



# GARDEN BUZZZZZZ



Volume 30 Issue 4 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association



April 2021



## Message from Lynda

*CAMGA President*



It's Spring!! Although our forecast for tonight shows our temperature dropping to the freezing range for my area, requiring me to cover a few tomatoes and some rattlesnake beans that I planted early. We always seem to have that cold snap right before Easter, so I was wise in only planting a few things that will require protection this year. We gardeners seem to be too anxious to get those plants and seeds in the ground as quickly as possible, at least I do. Our training teaches us to wait for all possibility of frost to end. I'm guilty!!

My neighborhood in Prattville is a "blaze of color." The azaleas, redbuds and dogwoods are beautiful this year. Unfortunately I don't get to enjoy those as much since I relocated almost permanently to the farm. I do have a beautiful cherry tree that bloomed in February at the farm and my azaleas here are blooming but my plants aren't as massive as our home in Prattville.

Thursday night, April 1st, CAMGA will have a booth at the Wetumpka Merchants' Market downtown. Plans are to highlight herbs and they will also have applications available and promote our Intern Class beginning in August. CAMGA plans to have a booth every first Thursday of the month throughout the summer. If you would like to be a part of this project, please contact Sandy Rosamond to volunteer.

## Table of Contents:

Message from Lynda.....	1-2
Message from Mallory....	3
CAMGA Minutes .....	4-7
CAMGA Library News.....	8
Spotlight on Volunteers...	9
Mansion Report .....	10-11
Master Gardener Class.....	12



CAMGA Garden Buzzzz  
Carol Pugh — Editor  
pughdia@aces.edu

## **Message from Lynda (Continued)**



Last week Glenn Huovinen, Richard Ohlson, Katrina Mitchell and I met with a team from Greensky Family Farms located on Old Prattville Road near Camp Grandview Road in Millbrook. They are in Phase 1 of a proposed farming operation to include many phases. They are interested in having assistance from Master Gardeners in teaching gardening to children. You will be hearing more about this in our April meeting. In the meantime, please visit [greenskyfamilyfarms.com](http://greenskyfamilyfarms.com) for more information.

Hopefully you are looking forward to our April 20, 2021 meeting at The Montgomery Botanical Gardens located on Forest Avenue across from Jackson Hospital's side entrance. It will be our first in person meeting this year and will include a tour of the gardens prior to our meeting. Follow the signs after you enter to the right. It's the first covered pavilion but look for detailed information later. You can't get lost once inside the park. I drove through recently and it's beautiful.

Plant Sale needs volunteers. Don't forget to register with Robin Snyder. This is our only fundraising opportunity this year so plan not only to volunteer but bring your plants on Friday morning, April 30<sup>th</sup> to the Extension Office. The new location will be so convenient for all of us. The sale is for CAMGA members and our friends. Look out 2022, we are planning a huge event.

CAMGA Rock Painting Class with instructor Loretta Loy will be held at the Extension Center on April 13, 2021 from 10 a.m. — 12 noon. Everything will be furnished and you may paint as many rocks as time allows. The fee is \$10 and the maximum class is 14 for social distancing. If there is enough interest, we will schedule a second class. You may register by emailing [lyndabaine@bellsouth.net](mailto:lyndabaine@bellsouth.net)

***Happy Gardening!!***

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



## Message from Mallory

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

### Controlling Fire Ants in the Landscape

Spring is upon us and the wet cold days of winter we hope are gone until next year! As we all move outdoors to plant spring bloomers or enjoy a picnic and BBQ you may soon encounter the terrible fire ant and now is a good time to treat for these awful pests!

Spring is the perfect time to rid your lawn or landscape of these unwelcome invaders, but there are a few things you need to know to control them successfully. Fire ants look for protein-rich foods all year, but especially in the late spring and early fall. Foragers will continue searching for food until temperatures drop below 75 degrees Fahrenheit.



Most homeowners treat with powders or dusts to the individual mound and those products really only kill a few workers and alert the rest of the colony to pick up and move. With this method, often times you will see a new mound pop up just a few feet away in the coming weeks. Additionally, you are only treating what mounds are visible and most times there are way more fire ants present than what you can see.

The best method for effective control of these insects is by using a fire ant bait. Using fire ant baits on a sunny day after the dew on the ground has dried can provide specific and continued control of fire ants in a cost-effective way. Baits should be applied when the ground is dry and no chance of rain for at least 24 hours. Make sure you don't over apply, it only takes a little.... Go out in the morning on a sunny day and place a potato chip or a piece of a hotdog (something high in oil content) out in the lawn and let it sit for about 15 minutes. When you come back, if there are ants on it, then the workers are out foraging and it is the perfect time to spread your bait. You can sprinkle just around mounds you see, but it is best to broadcast over the entire landscape.

Baits are picked up by the workers and taken back to the colony where it is then spread throughout all the colony which is why this method is much more effective than the dust that only kills the few workers that come in contact with it.

Treating all areas in the landscape surrounding the home and out in the surrounding areas where you will walk or kids will be playing should be your first priority. Also, treat around places like compost piles, unused stacked firewood, raised garden beds and potted plants as they all make great homes for fire ant colonies.

There are restrictions on which baits can be applied around edibles so please make sure you read the label before applying in a vegetable garden or fruit orchard. For more information for control in edibles please see the link below:

[Fire Ant Control in Vegetable Crops - Alabama Cooperative Extension System \(aces.edu\)](https://aces.edu)

For increased success, controlling fire ants should be a team effort. Working with neighbors or surrounding landowners can greatly boost your success. Fire ant control is more effective when larger areas are treated. When an 80-90% control rate is acceptable, consider participating in a community- or neighborhood-wide treatment program. If the problem is widespread, a large treatment plan could be more effective than treating in small areas.

For more information on treating for fire ants using a bait application and what active ingredient to choose in bait products please see the links below:

[Fire Ant Control: The Two-Step Method and Other Approaches – Ant Pests \(extension.org\)](https://extension.org)

[Managing Fire Ants with Baits - Alabama Cooperative Extension System \(aces.edu\)](https://aces.edu)



## CAMGA Minutes

### March 16, 2021

**By: Betty Plaster, Secretary**

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

Program: Vice President Leslie Bingham introduced Dr. Charles Mitchell who has a Doctorate degree in soil science. Dr. Mitchell's topic today was Garden Tillage. Reasons for tillage are to prepare seedbed, control weeds, break up traffic pans and soil compaction, and recreation and exercise. Dr. Mitchell suggested that you till the least you can so you do not destroy the soil structure. Garden tillage experiments have been published that show that double digging by hand and cutting slits by hand yield the best crop results. These are four ways to minimize soil compaction – Santa Claus method, reduce tillage with tractors and heavy tillers, use more organic matter, and use the double digging method.

Member Concerns: William Frye will have one more chemo treatment and then will begin chemo again in three months. So far, there have not been any changes shown on the scans. Joe and Sally L'Abbe are now living at the Hickory Hills assisted living facility in Prattville. Andy Wallace has not been feeling well and that is why he has not been attending meetings. Lynda Edwards had an accident last week that resulted in losing 90% of her hearing. Her doctor said she needs to wait three more weeks to see if the hearing loss is permanent. Prayers are appreciated for all.

President's Report by Lynda Edwards: Over the last four years Lynda has been reviewing CAMGA Bylaws and found that there was lots of information in the Bylaws that the organization does not need and there was new information that needed to be included in the Bylaws. Before accepting the position of President this year, Lynda stated she would only serve if the Bylaws were updated.

The Nomination Committee agreed to this condition and in December a Bylaw Committee was formed. Amanda Borden served as the Bylaw Committee Chairman and the other committee members were Anne Carr and Janet Lewis. The Bylaws have not been updated in ten and a half years. As Amanda Borden stated, many changes in technology have occurred in ten and a half years and we are going through a pandemic. The Bylaws are outdated. Amanda asked the membership if there were any questions regarding the new Bylaws.

Anne Carr moved that we dispense with the reading of the Bylaws and adopt them as printed and distributed. This decision was made because the membership has had more than six weeks to read and ask questions about the Bylaws. This motion will not require a second because it is coming from a committee. Lynda called for questions and then for a vote. The motion carried. The new Bylaws were adopted.

A Project Committee Chairman is still needed. Five people are serving on the Projects Committee but no one wants to be the chairman. Small project events will still be offered this year. Many thanks to Terry Chambliss who organized a seed swap for CAMGA on March 10.

The 2021 Membership Directory will be available to the membership at the April monthly meeting. Cathy Whigham will have the Directories at the meeting for members to pick up. If you are not able to attend the April meeting at the Montgomery Botanical Gardens you will be able to pick up a Directory at the Elmore County Extension Office.

## CAMGA Minutes Continued

### March 16, 2021

**By: Betty Plaster, Secretary**



Vice President's Report by Leslie Bingham: Our 2021 Directory will have our updated Speakers' Bureau List. You will notice two additions, Glenn Huovinen and Deborah Kelso. Many topics have been added under existing speakers as well.

Next month the meeting will be at the Montgomery Botanical Gardens located at 1010 Forest Avenue Montgomery, Alabama. If you enter from Forest Ave, veer right and we will gather under the first pavilion on the left. If able, bring a chair for our meeting portion. We will begin with a walking tour led by Fairlie Reinhart then have our business meeting under the pavilion. Please bring a mask. Robyn Synder will provide water and refreshments.

Secretary's Report Betty Plaster: Betty made the following corrections to the February 2021 minutes- Janice Jackson is the Chair for the 2022 AMGA conference, Margaret Cully is the Co-Chair of the 2022 AMGA conference, and Rhona Watson and Billie Crawford are the program chairpersons for the 2022 AGMA conference. 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 expenses.

Betty moved to accept the minute corrections and dispense with the reading of the February minutes since they were printed in the Garden Buzz and distributed to all members. Cheryl Fitzgerald seconded the motion. The vote was taken and the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report by Carol Rattan:

February beginning balance	\$6304.20
February income	40.00
February expenditures	184.94
Ending balance for February	\$ 6159.26

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

Carol reported that a new Reimbursement Request Form has been posted on the CAMGA website. Members, please keep in mind that it takes two signatures for a Reimbursement Check. Please have patience with this process until meetings are in person again.

Advisory Council Representative Report by Cheryl Fitzgerald: Cheryl reported that she can still request free zinnia seeds for any of the members who would like to have the seeds. Email Cheryl if you want zinnia seeds.

Membership Report by Lee Ann Marona: Due to the absence of Lee Ann, Lynda Edwards announced this month's Robin Award recipient is Leslie Bingham.



## **CAMGA Minutes Continued**

### **March 16, 2021**

**By: Betty Plaster, Secretary**

**Plant Sale Report:** Robyn Synder announced that the plant sale this year would be for members and their guests only on Saturday, May 1, 2021, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM, at the Elmore County Extension Office. Set up for the sale will be Friday, April 30. The plant sale is six weeks away and Robyn has had only six people to respond to the signup sheet emailed to the membership. Robyn will resend the signup sheet. Please let Robyn know where you would like to work at the plant sale. During the meeting Terry Chambliss volunteered to be the team leader for setup and clean up for the plant sale, Carol Rattan volunteered to collect money at the plant sale and will be assisted by Cindy Augustine, and Candy Jones volunteered to be the Herbs team leader. If you will not be able to attend the plant sale but would like to donate plants to be sold, please contact Mary McCroan before leaving plants at the Learning Garden. Please remember that this is the only fundraiser for CAMGA.

**2021 AMGA Conference Report:** Candy Jones reported that committees for the 2022 AMGA conference are being formed and members will be getting calls about volunteering in the near future. Please say yes to working at the 2022 AMGA conference which will be held in Montgomery, Alabama.

Margaret Cully, Co-Chair of the 2022 AMGA conference, stated that committee chairmen are being selected now and once these chairmen are in place calls will be made for volunteers. Candy stated that it is very expensive to host a conference. The conference is funded in part by an AGMA advance of \$2000 which must be paid back to AMGA. The rest of the funding is from fund raising, vendor rent, and sponsorships. Please encourage people to attend this event and sign up to work online. If you are having trouble with the online sign up please contact Candy and she will assist you.

**Main Street Merchant Market:** Sandy Rosamond attended a meeting for the Main Street Merchants Market in Wetumpka. The Market will be held the first Thursday of the month from April until November, 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm. The Market will feature food vendors, bands, and 30 booth sites. It was decided that CAMGA would participate in the Market from April to August. A team will be needed to host the CAMGA booth each month and the team can select what they would like to feature in the booth. For example, the team could feature raising tomatoes, raised bed gardening, etc. The April team will be Sandy, Candy Jones, and Debbie Kelso and they will feature herbs. Jane Mobley will be the chairman for the May booth. Sandy is planning to send a letter to the membership describing what is involved in setting up and working the booth. Sandy will also be available to assist members the day of the market. This will be an excellent opportunity to promote the fall intern class and the Master Gardener's organization.

**Earth Day Report:** Terry Chambliss reported that Earth Day will be held Saturday, April 17, from 9:00 AM until 11:00 AM at the Wetumpka Farmers' Market at 304 East Coosa Street. There is a public plant swap at this event. We will have a CAMGA table which will feature soil test kits, reference books, and information about CAMGA. Also, the Wetumpka Elementary students will have recycled projects on display. Please contact Terry if you would like to volunteer to work on Earth Day.

**Humane Society:** Carol Rattan reported that the Elmore County Humane Society is looking for volunteers to provide plants for their pots in front of the building. Please contact the Humane Society if you are interested in assisting.

**CAMGA Minutes Continued**  
**March 16, 2021**  
**By: Betty Plaster, Secretary**



Mallory Kelley Report: Mallory Kelley reported that the spring intern class held in Montgomery is halfway completed. There are 17 interns in the class and two of the interns are from Elmore county. Prattville and Montgomery Master Gardeners are hosting Lunch and Learn programs outside. One will occur in April, on the first Wednesday of the month, at Shakespeare Gardens in Montgomery and the program will be on Pruning Tools. Another will occur in April, on the first Thursday of the month, at Pratt Village in Prattville and the program will be Backyard Tomatoes by Mallory Kelley.

Alabama Garden Chat will start back on Wednesdays at 2:00 PM April through August.

“Just Dig It” farm tour with Tracey Britnell will be April 28 and the cost will be \$10.  
Coming in April a Grafting Demonstration at Lee Moore’s Japanese Maple Garden will be held.

Old Business: Lee Borden reported that the Grant money CAMGA received has purchased a new laptop and speakers for the helpline. Mary Ann Hatcher stated she will be working to set up the helpline next week. The CAMGA helpline operation will begin in April. Lee is learning to use the new time lapse camera and plans to create a video on Growing Corn in the Home Garden with the help of Terry Chambliss.

New Business: Anida Wishnietsky reported that the CAMGA Facebook fan page is still available and the CAMGA Facebook friend page has been deleted.

Meeting Adjourned at noon.

*Respectfully Submitted,*

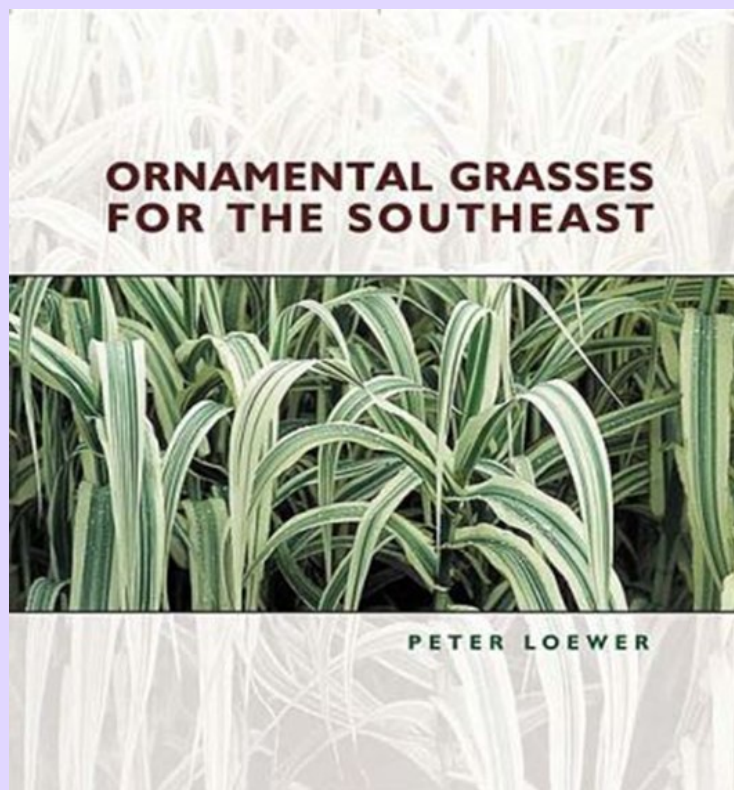
*Betty Plaster, Secretary*



## CAMGA Library News April 2021 By: Dee Turberville

### Ornamental Grasses for the Southeast By Peter Loewer

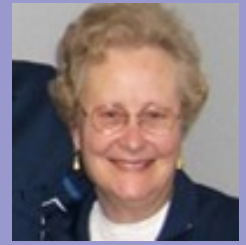
Ornamental grasses are diverse and easy-to-grow additions to the landscape. They provide color, texture, and movement. Peter Loewer's book of the Southeastern region of the U.S. fills a niche for these versatile grasses. He describes over 125 varieties of annual and perennial grasses as well as bamboos, sedges, rushes, horsetails, and reeds. There is a section called "Plants That Look Like Grasses" that includes plants such as acorus, liriopes, and yuccas. Each profile includes a color photo, detailed description, the plant's history as well as growing and caring for them.



Ornamental grasses are often overlooked herbaceous perennials that thrive in Alabama and will grow with minimal effort. They are attractive and most are not too aggressive compared to their weedy cousins like crabgrass, nutsedge and Johnson grasses. They are tough and resilient but not susceptible to disease problems; plus, most are deer resistant. They are an excellent choice for gardeners trying to create a landscape that requires less spraying, fertilization and maintenance. The strong vertical or fountaining form of many ornamental grasses, combined with their feathery, colorful flower heads (like those of the genus *Muhlenbergia*, commonly called muhly grasses) make a unique contribution to the landscape. Many add winter interest to the yard. Ornamental grasses are available in a range of hues and heights and can be used in a variety of ways – from lining walkways, to planting in containers, to incorporating into mixed perennial flower beds.



**SPOTLIGHT on VOLUNTEERS**  
**March 2021**  
**By: Judy May**



Attending the Board meeting via Zoom Monday, March 15 were Lynda Edwards, Leslie Bingham, Betty Plaster, Carol Rattan, Cheryl Fitzgerald, Jane Mobley, Anida Wishnietsky, Jane Mobley, and Sandy Rosamond. Judy May sat in for Lee Ann Marona.

A seed swap and garden tour was held March 10<sup>th</sup>. It was fun seeing friends and sharing knowledge along with the seeds. Those participating were Iva Hayney, Deborah Kelso, Sheila Radford, Sandra Bowen, Jane Duke, Mary McCroan, Ann Carr, Betty Plaster, Bill Quailes, and Terry Chambliss. Afterwards, Mary conducted a tour of the Learning Gardens and answered questions about growing, irrigation and maintenance.

Maria says Carla McCune, Leslie Bingham, Judy May, Sharon Kochik, Debbie Kelso and Don Hoover helped her this month. Also, she says thanks to all of you who bought plants. It helps the garden fund immensely!

March volunteers from CAMGA at the Governor's Mansion were Amanda Borden, Anne Carr, Linda Cater, Jane McCarthy and Robin Snyder. Jane says we had a fabulous workday March 9<sup>th</sup> and met several new volunteers. On other Monday's we pruned roses, pruned camellias, pruned crepe myrtles, pruned cast iron plant, pruned spireas, pruned Japanese maples, pruned an abelia, weeded, planted containers at the porte cochere, and were amazed by the mansions azalea display. Please come and join us...everyone loves to prune!



# Governor's Mansion Report

## March 2021

By: Amanda Borden



We had a fabulous workday on March 8th and met several new volunteers. On other Mondays, we pruned roses, pruned camellias, pruned crepe myrtles, pruned cast iron plant, pruned spireas, pruned Japanese maples, pruned an abelia, weeded, planted containers at the porte cochère, and were amazed by the Mansion's azalea display.

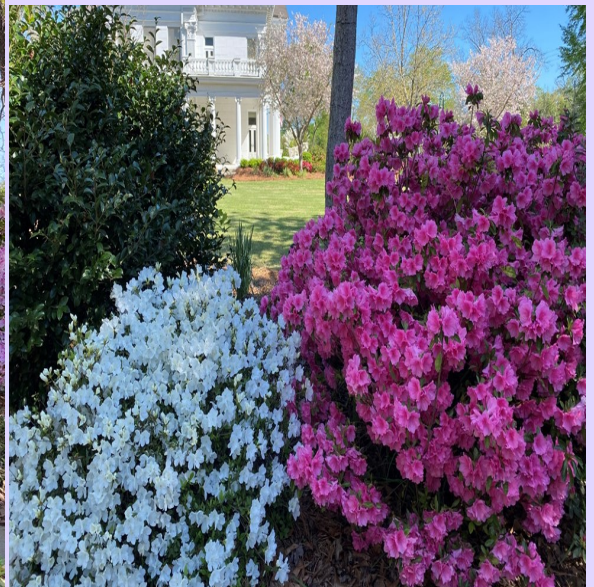
Please come and join us...everyone loves to prune!



# Governor's Mansion Report Continued

## March 2021

By: Amanda Borden





## 2021 Master Garden Class By: Lee Ann Marona

### Become an Alabama Master Gardener!

It's official! Elmore County will be hosting a Master Gardener Intern class this fall.

The classes won't necessarily look exactly as they did in the past. Some of the lectures will be streamed simultaneously to MG intern classes around the state, and for that reason the classes will be held on Wednesdays rather than on Thursdays as in previous years. It is still to be determined if any of the classes will be in-person or if they will need to be conducted online per guidance from Extension.

In other associations' intern classes which have been held during COVID lockdown, lectures have been conducted via Zoom, tests have been taken online, and some of the afternoon sessions have been held at local demonstration or learning gardens for hands-on learning experiences with the Extension agent and certified Master Gardeners. See dates and registration details below and please share with any friends or family who might be interested in taking the class. If you need a color copy of the flyer to post, there are a few copies in the CAMGA office. Thank you!

**2021 Session: September 1-November 17**  
**Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. —2:30 p. m.**

Dates are subject to change and classes may be virtual or in-person  
Registration Deadline August 6  
*The course fee is \$150 – Register by July 2, 2021  
for a \$25 Early Bird registration discount!*



**PRE-REGISTRATION FORM- Elmore County Master Gardener Intern Class**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer: Online Course \_\_\_\_\_ In-Person: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return Pre-registration Form by August 6, 2021 to:  
Elmore County Extension Office, 340 Queen Ann Road, Wetumpka, AL 36092**