in May.

Amanda Borden told the group that those interested in volunteering with the Montgomery Botanical Gardens at Oak Park should bring gardening tools to the park on Monday April 27th from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Linda reported for Ann Hill that some directories remain at the Elmore County Extension Office. If you do not have your directory, pick yours up as soon as possible.

Charlotte Hall spoke for the Lunch and Learn (L&L) Committee. The April session conducted by Debbie Boutelier had 38 attendees. On May 12, Chip East's L&L topic is "Luscious Lawns". Jason Powell is scheduled for the June session. His topic is "Tough as Nails Plants for the South." Looking ahead to 2016, the committee is projecting that half of the year's sessions will be demonstrations. Suggestions for demonstration topics are welcomed.

Becky Brown shared that the amended recruitment flyer for the intern class is available, and encouraged members to use the flyer for background information in recruitment of future interns. She also noted that some applications were already on file!

Carol Rattan prepared a power point presentation which contained a treasury of information about the Saturday, May 5th CAMGA Plant Sale in front of Trinity Episcopal Church in Wetumpka. This power point was made available to CAMGA members by e-mail. Some of the particulars were about trucks, tents, tables, plant tags, wagons, volunteer assignments, set-up, clean-up, and many other behind-the-scenes responsibilities. A short planning meeting was scheduled in the Conference Room after the CAMGA meeting.

Jane Mobley requested that members continue sending in pictures and print articles for the annual scrapbook. She also spoke about an herb workshop with Darryl Patton, scheduled on October 24-25, 2015, at Lee and Amanda Borden's farm in Tallassee. Those interested should contact Jane Mobley for her planning purposes. Costs are \$75 per person, and \$125 for a couple.

Gale Wheeler-Leonard sent cards to Janet Lewis and Mary Long. She read a thank you note to CAMGA from Mary Long in regard to all of the expressions of kindness due to the death of her husband, Bill Long. He will be greatly missed.

Sally L'Abbe reported that she is exploring the possibility of a CAMGA-sponsored fall seminar at Lanark. She will have more details at a later date.

Rick Ohlson noted that the Millbrook Farmers' Market opens on May 26th. Hours of operation are on Tuesdays, from 8:00 a.m. until noon. He requested interested volunteers to get in touch with him. He also expressed a need for hanging file folders to store the print information shared with the public. Bonnie McCormick made a motion to spend up to \$50 for hanging file folders. Phil Easter made the second, and the motion was carried by all present.

Mallory Kelly spoke about the educational and recruitment opportunities at the monthly Lunch and Learn. She said that graduation for the intern class is scheduled on August 18, at Mulder Church. She also shared that she will supply chicken fingers, and that CAMGA members are asked to bring covered dishes for this event. Mallory will order badges soon, and anyone needing a badge should contact her as soon as possible.

Door prizes were awarded. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m. Fifty-five attendees were at the meeting. Respectfully submitted, Rosemary Mobley, Secretary



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS by Judy May

Attending the State Conference March 23-25 were Rhonda and Jessie Miles, Rhona Watson, Bonnie McCormick, Becky Ashurst, Charlotte Hall, Pat Petro Perryman, Connie Willis, Rosemary Mobley, and Linda Griebel. Rhona was a panel member at the Retaining Members Forum.

At the CAMGA information table at Southern Homes and Gardens March 28th, Linda Griebel and Gale- Wheeler-Leonard gave gardening information to 25 individuals. April 22 Rhonda Miles and Linda Griebel talked to 62 people; April 18 Rhonda Miles spoke to 30; April 25 scheduled are Rhonda Miles and Corky Butts.

Jane Mobley did a presentation to the Arrowhead Garden Club on Southern Heirloom Gardens on April 6.

At Farm City Day on April 10, John Barnes and Linda Griebel presented short talks about gardening to estimated 450 school children from Eclectic and Tallassee schools.

On April 13, Linda Griebel did a presentation on "Growing and Using Herbs to 12 members of the Rumbling Waters Arts Club.

Linda Griebel did a pruning presentation for 15 people at Southern Homes and Gardens on March 28th. Lunch and Learn April 14th featured Debby Boutelier speaking on The Wonder of Herbs. There were 38 in attendance, 25 Master Gardeners and 13 others.

The Projects Committee met Monday, April 20th. Attending were: John Barnes, Johan Beumer, Rod Douglas, Linda Griebel, Lois Pribulick and Candy Jones.

Bringing food to the MG monthly meeting were Amanda Borden, Sharon Potts, Brenda Bernal, Bonnie McCormick, Joyce Vella, Katrina Mitchell and Judy May.

Attending a Plant Sale Committee Meeting immediately following the monthly meeting were Joe and Sally L'Abbe, Sharon Potts, Lois Pribulick, Rhona Watson, Johan Beumer, Terry Chambliss, John Barnes, Linda Griebel, Linda Armour-Scott, Nancy Tribble, Gale Wheeler-Leonard, Rod Douglas, Judy May and Carol Rattan.

Meeting with Suzanne Sikes following the CAMGA meeting were Rhona Watson, Linda Griebel, Candy Jones, Jane Mobley, Lee and Amanda Borden, Becky Brown and Mallory Kelley. They met to discuss techniques for enhancing retention and participation within Pike Co. MGA.

Marie Updike participated with other energetic and enthusiastic Garden Club volunteers on April 16 for "Game day", a scholarship fundraiser event sponsored by the Montgomery Federation of Garden Clubs.

The Montgomery Area Daylily Club held their successful plant sale on Saturday, April 4, and club member Marie Updike assisted with selling registered daylilies to patrons.

Jesse Miles, Rhonda Miles and Marie Updike attended the monthly meeting of the Montgomery Area Daylily Club on April 12 to hear a presentation made by hybridizer Jim Brazelton from Guntersville, AL. The meeting attendees had the opportunity to bid on and win some of Brazelton's registered daylilies at the Club's plant auction.

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

Phil Easter did Alabama live promo for Lunch and Learn on WSFA-TV. For Flora and Fauna days at Lanark, he guided a group of about 20 on a Nature Walk into the swamp lands. He also did a press release on the upcoming Plant Sale.

Helping at Lanark this month were Ann Hill, Norman Turnipseed, Judy May, Carla McCune, and Interns Darla Tiesling, Terry Chambliss, Peggy Gelpi, and Don Hoover.

Volunteers for the Flora and Fauna Arts Festival were: Sandi Adkinson, Peggy Gelpi, Gale Wheeler-Leonard, Penny Arceneaux, Sandy Rosamond, Linda Queens (brought her sister Bonnie King), Mary Ann Hatcher, Judy May, Sally and Joe L'Abbe, Sandra Gilley, Norman Turnipseed, , Peggy Turnipseed, Sharon





Potts, Carla McCune and her husband John, Connie Willis, Barbara and (Spotlight continued) Andy Wallace, Marie Updike, Darla Tiesling, Joyce Vella, Terry Chambliss, Catese Chafee, Don Hoover, Debra Kelso and Jerry Potts.

Volunteering in the Learning Gardens were: Candy Jones, Amanda and Lee Borden, Linda Griebel, Terry Chambliss, Rod Douglas, John Barnes, Mary McCroan, Jane Mobley, Cindy Beumer and Joyce Vella.

Helpline volunteers in April were : Rod Douglas, Joyce Vella, Melanie Barry, Wanda Ivey, Mike Harber, Terry Chambliss, Ricky Hatcher, Mary Ann Klatt, and Mary Ann Hatcher.

Working Earth Day at the recycling Center on a very wet morning were: Linda Griebel, Bob and Becky Brown, Nancy Tribble, Terry Chambliss, Don Hoover, Jane McCarthy, Catese Chaffee, Sue Robertson and Judy May.

See You at the Spring Plant Sale – By Carol Rattan —Plant Sale Chair



Dates and Times:

April 30th, Thursday, 5-7pm – We are **receiving plants** at the barn near the vegetable garden **only from those who can't bring them Friday or have more than one truck/car load of plants.**

May 1st, Friday, 8-4 pm – **Receiving plants, pricing, and loading** onto two enclosed trailers. Bring plants to the barn near the vegetable garden. Lunch provided for workers.

May 2nd, Saturday, 8-12 pm - **Plant Sale!** Set up of tables, tents, and signs is 6-7 am, unloading of plants and other sale items is 7-8am. Clean up begins at 12 pm.

Carol Rattan dons the green apron we'll be wearing during the plant sale.

LUNCH AND LEARN BY CHARLOTTE HALL

“Wonders of Herbs” – Debbie Boutelier



Have you ever needed or wanted to do some cleaning with products that were environmentally safe and smelled good, too? If you had attended April's Lunch and Learn with herbalist Debbie Boutelier, you would have taken home lots of recipes for doing just that and more wonderful herbal information that recipes!! Debbie provided an abundance of information to an overly inquisitive group of extremely interested attendees who were so interested that Debbie's Q&A lasted well past her presentation.

Debbie's motto of clean, green and herbal results from her desire to eliminate as many interactions with harsh chemicals one might have every day. Chemicals abound everywhere – from personal hygiene products, such as shampoos and conditioners, to all types of cleaning products. On a daily basis, one probably comes in contact with over 100 chemicals.

Herbal products contribute to an overall healthful lifestyle, are inexpensive to make and are easy on the environment. But beyond the things that you do receive from the use of herbal products are the things that you do not receive – no added chemicals since products are all natural, no petroleum byproducts, no parabens, and no artificial colors, fragrances or flavors. This is another example where less is more or certainly less is better!

Along with the home grown herbs and five basic ingredients, a variety of products can be made for everyday cleaning. The ingredients are vinegar, baking soda, washing soda, borax and Castile soap or other vegetable based soap. Vinegar is a natural occurring acetic organic acid. Baking soda is sodium bicarbonate - a white, slightly salty, white powder. Washing soda is very similar in content to baking soda as it has only one more sodium molecule than baking soda. Whereas baking soda is powdery, crystallized like salt and clumps together, washing soda is grainy, dull and opaque, and is separate grains. Borax is sodium borate which is a water-soluble salt that is mostly used in laundry products. Remember the old 20 mule team borax commercials? This product was named for the 20-mule teams that were used to move borax from the naturally occurring borax salt mines in the desert of Death Valley. Castile soap is a pure soap made from coconut oil which is hypo-allergenic, contains no animal byproducts, no synthetic detergents or sodium lauryl sulfates. Any vegetable based soap may be used for Castile soap.



With these basic ingredients, all purpose cleaners, air fresheners, furniture cleaners, scouring powders, glass cleaners, laundry soap, dryer fresheners, carpet scents, linen sprays, and hand sanitizers may be made. Common herbs used in these products include lavender, peppermint, rosemary, sage, thyme, and lemon balm. Peppermint is antibacterial, antiviral and repels both insects and mice. Rosemary is antibacterial, antiseptic, antifungal, helps to dissolve grease and stimulates the brain. Sage is antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral and antibacterial. Thyme is an anti-disinfectant that is also antifungal, antiviral and is the strongest antibacterial herb around. Herbs and plants also filter the air and are beneficial in the home.

The basis for a lot of these products is a tincture. This tincture is made with distilled (Continued next page)

vinegar as the solvent. In a glass container, add the desired herbs to distilled vinegar. Let the mixture sit for four to six weeks. Then strain out the herbs and leave in a glass container. For straining, use an unbleached coffee filter. This makes a pure tincture which can be used for cleaning countertops and other surfaces. Product may be put into a spray bottle and then applied by spraying. Distilled vinegar and lemon peels or any other citrus peels can be made into a glass cleaner, also. Prepare your pure tincture (four to six weeks of citrus peels and distilled vinegar sitting in a glass jar) and then combine one part tincture with an equal part of water and one tablespoon of isopropyl alcohol.

Debbie concluded with recipes for making carpet scents, soft scrubs, hand sanitizers, insect repellants and a sure-fire cure for eliminating fleas in your home by breaking the life cycle of fleas by drying up the eggs. She offers a booklet with all these wonderful recipes for a minimal charge of printing the information.

Having problems with your lawn or grass from all this rain? Don't know what kind of grass is best for you? Have any other lawn questions? Then join us next month on the 2nd Tuesday, May 12th, when the very entertaining county extension agent, Chip East, will answer all of those questions - and more – about Luscious Lawns. See you then!



**A large crowd enjoyed Debbie Boutelier's herb presentation at Lunch 'n' Learn in April.
Deborah Kelso is introducing Debbie above.**



Millbrook Farmer's Market

By Rick Ohlson

May 26th is the start of the Millbrook Farmer's Market. It will be every Tuesday morning from 8 till noon and will continue until the end of August. I am looking for some volunteers to be at our table - for all or part of that time. We answer questions and talk to the local folks about gardening. We have a ton of handouts and most often explain where they can investigate their problems online. We know some answers and have the resources to

help them help themselves. So, you don't need to be an expert to participate. We have you covered. You will learn a lot about what is going in the local gardening community.

If you would like to try it out - - and I hope that you will - - please contact me at this email or 334-233-7425, call or text - - and lets talk. This is an easy way to get some hours for our interns or the regular members. We do not need more than one or two members each week because I have a couple of local members who come almost every week. These guys know the local community and will cover you if there is a issue you are uncomfortable with. Believe me, you do not need to be an expert. It is easy work, fun to meet folks, and you will learn a bunch.

So, think about it, and get in touch with me. Let's set up a date - we have lots of them. Do it once or do it often. I think you will find it is a good time - - and we call it work.

(Millbrook members: This is easy with little travel involved. All members: I also would like to have some volunteers that I can call at the last minute if a problem comes up.,

Thanks so much, Rick

334-233-7425

rohlson@yahoo.com

April CAMGA Meeting Highlights



Top left, Suzanne Sikes is our April speaker. Bottom left: Charlotte Hall receives a silver star. Right Judy May and Jane Mobley receive platinum badges for 2000+ hours and Phil Easter receives a gold badge for 1000+ hours.

CENTRAL ALABAMA MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION SPRING PLANT SALE

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 8:00-12:00
TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
PARKING LOT
5375 U S HWY 231, WETUMPKA, AL



Great prices and plant selections
Annuals, perennials
Trees, shrubs
Vegetables, herbs
House plants, garden items
Soil test kits available / free
Gardening questions answered
by on-site Master Gardeners

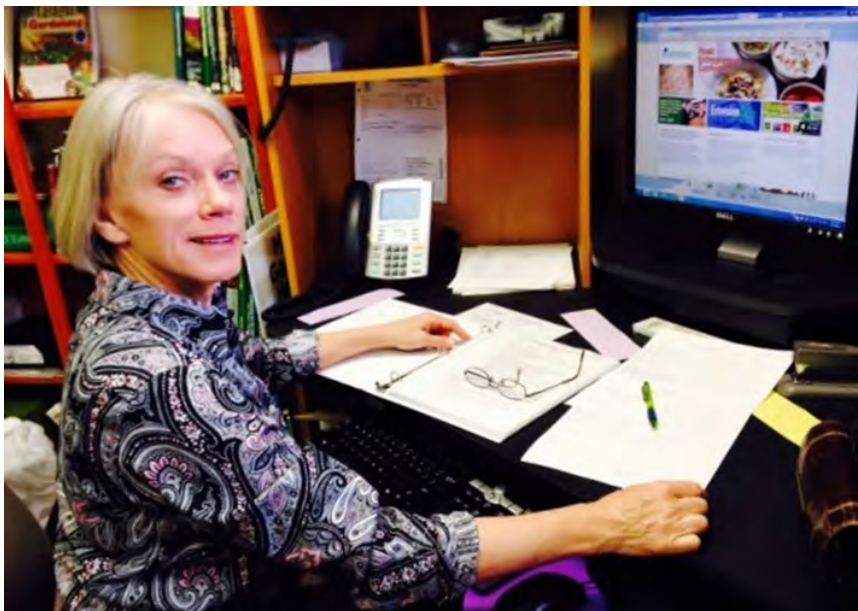


HELPLINE NEWS

By Mary Ann Hatcher

The Helpline has responded to an average of eight calls each Thursday during April. Interns working the Helpline were: Joyce Vella, Terry Chambliss,

Rod Douglas, Melanie Barry, and Mike Harber. Master Gardeners working the Helpline were: Wanda Ivey and Ricky Hatcher. Serving as Advisors were Mary Ann Klatt and Mary Ann Hatcher. Sharon Potts was our Appointment Reminder. Thank you all!



Melanie Barry researched an answer for a client.





Lanark Floral Fest Thank You from Maria Pacheco West



This month: Ann Hill, Norman Turnipseed, Judy May, Carla McCune and Interns Darla Tiesling, Terry Chambliss, Peggy Gelpi and Don Hoover all helped me get the gardens ready for Flora and Fauna. Norman and Carla deserve rewards for help setting up the tents for me a few days before the event. A lot of plants were divided, dug, repotted, fed, pinched back and made ready for the big plant sale. And the Interns, Darla Tiesling, Terry Chambliss and Don Hoover finished along with some help from the other MG's: Ann Hill and Carla McCune, a project started in January. We cut back, pruned to the ground and reshaped most of the azaleas that are not on the beaten path and which I can never get to. They are all manageable now. A mammoth task and I so appreciate all the hard work that went into completing this big job! Also, Don Hoover helped me clean out the barn for the speakers at Flora and Fauna and Peggy Gelpi mixed up and wet enough dirt to use for pots that I can start a business, now! Thanks to Carla McCune for great ideas and to Ann Hill and Darla Tiesling for helping to implement those ideas.

For the Flora and Fauna Arts Festival the people below volunteered. We could not have had this event without these people. Everyone on the AWF staff is well aware that these folks make it happen! Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for all your hard work! We had over 500 visitors (and it was a very busy Saturday in the Tri-County area) and all the vendors either sold out or did very well. The CAMGA table was wonderful for the children and I appreciate the Master Gardeners that worked that table and brought joy to so many little ones with their opportunity to plant a seed!

Stuff done: Directing parking, set up and take down Of tables, tents, chairs signs etc..., greeting visitors and giving them information, watching for folks not signing in, helping Eagles Roost Herb Farm sell their plants, working the Lanark plant sale table (we made a lot of money with the proceeds benefitting the Lanark gardens!) , working the volunteer snack table, giving rides in the golf cart, taking plants to peoples cars, helping set up for the presenters, keeping an eye on the Historic Lanark home with the art display, giving information to the public about the house, getting lunch to all the volunteers, making sure everyone had water and snacks, many brought snacks for the snack table (Thank you all!) Doing a presentation, this year it was Phil Easter who directed a tour of the Lanark swamp area and Lee Borden who gave a presentation on growing fruit at home; both did a great job and made the day wonderful for out visitors. Everyone was friendly and enthusiastic to our visitors and the whole event was a great success! Thanks to you all!

Volunteers on Saturday April 11, for the Flora and Fauna Arts Fest:

Sandi Adkison, Peggy Gelpi, Gale Wheeler, Penny Arceneaux, R.J. Arceneaux, Sandy Rosamond, Linda Queens (brought her sister Bonnie King), Mary Ann Hatcher, Ricky Hatcher, Judy May, Sally La'Abbe, Sandra Gilley, Joe La'Abbe, Norman Turnipseed, Peggy Turnipseed, Sharon Potts, Carla McCune and her husband John McCune), Connie Willis, Barbara Wallace, Andy Wallace, Marie Updike, Darla Tiesling, Joyce Vella, Terry Chambliss, Catese Chafee, Don Hoover, Debra Kelso and Jerry Potts.

Thank you all for your hard work and making the event a big success and lots of fun!

Ongoing Article for Learning Garden By Mary McCroan

The last week of March our project was cleaning up the weeds in the garden at the west end of the Extension Center. Candy Jones, Amanda Borden, Linda Griebel and Terry Chambliss made a huge difference in the before and after views.

The first week in April, with great weather, a bigger crew gathered. Rod Douglas, John Barnes, Linda Griebel, Mary McCroan, Jane Mobley and Terry Chambliss came out. Robin, hopefully a future MG intern, joined us after an invitation from Mary.

Terry focused on our Rain Garden that she has adopted and assaulted the Horsetail Rush. Lessoned learned: even planting this stuff in a pot will not guarantee it doesn't escape and try to take over your garden. Mary, Rod, John and Robin put up another trellis next to the one that Amanda and Lee built two weeks prior. This trellis will be used for Malabar Spinach which is a supposed to love hot temperatures and climb up to 12 feet on a trellis. John and Linda pruned the peach tree to open it up for more air circulation. We worked on the irrigation system to put it back in service for the summer. If anybody is contemplating irrigation for their garden we have plenty of examples to look at. Jane, Bob and John worked on planting more of the Butterfly Garden. And Mary planted a new veggie perennial as an experiment: Perennial Arugula.

The second week of March, we had Cindy Beumer, Terry Chambliss, Amanda and Lee Borden, John Barnes, Linda Griebel and Mary McCroan. We did various maintenance chores such as weeding (it never ends!). The big project of the day was to install a new raised bed (materials donated by Terry). Terry's husband had precut the wood and drilled pilot holes so the assembly was easy. We filled the bed up with compost and super soil and Terry will be figuring out what to plant soon!

The third week of March, with dicey weather, our volunteer group was a little smaller: Cindy Beumer (who likes to work in the rain!), John Barnes, Linda Griebel, Candy Jones and Mary McCroan. We cleaned up the shade/water garden, got some plants salvaged from the Four Season garden ready for the plant sale, and created a new sweet potato bed. This involved hilling up a row and planting O'Henry Sweet Potatoes that Mary purchased from Jung seeds. Mary is not terrible fond of sweet potatoes, but these are white sweet potatoes and supposed to be more like regular potatoes.



We will see. We harvested the last of the asparagus for the year--now we let them grow into ferns and feed the roots for next year's crop.

And finally, the fourth week of March, our crew included Cindy Beumer, Terry Chambliss, Amanda Borden, Linda Griebel, Candy Jones and Joyce Vella. The rain garden got some more attention with a renewed assault on the horsetail (just say no!) and digging and dividing of irises for the plant sale. As always, we accomplished some routine weeding of various beds. And we built one more raised bed. Amanda plans to plant sweet potatoes and we will have a taste test between the usual cultivar and the more exotic one planted by Mary the previous week.

Thanks to all who are planting, weeding, building and helping create a place of learning for gardeners!



(More pictures page 16)



Knock Out Roses



Sweet Peas

Fred Clematis



Raised Beds



Governor's Mansion Report by Amanda Borden



Volunteers at the Governor's Mansion managed to dodge enough of the April showers to get in some good work weeding and trimming. Gardeners were grateful for the shift to spring working hours, 8-11 a.m., as the temperatures began to rise. One work day had to be cancelled due to bad weather. On April 10 some of the regular volunteers enjoyed a congenial and productive visit to the Auburn Plant Sale, where they managed to pick up an assortment of vegetables, herbs, ornamentals, and even a couple of olive trees.



Left to Right: Amanda Borden, Jane McCarthy, Jean Smyth, Sandy Rosamond

Featured Plant of the Month - May By Jane Mobley

The Japanese Maple

With all of the wonderful flowers blooming in profusion this month, one might not think of the foliage plants that are strutting their stuff alongside their companions. One of the most beautiful is the queen of elegant trees, the Japanese maple. We often think of them in the fall when many trees are showing their colors, but many of these specimens have wonderful spring color also. With them we get a two or three season show. In addition, some of them even offer colorful limbs in the winter.

Japanese maples are an underused plant in our landscapes. With the thousands of varieties available surely there are one or two from which the Master Gardener's landscape could benefit. With all the diversity of size, shape, color, and leaf type present in this group even a small garden could boast a member.



Perhaps we might think that they are really an expensive item to add. The price is due to a couple of facts about these trees. The fancy types over which we may drool are grafted trees. They must have a hardy seedling for the root stock and scions grafted to that from the desired variety. Someone must graft them. Then, add the fact that they are slow growing, and that the nursery then has to grow them for some time to get a decent sized tree. So, the price is high. For the price of one of these trees we could purchase several other shrubs; so, we pass them by. However, there are ways to make them more affordable for us creative types.

One way that our members could reduce the price would be to use the following plan. First, Maria Pacheco-West sometimes sells Japanese maple seedlings. They are not too expensive when bought at a Lanark plant sale. Some of our members have beautiful trees that they prune from time to time. That could be a source of scions. There are ways of learning how to graft these trees. For instance, one of the vendors at Lanark, who has been one of our speakers, will teach anyone how to graft if that person will help him graft his trees. (Nothing like the good old barter system.) So, for a few dollars for a seedling, some free scions, and some time learning, one could have a beautiful addition to the landscape or ten, plus a new skillset.

Japanese maples are southern heirloom plants. For all of their fancy, frilly attributes they are really hardy. Once established they do not need lots of extra water unless they are planted in rocky ground where they will do well if they are watered. They do appreciate a little well-balanced fertilizer in the spring as well as an amended planting hole. Or, smaller varieties make great, stunning container plants. Pruning occurs in the spring before the buds leaf out. Many of them have wonderful structures that look good even when the plant has lost its leaves for the winter. That structure is revealed through competent pruning. For those of you who have enjoyed the bonsai classes we have had, those techniques can be carried over to the maples. You can enjoy all the beautiful shapes without having to water the subject every day. Helpful hint: Rhona can also demonstrate this pruning technique on trees in the ground and has done so on pruning days in the Learning Garden.

The ideal soil for these trees is a slightly acid sandy loam with a low to medium amount of organic matter. They do not like to stay wet. The site should be reasonably well-drained. Japanese maples have a shallow fibrous root system keeping their roots in the upper soil levels. The root collar should be kept level with the soil when planting. They are not often subject to serious insect infestations. Leaves may occasionally be attacked by the common garden pests, but the general health of the trees is not affected. Light requirements vary to some degree according to variety, but most like some shade.



Note from the Editor

I would like to thank CAMGA for your love and care during Bill's illness and passing. All of the cards, calls, visits, gifts and acts of kindness make me realize how blessed Bill and I have been to have such caring friends. Please accept my heart-felt gratitude and know that you have been a great help and inspiration to me at this sad time. I love you all.

Mary

Montgomery Botanical Gardens By Amanda Borden

A big thank-you to **Charlotte Hall** and **Iva Haynie** for joining us the work day at the Montgomery Botanical Gardens at Oak Park on April 27. Following a successful day of planting beds, we have one more task remaining: the beds need to be mulched. We need volunteers to help apply mulch on Monday, May 4, 2-5 p.m. If you can help out, please let me know at amandawborden@gmail.com (please do not hit "reply" to this email).

Please bring your own hand tools when you come.

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NEXT MEETING

MAY 19

**10 A.M.
SUE WEBB**

**INCORPORATING
NATIVE PLANTS IN THE
LANDSCAPE**