

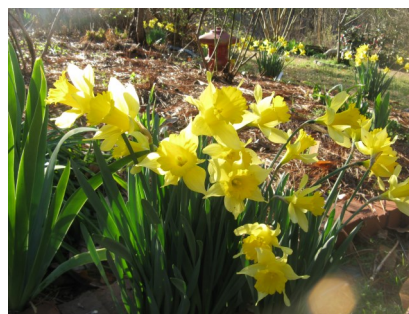


President's Message

By Linda Griebel



Why did February try to mimic January with freezing and / or damp weather? This cold stuff is getting old. Most of us are still unsure as to what has survived, but I am really enjoying early daffodils (you can never have too many), quince blooms, and the wonderful fragrance of winter honeysuckle bush (my bees are visiting these tiny cream colored blossoms). At least there were lots of activities, training, and accomplishments



in February to educate or otherwise fill the needs of master gardeners: State Advisory Council meeting; pruning workday in the Community Learning Gardens; Lunch and Learn featuring Jane McCarthy and her succulents; pruning Instruction to the new Coosa MG intern class; attracting wildlife featuring Patrick Cook; pruning party at the Governor's Mansion; several webinars; Extension training offerings; and bonsai class taught by Rhona Watson assisted by Mark Waldo. I'd like to thank everyone who's worked hard to accomplish so much in this short time frame. CAMGA members work and play hard all the time.

March is breaking and I hope the weather is also. I am already starting some warm weather vegetable seeds in trays this month (to go into the garden in April). While preparing beds, enriching and renewing soils with compost, there are some onion sets ready to go. Perhaps it's also time for some potatoes and lettuce and radishes. Although I am already seeing tomato plants in the stores, they're not for me. I don't like to have to replant any that cringe due to the chilly temperatures in late March. (Remember April 1st as last possible frost?)

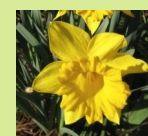
Have you been propagating or dividing plants? Then you might have just what is needed for the annual plant sale. It's always fun - a plantaholic's paradise! Preparations by the Fund Raising Committee have already begun. Mark your calendars for May 2 (Pricing Day) and May 3 for the Plant Sale. We need everyone's participation to be able to offer lots of variety to our customers. Start your plants early and they will look great by then!

Our Board of Directors is busy working on a flyer for intern recruitment which should be available in early March. When we email it out, you can print it or share it electronically with all of your contacts, organizations, or anywhere that you feel could reach potential candidates. We will have a supply of flyers available at the March meeting as well. Encourage anyone interested in taking this excellent master gardener training to turn their application in early for the best consideration. Please share your enthusiasm for what we do. Each member helps recruit just one (President's Message cont.) person for our fall class - we will meet our goal.

When our own gardens are popping out and we stop to smell the roses, don't forget that volunteer opportunities abound. Needing our help on a regular basis are the Learning Gardens, the Helpline, Lanark, and the Governor's Mansion. See you there!

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Message from Mallory By Mallory Kelley

Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests

A Most Unusual Dogwood

The "**Magic Dogwood**" - *Cornus florida* subspecies *urbiniana* - is a rare Mexican version of the common American Dogwood tree. Looking like exotic Chinese lanterns, these incredible blooms dazzle the eye by the hundreds each spring. Like snowflakes, no two are exactly alike. This is a very hard-to-find tree. The Magic Dogwood grows to about 20 feet tall in areas of the west coast. The leaves are slightly bluer than the common species. In the spring, the tree puts on its show of decorative blooms, which are unusually large for Dogwoods.



The white bracts are fused together at the ends to create an unusual, cage-like shape around the flowers. As you can see, the effect is truly spectacular. This is a naturally-occurring tree, not a cultivated hybrid!



The Magic Dogwood comes from the mountain forests of eastern Mexico, where it is rare. The climate there is spring-like year round, however the tree has been cold-hardy in Zone 6 here in the U.S. Growers recommend protecting it from frost the first 3 years. You may grow it in a pot and move indoors for the winter. It doesn't seem to

mind warm summers provided that nights aren't too warm. The tree normally grows in the forest understory, so it appreciates some protection from strong afternoon sun.

Deepest Sympathy to the Family of

CLINTON JAMES

1936 - 2013

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2014

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

						1
2	3 Governor's Mansion Work Day	4 Learning Garden Work Day	5 Fund Raising Committee Meeting 10:a.m.	6	7 All Bugs Webinar	8 Tiptoe Through the Camellias
9	10 Governor's Mansion Work Day WSFA 12 Talk	11 Learning Garden Work Day	12 Lunch & Learn Garden Design	13	14	15
16	17 Governor's Mansion Work Day Projects Committee	18 MG Meeting 10:00 a.m. Irrigation	19 Creating an Edible Landscape	20 Vernal Equinox	21	22
23	24 Governor's Mansion Work Day	25 Learning Garden Work Day	26	27	28	29
30	31 Governor's Mansion Work Day					

FEBRUARY MINUTES

By Rosemary Mobley



The February Central Alabama Master Gardener's Association (CAMGA) meeting was held February 18, 2014 at the Elmore County Extension Office Auditorium in Wetumpka, Alabama. Linda Griebel called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and recognized new member, Marie Updike. She turned the floor over to Carol Rattan, who introduced presenter, Patrick Cook. Mr. Cook is a regional Alabama Extension Agent in Forestry Wildlife and Natural Resource Management.

The presentation on "Attracting Songbirds to Your Front Yard," provided an overview of popular songbirds and ways to plan and execute a plan for attracting songbirds. Mr. Cook discussed three methods used in attracting songbirds: 1) Bird feeders; 2) Artificial structures, such as nest boxes and bird baths; and 3) Landscaping structures. He shared photographs of a variety of birds along with each bird's preferences in food and nesting. The importance of keeping feeders and bird baths clean was stressed. Mr. Cook referenced *Peterson's Field Guide to Eastern Birds* by Roger Tory Peterson as a resource for further study.

Following the refreshment break, the group reconvened at 11:00 a.m. for the business meeting. Linda gave an update on recruiting strategies for an intern class. She shared a letter from Maria Pacheco-West that offered a \$125 scholarship to an intern spending half of the required volunteer hours at Lanark. The scholarship is funded by the Alabama Wildlife Federation which would select the intern to receive the scholarship. Additionally, Maria suggested developing and distributing flyers promoting the Master Gardener intern class at local events and to local businesses. Linda reported that she was in the process of developing a flyer for distribution.

The President announced that the Board approved an expenditure of \$50 to purchase CAMGA's gardening item for the silent auction at the Alabama Master Gardener Association (AMGA) Annual Conference. The Board also approved \$60 for Helpline incentives.

Linda reported for the Advisory Council representative. The discussion at the quarterly meeting included: 1) intern mentoring and the novel idea of printing T-shirts with the saying: "Intern Class of (year of class); 2) retention of interns and regular members; 3) teaming with other counties which is an ongoing practice of CAMGA, 4) the need for separating entries for drive time on Master Gardening reporting of CEUs and other distant events. Currently, two entries have to be made to add travel time if attending a state meeting, but possible changes to the report site is being researched by Kerry Smith, Home Grounds Co-Leader in the Alabama Cooperative Extension System; 5) Master Gardener license plates will be available for purchase at future meetings since Sally L'Abbe has the supply and was unable to attend the February meeting, and; 6) ideas for fund raising through AMGA grants (alabamaamg.org), and small grants from businesses, such as Bonnie Farms, Home Depot and Wal-Mart. Gale Wheeler-Leonard has agreed to serve as a back-up for the Advisory Council representative, Sally L'Abbe.

Next, Sheldon Darnell was recognized by Linda. He presented a check made out to CAMGA for \$1000. This check represented the final payment on a grant he obtained for CAMGA from The Mildred Weeden Blount Educational and Charitable Foundation. Sheldon encouraged members to explore grant opportunities for special projects.

Carol Rattan, Program Committee Chair, announced speakers and trips planned for upcoming CAMGA meetings. These are:

March 18 – "Planning and Installing an Irrigation System," Mary McCroan

April 15 – "Alabama Wildflowers," Richard and Nancy Cobb of Alabama Native Plant Society

May 20 – *Trip to the Scott Gardens on Lake Martin

**June 18 – Trip to Young Farm in Auburn, AL, Focus on Annuals

July- "The Extension System and CAMGA," Mallory Kelly

*Guests are handled on a case-by-case basis.

* *Notice that this is on a Wednesday instead of the third Tuesday of the month. Make plans to carpool.

Mallory Kelley shared that CAMGA members, Jane Mobley, Linda Griebel, and Mary McCroan presented a pruning workshop for the Coosa County intern class. Phil Easter is slated to provide a workshop for the class as



well. This is the first intern class for Coosa County. The Coosa County interns will begin working with the CAMGA Helpline in May. Since the helpline is open March through August, Mallory reported the need for CAMGA members to sign up for the Helpline. As an incentive, a drawing for a \$10 gift card to Lowe's will take place every month. Eligibility is based on Helpline service for the month. Mallory also announced two upcoming workshops sponsored by ACES. These are: "Backyard Fruit Pruning Workshop," on February 25 at Gaines Smith Orchard in Billingsley, AL and, "Creating an Edible Landscape," on March 15, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Grace Episcopal Church in Montgomery. The cost is \$15.00. Dani Carroll and Chip Ellis are the presenters.

Katrina Mitchell was recognized and invited members to sign up for the Elmore County Extension newsletter by providing an email address to the Extension Office. This is a way to be informed of Extension workshops such as the "Ladies Can" series.

The January minutes were accepted as written. Amanda Borden made the first motion, Bonnie McCormick made the second, and it was carried by all present.

Becky Ashurst gave the treasurer's report for January 2013. The balance as of December 31, 2013, was \$9256.38. The income for January was \$224 from dues and \$25 speaker fee. Expenditures included \$60 for stars, a photo album at \$30.71, \$100 for President's gift, \$10 for membership cards, a \$100 donation to the Extension office, \$225 for Bonsai class supplies, and \$760 AAMGA dues that totaled \$1285.71. This brings the balance as of January 31, 2014 to \$8,219.67. The treasurer's report was approved; Rhona Watson made the first motion, Jane Mobley made the second, and it was carried by all present. The 2013 Audit results were compiled by Penny and R.J. Arceneaux. R.J. reported that there were no discrepancies in the accounting system used by the treasurer. He made a recommendation that CAMGA consider investing in a liability policy for events sponsored by the organization. R.J. volunteered to provide more information about a policy, and share at the next meeting.

Linda recognized Catese Chaffee, the chair of the Projects Committee. She said that the bonsai class is on tap for next Wednesday, February 26. Catese stated that the leaf bird bath class was rescheduled for September 12, 2014 in the Extension Barn. Members will be able to sign up for this class later in the year. An announcement was made about a daylily sale at Santuck Flea Market on April 5. The price quoted was 2 for \$5. Next month, members will also have the opportunity to volunteer for Farm Day to be held on April 11, and the Flora and Fauna Art Festival at Lanark, scheduled on April 12.

Amanda Borden provided an update on the ongoing project, Friends of the Governor's Mansion. CAMGA volunteers are scheduled to work on Feb 24, 2014. Activities will include pruning roses, hollies, and crepe myrtle. Amanda also reminded members to let her or Jane McCarthy know if they plan to volunteer by Friday at noon before the Monday work session so names can be given to gate security.

Phil Easter, chair of the Publicity Committee, informed members that the Alabama Gardener Magazine will run information about Lunch and Learn topics. He requested information about sessions be sent to him two months prior to the scheduled event. The taped segments for "Be Our Guest" were postponed to another time, perhaps to air in March.

The chair of the Fund Raising Committee, Linda Armour-Scott, reported that a site for the Master Gardener plant sale was confirmed. The location is Trinity Episcopal Church, 5374 US 231, Wetumpka, AL. The date is May 3, 2014, from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. A committee meeting is scheduled for March 5, at 10:00 a.m. in the Extension Conference Room.

Charlotte Hall, co-chair of the Lunch and Learn Committee, discussed that they were already addressing possible topics for 2015. She asked members to contact her or Sandi Adkison with suggestions for topics and speakers. The committee is also working on rectifying a conflict with the date of the second Wednesday of the month. This is the same date as the scheduled meeting of a local garden club including a number of CAMGA members.

Ann Hill distributed directories and reported that any remaining guides will be mailed to members by Becky Ashurst.

Suzanne George, the Chairman of the Intern Class Committee noted that the new intern class is slated to begin on the first Thursday in September, 2014 and run through December, 2014. The schedule is from 9:00



a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and lunch is provided for interns. Suzanne also shared some exciting news from the Junior Master Gardener class she supervises at Holtville Middle School. Alabama Living Magazine is planning a feature story on the class in an upcoming issue.

Linda recognized Mary McCroan to update members on progress in the Learning Gardens. All raised beds are adopted with the possibility of building more beds. The next work session will include division of chrysanthemums.

The Historian, Jane Mobley, requested that members send her information about speaking engagements presented by CAMGA members. She stated that she is interested in all CAMGA news and photographs. She reiterated the importance of sending copies to Mary Long and Phil Easter.

Mary Long, the Newsletter editor, announced that the deadline for newsletter entries for this month is February 23, 2014. She requested that when sending photographs of several individuals to include names of all those pictured.

Rhona Watson, 'Reach for the Stars' Program Coordinator, presented bronze stars to Janet Lewis, Jim Davis, Marie Updike, Charlotte Hall, and Katrina Mitchell. Penny Arceneaux and Barbara Olds received silver stars.

Johan Beumer announced the passing of CAMGA member, Clinton James. His presence will be sorely missed. Gale Wheeler-Leonard sent sympathy cards from CAMGA to the family.

Janet Lewis was recognized by Linda. She announced that the Federation of Garden Clubs will hold a Game Day on March 13, 2014. The event will be held at Whitfield United Methodist Church in Montgomery. Contact Janet for additional information and for tickets which are \$12.

Door prizes were awarded and the meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m. Red Norman made the first motion, Becky Ashurst made the second and it was carried by all present. Fifty-nine people attended.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Mobley, Secretary

Sheldon Darnell presented Linda Griebel a check made out to CAMGA for \$1000. This check represents the final payment on a grant he obtained for CAMGA from The Mildred Weeden Blount Educational and Charitable Foundation.

Sheldon encouraged members to explore grant opportunities for special projects.



RIVER REGION LIVING MAGAZINE ISSUE: MARCH 2014

‘FIRST EDITIONS’ — NEW PLANT INTRODUCTIONS FOR 2014

By Phil Easter



As a long-time gardener, I'll admit that we (gardeners) can sometimes become a bit overly obsessed with getting 'new' plants for our landscapes. If we're into Heirloom Gardens, we hunt down and pounce on anything classified as an Heirloom plant we don't already have in our garden but absolutely must have....even if we don't really have a plan in place for where we'll plant it. The same, of course, goes for us who may not have a theme to our landscape but because it's 'new' we must have it...light requirements, soil preferences, etc are not important. We must have 'it'. We'll worry about the other stuff when we get it home.

That's why I'm excited about the arrival in the River Region of a number of new landscaping plants for 2014. These new plants are billed as First Editions: 'New, Unique flowering plants that bring beauty and variety of color to your garden....year after year....with minimum effort.' OK, I'll admit I was hooked by all of that...'new', 'unique', 'flowering', 'color', 'year after year' but especially with the promise of 'minimum effort'. And, many of them are available at our local, independent garden centers!

We'll look at several of these 'New Editions' in this issue and follow up in April with some more.

Let's begin with some great new Hydrangeas. Last year we looked at the newbie 'Strawberry and Cream'. Following that direction, here's information on Strawberry Sundae' and 'Vanilla Strawberry'.

First Editions 'Strawberry Sundae' (*Hydrangea paniculata* 'Rensun') will do well in full sun (some noontday shading would probably be good) and grows 4-5ft tall by 3-4ft wide.....great for our smaller landscapes! The flowers emerge as creamy white in mid-summer, change to pink and finally to strawberry red. Because of it's small stature, 'Vanilla Strawberry' will do well in containers for great 'move around' color on the patio or accents in the landscape. The flowers are excellent for cut bouquets as well as for dried flower arrangements. Growing zones: 4-8

First Editions 'Vanilla Strawberry' (*Hydrangea paniculata* 'Renhy') also grows in full sun but gets to 6-7ft tall by 4-5ft wide. A new introduction from France, the enormous flower panicles are a blend of vanilla and strawberry, held upright on red stems. Like 'Sundae', the flowers begin as creamy white in mid-summer, change to pink and finally to strawberry red. New blooms will give us a multicolored effect in late summer and early fall, the red coloration lasting 3-4 weeks. This one is also great for cut flowers and dried arrangements. Growing zones: 4-8

Another Hydrangea, First Editions 'Jetstream' (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) is an Oakleaf Hydrangea that grows in full sun. Growing 5-6ft high and 4-5ft wide, it maintains a neat, compact, rounded shape. The dark green foliage turns a fantastic orange-red in autumn. Strong stems support the beautiful white flowers that age to pink. The peeling, rich tawny-brown bark adds winter interest to the landscape. Growing zones: 5-8

Moving away from the Hydrangeas, let's look at First Editions 'Daybreak' (continued)

Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* 'Daybreak'). This new shrub is also perfect for small space gardens and, with its eye-stopping color, will show off well even from a distance. Growing just 18 inches tall by 18-24 inches wide, the yellow-orange-red foliage will be a wonderful contrast to green shrubs around it. The foliage emerges an orange-red in color and eventually matures to a bright yellow-gold that will not burn or bleach in the full sun and summer heat. Fall brings back the orange color to highlight the yellow. Growing zones: 4-8

A new, low-growing *Lorapetalum* ('Fringe Flower') is First Editions 'Crimson Fire' Fringe Flower. This evergreen shrub with year-round ruby-red foliage provides a great addition to foundation plantings as well as elsewhere in the small landscape. Growing to just 2-3 ft high and wide, 'Crimson Fire' takes full sun well. In spring, vibrant neon pink flowers are a bonus and are highlighted against the ruby-red foliage. Growing zones: 7-9

As I said above, these exciting First Editions plants and shrubs will all take full sun. A reminder: The River Region is in growing zone 8.

So, gardening freaks or not, why don't we check out these exciting new (possible) additions to our landscapes now? Enjoy!



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS by Judy May

Working in the Learning Garden February 11 were: Jim Davis, Mamie Long, Rosemary Mobley, John Barnes, Ken Barber and Mary McCroan.

Mary says we hard pruned the roses, did a good job getting the peach tree down to where the fruit will be reachable, cut back the grasses and perennials.

Linda Griebel spoke to Kappa in January and presented "Pruning for Southern Gardens" to 9 people. On February 13, Jane Mobley, Mary McCroan and Linda Griebel presented "Pruning Pointers for Southern Gardens" to the Coosa MG class (19 attendees).

Sally L'Abbe, Gale Leonard Wheeler and Linda represented CAMGA at the AMGA Advisory meeting in Clanton on February 4.

Phil Easter has been busy. He did WSFA-TV promo for February "Lunch & Learn", teaching the Coosa County MG class February 20 on Container Gardening & Annuals vs Perennials and will be doing a program on floral design using foliage from the landscape for the Emerald Mountain Garden Club on the 24th of February.

Bringing refreshments to our Master Gardener meeting this month were Selma Thomason, Cathy Whigham, Bonnie McCormack and Iva Haynie.

The Lunch and Learn speaker this month was Jane McCarthy who spoke on succulents. Helping were Sandi Adkinson, Linda Griebel and Charlotte Hall.

Attending the Projects Committee meeting February 17th were: Catese Chaffee, Johan Beumer, John Barnes, Tina Bowles, Nancy Tribble, Linda Armour Scott, Carol Rattan, Linda Griebel, Mary McCroan and Lois Pribulick.

At Lanark this month Norman Turnipseed, Carla McCune and Sandra Gilley helped Maria with cleaning out the hydrangeas, odd chores here and there, cleaning her office, work in the greenhouse and helped look for plants for the plant sale April 12th for the Flora and Fauna Festival. Mary McCroan volunteered to be the advisor to Maria and a Girl Scout seeking her Gold award. She wants to build two water features in the Heirloom Garden and Mary will assist with this project.

Jane Mobley did a presentation on herbs for Old Alabama Town Herb Society on 2/18/14.

Working at the Governor's Mansion February 24th were John Barnes, Rosemary Mobley, Jane Mobley, Mary McCroan, Linda Griebel, Charlotte Hall, Candy Jones, Jim Davis, Amanda Borden and Jane McCarthy. Amanda Helps Jane McCarthy almost every Monday.





BECOME A MASTER GARDENER!

LEARN HOW TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN AND CARE FOR YOUR LANDSCAPE

BECOME A VOLUNTEER
TEACH OTHERS GARDENING TECHNIQUES
SHARE PLANTS

JOIN THE FUN - Get your application in now for full consideration

2014 classes will be held at Elmore County Extension office in Wetumpka each Thursday from 9:00am - 2:00pm (lunch provided) starting September 4th through December 4th

Get your application from a Master Gardener or download one from <http://www.aces.edu/search/ACESresults.php?q=master%20gardener%20application>

You can pick up an application from the Elmore County Extension office at 340 Queen Ann Road, Wetumpka, AL 36092. (Class fee is \$125, payable upon acceptance)

Return all applications to 340 Queen Ann Road, Wetumpka, 36092 (Final date for applications is August 20th)



Registration Form - Part A



www.amgaconference.org

www.alabamamg.org

www.baldwincountymastergardeners.com

REGISTRATION FORM

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Street _____ City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

MG County _____ E-mail _____ Phone _____

Please Circle One: MG Intern ACES Sponsor Vendor Guest

Is the Badge Name the same as the Registration Name? _____ Yes _____ No

If NO, please submit the name for your Badge _____

REGISTRATION COST:

Regular Registration: \$100.00

\$ _____

Postmarked After April 1: \$145.00

\$ _____

ADDITIONAL COSTS AS DESIRED:

Jubilee Hour I with appetizer

Monday Dinner at Bayfront—\$25 (BBQ Chicken Breast & Smoked Pulled Pork)

\$ _____

Tuesday's Boxed Lunch—Free with Registration

Circle preference: 1) Ham & Cheese on Roll 2) Chicken Caesar Wrap 3) Veggie Wrap

Jubilee Hour II with hor d'oeuvres

Tuesday Banquet at Daphne CC—\$45 (Registration must be postmarked by 4/1/2014)

\$ _____

Circle preference: (1) Chicken Cordon Bleu in Cream Sauce (2) Shrimp Scampi Kabobs (3) Vegetarian Eggplant Parmesan

T-SHIRTS:

T-shirts—\$15 each, select your size: _____ Medium _____ Large _____ XL _____ XXL

\$ _____

Note: A very small number of T-shirts will be on sale during the conference

GUEST MEALS AVAILABLE UNTIL APRIL 1, 2014

Guest Name _____ \$45 Tuesday Banquet

\$ _____

Circle preference:

(1) Chicken Cordon Bleu in Cream Sauce (2) Shrimp Scampi Kabobs (3) Vegetarian Eggplant Parmesan

TOTAL: \$ _____



Alabama... A Gardener's JUBILEE!



Governor's Mansion workers, John Barnes, Rosemary Mobley and Candy Jones had fun working at the mansion this month. It's great when you can get lots of work done and at the same time enjoy being with fellow gardeners.

Mary McCroan pruned this Crape Myrtle ! She climbed all the way up in it to reach the high spots. It is said that they got a picture of her 'hagin' out' in the tree. Jane McCarthy (right) is checking out the surgical operation.

More of the story—page 12



Program Notes By Carol Rattan

CAMGA Meetings and Speaker's Bureau

Extension Agent Patrick Cook shared his expertise on attracting songbirds to our gardens in February. He gave a lot of wonderful advice and I am already making some changes to my bird feeding routine!



Mary McCroan is our March speaker and we will learn how to plan and install an irrigation system in our gardens. In April Richard and Nancy Cobb from the Alabama Native Plant Society are coming to speak, of course, on Alabama natives. We go off-site in May and June, first to visit Jim Scott's beautiful gardens at Lake Martin, and then to see Young's Farm near Auburn. Mallory will speak to us in July on the Extension System and its organization. I am in contact with the folks at Pat Dye's to arrange a visit to Quail Hollow this fall.

Finally, part of my responsibility is the Speaker's Bureau. If any of you receive a request to speak with a group, please let me know and I will find someone. If you accept a speaking engagement, please let me know that as well. Also, if you are not on our Speaker's Bureau list, but would be willing to speak to groups, please let me know and provide your topics of interest. Thank you!

Carol Rattan, Program Chair





Governor's Mansion Work Day

At the Governor's Mansion on Monday, February 24, Elmore, Autauga, and Montgomery County Master Gardeners and three interns had a very productive pruning work day.

Linda Griebel, Jane Mobley, and Mary McCroan -- all with advanced pruning certification--pruned and taught proper pruning tech-

niques. Other CAMGA volunteers included John Barnes, Amanda Borden, Candy Jones, Rosemary Mobley, Charlotte Hall, Jim Davis, and Angela Peltier. The group pruned crepe myrtles, Japanese maples, roses, hydrangeas, and wax myrtles. The regular Monday gardening workdays have involved pruning, removing monkey grass, pulling weeds, and applying pine straw. Volunteers will continue the clean-up and start planting on every Monday at 9 AM. For more information, please call Jane McCarthy (221-9936).



Pruning Workshop

At left, Jane Mobley, Mary McCroan and Linda Griebel gave a pruning workshop for the Coosa County MG intern. Nineteen attended.

Rhona Watson, 'Reach for the Stars' Program Coordinator, presented bronze stars to (from left) Katrina Mitchell, Janet Lewis, Jim Davis, and Marie Updike.

Charlotte Hall, Penny Arceneaux and Barbara Olds (not pictured) received silver stars.





BONSAI CREATIONS by Linda R. Griebel

When suggested in 2013 to the Projects Committee by Jane Mobley as a fun project for members only, the idea of a bonsai class was quickly approved. Jane tagged accomplished bonsai expert Rhona Watson to become primary instructor and the planning progressed by determining necessary materials, tools, and finally estimating costs to cover expenses. The list filled immediately at the December meeting. Due to size limitations of 20 slots, a waiting list has ensued in hopes of a future class. Rhona called on another seasoned bonsai guru Mark Waldo to co-instruct.

The morning of the February 26 class brought a return of cold temperatures. It wouldn't have mattered as much except there was a power failure for the whole Extension facility! So, we set up in the dim light of an open door with our coats and jackets donned while an electric company worker and truck stayed at a power pole. Participants checked in, socialized, and found seats - early arrivals started picking the potted plant that "spoke to" them.

Still in the dark, Rhona Watson and Mark Waldo convened the class promptly at 9:02. Verbal and hands-on instruction for approximately 35 dimly lit minutes included chilly temperatures, but attendees were able to follow the instructions as well as printed material they received. Mary McCroan tried the light switch and sudden illumination! After the door was closed and the heat motivated, the comfort levels increased for the remainder of class time - jackets off.

After the break, the real work began. Each bonsai apprentice began carefully trimming off small branches and tips. Each juniper plant was shaped according to Rhona and Mark's instructions and subsequently to the owner's shape preferences. Every bonsai started to look quite unique. Once the pruning was mostly complete, Rhona demonstrated removing the plant from its original container, taking off all soil, root trimming if needed, and the actual potting process. What excellent training techniques!

Kudos to all who worked so hard to develop this first ever Bonsai 101 class offered to CAMGA members, especially Rhona Watson and Mark Waldo. Each of the 20 bonsai apprentices took home a unique creation. The saga will continue with proper care instructions provided in the class.

(Don't forget to take period photos and send them to the newsletter for publication.) Kudos to all who worked !



BUS TO AMGA CONFERENCE

The Master Gardeners of North Alabama (MGNA) would like to charter a motor coach for transportation to the State AMGA Conference, in Daphne, AL in April. We realize that MGNA members alone cannot fill the bus, but if Master Gardeners from other LMGAs in north and central Alabama would be interested in joining us, it would be possible.



Details:

- The bus will leave Huntsville on Sunday April 27, at a time to be determined, and will stop at pre-arranged locations to pick up other Master Gardeners and their guests as we travel south on I-65.
- During our stay, the bus will take us to and from pre-arranged locations: the 3 hotels, the conference center, tours, the evening activities at Bayfront on Monday and the Civic Center on Tuesday, etc.

The bus will be scheduled to leave Daphne at noon on Wednesday April 30 and make the same stops as we return north on I-65. Based on a full bus, the cost will be \$120.00 per person.

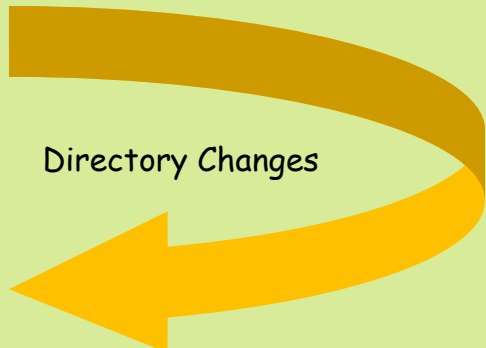
This is a good deal and should be a fun trip down I-65 as we all get to make new MG friends and get to know old ones better ... and we get to leave the driving to someone else.

Please share this information with your members and, if any are interested in joining us MGNA for this trip, ask them to respond to MG Brenda Myers (bmyers@usa.com). You were supposed to reply by February 24, but call anyway and see if there is anymore room. It's a short turn-around time, but arrangements have to be made early to reserve the bus.

ADD TO DIRECTORY:

Dale Hurst 2012 346 Rives Mill Loop Deatsville 36022
334-285-6089 ahurst4@elmore.rr.com

PLEASE CHANGE: Membership Chair,
Gale Wheeler's Number to 334-613-1826.



Directory Changes



Helpline News By Mary Ann Hatcher

Spring is upon us and as we are looking forward to planning our gardens and landscapes; John Q. Public is planning to do likewise. Our helpline is anticipating many calls about future gardens, as well as, the damage that winter has done to the existing landscapes. We are in a unique situation this year in that we don't have a ready force of Interns to press into phone service, thus we are calling on our "Veteran MGs" to rally. The month of March is shaping up nicely. We need just one MG volunteer to sign up for the week of March 27th. Please keep in mind when signing up to leave room for our advisors, unless we have already done so. The advisors are: Debbie Hough, Mary Ann Klatt, and Mary Ann Hatcher. We are still working out schedules of vacations, visits with grandchildren, etc. Serving again as our Appointment Scheduler is Sharon Potts. She will send a friendly reminder by email or phone. Please respond back to her that you received the reminder. A friendly voice on the other end of the phone is what we need more than a computer whiz with a snappy comeback. In fact, we want someone to answer the phone and convey genuine concern for the client's problem. If you have little or no computer skills, we will assist you with the research and data input. For those of you who haven't ever worked on the helpline, please give us a try.

You might be a Master Gardener if.....

- You ask for a Mantis Deluxe 4-cycle tiller for your birthday.
- You hear someone mention '*aralia spinosa*' and you say "Oh yes, devil's walking stick."
- You are walking in your neighborhood and stop to pull a few weeds from strangers yards.
- You can't bear to thin seedlings and throw them away.
- Your fridge's drawers are filled with over-wintering bulbs and plastic bags with seeds.
- * You are excited over the amount of compost your worms are making.

..... Submitted by Marie Updike

Millbrook Farmer's Market By Rick Ohlson



The Millbrook Farmer's Market is making a few changes this year which we think will be better for the customers and the vendors. We will run the market on Tuesday mornings, from 8 to noon, beginning 27 May and ending on 26 August. This will mean the temperatures will be cooler than the normal summer afternoon heat, and we will be less susceptible to afternoon storms.

It is early and I'm not making a schedule yet but I wanted to let everyone know the status and changes in our market. It is generally a fun time to talk to residents about their gardens and the new time will make it much more comfortable. If you would like to help us out this summer let me know. I will send another email or two

as we get closer to opening day. I generally need one or two folks who can stay the 4 hours, and could use others who can just give us a couple of hours. Give it some thought - - we will talk again in a couple of months.

* Thanks to all of you who sent me emails and talked to the Man Upstairs about my medical situation. I'm doing ok and as of now the cancer is gone. Bless you all! Rick

FEBRUARY LUNCH & LEARN By Charlotte Hall

Do you think of cactus plants when you hear the word 'succulents'? Most of us do. But on February 12th at the Lunch and Learn program for February, Jane McCarthy told us that succulents include many more type plants than cacti. Technically, a succulent is any plant with thick, fleshy (succulent) water storage organs that store water in their leaves, stems or roots.

Jane, a CAMGA member and master of the greenhouses at Maxwell AFB, brought many varieties for us to see and told us about even more. From the saguaro cactus (which can grow 40-60 feet and whose blossom is the state wildflower of Arizona) to the small hen and chick (hen and biddy or houseleek) which is so popular in the South; a wide range of sizes is also typical of succulents. Jane instructed us in the proper care of succulents which store a lot of water and can thrive in dry conditions with little care, and she also taught us how to propagate them.

Succulents have a variety of interesting leaf forms and plant shapes, including paddle leaves, tight rosettes, and bushy or trailing columns of teardrop leaves — among these being the jade plant, kalanchoe, aloe vera plant, burro's tail, and the all familiar mother-in-law plant. Attendees received a very informative, hands-on presentation and even a take home succulent (above) to have in their own garden. Many thanks to Jane for the wonderful program and for teaching us that all cacti are succulents, but all succulents are not cacti! Your next opportunity to receive such interesting plant tid-bits will be the March Lunch and Learn program on March 12th, Garden Design, presented by our own Mallory Kelley. Please bring your lunch and join us. Drinks will be furnished. See you there!



Sandi Adkison, and Mallory Kelley welcome our speaker, Jane McCarthy, center.



All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar

March 7

<http://www.extension.org/pages/70252/>

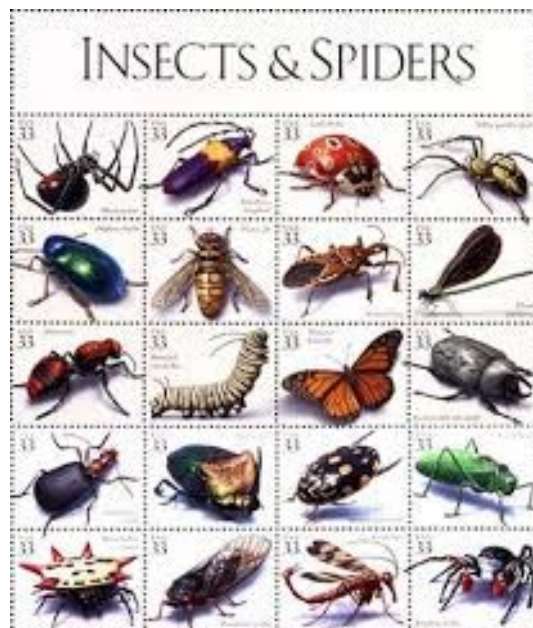
The following web page can be used to promote the 2014 series:

<http://www.extension.org/pages/70120/>

A flyer is also available:

jpeg: <http://www.extension.org/sites/default/files/2014%20Webinar%20Schedule.jpg>

pdf: <http://www.extension.org/sites/default/files/2014%20Webinar%20Schedule.pdf>



Creating an Edible Landscape

Hosted by the
Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the
Capital City Master Gardener Association

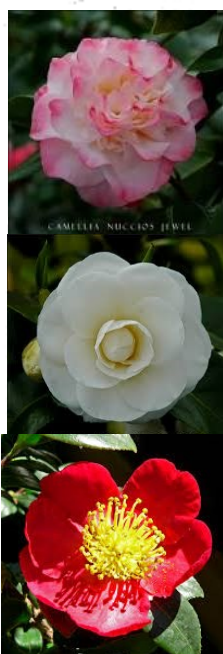


Wednesday, March 19th 2014

**Grace Episcopal Church
906 Pike Road
Pike Road, Alabama
9 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

Here's a great website for learning more about seed starting.
<http://www.southernhomesandgardens.com/local/sowing-seeds-of-success/> <http://>

Tip-toe through the camellias.



Over 300 of the area's most prized camellia blooms will be on display at the Opelika Sportsplex on March 8. Camellia Club members will be present to answer questions and discuss varieties and culture. You are invited to bring in your unknown blooms for identification. The show hours will be 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Come and experience the joy of camellias!

CAMELLIA SHOW

Opelika Sportsplex
Saturday, March 8



Stamp

CAMGA
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**NEXT MEETING
MARCH 18
10:00 A.M.**

MARY MCCROAN

**IRRIGATION
SYSTEMS**

Label