



# GARDEN BUZZZZZZ



Volume 29 Issue 3 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

March 2020



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### Message from:

**Sandy Rosamond**  
**CAMGA President**



WOW, what an outstanding group of people we are! We can have fun playing together and we can have fun working together. We had so much fun in the Mardi Gra Parade throwing out the seeds, candy and beads. Lets do it again next year!! Now we need to see how much fun we can have working together.

**WE NEED YOU!**

Guess what? It is time to start preparing our plants for the plant sale!

Terry Chambliss and Robin Snyder are making plans for the BEST, BRIGHTEST, AN MOST OUTSTANDING PLANT SALE WE HAVE EVER HAD. Please volunteer to help them.

Because of the rainy weather we have many opportunities to make the grounds beautiful. Any Thursday morning a group will be working . Please join in!

**See you at the meeting,**

*Sandy*



CAMGA Garden Buzzzz  
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## Message from Mallory

**Mallory Kelley**  
**Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds,**  
**Gardens, & Home Pests**

Ready to get those gardening gloves dirty again? A break in the rainy weather may be the perfect time for pruning some of the plants in the flowerbed. However, a big chop to ornamental shrubs and trees could leave gardeners with naked plants for the remainder of the year.

### To Prune or Not to Prune

It is a good idea to think before bringing out the shaping shears or pole saw. “It is important to think about the individual species of plants in the flowerbed before pruning,” “Pruning at an incorrect time will remove buds that are already in place for flowers.”



### The May Rule

The best guideline for pruning is to follow the May rule. If a plant blooms before May 1, prune it as soon as its flowers are spent. Early spring flowers—before May 1—are produced on last year’s “old wood” growth. Pruning during the winter would remove the current bloom buds.

For plants that bloom after May 1, pruning should occur when the plant is dormant during late fall or winter. Summer flowers produced after May 1 are on “new wood” growth. Pruning stimulates new growth and greater flower production for the following year.

### Old Wood Ornamental Shrubs and Trees

Late-winter and early-spring blooming ornamentals should not be pruned until after the spring blooming cycle is complete. These plants bloom on “old wood”—or growth that occurred in the summer and fall of the previous year. Even a small pruning job would likely remove all of the buds, resulting in a bush without flowers.

Plants considered early-spring bloomers include:

- forsythia
- camellia
- spirea
- viburnum
- Azaleas

These plants should be pruned immediately after flowering and definitely before June, as the plant will begin setting new buds for next year’s flowers in the late summer months.



## Message from Mallory (Continued)

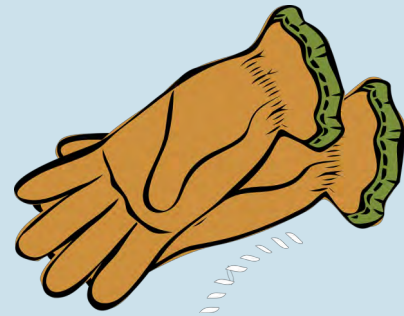
**Mallory Kelley**  
**Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds,**  
**Gardens, & Home Pests**

### New Wood Ornamental Shrubs and Trees

If a shrub or tree flowers during the summer or fall, it blooms on “new wood”—the growth that occurred throughout spring months. Kelley said these plants should be pruned once they go dormant in the winter and before leafing out in the spring.

“Fertilizing in the spring months will encourage new growth, which will create blooms in the late summer and fall,” Summer and fall bloomers include:

- crapemyrtle trees
- gardenia
- lilac chaste-tree
- butterfly bush
- clematis
- hydrangeas



Hydrangeas can be tricky as there are so many different types available now. Pruning timing should be determined according to variety.

Limelight varieties generally do not start blooming until around July 1. The limelight varieties do not start blooming until July 1, so those should be allowed to go dormant. Gardeners can enjoy those dried blooms throughout the fall and early winter. Pruning should occur before spring growth begins.

### Flowerbed Clean-Up

Fall and winter months are the best time to prune in the yard and flowerbed. This is a good time to prune plants to the ground and discard dry, spent plant material from ornamental grasses, annuals and perennials. Bulbs may need some TLC in the spring. After spring bulbs stop blooming, it is okay to remove spent flowers. However, be sure to leave foliage until it begins to turn brown and die down. The bulbs need this foliage as it is used for bulb growth, as well as the “food” the bulb stores up for its beautiful blooms the next spring.



**The Master Gardener Helpline is now taking calls!**



## **CAMGA Minutes**

### **February 18, 2020**

**By: Deann Stone, Secretary**

The meeting was called to order by Sandy Rosamond at 10:00 AM. Sandy welcomed members and recognized interns.

#### **Presentation:**

Lynda Edwards introduced our speaker, Debbie Boutelier. She presented on essential oils, the science behind them and how they work in the body.

All essential oils are not intended for internal use. All essential oils should be diluted with a carrier oil. The term Aromatherapy was first used in 1937. It is rooted in research conducted in France. Essential oils are the liquid essence of plants. The oils can come from the bark, seeds, resin, nuts, roots, flowers of the plant. Oils are extracted using steam distillation, CO2 extraction, enfleurage (using animal fats on fragile flowers), cold pressing (primarily used for citrus), and solvent extraction (least desirable method). She shared the benefits of each essential oil, as well as uses.

#### **Business Meeting:**

**President's Report:** The Board voted this morning to leave the name of our organization as Central Alabama Master Gardener Association. Our membership is made up predominately of Elmore County, but we also have members from Montgomery, Autauga, and other counties in Alabama and one member that resides in Florida!

**Secretary's Report:** January minutes were posted in the monthly newsletter. The minutes were accepted as presented by email in the newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report:** Deborah Kelso was not present due to illness. A report will be made during the March meeting.

#### **Projects Reports:**

Terry Chambliss provided an update on all projects currently underway.

**Learning Gardens Work Day - March 19.** We will work on the fence, landscape cloth, and any pruning and other clean up that needs to be done. Please plan to join us! We will plan to meet around 8 and work to no later than noon.

**Propagation Workshop - March 6.** Rhona will host a hands on propagation workshop at her home. We will be potting hosta and camillias. She will also show how to layer hydrangeas. We will begin at 10 AM. Please sign up. Workshop is limited to 20. Rhona's address is in the directory.

**Craft Workshop for Plant Sale - March 26.** Sandy will have plans for our projects that day. It will be a fun day of craft making for all who attend!



## **CAMGA Minutes Continued**

### **February 18, 2020**

**By: Deann Stone, Secretary**



#### **Mardi Gras Parade:**

The Wetumpka Mardi Gras Parade will be February 22, 2020. We will decorate on February 19 from 9 - 2! The Parade starts at 1:00 PM. Line up at 12:00 at the First Baptist Church.

Plant Sale - Robin will send an email out next week regarding projects for the plant sale. Please be working on your plants so that the roots are stable and the plant to healthy. Please share with everyone you know that date (May 2) and the location (Elmore County Extension) of the plant sale.

We still would like to have donated pots. However, please wash and disinfect them before bringing them to donate. Any size pot is welcomed, but we would prefer 1 gallon pots. We will also need plant trays. A member suggested that we check with Lowe's for trays and pots that have been recycled there.

Lunch and Learn - Charlotte Hall shared that 56 people attended last month's Lunch and Learn. The Borden's will present in March on Gardening During Climate Change. Charlotte shared the lineup for the upcoming months.

2022 Conference Update - The theme, "Behind the Garden Gate," has been selected. The artwork has been selected, created by Leslie Bingham. The budget has been completed and approved. The dates are May 2 - 4, 2022. The location is secured and deposits have been made. The conference will be held at Embassy Suites in Montgomery.

Forms were distributed outlining six different committees. Candy will email a link to the online conference manual so you can make a better decision regarding your interest in serving on a committee.

Katrina Mitchell shared that the Extension is looking for volunteers to help get the word out on the Census. Please contact Katrina if you are interested in helping.

The meeting concluded at 12:00 noon.

***Respectfully Submitted,***

***Deann Stone***



## February 2020 Lunch and Learn By: Charlotte Hall “Houseplants” - Eric and Elizabeth Leatherwood

On a very dreary, rainy and cold February morning, Eric Leatherwood unloaded a van load of houseplants and completely filled over two 8-foot tables with beautiful and shiny houseplants. Looking at the array of green plants and the gloomy skies, I surmised that we were going to have a lot more houseplants than we were going to have Lunch and Learn attendees. To my big surprise, the ratio was more in line than I ever imagined. While the plants did outnumber the attendees, it was by a small margin as we were in the fifty plus range for attendees. Who would have thought there would be that many to brave the elements to hear about houseplants????

I do believe all the attendees left thinking the effort was well worth it. All were rewarded by hearing an informative presentation by Elizabeth and Eric Leatherwood, owners of Leatherwood Nurseries. There is no better way to learn about any type plant than to hear from those who grow those plants for a living! The Leatherwoods have

encountered all kind of problems growing lots of houseplants over the years and have first hand knowledge of what works and what does not work. Houseplants are ornamental plants that are grown indoors in a container or adapts well to indoor culture. Most plants grown as houseplants are selected because they are already adapted to growing at typical house temperatures, between 15° and 25° C - or for us folks in the tri-county area 59 to 77 degrees Fahrenheit.

Eric stated that the most important needs of a houseplant are light, water and nutrients, but most important are proper light conditions for houseplants. Even though proper watering and light are the most important components of indoor plant care, humidity and temperatures also play a role. The best conditions are those that mimic the climate of the place where the plant originated - tropical plants thrive in warm, humid environments while cacti and succulents prefer hot, dry climates.

For best results, the following steps are suggested.

1. Match plants with proper light conditions. Houseplants vary greatly in their light requirements.
2. Choose the right container. It is important to consider size, material and even color.
3. Use good-quality potting soil.
4. Water properly.
5. Fertilize and control pests.
6. Increase humidity and prevent drafts.
7. Keep foliage clean.

The Leatherwoods use and recommend watering with a soluble, time release fertilizer like Peter's. They recommend fertilizing once a week for houseplants grown inside. And if you move the houseplant outside, fertilize once a month.



## February 2020 Lunch and Learn

### By: Charlotte Hall

#### "Houseplants" - Eric and Elizabeth Leatherwood



A lot of questions were asked concerning houseplants. In answering these questions, we learned that yellow leaves indicate a need for fertilizer or water. The asparagus fern can be grown inside as a houseplant with much success and can last a long time inside.

Pothos plant is the best friend of an inside gardener. It is easy to grow and easy to care for and grows under less than ideal conditions. The Boston fern is actually an Australian sword fern that got its name because it came into the United States in Boston. Some indoor plants are epiphytes which are plants that grow on another plant but is not parasitic, such as numerous ferns, bromeliads, air plants, and orchids. Eric demonstrated how to identify new bromeliads from an older bromeliad (mother plant will have off-spring sprouting from the base of the plant) and re-plant the babies which will later bloom. Removing old leaves with sharp scissors promotes blooming for bromeliads.

To maintain healthy houseplants, Eric encouraged keeping the houseplants clean by dusting the plant. Either dust the individual leaves or mist the plant and wipe off the dust. For his large fiddle leaf fig tree, Eric uses a commercial spray leaf shine product.

Other than improper light conditions and water, the other significant problem with houseplants would be pests, particularly spider mites. One easy way to test for spider mites is to hold a branch of the houseplant over a piece of white paper and shake the plant. If you see any tiny specks fall on the paper, and after a few seconds these specks start to move, those are mites. If you see webs on your plants, that means you have a lot of spider mites and serious problems. Heavily infested plants may be discolored, stunted or eventually die.

There are several home remedies for killing spider mites. One easy method is to mix one part rubbing alcohol with one part water and spray the leaves. Another is to use liquid dish soap. When spraying the leaves, be sure to cover both the top and under side of the leaves. Infected plants need to be sprayed and cleaned and isolated from other plants to avoid infecting those plants. The earlier spider mites are discovered, the more quickly the problem can be solved. There are commercial insecticides which may also be used.



Please join us next month when Amanda and Lee Borden, our own CAMGA members, will make a presentation on "Gardening with Climate Change." The date and time are 2nd Tuesday, March 10th at noon - lunch time. We will again meet at the Wetumpka Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall at 100 West Bridge Street - and are hopeful the weather will be sunny and bright. Until then, dry out, warm up and maybe you won't have to stay in! Bring your lunch and learn something new. Hope to see you next month.





## Governor's Mansion Report 2020

By: Amanda Borden



During the very wet month of February, volunteers at the Governor's Mansion were limited to two Mondays of decent weather. They accomplished a lot during those outings: They weeded and trimmed dead plant material in the herb garden, deadheaded pansies, cleaned up around the forsythia, weeded around the Lady Banks roses by the pool, cleared out spent plants around the pool, and pruned the knockout roses in front of the Mansion.

There will be a special workday on Monday, March 2 at 9:00 a.m., with a rain date of March 9. All CAM-GA members are invited. Bring your clippers, loppers, and gauntlet gloves as we'll be pruning roses. Those wishing to participate should notify Jane McCarthy [macandjane@att.net](mailto:macandjane@att.net) ahead of time.



Pruning Knockouts in front of the Mansion



Post Clean Up



Weeding around the rosemary



Tammy and Kathy Herb Garden



Before Pruning Lady Banks



Lady Banks After Pruning





## CAMGA Library News

### March 2020

By: Dee Turberville

### The Southern Gardener's Book of Lists

Published 25 years ago, The Southern Gardener's Book of Lists is dated but still a credible and popular source of information for CAMGA members in search of the right plant. Veteran gardener, author Lois Trigg Chaplin, recommends hundreds of plants for a variety of uses, noting the specific Southern regions where they grow while sharing helpful hints from other gardeners, nurserymen, designers, and horticulturists from around the South. Each of the 200 lists includes a short narrative describing the list and its application, such as, "Narrow, Upright Shrubs for Tight Places" and "Annuals That Do and Don't Withstand Pounding Rain."



*Caution:* Some of the plants are now considered invasive and others may be affected by climate change that has occurred in the past two decades. There is no "Table of Contents," which would have eliminated the need to leaf through the book, and the index is limited.

Thanks to donated books from Bill and Judy Pecoul and Robyn Synder, CAMGA has two copies of this title. Copy 1 is located within the subject category "Alabama and the South" and Copy 2 is housed on the "Plant Lists and Encyclopedias" shelf in the library.

Tired of wasting money on plants that do not grow in your yard? Looking for Southern plants that will work in your yard's problem areas? Wish you had a list of proven plants for specific locations or uses? The book's subtitle, The Best Plants for All your Needs, Wants, and Whims, may be the answer to end past costly plant-choice mistakes.



## **Projects Committee Minutes February 11, 2020 By: Terry Chambliss**

Those present were Rhona Watson, Johan Beumer, Cecelia Ball, Marilyn Knapp, Cindy Augustine, Candy Jones, Sandy Rosamond, Lynda Edwards, Sandra Bowen, Sherron Schaefer, Jane Mobley, John Butler and Terry Chambliss.

Sandy thought we would only need one day to decorate the float. It will be on February 19, from 9:00am until. Sandy volunteered to make some jambalaya, Deanne volunteered rice and Judy May some homemade french bread.

Rhona discussed her propagation workshop. She will be focusing on dividing hostas and air layering hydrangeas. Participants will need to bring gloves and knives. She wants the class size limited to 20.

Information regarding Earth Day was discussed. Earth Day will be on April 11, from 9-11:00 am and most likely at the Recycle Center. We are to check back with the City for more information in early March.

Sandy envisions the plant sale becoming a festival including music, hotdogs and demonstrations. She mentioned the possibility of Amanda and Lee Borden playing their dulcimers. Sandy hasn't finalized what crafts we will be making for the plant sale.

The Episcopal Church requested CAMGA participate in their Thursday morning learning programs at the church. They meet at 11:00am followed by lunch. The presentation should be no more than 15-20 minutes. The committee needs more information before making a commitment.

Jane requested we limit the number of participants in her air layering workshop on April 22, to twelve.

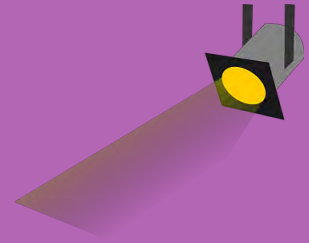
After discussion, it was decided to make vases out of cans decorated with natural materials for the senior project. Jane will obtain a date with the seniors in July. The practice workshop will be in June.

***Respectively submitted,***

***Terry Chambliss***



## SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS February 2020 By: Judy May



The Lunch and Learn February 11 was Houseplants by Elizabeth and Eric Leatherwood of Leatherwood Nursery. There were 52 attendees, 46 of them Master Gardeners. Assisting were Sandi Adkison, Charlotte Hall and Cathy Whigham.

February 5, Judy May gave her Orchid Basics talk to the Trinity Episcopal Church's Senior group. There were 18 in attendance.

February 12 Jane Mobley presented Air Layering to Millbrook Garden Club. There were 25 in attendance.

Eight members attended the February 11 Float Decorations planning meeting. Sandy Rosamond, Terry Chambliss, Deann Stone, Lynda Edwards, Candy Jones, Robin Snyder, Charlotte Hall and Judy May.

February 19<sup>th</sup>, members came to help decorate the float were: Sandy Rosamond, Deann Stone, Cathy Whigham, Hugh Wicks, Jane Mobley, Robin Snyder, Jane Duke, Sheila Radford, Cecelia Ball, Marilyn Knapp, Corky Butts, John Butler, Candy Jones, Sandra Bowen, Terry Chambliss, Johan Beumer, Sherri Schaefer, Judy May and Deann's husband Dave.

Members present for the Projects committee meeting February 11 were Rhona Watson, Johan Beumer, Cecelia Ball, Marilyn Knapp, Cindy Augustine, Candy Jones, Sandy Rosamond, Lynda Edwards, Sandra Bowen, Sherrie Schaefer, Jane Mobley, John Butler and Terry Chambliss.

Riding on the float or walking beside it during the Mardi Gras parade Saturday, February 22 were John Butler, Corky Butts, Terry Chambliss, Bill Quailes, Sheila Radford, Sandy Rosamond, Sherrie Schaefer, Deann Stone, Robin Snyder, Cindy Augustine, Hugh Wicks, Robin Sweeney, Cecelia Ball, Beverly Coutts, Jane Duke and Marilyn Knapp and Judy May.

Maria says many thanks to these fabulous CAMGA volunteers Leslie Bingham, Carla McCune and intern Beverly Coutts who helped clear wooded areas, dig up and transplant paperwhites and spider lilies and helped with a few other gardening chores. Please consider helping Maria in the Lanark Gardens. Winter is a great time to garden. Please call 334-657-9414 and let Maria know when you can help.

Food for the CAMGA monthly meeting was provided by: Bonnie McCormick, Cindy Augustine, Katrina Mitchell, Marilyn Knapp, Robin Snyder, Carla McCune, Ann Carr, Sharon Kochik and Hugh Wicks.



# March Gardening Calendar

## Fruits and Nuts

- Continue strawberry and grape plantings.
- Bud apples and peaches.  
Start planting blackberries. Remember, if weather conditions prevent prompt planting, heel the plants in by placing the root system in a trench and covering the soil.

## Shrubs

- Fertilize shrubs (except azaleas and camellias) according to a soil test.
- Late plantings may be made, particularly if they are container-grown.  
Watch shrubs for harmful insects.

## Lawns

- Plant bermuda, zoysia, and centipede in south Alabama.
- Seed bluegrass and grass mixtures in north Alabama.
- Fertilize established lawns.

## Roses

- Watch new growth for aphids.
- Begin a spray or dust program.
- Begin fertilizing.

## Annuals and Perennials

- Tender annuals may be planted in south Alabama.
- Check garden centers for bedding plants.

## Bulbs

- Plant gladiolus every 2 or 3 weeks if a long blooming season is desired.
- Plant tuberous begonias in pots. Plant dahlias.

## Miscellaneous

- Check and repair sprayers, dusters, and lawn mowers.
- Control lawn weeds with chemicals.
- Delay pruning of fruiting shrubs, such as cotoneasters, pyracanthas, and hollies, until after flowering.

## Vegetable Seed

- Plant hardy crops recommended for January and February.
- After danger of frost is past, plant tender vegetables.

## Vegetable Plants

- Plant cabbage, onions, lettuce, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts in north Alabama; plant tomatoes and peppers in lower south Alabama.



# 2020 CAMGA PROGRAMS



January 21	Intern Orientation
February 18	Debbie Boutelier, AMG, - "Aromatherapy! There's and Oil for That!"
March 17	Dr. Charles Mitchell, Auburn Professor Emeritus - "Garden Tillage"
April 21	Gary Gray, Regional Extension Commercial Horticulturist - "Edible Landscapes"
May 19	Charlie French, MG - "The Amazing Honey Bees"
June 16	Eric Riveria, Executive Chef, Vintage Café, Old Cloverdale. "Grows Herbs and Veggies on site to use Fresh in His Cooking"
July 21	Bionca Lindsey, MG - "Happy Hostas"
August 18	Intern Graduation
September 15	Eric Schavey, Regional Extension Horticulturist - "Hay Bale Gardening"
October 20	Marie Pancheo, Lanark - TBA
November 17	Janice Hall, Regional Extension Agent, Food Safety & Quality "Holiday Cooking with Herbs and Spices"
December 15	Christmas Party - First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka, AL



## Master Gardeners Preparing for Mardi Gra Parade





# Calendar of Events



## March 2020

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1	2 Mansion Workday 9 a.m. — 12 noon	3	4 Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon	5 Learning Garden Workday, Elmore Co. Extension Office  MG Helpline	6	7
8 Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 a.m.	9 Mansion Workday *8 a.m. — 11 a.m.	10 Lunch and Learn 12-1p.m. First Presbyterian Church —Gardening with Climate Change	11 Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon	12 Learning Garden Workday, Elmore Co. Extension Office  MG Helpline	13	14
15	16 Mansion Workday *8 a.m. — 11 a.m.	17 CAMGA Meeting Elmore Co. Ext. Office 10 am.	18 Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon	19 Learning Garden Workday, Elmore Co. Extension Office  MG Helpline	20 First Day of Spring	21
22	23 Mansion Workday *8 a.m. — 11 a.m.	24	25 Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon	26 Learning Garden Workday, Elmore Co. Extension Office  MG Helpline	27	28
29	30 Mansion Workday *8 a.m. — 11 a.m.  *(Please note time change)	31				