



GARDEN BUZZZZ



Volume 32 Issue 3 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

March 2023

Message from Kelly

Kelly Lafreniere

CAMGA President



Hello fellow gardeners. I hope everyone is doing well and getting ready for daylight savings time in two weeks!

I'm sure you all are enjoying this warm weather and looking at all of the different events and projects to plug into over the next several months— like our Learning Garden work day, and also an event coming up on Monday, March 13 at the Governor's Mansion, which is the 10th Annual Rose Pruning Spring Workshop.

For more details contact Jane McCarthy. I wish I could join you, but I will be working that day.

These are busy times for everyone. Our oldest daughter recently became engaged, so it will be a hectic year helping her plan a wedding.

All of our lives can seem so busy these days with work, projects, appointments, events, and wedding planning that we can sometimes times forget to stop and smell the roses.

Let's all try to take care of ourselves. Never forget to just go outside feel the sunshine on your face, plant a garden even if only in a container or just take a walk in the woods somewhere to relax.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting on March 21st!

Kelly

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*Carol Pugh — Editor
Garden Buzzzz
Newsletter*



Message from Mallory

Mallory Kelley
Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds,

Alabama Gardener's Calendar – March

Fruits and Nuts

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

Shrubs

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

Lawns

- Plant bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, and centipedegrass in south Alabama.
- Soil test and add limestone as recommended.
- Fertilize fescue lawns at 1 pound slow-release nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
South: If daytime temps are consistently above 70 degrees F, consider applying fire ant bait. Read label carefully for best control.

Roses

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

CAMGA Minutes

February 21, 2023

First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka

By: Sheila Radford, Secretary



The featured speaker was Mike Forster. Mike is a 2014 graduate of the master gardener program and is a member of the Capital City Master Gardener Association. His topic was raised bed gardening. Most of the soil in this region is on the clayish side.

Some of the disadvantages of raised bed gardening are:

- The soil dries out quicker
- It can be expensive
- Limited crop rotation

Some of the advantages are:

- Improved drainage
- Soil warms faster
- Easier maintenance

Place raised beds away from trees, shrubs, fences, and buildings. Remember that most vegetables need full sunlight and should be close to the water source for the bed. Orient beds from east to west but plant north to south. **Dig bed one foot deep. A raised bed shouldn't be any wider than 4 feet for any wider will necessitate stepping into the planting bed to tend to the plants.**

Raised bed frames can be constructed of landscape timbers, railroad ties, rocks, concrete blocks, etc. Mark out beds and spray thoroughly with Roundup. Wait three days and spray again. Bed should be at least a **foot deep. If using landscape timbers make 8'x4' bed placing timbers alternately (like constructing a log cabin).** Line the inside walls of the garden bed with heavy duty plastic. **DO NOT** line the bottom of the raised bed. Healthy plants need drainage.

Don't use the dirt from the yard in the raised bed. Use amended soils only. Growing media includes amended top soil, grass clippings, leaves, compost. There is specific raised bed soil available, but it is quite expensive. Potting soil is not recommended for use in raised bed gardens.

Planting techniques he recommended are: allow 1'x1' of space for individual plants like potatoes and corn and 2'x2' for each plant for crops like summer squash and tomatoes. If using seeds insure that they are labeled for this current year's use.

A light frost will not harm cabbage broccoli, potatoes, and early green peas. Cool season vegetables: such as cabbage, potatoes, garlic, onions, beets in this region should be planted now.

ANR 0063 and ANR 1345 are Extension publications that go into more detailed suggestions about raised gardens. The YouTube video Alabama Smart Yard: Constructing a Raised Bed Garden is well worth watching too. Warm season veggies like tomatoes, okra, and peppers need the warmer soil of later spring to get the best start.

CAMGA February 21, 2023 Minutes (Continued)

By: Sheila Radford, Secretary

Plant north to south with smaller plants to the south (the front of the bed) and larger plants behind them (to the north). Take the lower leaves off of transplants to help eliminate pests. Vertical planting can be achieved using plastic stakes and mid weight fencing wire.

To treat for garden pests Mike recommended Sevin Dust. It is very effective, especially if used as soon as damage is noted. He also recommended a specific type of hoe with a flexible working edge. The brand name of the one he uses is Hula Hoe.

Refresh the soil in raised beds yearly with compost, mulch, and add fresh soil.

Mike's presentation concluded at 11:00.

Kelly called the business meeting to order at 11:20. Twenty members signed the attendance sheet.

Carolyn Hensley took a fall and broke one of her arms. Lynda Edward's brother-in-law is seriously ill. Our prayers go out for these folks and any others that we might not be aware of. Going forward, and with the affected member's permission, any member concern that need to be addressed can be sent to Anida and or Kelly to be shared.

Kelly announced that the minutes of January's meeting are available in the Garden Buzz. Betty Plaster moved that they be approved and the motion was seconded by Bonnie McCormick.

Sherri told members the 2022 audit has been completed and approved by the board. The 2023 budget is finished and was also approved by the board. A new check has been submitted to the American Diabetes Association to replace the one that was erroneously written out as payable to a American Diabetes Society that doesn't exist. This donation was made in remembrance of Lynda Edwards' son.

Cindy, our liaison to the Alabama Master Gardener's Association, will be writing CAMGA related articles to be put in the Pathways publication. Cindy needs an alternate in case she can't attend an AMGA meeting. They meet quarterly in Feb., May, and Nov. Rhonda Miles has volunteered to be the liaison alternate. The 2024 AMGA convention will be April 22-24 in Daphne, Ala. at the city's civic center. **AMGA has pledged \$200,000 to secure the naming rights at the Auburn University Transformation Gardens. AMGA is counting on all the state's master gardeners associations to donate toward fulfilling this pledge. The Speakers Bureau is always looking for people willing to give presentations at events. Many associations across the state are eager to have speakers, but don't have people with this skill set.**

Terry spoke about the Earth Day celebration to be held April 15th **at the Wetumpka Farmers' Market.**

Two shifts are available for volunteers. They are 7:30 -10am and 10a- 12 noon, Bring a plant to swap!

Regarding the Plant Sale: A minimum of 4 people are needed to set up each booth for the sale. These volunteers can then move on to other areas that need help. Darlene Dixon added that there is now a sign that promotes the plant sale. This sign is available for members to take to meetings i.e. Lunch & Learns, Earth Day, Plant Swaps, Market Place etc.

The registration for the autumn 2024 Master Gardener intern class will be from June 1-30. Elmore county is the main host this year, BUT if Autauga county has more interns attending than Elmore the majority of meetings will gather in Autaugaville again.

CAMGA February 21, 2023 Minutes (Continued)

By: Sheila Radford, Secretary

Dee noted that there are a great many books in the CAMGA library on raised bed gardening. Members are urged to take advantage of this resource.

Trouble resetting password on the CAMGA Service Report? Anida can help.

Mary Ann gave members an update on the Help Line. Starting in March thru August on every Thursday. CAMGA is responsible for manning the Help Line.

Mary Ann now has the capability to work it remotely from her home, but interns are obligated to work the Help Line 2 days in order to complete the master gardener program. Starting in Sept. CAMGA will then have the duty every 6th week until next March.

Old business: 0

New business: 0

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

***Minutes respectfully submitted by,
Sheila Radford, Secretary***



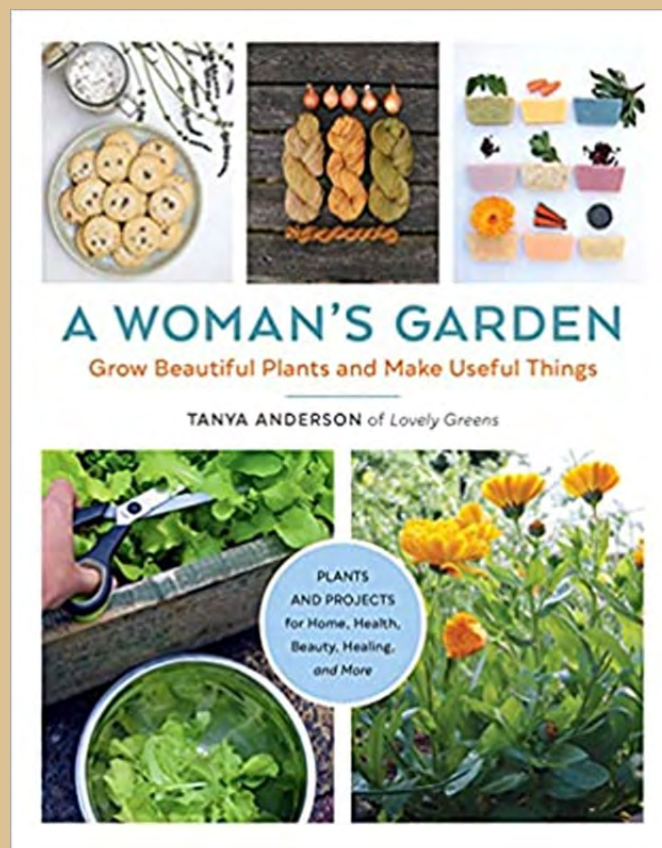
CAMGA Library News

March 2023

By: Dee Turberville

A Woman's Garden; Grow Beautiful Plants and Make Useful Things By Tanya Anderson

In *A Woman's Garden*, Tanya Anderson, shares a variety of ways you can use the power of plants for your home and health. The book introduces you to eight women from around the world who specialize in growing a particular category of useful plants, seven categories in all. With the assistance of beautiful photography, you can tour these gardens for helpful growing advice and step-by-step instructions for creating over 35 projects, edibles, and art from your garden. The first chapters focus on edible herbs and flowers. Health and beauty are the second topics and include skincare and medicinal herbs.



The final section introduces the concept of gardens for the home and crafts – cleaners, sprays, dyes, candles, and soaps. Some of the plant-based projects in the book include: edible flower ice cubes, healing calendula skin salve, papermache leaf lanterns, dying yarn, and my favorite, a DIY brick spiral for growing herbs.



Governor's Mansion Report For February 2023

By: Amanda Borden



We started the month of February by cutting back aspidistra in front of the Finley bungalow.



Later we renewal pruned dwarf crepe myrtles and Mexican heather in the mansion back yard and started the Herb Garden path project.

(Before)



(During)



(After)

Governor's Mansion Report (Continued)

For February 2023

By: Amanda Borden

On 13 February, we worked and weeded in the Governor's Mansion gardens for an hour or so, then we went to the Church of the Ascension, a few blocks away.

We renewed pruned, trimmed, and weeded in the northwest corner of the church property. We created lots of debris, had a great lunch (thank you Linda Cater), and learned that Jane has a healthy regard for overhead power lines.



Governor's Mansion Report (Continued)

For February 2023

By: Amanda Borden

On 20 February we placed stones as a continuation of the Herb Garden path project.





CAMGA Projects Minutes

February 14, 2023

By: Terry Chambliss

The Projects Committee met on February 14, 2023. Those present were Jason Mattox, Jane Mobley, Rhona Watson, Michelle Sharpton, Darlene Dixon, Sandy Rosamond, Kelly Lafreniere, Sheila Radford, Rebecca Ridley, and Terry Chambliss.

The budget was fine tuned. Rhona will update Sherri Davidson with some of the revisions.

Mardi gras was discussed. A quick look at the expenses to date revealed the budget needed to be increased to \$500. Due to inflation, the supply costs increased significantly. In addition, several of us did not claim the cost of the lunch, snacks, water, paper products and cutlery in years past, but plan to do so this year.

Earth Day will be on April 15th from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. A signup sheet will be available at the meeting.

Propagation in April and October will be at Dr. Mitchell's house in Auburn. We will be propagating camellias. Sign-up will be available closer to that time.

It was confirmed that we will be making wreaths for the Make and Take and Senior Projects. The wreaths will have a fairy garden theme.

It was decided to revisit helping Habitat for Humanity home sites if a chapter is started in Elmore County. Autauga and Chilton County master gardeners join together to help the new homeowners in their counties. They assist with choosing the plants and shrubs, planting and are available for questions later on. The Counties absorb the costs.

The memorial brick project was discussed. Rhona will present a power point presentation at the next meeting. She will discuss the costs and guidelines.

The Committee was told that Katrina will be meeting with the County Commission on February 22nd to discuss a new kitchen, either adding on to the existing kitchen or a remodel. Hopefully with the improvements, the meetings can be held there. Katrina already purchased new tables and chairs.

Publicity was discussed. It was suggested we make power point presentations at events, provide social media tutorials, and video live events. The Chamber already said they will include our events on the Community Page. Rebecca volunteered to put together slide shows about what we do and put it on Facebook. She will get with Anida about setting up an account for pictures.

Dates for the 2023 activities will be set at the next meeting.

***Respectively submitted by,
Terry Chambliss***

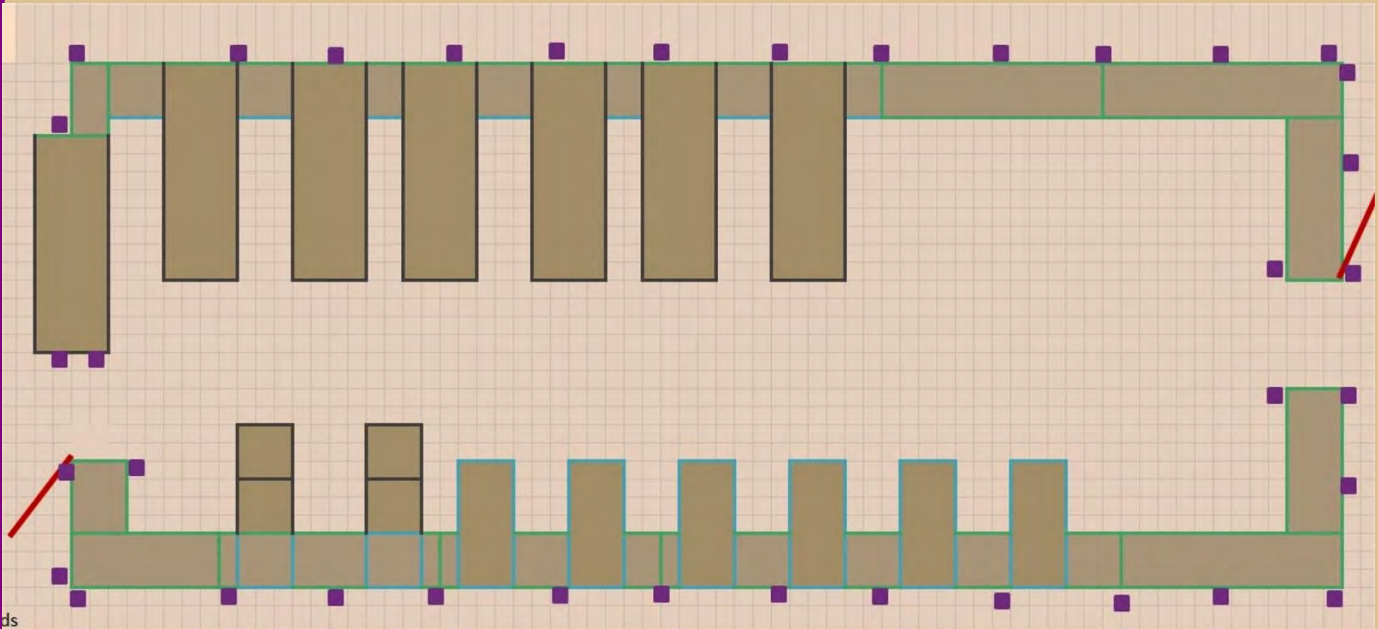


Learning Garden Report

“Upgrade Project”

By: Mary McCroan

Last August we were awarded \$2,500 to update our Learning Garden with additional beds and a fence to keep out veggie eating critters. I’m excited to give the membership an update on the project. Below is a diagram showing how the old beds and new beds will integrate into a cohesive design. The project will provide members of our community with ideas of how they might develop an attractive and bunny-free garden in their own back yard.



The actual work started with delivery of lumber and supplies in January.

We began with building the back fence. The first step was construction of 2x12 raised beds along the back side of the garden. We installed a 4x4 at each end of the garden fence and used a string to level additional 4x4s at six foot intervals.

Those 4x4s are bolted to the 2x12s and should be a sturdy long-term support for the fencing material. A direct hit from a tornado would probably take out our new fence, but if that were to happen we’d have bigger problems! The existing beds were all moved just a bit to

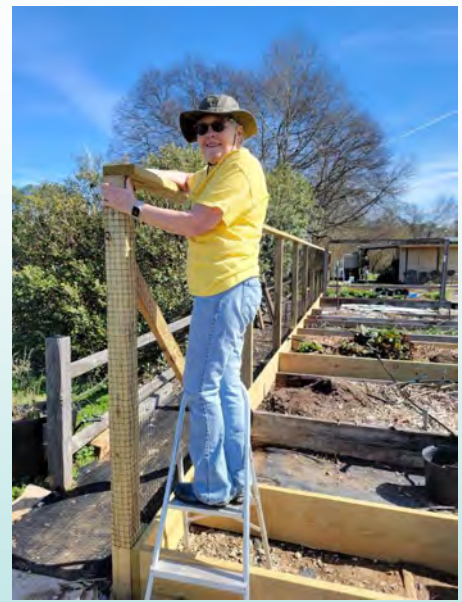
line up with the new 2x12s and then old and new were screwed together. Deb Kelso and Darlene Dixon, above right after a morning’s work.





Next we installed 1x1 black vinyl coated wire pictured to the left. Then we added 2x6s to the top of the fence. Not necessary for critter control, but these boards add strength to the fence, better support any climbing vines we may plant and demonstrate one solution creating an visually appealing garden enclosure.

Pictured above and to the right is Cheryl Fitzgerald putting on the last top board and the picture below and to the left is Darlene and Candy Jones putting on the last vertical board.



Along the way we also moved the old beds just enough to line them up with the new boards. We had to dismantle the beds, move a little of the soil and then screw them back together.

Some of the beds were in pretty bad shape after fifteen years and we replaced the boards. I didn't get pictures of everybody, but also involved in digging, sawing, hauling, lifting, and fastening were Alan Griffith, Jason Maddox, Virginia Pruitt Amanda Borden and Terry Chambliss.

Maddox, Virginia Pruitt Amanda Borden and Terry Chambliss.

The picture to the right is our status today. One side of the fence is finished and looking great with old beds repaired and renewed where needed.



Still to be done:

- Build the front fence
- Build the two end fences
- Build gates
- Finish putting soil in the new beds

Our progress is steady but slow with just a few volunteers able to come out each workday. More would be welcome!

2023 Mardi Gras Parade

By: Terry Chambliss



We had a great time decorating the Mardi gras float this year on February 17th. It was very cold, but the hot jambalaya lunch Sandy made hit the spot. Bill Quailes found the baby in his piece of the King cake. The volunteers included Michelle Sharpton, Sheila Radford, Bill Quailes, Betty Plaster, Jane Mobley, Cathy Whigham, Iva Haynie, Sandy Rosamond, Rebecca Ridley, Rhonda Miles, Jesse Miles, Darlene Dixon and husband Robert Branyon and Terry Chambliss.

Those riding the float on February 18th were Kelly and Steve LaFreniere, Cindy Augustine, Darlene Dixon, Rebecca and Marcus Ridley, Sandy Rosamond, Bill Quailes, Eva Layne Bozeman, Alex (granddaughter of Ann and Eugene Hill), and Terry Chambliss. Those walking holding signs advertising the plant sale were Michelle Sharpton and Rhonda and Jesse Miles. The float looked great—the best we've done so far.

We want to thank all who participated to make this a memorable and educational event for the public. We had opportunities to disseminate information about us while waiting in the staging area and even while standing in line for the restroom! The viewers seemed to like the seed packets better than the beads. Due to the high cost of seeds, perhaps we can start a seed drive and make our own packets.



Members Decorating Float for 2023 Mardi Gras Parade



5TH ANNUAL SPRING GARDEN SYMPOSIUM

Engaging with Plant People: The Breeders, the Explorers, & the Collectors

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM
LONGLEAF EVENT CENTER





March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Lanark Gardens 8-11 a.m.	2 Learning Gardens 8-12 noon	3	4
5	6 Governor's Mansion Gardens 9-11 a.m.	7	8 Lanark Gardens 8-11 a.m.	9 Learning Gardens 7-10 a.m.	10	11
12	13 Rose Pruning Workshop at Mansion Gardens 9-11 a.m.	14 Lunch and Learn 12-1 p.m. First Presbyterian Church	15 Lanark Gardens 8-11 a.m.	16 Learning Gardens 7-10 a.m.	17	18
19	20 <i>First Day of Spring</i> Governor's Mansion Gardens 8-11 a.m.	21 CAMGA Meeting 10 a.m-12 noon	22 Lanark Gardens 8-11 a.m.	23 Learning Gardens 7-10 a.m.	24	25
26	27 Governor's Mansion Gardens 8-11 a.m.	28	29 Lanark Gardens 8-11 a.m.	30 Learning Gardens 7-10 a.m.	31	