



# GARDEN BUZZZZZZ



Volume 30 Issue 3 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

March 2021



## Happy Spring



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### Message from Lynda

#### *CAMGA President*

Can you believe it's been almost one year now that we have been sheltering in place, wearing masks and social distancing all because of Covid-19 and this worldwide Pandemic?



It was about one week prior to our March meeting last year when I learned our Elmore County Extension Office was shutting down and we would not be able to have our meeting there last March. I remember that day very well. As your person in charge of the programs, I placed a call to one of my favorite speakers, Dr. Charles Mitchell, retired Professor Emeritus, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, Auburn University who was to be our speaker for last March.

I had previously talked to him a few times prior to that call and when I told him who I was, he immediately said, "You aren't going to cancel me are you?" He was disappointed and so was I.

Both of us thought it was silly because it happened so fast and no one was really prepared for a disastrous pandemic. Little did we know that one year later we remain unable to meet together on Queen Ann Road for our meetings. Neither have we been able to walk into our favorite movie theaters, attend concerts, eat in our favorite restaurants or attend large sporting events. I continue to jump out of my vehicle and dash to a store for a few items, only to return and get the mask. For one year now and I still forget.

Nothing was the same in 2020. Thank God for Zoom meetings that have allowed us to hold on and this month Dr. Mitchell will be with us after all. We just can't hug him. I can hardly wait to see what he has in store for us this time. Thanks Leslie for making the arrangements.



CAMGA Garden Buzzzzz  
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## **Message from Lynda (Continued)**



We had a successful meeting last month and our first CAMGA Budget was approved. We welcomed a new Treasurer, Carol Rattan and we had a great program from Dani Carroll on Wildflowers.

Thanks to all of you for breaking our attendance record with 47 members watching on Zoom. I salute the Phone Tree Team and give you the credit. We delayed voting on the new bylaws since we were short in giving the 30 day notice per our existing bylaws. Therefore, this vote was tabled until the March meeting.

If you haven't taken time to read those new bylaws that are posted on our web. If you have trouble finding and would like a copy emailed to you, please let me know soon.

I don't know about you, but I welcomed this beautiful weather this week. I was able to get out to the garden and do a little pruning and cleaning up. Be careful with those clippers I was all ready to trim the large Rosemary back before picking up my phone and asking Google if that was a good idea. Use your phone and Google questions any time there is doubt. Sure enough, do not trim that Rosemary back until frost has passed. Believe me; we haven't had our last frost. It's only February.

We attended the very informative pruning workshop in Billingsley recently. Thanks Mallory for accommodating Earnie and me by starting with the peaches first. We were scheduled for our second vaccine in Montgomery and ran a little late. We don't have any peaches to prune but learning about figs and muscadines was very beneficial. We immediately came home and reduced our two rows of muscadines down to one. Maybe in the long run this will stop our fruit from aborting about 10 days too soon for past several years. We have tried everything suggested.

Now is the time to add new flower beds and new raised vegetable beds and prepare for our plant sale. Did you forget to prune those roses on February 14th? I trimmed back my large Climbing Pinky and have 20 plus cuttings rooting in time for our sale. You will be hearing from Robin Snyder regarding her plans for the Plant Sale soon.

Just a reminder, Friends of the Governor's Mansion, one of our Volunteer Opportunities is having a big workday on Monday, March 8th beginning at 9am. Contact Jane McCarthy if you can help. [macandjane@att.net](mailto:macandjane@att.net)

***Lynda Edwards, President  
Central Alabama Master Gardener Association***



## Message from Mallory

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

### CAMGA Monthly Meeting

**Tuesday, March 16, 2021 — 9:00 AM (Board meeting)**  
**10:00 AM (regular meeting)**

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

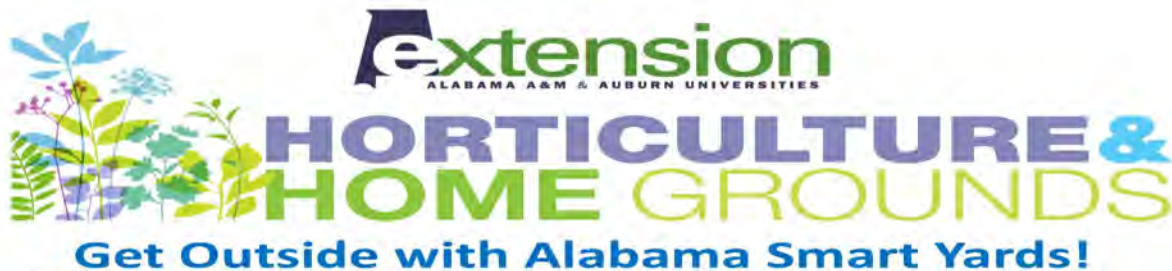
<https://auburn.zoom.us/j/88248604942>

Connect using Computer/Device audio if possible.

Or Telephone: Meeting ID: 882 4860 4942

Dial: +1 646 876 9923 (US Toll)

or +1 301 715 8592 (US Toll)



**Free Webinar Series (30 minutes)**

**Wednesdays @ 1:00 pm**

**Connect: [auburn.zoom.us/j/82398811386](https://auburn.zoom.us/j/82398811386)**



**W, March 3 Adding Native Plants to the Landscape:**

Frank Melton, Alabama Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

**W, March 10: What to Like About Perennials**

Charlot Ritenbaugh, Alabama Extension Master Gardener Volunteer

**W, March 17 Dividing Perennials:**

Dani Carroll, Alabama Extension Regional Extension Agent

**W, March 24: Rain Barrels**

Rhonda Britton, Alabama Extension Regional Extension Agent

**W, March 31: Beyond Rain Barrels**

Rhonda Britton, Alabama Extension Regional Extension Agent

**Master Gardener Helpline (887) 252-4769** [www.aces.edu](http://www.aces.edu)



## **CAMGA Minutes**

### **February 16, 2021**

**By: Betty Plaster, Secretary**

President Edwards called the CAMGA Zoom meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

**Member Concerns:** William Frye continues his chemo and is having some complications. Please keep William and Freda in your prayers.

**Program:** Vice President Leslie Bingham introduced the speaker Dani Carroll, Regional Extension Agent for ACES, who spoke on Wildflower Meadows. Dani explained that a Wildflower Meadow is a mixture of annual, perennial, biennial wildflowers and native grasses. Preparation is the key to a successful Wildflower Meadow. Decide what your goal is for the meadow. For example, will the meadow be for beneficial insects, wildlife, pollinators, etc.? To have a beautiful Wildflower Meadow be sure your seeds match your planting location and the soil is correctly prepared. Make sure the flowers are different shapes, sizes, colors, and have different blooming times.

**President's Report by Lynda Edwards:** Deb Kelso decided not to serve as Treasurer for the upcoming term. The Executive Board unanimously approved Carol Rattan to be the CAMGA Treasurer for the remainder of 2021. Carol was CAMGA Vice President 2013-2014 and has served as plant sale chairman. Virginia Pruitt and Pat Perryman will audit the Treasurer's books in the near future and give a report to the Board.

The Bylaws Committee has updated the CAMGA Bylaws and is asking for your input and questions. If you have questions about the Bylaws please contact Amanda Borden, chairman of the Bylaws committee, Anne Carr, or Janet Lewis. The updated Bylaws will be voted on at our next meeting on March 16, 2021. Lynda expressed her appreciation for the Bylaws committee's hard work.

The Officers identified a need to have Financial Policies for CAMGA. The financial policies have been written by the Bylaw Committee for both the Treasurer and the membership and will be included in CAMGA's Membership Directory/Guide. They will be voted on in March meeting.

A first time Proposed Budget for CAMGA was presented to the membership. This proposed budget was previously approved by the Board. Members used the Zoom "reaction button" to vote on the budget and thanks to Lee Ann Marona for "screen sharing" so that members could view each proposed line item.

Income for CAMGA comes from dues and the plant sale. The 2021 income is estimated to be \$2712.00. President Edwards discussed each proposed Expense item listed in the proposed budget with expenditures of \$2712.00 making a balanced budget.

Leslie Bingham, a member of the Budget Committee, made the motion to accept the budget as proposed. Coming from a committee, the motion required no second. Rhona Watson asked if the Learning Garden needed more money, how would they get the money? President Edwards explained that if the budget passed, the Learning Gardens could spend the amount proposed in the budget for the Learning Gardens without any additional approval and if more funds (over \$25.00) were needed that the membership would have to approve the expenditure. The Proposed Budget is proposing to budget this year's income. The money in the present checking account will be used for unexpected items and will require Board and membership approval. The vote was taken and the motion carried. There will be a new budget adopted for 2022.



# CAMGA Minutes Continued

## February 2021

### By: Betty Plaster, Secretary



**Vice President's Report by Leslie Bingham:** The speaker for the March monthly meeting, March 16, 2021, will be Dr. Charles Mitchell and his topic will be Garden Tillage. This will be a Zoom meeting.

Plans are for the April monthly meeting to be a tour of the Montgomery Botanical Gardens and the business meeting will be held after the garden tour at the pavilion at the gardens. Hopefully all spring and summer meetings can be held outdoors.

**Secretary's Report by Betty Plaster:** Betty moved to dispense with the reading of the January Minutes since they were printed in the Garden Buzz and distributed to all members. Hearing no corrections or additions to the minutes, Betty moved to accept the minutes as printed. Leslie Bingham seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the minutes were approved.

#### **Treasurer's Report by Deb Kelso:**

January beginning balance	\$6,180.19
Dues income	180.00
January expenditures	55.99
Ending balance for January	\$ 6,304.20

There were no questions about the report. The Treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

**Advisory Council Representative Report by Cheryl Fitzgerald:** The 2021 AMGA conference had been canceled. However, there will be a Zoom business meeting at 10:00 AM on April 21, 2021. Anyone can attend this meeting and once Cheryl has the Zoom link information, she will send it to Anida to email the membership. Autauga County Master Gardener's are planning a Fall seminar for AMGA for September 2021.

It will be an in person outdoor seminar. Rudy Yates, with the Extension Service has a social media project to make people aware of the Master Gardener program. He is asking Master Gardeners to go to Facebook and Instagram and join Zooming Zinnias. Post your zinnia pictures and videos. Zinnia seeds are available for new gardeners. If you would like seeds, please email or text Cheryl.

Visit the ACES website to see the new seminars and projects available. Kerry Smith has requested that surveys be completed by February 28, 2021. If you complete the survey you can receive volunteer hours. The AMGA newsletter will be advertising all the plant sales in the state. Cheryl will be sending CAMGA plant sale information to AMGA's newsletter. The next meeting will be held May 4, 2021, and the location will be announced at a later date.

**Membership Report by Lee Ann Marona:** The Robyn Award recipient for January was Carolyn Hensley. Carolyn is a new member who took the class in Montgomery in spring 2020. Lee Ann stated that if anyone had questions regarding the lifetime membership fee for AMGA to please contact her. She will need a check tomorrow if anyone plans to become a lifetime member.



## **CAMGA Minutes Continued**

### **February 2021**

**By: Betty Plaster, Secretary**

**2022 AMGA Conference Report:** Janice Jackson with the Capital City Master Gardeners and member of the Steering Committee for the 2022 AMGA conference gave the following report. May 2-4, 2022, CAMGA and the Capitol City Master Gardeners will host the 2022 AMGA Conference at the Embassy Suites in Montgomery, Al. Janice announced that Candy Jones and Sandy Rosamond from CAMGA are on the Conference Steering Committee. Rhona Watson from CAMGA and Billy Watson from Capitol City Master Gardeners are the program chairmen for the conference. Janice reported that the door prizes and silent auction items that were to be used at the 2020 and 2021 Conferences have been donated to the 2022 Conference which will help with the Conference expenses. Margaret Cully with the Capitol City Master Gardeners encouraged members to complete the survey sent from Candy Jones to help the committee plan the conference. Candy Jones stated that to have a successful conference everyone will have to help.

**Plant Sale Report:** Robyn Synder reminded the membership that the plant sale will be at the Elmore County Extension office hopefully the first Saturday in May, May 1, 2021. Because of Covid, Robyn is not sure if this will be a public or private sale. Right now, Robyn believes we will have a one-day private sale. Set up for the sale will be scheduled the day before. The membership will receive an email from Anida on positions to help with the plant sale. Robyn stressed that now is the time for everyone to start getting your plants ready for the sale! In the next couple of months, you will be contacted to share what plants you have for sale and what plants you would like to purchase at the sale. Robyn stated she has a plan for the sale and is happy to share the plan with anyone.

**Mallory Kelly Report:** (Given by Lynda) The Master Gardener Helpline will be routed through Birmingham through the month of March.

**Old Business:** Grant Update - Lee Borden happily reported that CAMGA has received a \$1500 grant! This grant money will be used to purchase a new laptop computer and speakers for the Master Gardener Helpline. It will also be used to purchase a new time-lapse camera to make Stubborn Old Gardener videos for CAMGA. Please be considering what videos you would like to produce and contact Lee with that information.

**New Business:**

Robyn Synder stated that this fall it will be CAMGA's turn to host the intern class. Hopefully it can be in person, but if not, CAMGA could host outside events to get to know the interns. Please contact anyone who you know that would be interested in becoming a Master Gardener and tell them about the upcoming class. Candy Jones also stressed the need for CAMGA to have interns. Meeting adjourned at 11:44 AM

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Betty Plaster, Secretary*



## CAMGA Library News March 2021 By: Dee Turberville

### DONATIONS GALORE!

CAMGA members are energetic and generous folks. Instead of attending garden activities, due to COVID limitations, you have cleaned out your closets and downsized your bookshelves. The CAMGA library shelves are overflowing with your donations!

*A special request – PLEASE CALL ME* in the future before dropping off your donations at the ACES office. Books that are over 20 years old may contain dated information and/or may have mold/dust mite allergies for sensitive patrons. Duplicate copies will be shared with interns or sold in upcoming plant sales. Several CAMGA videos came out of storage recently and are available free to anyone who still has a VCR and enjoys using this older technology. A few:



Don't see a book in the library that you think we should have? I welcome suggestions and memorial donations. You can choose to memorialize or honor a relative, colleague, or friend and help grow the library at CAMGA at the same time. After informing me, be sure to note on your check that your tribute gift is designated for the library, made out to CAMGA, and sent to our new treasurer, Carol Rattan. Let me know if you have a specific title or a particular subject in mind. A card will be sent to the honoree or family representative notifying them that a gift has been received. The tribute book will be included in the library report for the Buzz Newsletter. If needed, I may suggest a reference book for the Helpline on a certain topic as a possible donation. *Thank you for responding to my request. Thank you for your past donations.*

## **SPOTLIGHT on VOLUNTEERS**

**February 2021**

**By: Judy May**



Phone Tree Team members who will be making reminder calls each month to CAMGA members are: Leslie Bingham, Cheryl Christian, Cheryl Fitzgerald, Marjorie Hannah, Janet Lewis, Lee Ann Marona, Judy May, Rhonda Miles, Jane Mobley, Betty Plaster, Carol Rattan, Sandy Rosamond and Rhona Watson.

Terry Chambliss and Jane Mobley are working with Millbrook Chamber to design a plan for their flagpole area.

Maria says Carla McCune, Leslie Bingham, Cheryl Fitzpatrick and Debbie Kelso helped her this past month. She says we have been busy digging up plants to repot for plant sales as well as relocating plants. We've cleaned up a lot of messy areas, cleared more wood from storms, trimmed bushes, dug up and moved bulbs, and have begun major garden upgrades. This next month the daffodils will be blooming and it will be a great time to come visit Lanark! I hope to begin cleaning out the 1,000 Hydrangeas that grow around our Catfish pond and could really use some help! If you're interested, please call Maria at 334-657-9414.

On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Jane Mobley and Terry Chambliss met with Abigail Fields and Ann Harper, to discuss landscaping around the flagpole at the Economic Development Center in Millbrook.

Volunteers working at the Governor's Mansion this month were Amanda Borden, Robin Snyder, Linda Cater, Anne Carr and Jane McCarthy.

Attending the CAMGA Board meeting this month by Zoom were Cheryl Fitzgerald, Betty Plaster, Deb Kelso, Lynda Edwards, Carol Rattan, Lee Ann Marona, Candy Jones, Leslie Bingham, Jane Mobley and Anida Wishnietsky.





## Governor's Mansion Report February 2021 By: Amanda Borden



During February at the Governor's Mansion, we weeded, pruned lantanas, trimmed sago palms, pruned saw palmettos, planted day lilies, pine-strawed, and weeded some more.

We will be holding our spring workday on Monday, March 8 (rain date March 9), 9 a.m.—noon. It's okay to come earlier, but not before 8 a.m.

We will be pruning roses, camellias, wax myrtles, Japanese maples, crepe myrtles and other shrubs. It will be a good opportunity to practice your pruning skills!

Bring pruning tools, gloves, water, favorite gardening equipment (kneeling pads, stools, etc.).

No firearms are allowed on Mansion grounds. Enter on Finley Street and pull up to the security gate. Park in the left-hand parking lot.

If you would like to participate, please contact Jane McCarthy at 334-221-9936 or [macandjane@att.net](mailto:macandjane@att.net) prior to Friday, March 5. She will provide a list of volunteers to Security.



***Starting Monday, March 15th, we will meet 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to work at the Governor's Manion due to day light savings time.***





## **Governor's Mansion Report Continued**

### **February 2021**

**By: Amanda Borden**







## Learning Garden Report

### By: Mary McCroan



February ended with a great Workday in the Learning Garden on the 25th. It was awesome to actually be face to face with fellow gardeners. We kept our distance and wore masks and enjoyed the fellowship. No hugs yet, but that is coming! Debbie Kelso and her hubby brought two truckloads of “super soil” from Bubba’s Materials in Prattville. It is pretty good stuff. We filled up the Medicinal Herb Bed which had settled considerably since it was originally constructed. Note that although growing medicinal herbs is wonderful, we are not allowed to educate the public on actual use of herbs for health purposes in our Master Gardener capacity. Candy Jones, Rhona Watson, and Mary McCroan also shoveled and scooped. We’d had to remove existing

plant material from this bed. Debbie will be redesigning and replanting with a variety of herbs. We will label them so that visitors to the garden will know what they are looking at.

Another project was to rebuild one of the raised beds. Virginia Pruitt and Bill Quails took on this project and did a wonderful job. This bed was originally built from untreated wood and lasted a surprising long time, but it was finally rotting away. Some people are concerned about using treated wood in the garden and this was a really valid concern when arsenic was used to keep the wood from deteriorating. Now the treatment is generally micronized copper. University tests have showed that leaching of the copper into the soil is minimal and would actually be at very low levels that would be beneficial to the plants as a micronutrient. Virginia and Bill knocked away the rotted timbers, and built the new bed around old “footprint”. We then added some of Bubba’s super-soil to fill in the larger area.



It was also time to harvest the turmeric growing in the shade bed. These beds had also settled as organic material decomposed. So after digging the turmeric roots, we refilled those beds with Bubba’s soil, and replanted good size turmeric crowns. We had plenty for anybody that wanted to take crowns to plant, or to experiment with making your own turmeric powder.

I went home and tried to make turmeric powder for the first time. Different sources on the Internet have different recommendations. The first decision (after cleaning the roots of course) is whether to boil the rhizomes or not. This will supposedly soften them, but there are concerns that heating degrades the beneficial curcumin. With a little research, I found a study reported by the National Institute of Health found that boiling, roasting or frying turmeric only slightly reduced the curcuminoids.

## Learning Garden Report (Continued)

### By: Mary McCroan



I decided to follow the instructions to boil the rhizomes until they could be “easily pierced with a fork”. When they were still tough after four hours, I gave up and popped them in my food dehydrator. I’m still a novice at dehydrating and had never dehydrated turmeric. But they were large tubers, and I thought it would take overnight. The next morning the turmeric had shrunk by about 95%!

My next step was to take these sad and VERY hard little roots and try to grind them. The small food processor I have made no progress at all. The coffee grinder did somewhat better and I ended up with a small amount of turmeric powder. Yay! It looks and tastes pretty much like what you would buy from the store. It should keep at least a year. After getting this amount of turmeric powder, my coffee grinder quit on me. So I guess I either need a better tool or a different technique. To be continued. My next attempt will involve NOT boiling the turmeric, slicing it thin, putting it in the dehydrator for a much shorter time, and hopefully end up with a dry, but more tender product that will be easier to grind.

Another activity from February was to prune the Coral Bark Honeysuckle in front of the Extension Office. We try and keep it bare on the inside, and the flowering foliage on the outside of the arbor. This is because of previous bad experiences with Extension visitors getting stung by wasps on their way inside. Trimming off the green stuff on the inside seemed to solve the problem. And the bare stems are structurally interesting from a garden design perspective.

Next Thursday should be another pretty day. Come on out if for a little fellow gardener company! Call Mary for questions at 334-312-0679.