



GARDEN BUZZZZZ



Volume 27 Issue 2 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

February 2018

Message from:

Rhona Watson

CAMGA President



As if January wasn't bad enough with the cold, snow and ice, it is time to get ready for February. At least some of what I do this month is inside.

I will start my first batch of seeds, a new cone flower called Green Twist, Italian Parsley, and some ornamental grass. All of these take 8 weeks before they are ready to go into the garden in April. I will do two more batches of seed in March for the plants that take 6 weeks, and the annuals that take 3 to 4 weeks.

The outside activity is grafting Japanese Maples. I learned to graft about 5 years ago and look forward to trying again and seeing my friends from Auburn and Florida that graft with us. I have 11 trees in the ground ranging in age from 20 years to 3 years, and many more in pots from bonsais to 5 gallon pots. There are 100's of cultivars so you can never have too many.

Thank you to Mary McCroan who started our year of meeting presentations with the history of our learning gardens. It was fun and informative to look back and see what we had accomplished. She also did the Lunch and Learn about the lessons we had learned over the years working in the gardens.

Our meeting in February is very timely as well. Don Armstrong from Autauga County Master Gardeners will speak to us on different methods of propagation, and will bring some plants as examples. It will be interesting to see what plants he is propagating and hear about his successes.

Our new computer and projector were up and running for our meetings. Sandy Adkison has agreed to be the contact person if you need to use it for a presentation. It is available except the 2nd Tuesday of each month when it is used for Lunch and Learn. There will also be a checklist of parts in the case to help keep track of the cables and remote.

If you have not taken advantage of our library, you are missing an opportunity. Lee Ann Moran has put the books on line, so you can go to camga.net, and search for what you are interested in. For example if you type in Perennials it will give you a list of books that we have on the subject. To further improve the library and to encourage everyone to use it. Lee Ann has put a survey on line to learn about how it is currently being used and peoples interests.



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Message from: Rhona Watson
CAMGA President — (Continued)



Our newest addition to the library is the 2017 History book that Jane Mobley has put together. There are wonderful pictures, and great memories. Thanks Jane.

The picture this month is of an arrangement I made with a new vase I got for Christmas. It is a combination of dried hydrangea flowers from last year, and fresh eucalyptus I cut in the yard.

They say you can't grow eucalyptus in our zone but I have had the tree over 10 years and it is about 20 feet tall. It is great for arrangements for the color and the scent. The stem of white flowers are silk, just to add more interest.

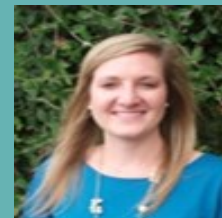


MAKE YOUR FAVORITE GARDEN YOUR OWN
Rhona

Message from Mallory

Mallory Kelley

Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests



The War Against Lawn Weeds

Many of you have given up the battle to treat your lawn on your own and many of you are still waging war yourself and wondering what am I doing wrong? Well if you want to get ahead of the game a pre-emergent in February is the way to go! This article will hopefully give you several tips from pre and post emergent products to fertilizers to help you achieve the beautiful lawn you are hoping for.



The most popular product out there that seems to have it all, the “one stop shop” for all your lawn needs is the “Weed and Feed” products. I am often asked if this is the correct way to treat the lawn. In central Alabama, there is not a large window of time when this product would be beneficial, but it can be used in May or early June when an extra application of fertilizer would not hurt and the application of the pre-emergent chemical in the product will help prevent weed seeds from germinating through the summer and into the fall.

The best and most effect control of weeds in the lawn may take a little more effort than the “Weed & Feed”, “All in One” products, but you can save money and time in the long run applying them separately. Pre-emergent weed killers should be selected based on the type of grass you have. These weed control products are preventative so they should be applied before the weeds are visible in the lawn as they prevent the seeds of the weeds from germinating. These can be applied any time of year except during “Green-up” or to newly seeded or sprigged lawns, but again February is a great month as we will soon have spring like temperatures and spring weeds will start to germinate. Do not reseed a lawn for 4-6 months after a pre-emergent chemical is applied and remember to always read and follow all label instructions when making applications of any chemical. I have provided information below to access our website for a list of all Pre and Post-emergent chemicals on the market so you can correctly select the chemical that is best for your lawn situation. Don’t forget, a post-emergent herbicide is only going to kill a weed that has already begun to grow in the lawn.

Fertilizers are generally applied twice throughout the year, first in early spring during green-up and then again in mid summer. Fertilizer type and amounts should be based on soil test results, not guess work and anytime is a good time to have a soil test. Soil tests will provide you with the correct type of fertilizer and amounts needed for your specific lawn and if lime is needed, lime can be added at anytime of year. Remember, lime raises the soil pH. A soil test will help you be more accurate in your fertilizer application, provide your grass with the exact nutrients it needs and save you money down the road.

For information on proper care of your turfgrass visit our publications online at www.aces.edu and search for the type of grass you have. Also for a list of pre and post-emergent chemicals that are available and the type of lawn they can be applied to, visit our website and search for: IPM Weed Control or access this link: http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/A/ANR-0500-B/VOL2-2011/home_lawns_weed.pdf



CAMGA Minutes January 2018 By: Mary Lou Mullins, Secretary

CAMGA Meeting Minutes — January 16, 2018

Welcome: Rhona Watson, President, welcomed the 26 individuals attending and introduced Andy and Janice Jackson as new members.

Monthly Program: Mary McCroan, Gardens Coordinator presented a retrospective of decade of CAMGA projects.

Business Meeting & Committee Reports:

Rhona pointed out the new monthly sign-in sheets developed by Cathy Whigham, Directory and Membership Committee.

Mary Lou Mullins was sworn in as Secretary for 2018.

The December CAMGA Minutes and Treasurer's Report were approved. Bill Quailes, Treasurer reported \$357.11 in expenditures, \$371 in income with a year-end balance of \$10,053.24.

Jane Mobley, Projects Committee presented the completed CAMGA 2017 Scrapbook.

Motion: Rhona Watson, (Candy Jones seconded), moved that \$75 be taken from the Treasury to pay for the book. Approved.

Sandy Rosamond, Vice President and Programs Chair stressed the need for members to serve on the diverse committees of CAMGA. Handouts were dispersed to describe each committee. Sandy presented the schedule of programs for the year. Next month's will be "Plant Propagation" by Don Armstrong on February 20th. Field trips are being organized to visit members' home gardens. The first one will be May 22nd.

Sandi Adkison thanked Mary McCroan for overseeing the purchase of our new \$1,527 computer and projector. **Motion:** Janet Lewis, (Terry Chambliss, seconded), requested \$100 to purchase a remote for the projector. Approved.

Sandi Adkison will oversee tagging the new equipment along with developing care and sign-out guidelines.

Motion: Candy Jones, (Terry Chambliss, seconded) requested \$150 be spent for Preen Mulch for the Learning Gardens. Approved.

CAMGA Minutes (Continued)

January 2018

By: Mary Lou Mullins, Secretary



Lee Ann Moran, Library Committee asked that all members complete the “Library Interest Survey” that will be emailed to them soon. Hard-copy books can be checked out from our library. See CAMGA.net for a listing of books.

The Plant Sale is tentatively reset for April 28th, due to a date conflict with Herb Day on May 5th . Members are encouraged to get busy preparing.

The Projects Committee will meet at 10:30 a.m. February 10th prior to Lunch and Learn at noon. The topic for Lunch and Learn is “Backyard Birding and Wildlife.”

The Master Gardener State Conference is May 3--5, in Birmingham.

On April 30—May 1, the Garden Club of Alabama will be offering a Landscape Design Course. Contact Janet Lewis for information.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Mullins, Secretary



January 2018 Lunch & Learn

By: Charlotte Hall

“Lessons Learned from the Learning Gardens” – Mary McCroan

What a wonderful way to start 2018 with a program by the always entertaining and informative Mary McCroan on some lessons that were learned by trial and error in our CAMGA learning gardens. Mary has spearheaded the learning gardens and, in doing so, has taken on several interesting and sometimes unusual projects for this area.

The great thing about Mary with the learning gardens is her willingness to give new and varied projects a try, often resulting in our reaping the time, effort, and knowledge benefit of some varied projects for this area. I think that Mary loves a challenge!

Here are a few of the lessons learned, some very positive results and some not so much.

Drip Irrigation – the only way to minimize water maintenance. The most common problem is over watering. Most everyone can probably install their own irrigation system. The main lesson learned is that more controllers being used usually produce better results. The best solution was a controller for every bed to have more specific water control. Also incorporating both drips and sprays brought good results.

Low maintenance initiative – In the attempt to reduce weeds, landscape fabric was incorporated in the flower beds around the extension center. While it was discovered that landscape fabric does control some weeds, it does not control all weeds – especially nut grass. Another discovery was while mulching on top of the landscape fabric looks neat and good, it did not deter weeds as some weeds seem to prosper in the mulch and some seeds tended to germinate there. Raw edges also can be aggravating. Another solution which proved to be helpful for the flower beds was the removal of the perennials there and replacing them with shrubs. The shrubs tended to shade the weeds.

Rain Gardens – The main lessons learned are that rain gardens can be used to divert water from buildings, reduce erosion as they keep water from running down a hillside and they can help with slope problems.

Raised beds – Much success was realized with raised bed projects as the soil can be controlled in this specific area. Lessons learned – the taller, the better. Though it initially may be difficult to fill with soil, the end results were good for aching backs. You can sit on the edge of the raised bed and garden without back problems. Allow plenty of room between raised beds.

Materials for raised beds – Untreated wood lasts about five years. Treated wood has toxic accumulation after use, usually arsenic. Creosote timbers also have chemical draw-backs. Some products have copper based treatments. The micronized copper products – yellow wood – has less copper leach. Trex or other decking material lasts almost forever but needs more support because of its flexibility. Concrete blocks or cinders are heavy for the original construction but seem to last almost forever, also.

January Lunch & Learn (Continued) By: Charlotte Hall



Square foot gardening – This project received a “thumbs down” in the learning gardens. It was not good for public gardening where it was checked only once a week.

Straw bale gardening – The bales were expensive but proved to be great for watermelon and cucumbers. It was discovered that there is a difference in the way the bales are constructed as to whether water will go through or not. Be sure to position bales so that water can go down to water the plants. The bales are good for only one season. Once used, they can be composted or put elsewhere for use. Bales are porous but hold water as they decompose.

Vertical gardening – Great for peas and malabar spinach. It was discovered that metal poles were needing for the vertical gardening as fiberglass was too weak.

As the learning gardens experiment with new ideas, incorporating new techniques and different plants, we expect many more useful and productive lessons to be learned. If you would like to participate in any of these interesting projects, contact Mary McCroan or just appear each Thursday morning for active involvement.

Please join us on February 13th, the second Tuesday in February, at noon to enjoy a presentation by Hal Smith of Wild Birds Unlimited on Backyard Birding and Wildlife. Here's hoping that the weather will be good and maybe, even warm?

Remember that drinks will be furnished. See you then.



Governor's Mansion Report January 2018 By: Amanda Borden



Holidays, weather, and the Governor's business conspired to limit workdays at the Governor's Mansion to one work day thus far for the month of January.

On that day, volunteers cleaned up the Herb Garden. However, we have big plans for February.

In addition to our normal Monday workdays, we are having a special "work week" on February 26, 27, and 28, 9-11 a.m. each day.

Master Gardeners are encouraged to come help on any or all of these days. During that time we will prune roses, shrubs, trees, etc., so bring your pruners, loppers, weeding implements, and your other favorite gardening tools.

Hope to see you at the Mansion!

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

January 2018

By: Judy May



The Lunch and Learn program on January 9th was Garden Lessons Learned by Mary McCroan. There were 28 attendees, 21 of them Master Gardeners. Assisting were Sandi Adkison, Charlotte Hall, Cathy Whigham and Bill Quailes. On January 16 she did the same for our monthly meeting.

Members who brought food to the monthly meeting were Rhonda Miles, Pat Petro-Perryman, Carolyn Placeway, Sandy Rosamond, Mary McCroan, and Betty Plaster. Others who had not signed up may have brought some refreshments too.

In January, only Jane McCarthy worked at the Governor's mansion.

On January 4th, Amanda Borden made a presentation entitled "Gardening 101" to the Autauga County Master Gardeners Association Lunch and Learn at Trinity United Methodist Church in Prattville.

Maria says working with her this month were Carla McCune, Don Hoover, Peggy Gelpi, Leslie Bingham, Sheila Pearson, and interns Sue Brasel, Linda Jarzyniecki and Betty Plaster all helped do extra winter work.

Maria says she still needs help with winter chores such as pruning, cleaning out areas we can't get to in the warmer months, cutting back roses and rooting the cut pieces, collecting plants from the woods for the plant sale April 14th and so many other garden projects! We work on Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to 11ish or you can call her about coming another morning or afternoon.

Please call Maria first at 657-9414, so she will know you are coming and will be available to work with you.


UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark Your Calendar!

Join and promote the following events

Lunch & Learn, and ETC.:

Lunch & Learn occurs once a month, shares a new topic every event, and takes place from 12:00—1:00 p.m. Drinks are provided, but tell friends to bring a sack lunch. L&L is a cooperative effort between Extension Agents and several hard working crews of Master Gardeners. *Similar events are listed here too, but may have other arrangements.*

1	Autauga County: Topic: Roses Where: Trinity United Methodist Church	27	St. Clair County: Topic: Soil Amendments Where: St. Clair County Extension Office
6	Houston County: Topic: A Year of Gardening Where: Dothan Houston County Library		
7	Montgomery County: Topic: Home Gardening Facts Where: Amory Learning Arts Center		
13	Elmore County: Topic: Backyard Birding, and Wildlife Where: Elmore County Extension Office		
13	Russell County: Topic: TBA Where: Russell County Extension Office		
14	Morgan County: Topic: Out of this World Gardening Where: Aquadome, 1202 5th Ave SW		



Amanda Borden presented the program,
“Gardening 101” in January to the Autauga
County Master Gardeners Association
Lunch & Learn in Prattville

Calendar of Events

February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 <i>Work Day Elmore Co. Extension Office Learning Gardens 8 a.m.</i>	2	3
4	5 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 a.m. to 12 Noon</i>	6	7 <i>Lanark Workday 8 a.m. to 12 noon</i>	8 <i>Work Day Elmore Co. Extension Office Learning Gardens 8 a.m.</i>	9	10
11	12 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 a.m. to 12 Noon</i>	13 <i>Lunch & Learn 12 noon to 1 p.m. — Elmore Co. Ext. Auditorium</i>	14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i> <i>Lanark Workday 8 a.m. to 12 noon</i>	15 <i>Work Day Elmore Co. Extension Office Learning Gardens 8 a.m.</i>	16	17
18	19 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 a.m. to 12 Noon</i>	20 <i>CAMGA Meeting — Elmore Co. Ext. Office, 10 a.m. to 12 noon</i>	21 <i>Lanark Workday 8 a.m. to 12 noon</i>	22 <i>Work Day Elmore Co. Extension Office Learning Gardens 8 a.m.</i>	23	24
25	26 <i>Special workday at the Mansion 9-11 am.</i>	27 <i>Special workday at the Mansion 9-11 am.</i>	28 <i>Lanark Workday 8 a.m. to 12 noon</i> <i>Special workday at the Mansion 9-11 am.</i>			