PATHWAYS

Fall 2021

D Johnsey, St Clair Co Native walking trail

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AMGA Website
alabamamg.org

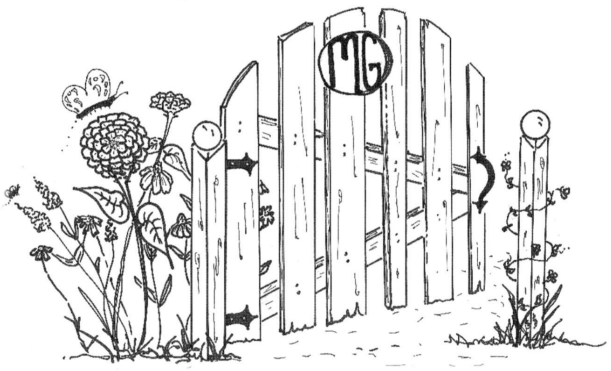
SPEAKERS ARE ANNOUNCED FOR AMGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Jane Mobley, Steering Committee

Capital City Master Gardeners and Central Alabama Master Gardeners have arranged a fabulous lineup of speakers to inspire us at the Behind the Garden Gate Conference to be held in Montgomery May 2-4, 2022. The pre-conference workshops are *Herbal Beverages* by Debbie Boutelier, past president of the National Herb Society and the president of Autauga County Master Gardeners, and *Propagating Camellias* by Rhona Watson and Jane Mobley, Advanced Master Gardeners with CAMGA. Attendees will go home with goodies.

Conference speakers are Gary Bachman, who will speak during the Tuesday dinner session on *Horticulture CSI: Search For the Long Beach Radish* and during the Wednesday morning session on *Growing Potential Of Small Gardens.* On Tuesday, Erica Glasener will present Cultivating *Sense of Space* and *Designing a Garden For Four Seasons*. Jack Rowe will discuss *Trees You Didn't Think Of: Uncommon Yet Wonderful Ornamental Trees*. Michelle Samuel-Foo will share *Ten Things You Didn't Know About Entomology*. Beth Bolles will present *Vertical Beauty With Flowering Vines*.

We are so excited about this conference and getting to see everyone again! Please plan on joining us at the Embassy Suites in May. Look for your application in the *Pathways* later in the year.



Behind the Garden Gate

AMGA PRESIDENT
Myra Lassere

The joy that comes from gardening is undeniable. Whether tending a prized perennial or harvesting the season's bounty, people are drawn to the garden. The garden teaches us many lessons in hope, peace and love. In gardens, weeds do exist. Our gardens do not grow to be tidy and perfect.

Sometimes a portion of the plant blooms and sometimes, a plant looks bedraggled. Some plants require stakes for support, while others need pruning. There are some plants that need ripping out while some others, with care, can be transplanted to the right place. Gardens aren't picture perfect except perhaps in doctored photo shoots.

With Autumn upon us, venture to the northern portions of Alabama to discover the changing colors of leaves. The Botanical Gardens in Birmingham and Huntsville provide picturesque escapes. Gardens such as the ones in Calhoun County (Cane Creek), Petals from the Past Nursery in Jemison, Montgomery and Dothan Botanical Gardens and the southern gardens of Bellingrath in Theodore, and Mobile Botanical Gardens provide insights into fall gardening. With Covid-19 and it's variants, these outdoor spaces provide sanctuary for all of us to enjoy. They also give us an occasion to learn about the myriad of plants and their requirements. So, take advantage of all that Sweet Home Alabama has to offer besides football and tailgating. Recently I had the good fortune to visit P. Allen Smith's Moss Mountain Farm in Roland, Arkansas, and Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, Georgia. *Farm to Table, Fruit, Vegetable and Flower Gardening, Hardscaping, Butterfly Gardens, Bird and Fowl Rookeries, Pollinators and Habitats* were some of the seminars I participated in – something for everyone!

Look for AMGA website updates. The Transformation Garden at Auburn is gaining momentum and I'm proud to say AMGA is excited about this new endeavor. There will be many opportunities for all to contribute and participate.

Finally, HAPPY 40th to all of AMGA, and special thanks to our Founders and Supporters. Have a Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Fall, Y'all! Stay safe! Stay healthy!
To Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow. Myra

AMGA Vice President
Devonne Ellis

I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying cooler temperatures, lower humidity, and everything fall. This year has flown by for me. My association had some amazing plant sales, in-person meetings, volunteer efforts at Dothan Botanical Gardens and Landmark Park, and answered questions on the helpline. Of course, we all are moving forward cautiously. What is your association doing? Are you still meeting in person? I hope each of you are doing well.

I am happy to report all upcoming Conferences are moving forward. Next year our AMGA Conference is in Montgomery with Capital City Master Gardeners hosting. They are working very hard to finalize everything for you. In 2023 our Conference hosts are Tuscaloosa Master Gardeners, and Baldwin County will host in 2024. Both Master Gardener Associations are busy moving forward for your visit to their cities. I am looking for Master Gardeners interested in hosting in 2025. It is a great opportunity for your association.

Speaking of volunteering, now is a good time to step up in state positions such as Advisory Council, AMGA board positions, or newsletter apprentice editor. We all started as volunteers and continue in our local associations. Please bring your talent up to the state level. There are so many opportunities available for you. It is a great experience. Let me know if you have any questions or a desire to volunteer in any position mentioned.

I hope each of you has a wonderful holiday season! Thanksgiving and Christmas are wonderful times to spend with family and friends. Thank you all for your continued support for AMGA, Advisory Council, and your local associations.

Life is a Garden, dig it!

This Pho-

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Sondra Henley, chair

The Advisory Council met August 3, 2021, at Petals from the Past. Twenty-six associations were represented, with 58 council members and guests attending.

Deborah Harris of Blount County was appointed as AC Nominating Committee Head for the upcoming 2022 AC officer elections. Deborah will have a nominating committee of two others and will send their nominations to AC Chair, Sondra Henley, by October 15. At that time, Sondra will send the 2022 nominations to the AC roster. The November meeting attendees will elect the 2022 officers.

AMGA Conference reports were given, as well as ACES updates. There were discussions about websites and the Transformation Garden at Auburn University.

AC representatives were encouraged to appoint themselves, or other members of their LMGA, to a list of potential members who would like to work with AMGA and fill the state positions that are open now or in the future.

LMGAs were encouraged to continue being creative in their efforts to meet and work on association projects as well as following ACES Covid guidelines.

A potluck luncheon is planned for the November 2 meeting at Petals from the Past.

AMGA AWARDS

Lyn Webb, chair

We are already into fall, so it is time to start thinking about nominations for the AMGA Awards to be presented at the State Conference in Montgomery next May.

Information and instructions for the award nominations are found at alabamamg.org.

Under "AMGA Publications and Forms," select "AMGA Awards and Criteria." Each award is listed separately with its unique instructions. Please follow those instructions and submit by the deadline of January 31, 2022.

Entries for Outstanding Newsletter Award should be for the association's May and September issues. All associations are encouraged to make submissions in the appropriate category. If your association has previously won this award, you must wait three years before your next submission.

Except for the Gary Murray Outstanding Service Award which honors non-Master Gardeners, all nominees for AMGA awards must be current AMGA individuals in good standing.

Order forms for Reach for the Stars and Advanced Badges and Stars awards are found by going to alabamamg.org, looking under "AMGA Publications and Forms," and clicking on "AMGA Forms." Select and print the forms needed. Instructions are on the forms. With the order form, checks should be made out to AMGA and submitted to the Reach for the Stars Chair, Lee Ann Marona, 292 Magnolia Ridge, Millbrook AL 36054. Please do not send checks to the AMGA Treasurer. You can reach Lee Ann here, amgastars@gmail.com.

Advance Badges and Stars Awards order forms are sent to Lyn Webb, lyn.c.webb75@gmail.com.

Every association has someone who goes above and beyond. Most of us have someone who is not a Master Gardener but has made significant contributions to the Master Gardener program. Please help AMGA recognize the most deserving members by submitting them for an award.

AMGA MEMBERSHIP

Mary Howe, chair

AMGA's paid and lifetime memberships for 2021 totaled 1932 as of September 7, 2021, according to Dues Tracker entries and payments to the AMGA Treasurer. Several discrepancies still exist between membership dues submitted to the Treasurer and the Dues Tracker postings so that the actual count may vary. The numbers need to be reconciled at the local association level to assure AMGA has an accurate membership record.

Dues collections for 2022 will begin soon, and payments should be posted in the Dues Tracker database when payments are sent to the AMGA Treasurer. Each association should have at least one individual with access to Dues Tracker (and preferably at least one alternate administrator). If your association does not have an administrator or needs to change individuals with access, please provide the information to the AMGA Membership Chair at www.amgamembership@gmail.com. Use the same e-mail for membership questions or assistance with Dues Tracker. The Dues Tracker website has been updated and reformatted in an effort to reduce the time required for posting dues. The functionality of the site remains similar to the old format, but some enhancements have been included. A Frequently Asked Questions page has been added, and there is a means for addressing any problems encountered with the site. At present, both sites are available and reflect the same information, but the old site will be taken offline in the future.

AMGA Newsletter

Patricia Peoples, editor

Thanks to all who submitted an article for PATHWAYS or for HAPPENINGS.

Without your comments and information, we would have no newsletter. I would, at this time, like to recognize Patricia Patty, copy editor, and Carolyn Wade, proofreader, on their dedication in helping with *Pathways* as we strive to make sure the newsletter is accurate, grammatically correct, and the words flow to create an excellent, readable paper.

The winter issue of *Pathways* will be mailed to members who are paid Master Gardeners and whose names are listed in the AMGA dues tracker. If you wish to receive this issue, PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR INFORMATION IS CORRECT.

ADD THESE DATES TO YOUR CALENDAR.

Tuscaloosa Fall Seminar: October 27
Advisory Council meeting: November 2
AMGA BOD meeting: December 7
Order Stars, and Awards nominations deadline: January 31, 2022
Winter *Pathways*: Mailing around January 15, 2022
AMGA Annual Conference: May 8, 9, and 10, 2022

AMGA PROJECT FUNDING
Sheila Bolen, chair

There's not a lot going on with Project Funding right now; however, LMGAs should be putting their thinking caps on for possible projects. The following LMGAs have received funds in the last two years and are not eligible to apply in 2022: Autauga, Baldwin, Blount, Calhoun, Central Alabama, Cherokee, Chilton, Covington, Limestone, Marshall, Master Gardeners of North Alabama, Mobile, St. Clair, and Tuscaloosa. The remaining 18 LMGAs (there are 32 LMGAs listed on the AMGA website) are all eligible to apply for Project Funding monies. What would you like to build, expand, remodel? Need some more soil for school or community gardens? How's your association A/V equipment? Is there a city/county park where you would like to do plantings? Ideas are endless and that's what Project Funding is for - to help associations with projects and needs. I know it's just September, but why put applying off until the last minute. Applications are due to the Project Funding Chairperson no later than January 15, 2022. The Project Funding application can be found at (alabamamg.org) and the Mission Statement and Guidelines are at AMGA PROJECT FUNDING PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT | Alabama Master Gardeners Association, Inc (alabamamg.org). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, Sheila Bolen, at sheilabolen@hotmail.com or by calling 256-354-2188 and leave a message (I don't answer numbers I don't recognize). Hope to see an application from all eligible associations!

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately,

to front only the essential facts of life,

and see if I could not learn what it had to teach,

and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.

Henry David Thoreau
brainyquote.com

AMGA TREASURER

Sunita Graves

Your association continues to hold a strong financial position, with a total of $113,679 in the bank as of August 31, 2021, and no liabilities.

A more detailed Statement of Financial Position as of December 31, 2021, and a Statement of revenues and expenses for the year then ended will be presented at the 2022 annual conference.

ALABAMA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION, INC	
Statement of Financial Position	
As of August 31, 2021	
	Total
Assets	
Current assets	
Total certificates of deposit	$25,176
Checking account- Regions Bank	$77,827
MONEY MARKET account - REGIONS BANK	$10,676
Total bank accounts	$113,679
Other current assets	
Total Other Current Assets	$1,895
Total Current Assets	$115,574
Fixed Assets	
ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION	-$3,322
Equipment	$3,420
Total fixed assets	$98
Total assets	$115,672
Total fund balance	$115,672

Love is like a beautiful flower which I may not touch, but whose fragrance makes the garden a place of delight just the same.

Helen Keller

CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES: ALABAMA MASTER GARDENERS CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." -Audrey Hepburn

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System Master Gardeners (MGs) are celebrating 40 years of belief in tomorrows. Through community gardens, tours, workshops and community outreach projects, MGs are making a difference in their communities across Alabama year after year.

The MG program has touched thousands of lives throughout its 40-year history, reaching farther than many people realize. Volunteers in some counties help feed food-insecure families with produce from community gardens. Others host community events or garden tours. There are other counties where the MG volunteers are the backbone of the county fair.

A JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZES CONTRIBUTIONS

Senator Clay Scofield introduced a joint resolution to the Alabama legislature recognizing the Master Gardeners for their service during the past 40 years.

The Alabama legislature jointly "commends the Alabama Extension Master Gardener Program for its contributions to the State of Alabama and hereby recognizes its impact toward making our state more beautiful and its citizens more capable of environmentally safe and sound decisions for their home landscapes."

Over the forty years of sweat, energy, time and talent contributed, their work has had an estimated $112 million worth of volunteer efforts.

Humble Beginnings and Humble Service

Since its beginning in 1981, the Alabama MG program has become an impactful and expansive statewide program, with 1,565 members reporting volunteer hours in 2020—even in the midst of a global pandemic.

Gary Murray, Extension Agent Assistant in Madison County in 1981, led the team who developed the first volunteer training. He was encouraged to implement the program by Huntsville resident Mary Lou McNabb, who participated in the MG program at Cornell University.

He said behind every successful program is a good team who makes it happen. "It comes down to the quality of people who choose to become MGs. These individuals are extraordinary. I am a first-hand witness to the difference they can make in communities. They want to improve their own knowledge base, and then use what they learn to help others."

Fast-forward to 2021

Mallory Kelley, a Regional Home Grounds Agent, said the impact MG's have on their communities is incredible and inspiring. "The MG program is about gardening, but the thing that really ties people together is the unique and lasting relationships you cultivate. I applaud these volunteers because they give a lot of time, energy and love to their projects. The Prattvillage garden is just one example that makes a difference in an Alabama town."

Cultivating Community

Billie Crawford, a Montgomery County MG, comes from a family of Alabama MG volunteers. She said gardening is in their blood. Crawford's sister and brother-in-law are Tuscaloosa County MGs. Her mother, Helen Bretz, was an Alabama MG in Tuscaloosa County in 1991.

Continued on page 7

Crawford said. “Mom already loved the MG program and encouraged me to participate in the outreach programs and get involved with community service projects.”

Helen Bretz said, “The MG program has given me so many wonderful friends. Many of them I am still in contact with today.”

The association that brought her lasting friendships is the same one that she said breathed life into her again after she fought colon cancer. “After 24 cancer treatments, I was weak and tired,” Bretz said. “Through Harvest for Health, I was offered the opportunity to have two MG mentors help me with a garden in my back yard. It really brought me back to life.”

The Reward of MGs Believing in Tomorrow.

MG volunteers donated 13 tons of fresh produce to area food banks for local families experiencing food insecurity in 2020 through the Grow More, Give More (GMGM) campaign. This topped 2019’s donations by 2,000 pounds.

Harvest for Health pairs cancer survivors with MG mentors who guide them while growing a four-season backyard garden. Harvest for Health has impacted more than 400 cancer survivors throughout Alabama.

This research, led by the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s Comprehensive Cancer Center, would not be possible without Alabama MG volunteers and their contributions of time, talent, and heart.

40 Years of Service

From humble beginnings came a program that humbly consistently serves in many communities throughout the state of Alabama.

This outstanding Extension program owes gratitude to the Alabama MG program pioneers for their energy and determination, especially Mary Lou McNabb for launching the idea in Madison County. Thank you to her and to all of the Alabama Master Gardeners who volunteer in their communities. Way to grow!

Original article by Katie Nichols, ACES Communications and Marketing

Submitted by Kerry Smith, State MG Program Coordinator

A garden is a delight to the eye

and a solace to the soul. - Sadi

HAPPENINGS

Fall 2021

D Johnsey, St Clair Co walking trail

AUTAUGA CO MGA

Nancy Waggoner

Prattvillage Garden, maintained by AC-MGA in downtown Prattville, is well recognized for its old wooden chapel, gorgeous flowers, herbs, shrubs, and brick pathways. It has now assumed additional importance with two new plaques prominently displayed on the garden fence. One designates Prattvillage as a Monarch Waystation by Monarch Watch. The other shows it received the Green Bridges TM Certification from The Herb Society of America.

Diligent and dedicated members of the ACMGA Prattville Pollinator Project, Debbie Boutelier, Kathy Quinn, Jane McCarthy and others, have been instrumental in seeing that the garden meets and maintains the qualifications for receiving these certifications. Adding a large pollinator-friendly area with nectar and host plants has ensured that the garden is a safe habitat and consistent way station, for insects, butterflies, and birds, that through browsing and feeding on native plants, distribute pollen critical for healthy, sustainable ecosystems.

Butterflies can be "reared" to multiply! For example, swallowtail butterflies deposit eggs on parsley, dill, and fennel, where the larvae feed voraciously. Our butterfly expert, Sonya Moore, guided us through the process of placing the eggs and larvae (caterpillars) in special, protected containers to move into chrysalis and adult stages. We had great fun in waiting for our babies to emerge and fly! When metamorphosis was complete, butterflies abandoned the chrysalis and were released back into the garden.

An additional goal of the project is to increase awareness of the need to provide safe and healthy habitats for our pollinators. ACMGA, a proud sponsor of the AMGA Fall Seminar in Prattville, has invited speakers who will focus on the role of pollinators such as native insects and hummingbirds.

Prattvillage Garden is now officially certified as a safe habitat and way station for pollinators. Photo by Nancy Waggoner

CALHOUN CO MGA

Tim Kaylor

Busy, busy, we're so busy, it'll make you dizzy! Our Master Gardeners are ecstatic that *Alabama's Fall Season* has arrived. Cooler temperatures translate to higher productivity, greater comfort and increased participation in our mission. We have enjoyed a lineup of tremendous speakers at our monthly Lunch and Learn meetings on the fourth Wednesday each month; Dr. Ken Tilt, "Lotus"; Dr. Carolyn Robinson, *The Art of Floral Design*; Dr. Amanda Strayer-Scherer, *Scouting and Managing Plant Diseases*; Toni Bruner, *Down Under in North Alabama, All About Cave Ecosystems*; David Doggett, *Garden References, Books and Online*. Our Grounds Crew has magnificently manicured and sustained the beauty and functionality at our home grounds, Cane Creek Community Gardens. We continued our public tours and were pleased to host Cherokee County MGA and East Central AL MGA, who, following their tours, held their meetings under the pavilion. We were blessed with speakers at our regular monthly MG meetings on topics like; *How to Select the Right Daylily*, *Roses in the Garden* and *Things to Know about Fall Vegetables*. Our CCMG board continues to perform at a high level. Committees are hard at work creating an incredible future for our Association. Should any association like to tour our home grounds, please contact our President and schedule your visit. We've received positive responses from many in the community in appreciation for access to free raised bed planting spaces. They've enjoyed the bountiful harvests and many have donated through the *Grow More, Give More* campaign.

Butterfly Garden at Cane Creek Community Gardens. Photo by Tim Kaylor

CAPITAL CITY MGA

Mary Eleanor Hines

COVID has not slowed the CCMG. We have continued monthly meetings with excellent programs and constructive plans for our future. Our 2021 membership currently stands at 135 members. Current interns, along with 2020 interns, are completing their volunteer hours after having finished classroom requirements. With COVID ending, we look to increased activities

Ten members were awarded stars at the March meeting and eight members were awarded badges for 2020.

Our CCMGA Constitution was revised by a committee of four. The revisions were reviewed by the membership and later approved.

A new committee will assist in raising funds not possible to do during the past year. With a goal of $5,000, we began with a CCMGA and Montgomery Botanical Gardens Board members-only plant sale held in our newly constructed greenhouse and made $1,328.50. MBG has progressed well over the past couple of years with CCMGA funding and manpower support from the beginning. A recent joint project was the creation of colorful plant beds at the garden's entrance.

CCMGA has also added to our monthly meetings *My Favorite Thing.* Members are encouraged to present their favorite gardening item such as a tool, process, plant, etc.

Earth Day 2021 was recognized by our talented president, Janell Diggs, and her daughter, Janlyn, with a spirited program, *How to Love Our Earth*. It was a most informative and entertaining program.

MBG will begin the Helpline Service statewide with the help of CCMGA. CCMGA will participate once a month.

CHEAHA CO MGA

Debby Mathews

Orchids have been on our minds lately because Steve Jones has launched the Cheaha Orchid Society as part of his service as a Master Gardener. Check the Facebook page Cheaha Orchid Society for the daily blossom, and take time to "like" the page. A recent daily blossom posting featured Cattleyopsis, an orchid that will put you in a Hawaiian state of mind!

After our September meeting, we gathered for a photo behind the Master Gardener 40th anniversary banner. Pictured left to right; Marie Rhoden (president), Margaret Taylor, Jimmy Taylor, Sue Pentecost, Steve Jones and Ann Jones. Photo by Debby Mathews

CHEROKEE CO MGA

Janice Knight

Summer has come and gone, and we are still busy with our garden projects. The Centre City Park is getting rave reviews from the folks in the neighborhood. We had help with watering this immense venture from two groups: the Centre Boy Scout Troop #247 and the students at the Centre Education and Training Center. The Training Center group has been rewarded with a donut party, and the Boy Scouts were rewarded with pizza. Thanks so much for helping us get so many new plants established!

Welcome to our new regional agent, Dr. Brian Brown. He is a very busy man, but he had time to do a Master Gardener monthly program for us on *Fall Landscape Makeover*. Thanks! We also visited the Maraella Winery in Hokes Bluff to tour the vineyards and the processing facilities late this summer.

Our dedicated volunteers also manned the booth at the Farmer's Market in Centre this year. We sold plants and gave out valuable plant information, plus we planted the seed in the minds of many to be in our next MG intern class, hopefully to be held in January. The sales season ended in September at Leesburg Day, a community event with a plant sale booth.

Next year, we have contracted with a local greenhouse for space to propagate plants for the 2022 season.

October 2, 2021, saw us at an information booth at the Centre Fall Festival. This is an annual community event, and the booth was great public relations for us. The streets were adorned with our planters, now beautifully decorated with fall chrysanthemums.

Happy Gardening in the fall, y'all!

CHILTON CO MGA

Audrey Giles–Trisha Williams

Every Thursday in July, several Chilton County Master Gardeners were digging and potting iris, daylilies and more for our plant sale. A local resident donated as many plants as we wanted from her property that once belonged to her grandparents. A team led by Susan Cleckler consulted with the Chilton County High School Ag teacher about plants to beautify around existing raised vegetable beds and suggestions for additional beds. In August, Charlene LeBlue from Auburn University talked to us about Frederick Law Olmstead, who is considered the father of American landscape architecture. The 40th anniversary of Master Gardeners in Alabama was celebrated with lunch outside at the Chilton Research and Extension Center. We invited the staff at CREC including some retired extension employees and enjoyed visiting with everyone on a damp, cool day. Our September program on Straw Bale Gardening was presented by Eric Schavey, ACES Regional Extension Agent. We learned the steps to be successful in growing vegetables in straw bales.

A large group of Chilton County MG's and Gay West, retired Chilton County Extension Coordinator. Photos by Trisha Williams

COFFEE CO MGA

Jacque Hawkins

Members of the Coffee County Master Gardener's Association (CCMGA) work with new homeowners of Habitat Houses to provide landscaping. CCMGA members recently assisted in landscaping the front of a Habitat Home in Elba, AL.

Master Gardeners teach the homeowners how to prepare a plot for planting, incorporating proper procedures for planting to achieve maximum success. We show them how to mulch around the plants and how to maintain them once they are planted.

Master gardeners landscape a habitat house. From right to left: Jacque Hawkins; CCMGA Project Chair Brenda Evans, who scheduled the workday; Maggie Sickler; Rodney Penuel; Anne Edwards; Janine Coles and the CCMGA President Ed Seigner. Photo by Louie Evans

EAST CENTRAL MGA

Sheila Bolen

It's been a busy summer for East Central Alabama MGs. On June 17, we toured Fern Ridge Farms in Cherokee County for a great educational tour by Eleanor Craig. Who knew there were that many different ferns out there? On July 13, we had a double-whammy tour. First, we met Hayes Jackson at Longleaf Botanical Gardens, where he gave us a tour of the facilities and grounds. After touring the gardens around the main building, Hayes opened the greenhouses for us, and all had a really good time! After we were shopped out, we headed over to Cane Creek Community Gardens, home of the Calhoun County Master Gardeners. Again, a great educational tour was given by Skeeter Sims and Linda McDaniels. September 16 East Central is hosting a presentation by former HGTV star Joe Washington on Adaptive Gardening. We've been very busy finding a location, designing fliers, pre-registering attendees, and working on the gardens at SIFAT (Servants in Faith and Technology). Everybody is keeping their fingers crossed that Covid lets us continue with our plans.

East Central MGA touring Longleaf Botanical Gardens L to R: Hayes Jackson, Martha Burnett, Augie and Ralph Sanchez, Susan Reynolds, Cheryl Smith, Valerie Morris, Laura Kulick, Stephanie Yates, Martie and Lee Culver, Peggy McLarty, Jack Bolen. Picture by Sheila Bolen

Etowah Co MGA

Carol B. Link

Throughout the summer, a group of Etowah County Master Gardeners stayed busy at the greenhouses; pruning, cleaning up, and potting plants in preparation for the next plant sale. The association has been planning a fall plant sale, but the sale may not occur with the surge in Covid cases. In all probability, the next plant sale will be next spring.

The association has procured a new permanent meeting place in downtown Gadsden: the Lena Martin room at the Gadsden Public Library. The June, July, and August meetings were held there this summer.

In June, Betty Hall, an Etowah County Master Gardener, and her husband Keith (an ECMGA honorary Master Gardener) conducted a hands-on workshop on constructing and installing an irrigation system. The workshop, which was conducted in the garden at Darden Rehabilitation Center, was well attended.

On July 1, at the association's regular business meeting, Alabama Cooperative Extension agent Eric Shavey gave a presentation on *The Alabama Beginning Farmer Program.* On July 7, at the 5th Street Farmer's Market, the extension system held a Tomato Taste-off. Dale Garner, former president of ECMGA, won the contest for the biggest tomato.

In late August, when the new strain of Covid began an uptick in cases, to protect its members, the executive board decided to suspend upcoming meetings .

The executive board will continue meeting in the metal building on association property each month to take care of business until the danger of Covid has lessened or passed. The June, July, and August meetings were held there.

Recently, these new Master Gardeners from the class of 2020 were awarded bronze stars. They completed the required number of service hours in spite of Covid 19 challenges. L-R: Nancy Walker, Dennis Thompson, Mary Thompson, and Lara Knight. Photo by Regina Ford

JACKSON CO MGA
Bill Caudill

Hello from the garden to all.

We are saddened by the death of fellow Master Gardener, Gary Patrick Bullock on July 1, 2021. His smiling face will be missed.

We enjoyed a great presentation of "Gardening For Seniors" by Madison County MG Bonnie Gardner at our September 2 meeting. We thank her for coming to visit.

We wrapped up participation in the Jackson County Fair last month, Sept. 7-11. The theme was "Let Freedom Ring." We did gate decorations, designed a first Place award booth for exhibits, and manned and maintained the flower house exhibit. Until next year!

We are working hard on having an October 9, 2021, Plant Sale in the Jackson County Senior Center Parking Lot. Address 146 Rita Williams Drive. There will be day lilies from Vernon Bush garden beds, shrubs from Vernon Bush garden, and a variety of plants from JCMG home gardens. Part of the proceeds will go to a scholarship fund. Hours will be 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

We held a Vernon Bush Memorial Dedication August 9 at Jackson County Park. Several family members, friends, co-workers and county government officials participated. Signs have been installed that acknowledge Vernon's dedication to improving the park. We included this event in our Master Gardener 40th Anniversary celebration

Jackson Co MGA pictures. Photo by Cynthia Smith

JEFFERSON CO MGA

Fletcher Harvey

Jefferson County Master Gardeners remain busy…pandemic or not.

In July, a well-deserved field trip to Turkey Creek Preserve proved to be an excellent morning outdoors with friends.

In early August, a celebration was in order as we celebrated ACES Agent Bethany O'Rear's tenth anniversary as our guiding light. Due to restrictions, we were unable to party as we desired. Despite this situation, Bethany received a gift and other accolades. There are plans for a cake and appropriate frivolity sometime in the future. Bethany is truly a treasure.

Later in August, we had more cause for celebration as Alabama Master Gardeners celebrated their fortieth birthday at a beautifully executed event in Auburn. It was wonderful hearing from Mary Lou McNabb, Elouisa Stokes and Retired ACES Agent Gary Murray, who were largely responsible for our beginning. Kerry, you "done good."

On what might have been our only fall days, many Master Gardeners volunteered at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale. Perfect weather…good company…healthy plants. What more could one ask?

We ended our summer on yet another high note. Greg Harper, a researcher at UAB, delivered an excellent presentation on his four visits to the Galapagos Islands.

JEFFERSON CO MGs advising folks at the BBG Plant Sale. Photo by F. Harvey

MARSHALL CO MGA

Jo Dru

Marshall County Master Gardeners are partnering up with Guntersville State Park to create a pollinator garden. The park will supply herbicides, mulch and rocks and the MGs will supply the expertise and plants. A call was made to the MCMGA for noninvasive, native, deer-resistant plants. The plan is to clear an area at the park around the Nature Hut and plant around the Hut, keeping in mind the seasons. Stay tuned for the work in progress.

Workday around Guntersville State Park. Tom Anders, Judy McMurry, Harry Anderson, Jane Stanton, Ingrid Gibson, Mary McClendon, Colleen Hunkapillar, Elaine Hild. Photograph provided by Elaine Hild

MASTER GARDENERS OF NORTH ALABAMA

Barbara K Stansky

MGNA committees have been hard at work despite the challenges of continued restrictions to our usual activities! Our members maintained a beautiful Demonstration Garden at Huntsville Botanical Gardens all summer. Our Habitat for Humanity Committee participated in landscaping a home. Our Workshop Committee hosted several online workshops and a neglected corner in downtown Huntsville benefited from the work of our members. The Herb, Pollinator, and Perennial Demonstration beds at the Extension Office grounds flourished and became a nice focal point for visitors.

Our members gathered at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens to participate in the 40th Anniversary celebration in August. We were honored to have several iconic representatives in our group! Mary Lou McNabb, who was so instrumental in bringing Master Gardeners to Alabama, addressed the simulcast program from our party. Elouisa Stokes, our very active member of MGNA's first Intern Class who has served MGNA for forty years, also addressed the simulcast. We are so proud of both of these trailblazing ladies!

Mary Lou McNabb and Eloisa Stokes addressed the statewide 40th Anniversary Recognition Program via Zoom. Photo by Barbara K Stansky

Let's recollect the past and reconnect for the future. This year marks our 40th anniversary, and we celebrated it! Paul Patterson, dean of Auburn University's College of Agriculture, and Mike Phillips, director of Alabama Cooperative Extension honored us with a special recognition.

MOBILE CO MGA
Carol Williams

Peggy Wright participated in MCMG's greenery design workshop September 7, for members and interns to learn or polish their arranging skills, in preparation for our Greenery Sale at the Mobile Botanical Gardens in December. The owner of "Flowers by James" taught the creation of a mailbox saddle arrangement from greenery harvested and brought to the workshop by participants. Dozens of similar arrangements will be created and sold in December. Master Gardeners look forward to another class September 26, led by Lorene Lami , a retired floral specialist.

Brenda Bolton is June Master Gardener of the Month. Brenda, a retired schoolteacher and administrator, regularly shares her garden knowledge with state gardeners through the Master Gardener Help Line. Our whole community benefits from Brenda's knowledge through the occasional MCMG gardening columns she contributes to Mobile's weekly newspaper, Lagniappe. She previously served as MCMG president in 2015 and as chair of our annual Greenery Sale fundraiser, to which she is still very committed.

Bob Howard is August Master Gardener of the Month. Bob and his wife, Brenda, co-chair our information booth at summer Market on the Square each week through July in downtown Mobile, averaging eight contacts per hour this past summer. He looks forward to the Fall Market in the Square October to November, too. Bob is logistics chair of this year's Greenery Sale, our annual fundraiser. Bob also serves as membership chair for MCMG, and Brenda is corresponding secretary.

L-R: Peggy Wright, Brenda Bolton and Bob Howard, photo by Julie Conrey

MORGAN CO MGA
Susan Ledbetter

Morgan County MGA member, Bob Honea, is involved with the research project Harvest for Health, which is led in partnership by Auburn University and the O'Neal Cancer Center at UAB. The goal is to get cancer survivors involved in growing backyard vegetable gardens, providing them the potential to positively impact health factors such as daily exercise, increased strength, flexibility, and better eating. Bob is paired with two local cancer survivors. He visits their homes and guides them on how best to maintain successful and productive gardens. He sees their excitement in being able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. The program is funded by the National Cancer Institute, as well as corporate and private donations. A large follow-up study will end in spring 2023. This is the very first study that will document the health effects of managing a home garden. The Morgan County Master Gardeners Association is proud to be part of this groundbreaking research!

MCMGA has a new mascot on display at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. With a face only a gardener can love, Mr. M. G. Morgan is a scarecrow on the Scarecrow Trail from September through the end of October. Be sure to check out his bark hat in the photo attached!

MCMGA is excited about a new program led by the Oakville Indian Mounds Education Center. The program is part of an initiative to familiarize school children with local Native American foods. For our part, several of our greenhouse raised beds are being overtaken by butternut squash. More details and an added bonus will be discussed in a future Pathways article.

L: Bob Honea is pictured as the scarecrow. R: Bob Honea. Photo by Susan Ledbetter

SHELBY CO MGA

Kate Vogel

The Shelby County Master Gardeners continued to schedule outdoor meetings this summer. Mother Nature did not always cooperate.

Our traditional June member's garden tour was rained out but has been rescheduled for October.

In 2015, SCMGA members took on the job of refurbishing the county-owned Outdoor Learning Center behind the Extension Building. In July, we scheduled a workday in the shady OLC but again were rained out. We met inside (socially distanced and masked) to hear from those who had spearheaded that project.

Traditionally the August meeting is when we send a special invitation to this year's interns to join us for our monthly meeting. This year we had groups of interns from the two previous state-wide ZOOM classes. Interns Teresa and Larry Riddle, who received their badges and certificates at the meeting, spoke to us on their project to start a Community Garden in Pelham in conjunction with Pelham Parks and Recreation.

In September, we toured the 4-H Center near Columbiana to see the $8.4 million renovation project.
https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/4h/alabama-extension-dedicates-8-4-million-expansion-at-state-4-h-center/

SHOALS MGA

Cynthia Kershaw

The Shoals Master Gardeners had a very busy summer implementing and working with two educational projects with children in our area. These programs worked with 60 children. Both projects started the first week in June. One of our spring Interns, Alan Nix, wanted to start a children's gardening program at Calvary Learning Center in Tuscumbia. With the help of Lucy Edwards, our regional agent, Alan Nix and the facility's staff developed a program for four-year-old children and one for children ages eight to ten. The Master Gardeners constructed and filled eight raised beds for the older group and filled cattle tubs for the younger group. The activities covered nine weeks in which the children planted, cared for and harvested produce from the garden.

The Common Ground Project in Florence conducted a similar program. Master Gardener Lisa Morris was instrumental in presenting the project to the Master Gardeners. The members filled 11 existing raised beds for the project. The project followed the same curriculum that was developed for the Calvary Learning Center. There were six different groups of students who participated in the nine-week project.

Master Gardeners had an opportunity to volunteer or conduct a lesson each week at either one or both projects.

Our gardeners have been sharing some of their beautiful flowers and produce on our Facebook page. You can find out about Shoals Master Gardeners on Facebook or our website.

Intern Alan Nix, assisting two participants in caring for plants at Calvary Learning Center. Photo by Lucy Edwards

ST. CLAIR CO MGA

Pam Garrison

Back in June, one of our treasured members moved from St. Clair County down to Lee County. Patricia Peoples was an integral part of our group, and we really miss her. She managed our membership roster and oversaw the entry of our credit hours, among other contributions. Patricia has provided many great ideas regarding our projects and was very helpful in getting grants for us. Our loss is Lee County's gain, and they got a true gem.

We have been busy gardeners through the summer. The Pell City Lakeside Native Walking Trail has been the recipient of several workdays. New plants have been added, and the existing ones have been weeded and fed. Posts to hold identifying name tags were installed. With the help of one of our new interns, Zane Hoffman, the butterfly garden area was weeded and mulched.

A hot day in July found us working at the Moody Miracle League Baseball Field. We weeded, pruned and mulched the entire area to make it nice for the players and their families. Work has also continued at Gateway Community Garden. Members have worked a number of days there, planting, weeding, and harvesting vegetables to be delivered to area food banks and the senior center.

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY MGA

Dan Sutton

Summer heat has many of us inside enjoying the air conditioning, but our projects are still growing. The Community Garden at the University of Alabama Arboretum has been thriving with all the rain we have received over the past couple of months. The garden is designed for both education and productivity. While Covid has limited opportunities to use it for teaching, corn, tomatoes, okra, field peas and other veggies grown there have allowed us to donate almost 600 pounds of produce to the West Alabama Food Bank. On Saturday, August 7, several of us had a work day there harvesting and getting the raised beds ready for the Fall crop - in spite of the intense August heat.

A much larger garden we help support in Tuscaloosa is Jeremiah's Garden. Member Barbara Sullivan (along with others) has spent hundreds of hours on that property where fruit, potatoes, herbs and vegetables grown are donated to the West Alabama Food Bank, the Community Soup Bowl, Catholic Family Services, and other local organizations. So far this year, over THREE TONS of food have been provided from this garden.

On July 17, President Wanda Smith visited the Moundville Historical Park *Saturday in the Park* series event, featuring native American food crops and crafts as demonstrated by Rosa Hall. She reported it was very interesting. Hopefully they will repeat the program next year.

TCMG volunteers working at the University of Alabama Arboretum - Community Garden on 07/07/21. Photo by Wanda Smith.

WIREGRASS MGA

Cathy Hinesley

Wiregrass Master Gardeners have been busy and productive this summer, including education and presentations at several community events. One of the community events we participated in was Aunt Katie's Community Garden Children's Outreach Program. This outreach is a six-week education program for kids that provides weekly classes developed and taught by our Master Gardeners.

Another favorite community project this summer was the Veteran's Garden Project at Landmark Park. Our veterans were able to have hands-on experiences during teaching programs like seed saving techniques by Advanced Master Gardener Helen-Sue Kemp. We have several Master Gardeners with advanced certificates who traveled and presented their programs to various community groups and area Master Gardener organizations. Another fun community project WMGA was involved in this summer was the Watermelon Tasting Event at Landmark Park in July. This annual event is sponsored, promoted and conducted by WMGA.

In addition, WMGA hosted summer programs in the Kitchen Garden at Landmark Park. Our Master Gardeners harvested vegetables from our Kitchen Gardens at Landmark Park and our demo beds at Dothan Area Botanical Gardens. We donate all food items to the Wiregrass Area Food Bank.

Lastly, WMGA proudly participated in the AMGA 40th Anniversary Program. Not ones to rest on our laurels, WMGA members are currently busy preparing for our annual Fall Plant Sale in October.

Pictured, Helen-Sue Kemp (left) and Sarah Jo Adams showing off a bountiful harvest at DABG
Photo by William Holman

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NEXT ARTICLE FOR PATHWAYS DUE DEC 15

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