



GARDEN BUZZZZZZ



Volume 26 Issue 5 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

May 2017

Message from: Rhona Watson
CAMGA President



May is one of my favorite gardening months, the new growth on all the trees are beautiful, and all the iris's, and roses are full of blooms. This is the month when I get to be creative, making containers, and filling up beds with all the plants I have been nurturing all winter. Almost all the perennials are back, except a few hostas that are in the ground. I love to walk around each morning and see what is growing, blooming and returning from last year. Thanks to John Barnes, and the other volunteers that worked the plant swap. There were all types of plants, and Johan helped with building bird houses. All the volunteers did an impressive job helping with questions, and promoting our September Class. Hopefully we will get some interns from the people we talked to.

Thanks to Lee Borden for putting together the slides, and making us all look good presenting our English garden tour. It was fun seeing Charlie and Peggy Mitchel, and reliving our experience. Hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did.

The plant sale is almost here on May 6. If you are bringing plants be sure they are well rooted, and labeled. We will especially miss Linda Griebel, Phil Easter, Ann Hill and others who will not be there this year. We are short of volunteers, especially for set up and clean up on Saturday. Please check your calendars, and plan to be there to help if you can.

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CAMGA Garden Buzzzzz

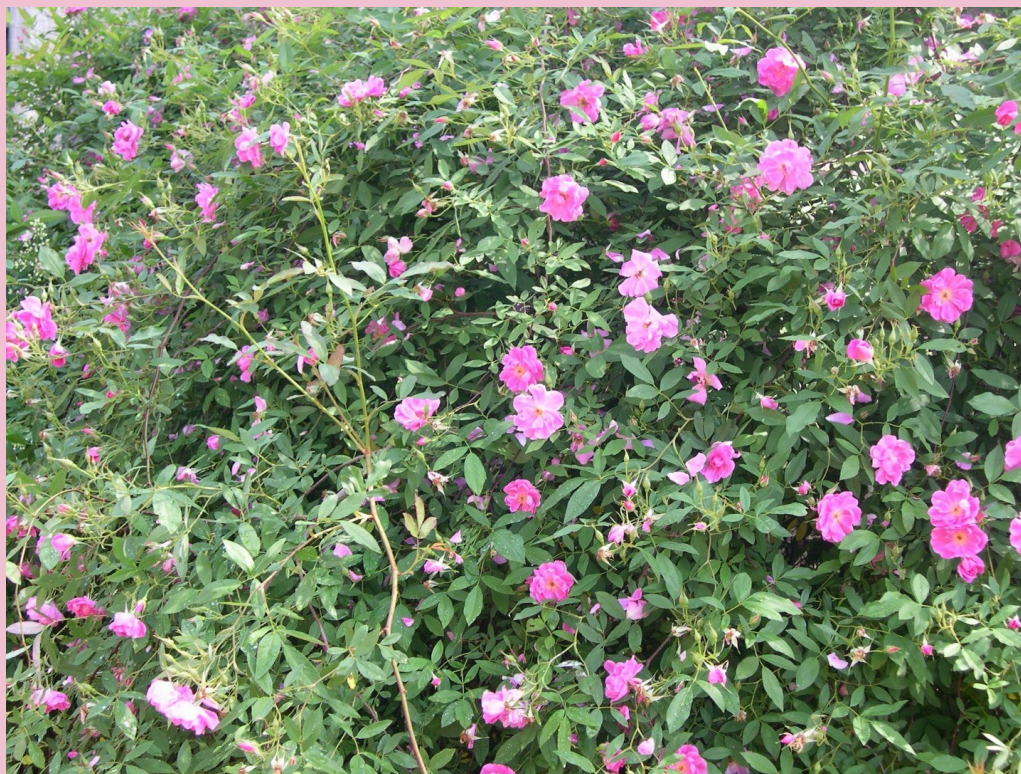
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Message from: Rhona Watson
CAMGA President — (Continued)

The picture this month is a *Rosa palustris* (swamp rose). It blooms in early spring with pink flowers, and is very fragrant. It has arching canes and grows to about 6 feet. It is unique for a rose, because it can grow in wet soil, but does not require constant moisture. I have knockout roses in the front that are just covered with blooms, and 2 shrub roses in the back that are also looking great. I don't spray, so the roses I do have look best in the spring.

YOUR FAVORITE GARDEN SHOULD BE YOUR OWN
Rhona



Rosa palustris (swamp rose)

Message from Mallory

Mallory Kelley

Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests



Fire Blight

Fire blight affects many plant species each year and once you know the symptoms you will start noticing it everywhere. This spring it seems to be more prevalent and a warmer winter along with the drought stress we had in the fall is what I attribute it to. Fire Blight, caused by the bacterium *Erwinia amylovora*, is a common and destructive disease of pear, apple, quince, hawthorn, many other members of the rose plant family as well as several stone fruit trees. The host range of the fire blight pathogen includes nearly 130 plant species in 40 genera. Badly diseased trees and shrubs are usually disfigured and may even be killed by fire blight.

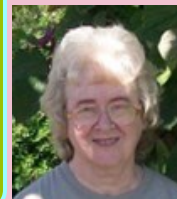
The term fire blight describes the blackened, burned appearance of damaged flowers, twigs, and foliage. Symptoms appear in early spring. Blossoms first become water-soaked, then wilt, and finally turn brown. Fruit may be infected by the bacterium directly through the skin or through the stem. Immature fruit are initially water-soaked, turning brownish black and becoming mummified as the disease progresses. These mummies often cling to the trees for several months.

Shortly after the blossoms die, leaves on the same spur or shoot turn brown and black. As the twig and leaf blight phase progresses, leaves die and curl downward, but do not drop from the tree which produces a “shepherd’s crook” appearance. This is usually the time when this disease is noticed on a tree or shrub. Spraying at this time is pointless, sanitization is the only cure. This means cutting back at least 12 inches behind the scorched area and sanitizing pruners between every cut. Choosing tolerant plant varieties is an easy way to reduce the likelihood of getting fire blight. Another option is to apply antibiotics (bactericides) very early in the spring, but timing can be very tricky for complete control. Remember, **Antibiotics are protectants and not cures so they must be present to prevent the infection. The best way for a homeowner to avoid fireblight is to choose resistant varieties.**

CAMGA Minutes

April 2017

Iva Haynie, Secretary



APRIL 2017 CAMGA MINUTES

By: Iva Haynie, Secretary

The Central Alabama Master Gardeners Association met on April 18, 2017 for its regular monthly meeting. There were 35 attendees. The meeting began at 10 a.m. with a tag team program on the English Gardens tour. Tag team members were Amanda Borden, Rhona Watson, Charlie Mitchell, Lee Borden, and Rosemary Mobley.

Mallory stated the tour of Jim Scott's gardens will be Monday, May 22nd. More details later. Lee Borden reported that the Farmbot components have arrived and he, Rhona Watson, Katrina Mitchell and John, Rhona's husband, are working on putting it together. Lee noted that the "Stubborn Old Gardeners" U tube had 61 views and 82 minutes watched in March and increased to 213 views and 312 minutes watched in April.

After a delightful English Tea Party break, the business portion of the meeting was conducted. The minutes of the March meeting were approved by affirmation as was the treasurers' report. Bill Quails reported the balance on February 28th was \$9,281.02. No income in March, total expenditures were \$958.98 leaving a balance at the end of March of \$8,322.04.

COMMITTEES:

FarmBot - Lee Borden requested a budget of \$300 per year for Farmbot and the same for the videos. Patricia Perryman made the motion for FarmBot and Terry Chambers seconded. The motion carried. Jo Weitman made the motion for the videos and John Barns seconded. The motion carried.

Program - Next month's program will be "Year Round Color".

Projects - John Barns reminded that the Earth Day plant swap will be this weekend behind the Elementary school. It has been suggested that we put on demonstrations each week at the Farmers Market.

Lunch and Learn - Charlotte Hall stated the April Program was on Back Yard Tomatoes and next month, Rhona Watson will talk about Propagation. In June the program will be by Aldridge Gardens on Hydrangeas.

Learning Gardens - Mary McCroan reported the cost for fixing the leak into the building was just under the approved \$600. There are some collards left if someone wants to take them. Mary asked for up to \$150 for mulch with Preen. The motion was made by Mary and seconded by Charlotte Hall. Motion carried. Johan said the food bank could use any extra food we might have.

Intern Class -Robin Snyder reported we have three applications so far. We need more.

Membership Care - Gail Leonard-wheeler noted both Sally and Joe L'Abbe are better. Sally had a stroke and Joe had surgery on his neck. Ann Hill is progressing slowly at Health South and may go home soon.



CAMGA
April 2017 Minutes (Continued)
Iva Haynie, Secretary

Help Line - Mary Ann Hatcher gave out pins to help line workers: Two for those who worked 3 times, two for those who worked 4 times and 5 for advisors.

Library - There are a number of library books missing. It was asked that members check to see if they may have any of them.

Plant Sale - Carol Ratan mapped out the plan for receiving plants and noted workers still needed for the plant sale. Several volunteered to help. Carol said plants should be labeled with name, color, sun/shade and mature size.

Mallory thanked Ken and Anida for hosting the tour of Barber Berry Farm. She recognized an intern who was at the meeting. If anyone wants a new badge, they are \$10.

Katrina said we could use picnic benches for the Farmbot area. The extension office will purchase 2 and suggested CAMGA purchase 2 at a cost of \$250 for the two. Bonnie McCormick made a motion to purchase them, Nancy Tribble seconded and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Iva Haynie, Secretary*

Stubborn Old Gardeners

By: Lee Borden



Our new branded YouTube Channel is up and operating. We have four videos right now:

- Low Maintenance Gardening for Hydrangea Lovers
- Winter Protection for a Meyer Lemon Tree
- Hydrangea Follow up
- Repotting an Orchid

There are two markers I will be watching to see how we're doing, and I encourage you to watch them too, I'd like for you to remember them from our first month in operation, March. During March, we had 61 views (people asking for a video), and we had 82 minutes of "watch time" (minutes spent by someone watching one of our videos). I expect those numbers to grow, so let's burn the March numbers into our brains. I want us to look back when some bigger numbers start coming in and remember how things got started.

March numbers for *Stubborn Old Gardeners*:

61 views
82 minutes

So what video are you thinking about producing? The best way to get started is to read [8 Steps, 8 Hours To Your Finished Video](#) on our web site. It will give you an idea how the process works and how much time it would take.

Stubborn Old Gardeners will leverage our teaching function in ways we have previously only dreamed about. But it won't be complete without you!



Lunch and Learn Program April 2017 By: Charlotte Hall



“Backyard Tomatoes” By: Mallory Kelley

Do you know what the most popular plant in the vegetable garden is? If you guessed the tomato plant, then you are correct. And for our April Lunch and Learn program, our own Mallory Kelley was the speaker for Backyard Tomatoes. Mallory has done extensive work on tomatoes during her formal education days and had all the answers for this popular plant.

There are over 5000 varieties of tomatoes featured in seed catalogs with many different kinds such as cherry, grape, roma, striped, red, purple, heirloom and just about any other qualifying characteristic that you could imagine. But the underlying question that is

asked the most often of all these different types is: What is the best tasting tomato?

As you can imagine, there are many determining factors that can affect the taste of the tomato – soil, water, sunshine, acidity, sweetness, and not to mention that everyone’s tastes are different. However, some factors will be the same for all varieties. The longer the tomato stays on the vine and ripens, the better the taste. The more sugar the tomato has, the less acid tasting it is. Mallory pointed out that there is no low or high acid tomato. It is actually high or low sugar content which determines the acid taste.

So, since there is no clear answer as to which tomato variety is the best tasting, though many advanced tomato workshops have conducted taste-testing studies, the best way for anyone to determine the best tomato for yourself is to try different ones and make your own determination.

Select your tomato using the following criteria: Kind – determinate or indeterminate, Days to maturity, Disease resistance, Heat Tolerance and Use for Tomato.

The kind of tomato is a determinate – a bush type tomato with fruit ripening in a concentrated time period or an indeterminate which means it is a climbing tomato and the fruit ripens over an extended period of time. If you have a confined space and do not want to deal with staking or need a lot of tomatoes at one time such as for canning, then determinates are for you. These plants grow to a determined height and produce fruit for 2 or 3 weeks. If you prefer to have less fruit for a longer period time of time, the indeterminate is the one. It runs and requires staking but can produce until frost.

As there are many varieties of tomatoes, there is also a range of days to maturity depending on the tomato variety. Days from transplanting to harvest can range from less than 30 to greater than 85. Early varieties are in the 50-69 day range, mid-season is the 70-79 day range and late varieties are 80 days or longer.

Disease resistance is also dependent on the type tomato. Tomato seeds or tomato plants will have certain letters on their identification tags such as V, F, N, etc. These letters indicate that the tomato is resistant to that particular virus or fungus: V-Verticillium Wilt, N-Nematodes, F-Fusarium Wilt (1, 2, or 3), St-Stemphylium, EB-Early Blight, LB-Late Blight, TMW-Tobacco Mosaic Virus, TSWV-Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus, AS-Alternaria Stem Canker, BKS-Bacterial Speck, TMV-Tobacco Mosaic Virus and GLS-Gray Leaf Spot.

Lunch and Learn Program (Continued)

April 2017

By: Charlotte Hall



Many varieties of tomatoes will not set fruit when the day temperature is above 90 degrees and night temperatures are 75 or above. Determinate tomatoes that have some heat reference in their name such as sun, fire or solar are all heat resistant.

Lastly, the culinary use of a tomato is another factor to consider when selecting a tomato type. There are specific varieties that are for slicing, salads, sauces or salsa.

Since tomatoes are vines, the proper way to plant a tomato would be to place in soil less than 8-10" so water would be available to the plant with half of the plant above the soil. If the plant is long and spindly, a trench can be dug and the tomato plant placed on its side and covered with soil. Roots will grow from each node.

To produce larger fruit, thin your plant down so all the energy goes to produce fruit. Removing suckers – the arm-pits of tomatoes – helps to reduce disease and allows air to circulate. The following are suggestions for preventing problems with your tomato plants: (1) Pinch off the lowest limbs and have one foot between the low limbs and the ground, (2) Do not let limbs touch the soil surface, (3) MULCH, (4) Never overhead irrigate, (5) Do not water the foliage, (6) Start a fungicide spray at planting and continue through the growing season, and (7) Scout for insects and diseases.

Tomatoes are susceptible to many disorders such as blossom-end rot, sunscald, poor circulation resulting in no fruit, cat-facing or cracking, flowers aborting, leaf-roll, herbicide injury or being blotchy. Some varieties are also susceptible to common diseases caused by fungus or bacteria. If a fungicide is being used, check the label of the fungicide and make sure it contains either chlorothalonil or mancozeb. Many pests also love tomatoes – aphids, stink bugs, Colorado potato beetle, thrips, whiteflies, caterpillars, tomato hornworms, fruit worms, cabbage loopers or cut worms. If applying an insecticide, check the post harvest fruit interval. A tomato with a zero post harvest fruit interval means the tomato can be eaten the day that it is picked without any harmful effects. Bacillus-thuringiensis is a common ingredient in some major brands of insecticides which can be applied to control many pests.

As an added treat for all the April Lunch and Learn attendees, Mallory provided different types of tomato plants for everyone to take home and grown their own delicious most popular plant in a vegetable garden. Also, a list of most tomato types and their growth habit and disease resistance was distributed. Who knows what treat might be waiting for next month's Lunch and Learn attendees? Rhona Watson, current president of CAMGA, will make a presentation on propagating plants. Make plans to join us on May 9th at noon. Bring a lunch and remember that drinks are provided.





Governor's Mansion Report April 2017 By: Amanda Borden



Volunteers at the Governor's Mansion in April weeded in the front yard, the side lawn southern bed, the Herb Garden, the Secret Garden, and the Serenity Garden.

They renewal pruned the azaleas at the northeast corner of the side lawn and the camellias under the kitchen windows, and they stumped the Carissa holly shrubs at the T in the driveway.



Before Pruning



After Pruning



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

April 2017

By Judy May



The Lunch and Learn speaker this month was Mallory Kelley who spoke on Backyard Tomatoes. There were 27 attendees, 20 of them Master Gardeners. Assisting were Sandi Adkison, Cathy Whigham, Charlotte Hall, Carla McCune and Bill Quailes.

Jane Mobley led a tour of the Governor's Mansion grounds for the Blue Ridge Garden Club on April 12th. Jane also gave a presentation on Butterfly Gardening for the Wetumpka Fine Arts Guild on April 20th.

Judy May did a Stubborn Old Gardener video on repotting Orchids on April 11 with Lee Borden directing and doing the photography and Charlotte Hall assisting as Stage Director. Also involved with Stubborn Old Gardeners this month were Rhona Watson, Jane Mobley, Mike Harber and Mary McCroan.

Working on Farm-Bot this month were Lee Borden, Rhona Watson and her husband John, and Katrina Mitchell.

March 16th a group of our artists met at the home of Earnie and Linda Edwards to decorate and paint gourd pots for the Plant Sale. Joining them were Sandy Rosamond, Charlotte Hall and Jane McCarthy.

Attending the Projects Committee meeting April 17 were John Butler, Terry Chambliss, Sharon Potts, Jane Mobley and John Barnes.

Maria sends a huge thank you to all the volunteers for the Flora and Fauna Festival! She says the help with setting up the artists the Friday before was invaluable and then all the hard work all day long on Saturday was just amazing and wonderful! Thank you all so much! It was a successful festival because of the wonderful people each of you are and because you were all so willing to pitch in and do the work. It was also a fun day and Maria enjoyed sharing it with you all.

Volunteers that day were Peggy Gelpi, Jimmy May, Don Hoover, Carla McCune, Sheila Pearson, R.J. and Penny Arceneaux, Charlotte Hall, Marie Updike, Mary Ann and Ricky Hatcher, Barbara and Andy Wallace, Judy May, Sandra Gilley, Cathy Whigham, Ernie and Lynda Edwards, Lee Ann Marona, and interns Lanell Tatum, Paul Richards and Cheri Cook. Volunteering at Lanark during the month were Cathy Whigham, Norman Turnipseed, Carla McCune, Sheila Pearson, Don Hoover, Jimmy May, Peggy Gelpi and interns Paul Richards, Cheri Cook and Lanell Tatum. They helped through the month preparing for the festival and helping keep the grounds in great shape! Thank you so much!

Manning the Intern Recruitment Booth and the Butterfly Garden Booth at Flora and Fauna were Sandy Rosamond, Lee Ann Marona, and Robin Snyder.

Working at the Governor's Mansion this month were Amanda Borden, Jane McCarthy and intern Amy Richardson.

Working the CAMGA table at Earth Day were Nancy Tribble, Sharon Potts, Deborah Kelso, Johan Beumer, Terry Chambliss, Rhona Watson, Sharon Hauk, Betty Stricker and John Barnes.

Working the Helpline this month were Candy Jones, Sandy Rosamond, Joyce Vella, Cindy Beumer, Mary Ann Klatt, Charlotte Hall, Sharon Potts, Ricky and Mary Ann Hatcher and intern Amy Richardson.

Progress On FarmBot

By: Lee Borden

Your FarmBot team has had an interesting couple of weeks, as we have unpacked, sorted, and installed the thousands of tiny parts that make up the FarmBot machinery. We are all beginning to realize that FarmBot is designed for hackers, those who want to start with the basic machinery and then get adventurous about other functions they could ask it to perform. Right now at least, that does not describe us!

As of press date for the newsletter, we have the tracks for the x axis (end to end on the bed), y axis (side to side on the bed), and z axis (up and down in space) installed, and we have the cables placed in their cable carriers and installed on each axis. Next up is the installation of the cables for the twin motors that move FarmBot along its x axis, and then the installation of the computer itself.

We'll get FarmBot assembled, and we'll eventually get it working. Thank you all for your patience!

Here's an example of the fun we're having. Rhona Watson, her husband John, and Lee Borden have just a few of the parts spread out on a table so we can study how they go together.



**Rhona Watson, John Watson and Lee Borden
Working Diligently on Assembling the FarmBot!**

Spring Plant Sale — Everything You Need to Know

By: Carol Rattan

Dates and Times:

May 4th, Thursday, by appointment only – 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. **Please call me** if you need to deliver plants on Thursday and need help unloading. Signs will be installed early that week.

May 5th, Friday, 8 a.m.--4 p.m. – **Receiving plants, pricing, and loading** onto two enclosed trailers, and a large flatbed trailer. Bring plants to the barn near the vegetable garden. Look for the signs around the barn so you know where to unload. Please be patient.

May 6th, Saturday, 8-12 p.m. - **Plant Sale!** Set up of tables, tents, and signs is 6:30 a.m. -7:15 a.m., unloading of plants and other sale items is 7:15 a.m. -8:00 a.m. Clean up begins at 12 p.m.

Other Information:

Volunteering/Needs – If you have not signed up to volunteer and want to help, please just show up to help. I don't have quite the number I've had signed up in past years. If you can bring a **wagon** to help haul plants to cars that would be very helpful. If you have a **canopy** we can use, bring that too. We will load those onto a truck Friday.

Labels - Plants you bring **must be labeled** – **name (common – Latin name is optional), color, shade/sun, and mature size.** See below for example! “Mini blind” labels are in a box in the MG room at the Extension office, and will be available at the next meeting. If you have extra “mini blind” labels, please ensure they are clean and bring them to share. Also, Rhona Watson has created some plant labels which you can modify and use for your plants, which is especially helpful if you have lots of similar plants to donate. The label files are available on our Yahoo site, or Rhona can send them to you if you can't access Yahoo.



Pre-purchase - Members who donate plants and/or work during pricing day may purchase plants on that day.

Aprons – Eight bright colored aprons will be worn by members working at the sale who have extensive knowledge on plants to provide information to customers.

Books and Yard Art – We are not selling books this year. We have donations of some beautifully decorated gourds we will be selling this year.

Miscellaneous Photos



Sandy Rosamond working at 2017 Lanark Flora and Fauna Festival CAMGA booth.

Photo submitted by: Robin Snyder

Lee Borden and Rhona Watson working on FarmBot



Mary Ann Hatcher, Patricia Petro-Perryman, Ricky Hatcher, and John Barnes received pins for working the MG Helpline at the April CAMGA meeting

Calendar of Events

May 2017

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 8 to 11 a.m.</i>	2	3 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	4 <i>Elmore County Extension Office Learning Gardens Workday 8 to 12 Noon MG Helpline Elmore Co. Office</i>	5	6 <i>Master Gardener Plant Sale, 8-12 Trinity Episcopal Church, Wetumpka</i>
7	8 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 8 to 11 a.m.</i>	9 <i>Lunch & Learn 12 noon to 1 p.m. Elmore Co. Ext. Office</i>	10 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	11 <i>Elmore County Extension Office Learning Gardens Workday 8 to 12 Noon MG Helpline Elmore Co. Office</i>	12	13
14	15 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 8 to 11 a.m.</i>	23 <i>CAMGA Meeting 10:00 a.m. Extension Office</i>	24 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	18 <i>Elmore County Extension Office Learning Gardens Workday 8 to 12 Noon MG Helpline Elmore Co. Office</i>	19	20
21	22 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 8 to 11 a.m.</i>		<i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	25 <i>Elmore County Extension Office Learning Gardens Workday 8 to 12 Noon MG Helpline Elmore Co. Office</i>	26	27
28	29 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 8 to 11 a.m.</i>	30	31 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	<div> <p>The Master Gardener Helpline is now open!</p> <p>Call 1-877-ALA(252)-GROW(4769)</p> </div>		