



# GARDEN BUZZZZZZ



Volume 31 Issue 4 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association



## April 2022



### **Message from Lynda** *Lynda Edwards, President CAMGA President*

April in Alabama has to be one of the favorite months for Master Gardeners. The beautiful azaleas, redbuds, dogwoods, jonquils, snowball viburnum and spirea provide a glowing display of color in my neighborhood. The entire hillside looks like a giant garden. It's a beautiful month and one we celebrate the resurrection of Christ the Lord and plant our gardens with less fear of frost and damage to young plants.

Thank you all for the cards, prayers, texts and emails received since my surgery on March 7<sup>th</sup>. We will know more after activation of the Cochlear Implant now rescheduled for April 8, 2022. Unless you've been there, you cannot imagine living in a world where you cannot hear.

I have a deep respect for those who are deaf and those with severe hearing losses. I am looking forward to the required rehab so I can once again function better.

I will be with you at our April meeting. Kelly has planned for Caylor Roling from Eat South to speak to us this month. Robin will update us on our big plant sale, opened to the public this year, complete with vendors. Other than dues, our plant sale is our only revenue project to support our budget.

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**CAMGA Garden Buzzzz**  
Carol Pugh — Editor

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

***Lynda Edwards, President  
CAMGA President***



We need everyone to be involved with the plant sale and to talk it up to friends and neighbors. The date is May 7, 2022. Plants are sky-high at the box stores this year. It should be a wonderful opportunity to have lots of plants for sale. Hopefully everyone has been propagating.

The AMGA Conference will be May 2- 4 and our co-chairs will give us an up-to-date report on this Conference. I hope you have registered. That first week of May is a busy week for CAMGA members.



***Lynda***

***Lynda Edwards  
CAMGA President***



## Message from Mallory

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

### The Excitement of Spring Gardening is Here!

The cool, crisp, bright sunny days of spring are upon us. I don't know about you, but I have been in long anticipation and the gardening bug is biting me big this year. Like me, maybe you have been dreaming over seed catalogs all winter and plotting out ideas of where you want to try something new or just the rotation plan for your vegetable garden.

Here are some tips for your spring garden that I hope will excite and encourage you to plant some of the garden staples like tomatoes and peppers, but also try something new in your garden or landscape this year.

First of all, let's talk about planting and pruning. The best time of year to plant trees and shrubs is in the late fall and winter, this is because the plant leaves and stems go dormant, but its roots continue to grow. This allows time for the roots of the plant to establish so when Spring arrives the roots are strong and healthy and ready to send all the energy up into the leaves, stems and flowers. But, if you missed planting or you are now out in the garden centers and see something you want to add, planting can continue on into the spring, but extra care needs to be taken.

Make sure you amend the planting hole with good garden soil, keep the plant watered and apply mulch to keep the plant from drought stress and weeds. If possible, remove any flowers or fruit the plant produces the first year in the ground. This will reduce stress and send energy into making roots for a much happier, healthier plant sooner than later!

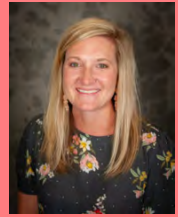
If you have not pruned shrubs yet, remember the "May Rule" or you may be removing buds, resulting in a garden with no beautiful flowers. The "May Rule" is "If it blooms before May, prune it right after it blooms, if it blooms after May, it can be pruned when it is dormant in the fall or winter." But some plants are exceptions to this rule so always check before pruning to make sure.

It is also a great time of year to get your soil tested. Soil tests are available through the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and cost seven dollars. We recommend you retest the soil every 3-4 years to see what additional nutrients might be needed to improve the growth of your plants. Plants like blueberries, camellias, and azaleas require a low pH and need acidic soil to grow healthy.

April is a great time to plant a new lawn or to fertilize established lawns. Wait until May to plant lawns from seed. In May water new lawns as needed to prevent drying. Keep established lawns actively growing by watering, fertilizing, mowing, and spray weeds in lawns with the proper herbicide. Begin fertilizing in April at 3-6 week intervals.

## Message from Mallory (Continued)

### Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, & Home Pests



As for Vegetable Gardening, it is time to plant those seeds and transplants once the threat of a late season frost has passed, this is usually mid April but can vary from year to year.

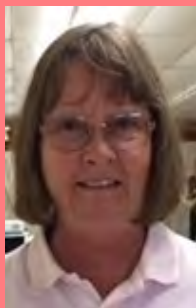
Some seeds can be started now if you have them inside in a sunny place or if you have a green house, but if you plant them outside too early you will only be wasting your time and money as the soil temperature is not warm enough for the seeds to germinate. Tomato plants can be transplanted at 55 degrees F, but growth will be slow. Use a rule of thumb of a night air temperature minimum of 55 degrees F. If you plant seeds like okra, beans and marigold seeds when the soil is less than 60 degrees F, the seed will sit in the soil which could result in it rotting or birds eating it before it germinates. It is really best to wait for warm sunny days in the 70's before planting.

Applying new mulch in April around existing shrubs, a perennial or annual bed, a large planting of new shrubs, or your vegetable garden each year is always a good idea. This will help prepare your plants for the hot summer temperatures that are quickly approaching along with many other benefits. Mulch helps conserve moisture so less watering is needed which saves you a lot of time pulling weeds, but also saves on your water bill. In addition, mulch will add nutrients to the soil as it breaks down over time. However, you do not want mulch to become too thick and piled up around the base of trees as this can hold moisture in the bark and cause rotting over time and invite insects. Make sure that the flare of the tree where it meets the ground is still visible!

Those are just a few tips on things you can be doing now in the garden, but also things you can prepare for in the next few months to help improve the success and beauty of your garden or landscape.







**CAMGA Minutes**  
**First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka and**  
**Via Zoom**  
**March 15, 2022**  
**10:00 a.m. — 12:00 noon**  
**By: Sheila Radford, Secretary**

The program speaker, Verna Gates, was introduced by Vice President Kelly LaFreniere. Verna is an ethnobotanist by profession and works with Fresh Air Families.

This organization is dedicated to outdoor education for families and to preserving wildflower folklore. They served over 4,000 children in 2021. Verna furnished many interesting stories of wildflowers common to this region, and she noted that Alabama is the 4th most biologically diverse state in the USA. For more information on this interesting field Verna may be contacted at: [www.VernaGates.com](http://www.VernaGates.com)

**The meeting was called to order by Kelly at 11:04 a.m.**

**Member concerns:**

Lynda Edwards surgery was completed. Sherri Davidson has medical tests scheduled. Cathy Whigham is traveling in Ireland. Our collective prayers go out for all these and any others we are unaware of.

**Vice President:**

Kelly said that the recruiting of speakers for future meetings and programs is a continuing work in progress.

**Secretary:**

Sheila moved to dispense with reading last month's minutes. They are available on line in the Garden Buzz. Betty Plaster seconded this motion. Motion carried.

**Treasurer:**

Sherri presented the 2022 CAMGA budget. This budget has already been approved at the board meeting and was open for discussion. CAMGA will continue working toward gaining 501(c)(3) tax designation. It was suggested that CAMGA should track expenses for fund raising versus profit from selling plants and crafts. Sherri has access to software "MoneyMinder" to use for tracking this issue. The point was made that some projects are worthwhile simply because they benefit the community even though CAMGA doesn't make money from them. A motion was made to accept the budget. There were none opposed and no abstentions.

**Learning Gardens:**

Mary told members that a new concept has been implemented in the garden. Instead of individuals taking responsibility for a particular bed it will be more of a community effort. There is a specific need for 1 qt. and 1 gal. planting pots for getting ready for the plant sale. Terry will be bringing soil to the learning gardens for this purpose. Thursdays are the regularly scheduled workdays from 8-12 depending on the weather.

**CAMGA Minutes (Continued)**  
**March 2022**  
**By: Sheila Radford, Secretary**

**Historian:**

Jane asks members to remember to take lots of photos at the AMGA conference and email them to her. The 2021 Yearbook is in the extension library.

**Librarian:**

Dee suggested that publicity for CAMGA's plant sale could utilize neighborhood Facebook pages.

**AMGA Convention Update:**

Janice reminded members that the last day for regular registration is March 31st. Late registration is available through April 20th for an additional \$10.00 charge.

There has been an additional tour added on May 2nd at 12:45. There will be more information on this at a later date. Margaret reiterated that convention volunteers need to wear a specific volunteer t-shirt. These shirts are available at \$8.00 each. Sizes do run small.

Volunteers are still being recruited to help with silent auction, working in the train shed, etc. April 21st assistance is needed for stuffing registration bags at Crossroads Community Church in Elmore. Contact Bionca Lindsey for more information about volunteer information. (Detailed info in email from Bionca)

**Plant Sale:**

All plants must have information regarding name of plant, color of blooms , (if pertinent) best growing conditions i.e. sun/shade, moist/dry. There stakes available for members to use.

A #2 pencil is the ideal marker to use for this purpose. This will be the first time for the plant sale to be open to the public at the extension. (Details included in email from Robin).

**Projects:**

Mardi Gras parade turn-out was enormous. Sandy needs help with butterfly garden booth and the crafts booth at the plant sale. (See projects email).

**Old business:** none

**New business:** none

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon

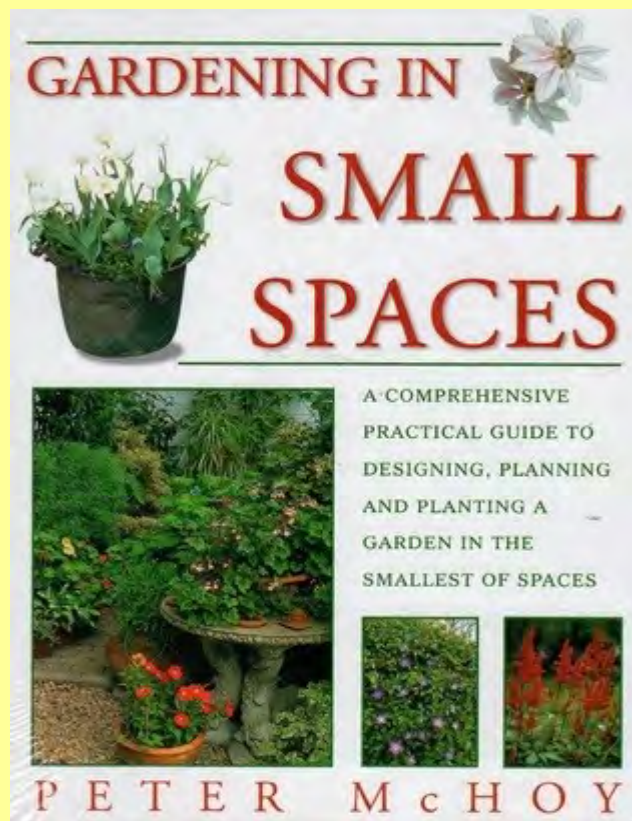
***Respectively submitted by,  
 Sheila Radford, Secretary***



## CAMGA Library News April 2022 By: Dee Turberville

### GARDENING IN SMALL SPACES, By Peter McHoy

Attractive small gardens seldom just happen; they are designed. And despite the apparent contradiction, the smaller the garden, the more important good design becomes. A large garden tends to look good, even with a weedy bed or two, because they go unnoticed among the overall impression of a large lawn, stately trees and shrubs. A small garden can be viewed in a glance, and the difference between good and bad design, attention to detail or neglect, is immediately obvious. Errors of judgment are highlighted. These handicaps can be overcome. This step-by-step guide, with examples of garden styles, and with explanations for every task covers a variety of suggested projects.



There are three well-illustrated sections in the book: (1) Elements of Design (2) Features and Structures (3) Choosing Plants. If you want a low-maintenance garden, the emphasis is on hard landscaping and the use of ground covers with easily maintained plants. If you like to collect a variety of plants, you will learn about spacing and choosing the right plants in proportion to the available space. In the third section, you will find hundreds of recommended plants, arranged by purpose – i.e., shade, color theme, borders, or fragrance, etc. With Peter McHoy's assistance, you are on your way to success— to make a big impact with a small garden!





## Governor's Mansion Report For March 2022 By: Amanda Borden



We began March with our second spring workday; we worked on the Lady Banks roses and removed and divided Louisiana Iris and daylilies.

- On March 8 we planted the divided Iris, daylilies, and gladioli at the Finley House. We also weeded and then renewal pruned the dwarf crepe myrtles and Mexican heather in the back yard.
- On March 14 we divided very large clumps of non-blooming narcissi; we separated them and replanted them in full sun.
- March 21 was the day we farewelled Trooper Morrow (see photo) and did not do much work.
- On March 28 we weeded in the Herb Garden, as seen in the last three photos.



**Standing:** Ann Hamill, Debbie O'Brien, Lisa Carrick, Lacey Gibson, Linda Cater, Darwin Prewitt, Anne Carr, Shap Ashley. **On the ground:** Robin Snyder, Jane McCarthy, Betty Plaster, Vivian O'Neal. **Missing from photo:** Kathy Quinn, John Carrick, Amanda Borden.





# Governor's Mansion Report (Continued) For March 2022 By: Amanda Borden



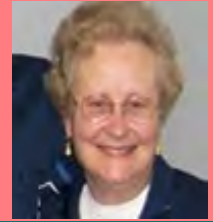
**In the photo: Jaeri Ellis, Debbie O'Brien, Robin Snyder, Jane McCarthy, Trooper J.T. Morrow, Darwin Prewitt, Linda Cater, Ann Hamill, Anne Carr, Beth Wicker. Not pictured: Kathy Quinn, Peggy Funk, Amanda Borden.**



## **SPOTLIGHT On VOLUNTEERS**

### **For March 2022**

**By: Judy May**



Members who brought food to the march CAMGA meeting were: Linda Cater, Iva Haynie, Sandra Rosamond, Robin Snyder, Barbara Wallace, Cheryl Fitzgerald and Dee Turberville.

Again this month Mary Ann Hatcher worked the Helpline by herself.

Volunteers at the Governor's Mansion this month were Amanda Borden, Valera Brown, Lisa Carrick, Anne Carr, Linda Cater, Ann Hamill, Peggy Funk, Jane McCarthy, Dawn Mitchell, Betty Plaster, Kathy Quinn, Robin Snyder and Beth Wicker.

Attending the Projects Committee meeting March 8 were, Terry Chambliss, Sheila Radford, Sandy Rosamond, Jane Mobley, Anne Carr and Judy May.

On March 21<sup>st</sup> area Advanced Master Gardeners attended a Zoom presentation to support Advanced Master Gardener candidate Phyllis Clay. In attendance were: the presenter, Master Gardener Phyllis Clay, (Jefferson County), Advanced Master Gardener Lee Borden, (CAMGA) David Doggett (Jefferson County), Sondra Henley (Clanton-Autauga Counties), Glenn Houvnen (Autauga/ CAMGA) Bionca Lindsey (Autauga / CAMGA), Jane Mobley, (CAMGA), and Liaison Candace Jones, (CAMGA).

The members who volunteered at Lanark this month were: Carla McCune, Don Hoover, Leslie Bingham, Judy May, Cheryl Fitzpatrick, and Sharon Kochic. Thanks to Terry Chambliss and the Projects Committee for organizing a workday at Lanark.

Judy May, Cheryl Fitzpatrick, Sharon Kochic, Don Hoover and Leslie Bingham dug up daffodils that will be planted along the front drive. We lost a bunch over the years due to tractor work in that area. Come visit Lanark, it is beautiful this spring! Maria promises to put you to work and you will have fun!

On March 30, members met to confirm and coordinate plans for the plant sale. Members attending were: Robin Snyder, Jane Mobley, Lynda Edwards, Terry Chambliss, Ann Carr, Sandy Rosamond, Rhona Watson, Dee Turberville, Iva Haynie, Sherri Davidson, Allison Andrews, Amanda Borden and Judy May.







# Learning Garden Report Part 1

## By: Mary McCroan

### Frost Cloth and Azaleas

Our climate around Wetumpka is generally perfect for a great spring display of azaleas in the landscape. However, every now and then we get a spring freeze unfortunately timed for when the shrub is full of buds and just about to be gorgeous. For many azaleas, the fantastic bloom only happens once a year.



And when mother nature throws us a late freeze, it is hard on a gardener's heart. This year, mid March, we were going to suddenly drop to overnight temps of 23 degrees. Our George Tabor Azaleas were in full bud with just a few flowers. We have two groups of them and covered one with frost cloth (top picture).

We didn't have enough frost cloth for the second group, so it became an experiment.



The results were obvious the next day, with all of the flowers drooping on the uncovered group and many flowers surviving on the covered group.

More importantly, most of the unopened buds on the uncovered group (middle picture) were damaged and there were very few flowers that opened later.



The covered group (bottom picture) came through like a champ, buds opened, and we got that wonderful display that azaleas are famous for!

So, experiment successful--frost covers work!



# Learning Garden Report

## Part 2

By: Mary McCroan

In addition to working on a grant request to improve the future of our demonstration gardens, we are restructuring the veggie garden component today. Previously, volunteers adopted a bed. They planted, weeded and harvested according to what they wanted. We might end up with three tomato beds, which limited what we were showing the public. This year, we got together and decided jointly what will go in each bed. We will all plant, weed and harvest all of the beds. Anything that is ripe that doesn't go home with a volunteer, will be donated to the food bank which is a short distance away. One of our decisions is to dedicate four beds to teaching crop rotation. Crop rotation is one of agriculture's oldest cultural practices. In a home vegetable garden, crop rotation involves changing the planting location of vegetables within the garden each season. Crop rotation is used to reduce damage from insect pests, to limit the development of vegetable diseases, and to manage soil fertility. Amanda Borden has come up with a four year plan that will rotate all the major plant families (brassicas, nightshades, legumes, cucurbits, etc). Amanda's efforts are complicated by our mild climate which allows us to often plant a winter crop that has to be taken into account in the plan.



Plants in the greenhouse have done well. One night, when outside temps got down to 24, the temperature inside got down to 38. That didn't hurt the Impatiens pots I put in there as the "canaries in the coal mine" that I thought would be most sensitive to temps that were too low. However, there may have been some damage to a few of the Angel Trumpet pots--the stems are slightly droopy since that cold night and we will see how they recover. Most of the Angel Trumpets show no distress and we will have plenty for the plant sale. The pretty Yellow Jasmine planted on the trellis outside the fence that surrounds the greenhouse did take a hit that cold night and all the flowers were lost. Interestingly, wild vines in the woods seem to fare better.

For those that are dividing plants for the plant sale, one yard of super soil and two yards of peat moss are available for this purpose. Look behind the shed at the far end of the veggie garden.

And for those looking for a mental health day, come on out on any Thursday morning. We'd love your company and everybody feels better after a few hours with your fingers in the dirt!



# 2022 Master Gardener Plant Sale



## PLANT SALE



**plus Local Vendors**

**Saturday May 7**

**8 AM – 12 noon**

**Elmore County Extension**

**340 Queen Ann Road, Wetumpka**

**Great prices and plant selection. On site master gardeners to answer your questions. Variety of local vendors.**

**Annuals**

**Perennials**

**Vegetables**

**Herbs**

**Trees**

**Fruit**

**Shrubs**

**Succulents**

**House Plants**

**Indoor Plants**

**Butterfly Garden Plants**

**Yard Art**

## **GETTING TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS**

**April 2022 Featured Member:**  
*Sheila Radford*



**Hello my name is Sheila Radford.**

**I am a retired x-ray technologist. My family has lived in the Prattville/Millbrook area since 1970.**

**I am a widow and have three adult children — two daughters, one son, and I have four grandsons!**

**My hobbies are gardening (of course), reading, walking, and working jigsaw and crossword puzzles. I also enjoy following current events.**

**My favorite garden interest is landscaping and butterfly gardens.**

**I took the Master Gardener class to meet people, learn more about gardening, and socializing.**

**One thing that you may not know about me is, I have a second degree black belt in Taekwondo.**





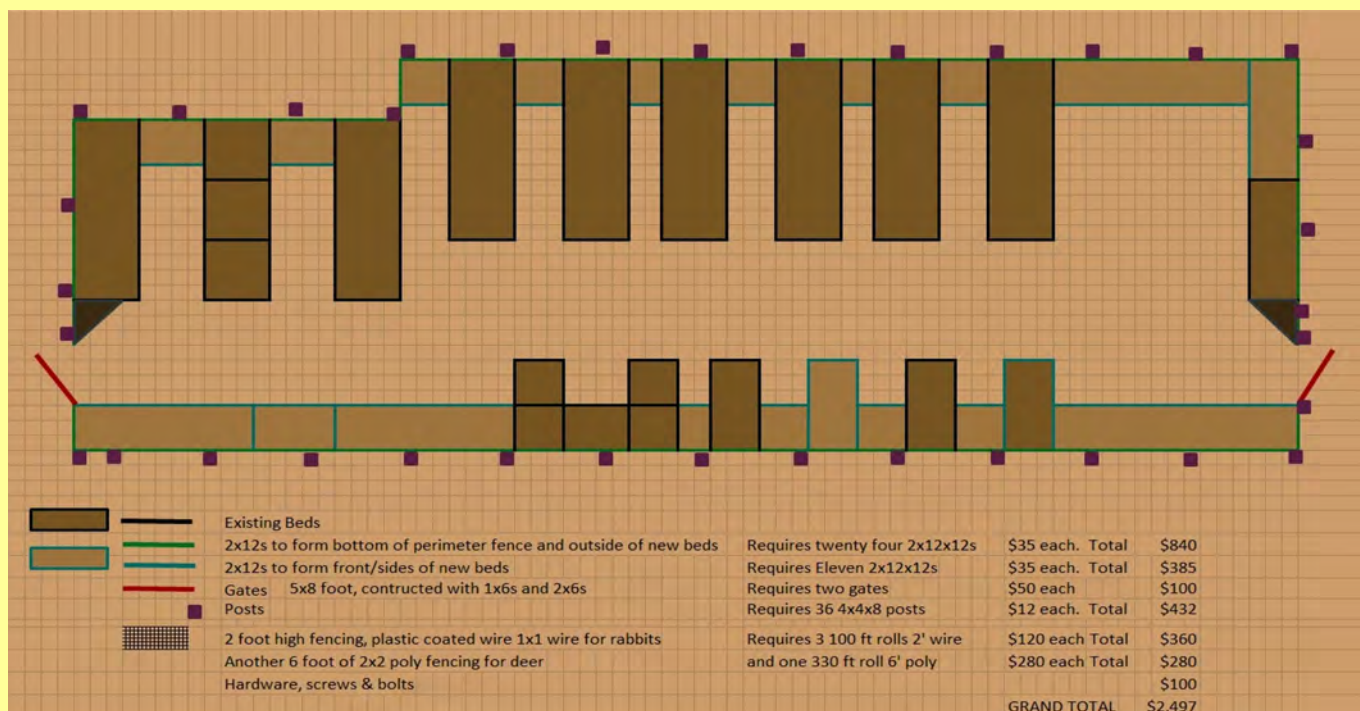
## Learning Garden Grant

### By: Mary McCroan

We had the opportunity recently to apply for a grant from the Central Alabama Community Foundation. We will learn in August if our grant request was successful.

The Learning Gardens located at the Elmore County Extension Office currently include ornamental beds, butterfly gardens, a shade and water garden, a rain garden, herb beds and edible beds (small fruits, seasonal veggies, perennial veggies). These areas illustrate the possible to Elmore County homeowners. We have used them to conduct seminars on pruning, propagation and food production. Our gardens demonstrate techniques such as raised beds, vertical gardening, straw bale gardening and so forth. The area that we are requesting funding for improvements is our vegetable garden area. This area is not bounded by a fence and has no protection against critters such as deer and rabbits. In addition, there is room for additional beds that could be used to demonstrate a wider variety of edible plants our community could consider for inclusion in their home gardens. We plan to use 2x12 treated lumber to connect existing and new raised beds to form a solid perimeter. This will add 300 square feet to the existing beds. 4x4s will be connected to this perimeter and faced with plastic fencing (for the rabbits and deer). The new fences will create vertical gardening spaces to show homeowners how to maximize production from even a small garden.

Below is a diagram of the new garden with a summary of our projected costs. The rectangles represent raised beds. The darker rectangles are existing beds and the lighter colored rectangles are the new raised beds.





# April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday, 9-11 a.m.	5 Advisory Council Meeting, Petals from the Past 10 a.m.	6 Lanark Gardens Workday, 8-11 a.m.	7 Learning Gardens Workday, Extension Office, Wetumpka 8-12 noon 1st Thursday Community Market, Wetumpka, 3:30-6:00 p.m.	8	9
10	11 Governor's Mansion Workday, 9-11 a.m.	12	13 Lanark Gardens Workday, 8-11 a.m.	14 Learning Gardens Workday, Extension Office, Wetumpka 8-12 noon MG Helpline Elmore Co. Extension Office 9-1 p.m.	15 Good Friday	16 Earth Day at Wetumpka Farmers Market, 7:30 a.m. – 12 noon
17 Easter Sunday	18 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday 9-11 a.m.	19 CAMGA Monthly Meeting, First Presbyterian Church at 10-12 noon. <i>Guest speaker will be Caylor Roling from Eat South</i>	20 Lanark Gardens Workday, 8-11 a.m.	21 Learning Gardens, Workday, Extension Office, Wetumpka 8-12 noon Stuff AMGA Registration Bags, Crossroad Community Church, Elmore, 9 a.m. Propagation Workshop at Jane Mobley's house 1-3 p.m.	22	23
24	25 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday 9-11 a.m.	26	27 Lanark Gardens Workday, 8-11 a.m.	28 Learning Gardens Workday, Extension Office, Wetumpka 8-12 noon	29	30