



# GARDEN BUZZZZZ



Volume 28 Issue 2 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association February 2019



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### Message from:

***Sandy Rosamond  
CAMGA President***



Our first meeting of 2019 is already behind us. It was a great start to a new year! Mr. Rodgers gave an inspiring presentation about camellias, our state flower, and we made a few plans for the rest of the year. Have you ever stopped to consider who we are as Master Gardeners? One thing for sure we are not a gardening club.

We are an all-volunteer organization that is to serve the community with our Master Gardening training! Terry and Jane have planned projects to do just that and some fun ones just for us to enjoy.

To be a successful organization and serve our community we count on every member to get involved. We have great things planned for this year. Please join us to make this a successful and fun year.

See you at the next meeting on February 19th.

***Sandy***



CAMGA Garden Buzzzz  
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**Message from Mallory  
Mallory Kelley  
Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests**



## Amaryllis

Amaryllis is a popular gift you will see in the garden center in the fall through Christmas. If you purchased or received one of these bulbs I hope you had success and it has bloomed for you and now you may be asking what should I do next?

Amaryllis are very simple to grow and will re bloom year after year if taken care of properly. You can continue to care for the bulb in the container with the care listed below or in central Alabama amaryllis can be planted outdoors. If planting outdoors, be sure to plant in an area with at least half a day of full sun and in soil with really good drainage. When you get ready to plant the bulb make sure the neck and shoulders of the bulb are showing and check on it throughout the season to make sure mulch doesn't cover it.

You should water the bulbs weekly and fertilize once a month. All spring and summer you are growing healthy foliage and this foliage is sending energy to the bulb, which is storing up the food it needs to bloom next year. Once September or October rolls around it is now ok to go in and cut back the foliage all the way down to the neck of the bulb. This is the case whether it is in your pot indoors or outside in the ground. If it is still indoors in the container in September you should stop watering the bulb and let the soil dry, then move it to a cool dark place. Outdoors we can not control the amount of rainfall, but the plant should begin to go dormant on its own and no more water or fertilizer is needed until it begins to break dormancy in early spring.

For the indoor container keep in mind that once you take it out of its dormant location you should expect it to flower in about 8 weeks. Indoors we call this "forcing" the bulb as you are tricking the bulb to make it think it is early spring in your home to produce a flower show. Usually this is done around November when you place the container in a sunny window and the ideal temperature is 60°F. If it is too warm in your home the foliage will be very elongated. Remember to rotate the container as the foliage and flower stalks will want to grow towards the sun. While the flower stalk is growing, feed with a complete liquid fertilizer every 2-3 weeks. Amaryllis make a great cut flower as well so even if the plant gets too elongated and begins to tip over indoors, cut the bloom and place it in a vase of water. The bloom will continue to open up over time and the flowers will last 2-3 weeks.

Then the same process begins again for another year. If the bulb has grown in size where it is too big for the pot the time to transfer it to a new container is in September when you let the soil dry out and cut back all the foliage. Any offsets may be left on the mother bulb to produce a clump, or, at the time of repotting, they may be pulled off with a portion of root attached to develop new bulbs of the same variety. Handle offsets in the same manner as the mother bulb. They will bloom the second or third season.

The Master Gardener Helpline opens March 1<sup>st</sup> so please call 1-877-252(ALA)-4769(GROW) with all your gardening related questions. We are excited to help you achieve success with your flowers, vegetable gardens and more this year!



## CAMGA Minutes January 2019 By: Deann Stone, Secretary

### Meeting January 15, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Sandy at 10:00 a.m. Jane requested \$75 for a historian book. Approval by acclamation.

Dee commended Jane for her work.

Sandy announced that Rhonda Miles is leading the caring group. She suggested including a “happiness and health” announcement so that we can enjoy the happiness of others (birth announcements, anniversaries, etc...). Some people are private and a suggestion was made to respect privacy of others. A suggestion was made to place a list by the sign in sheet. Leslie Bingham will send cards to members who have not been coming to meetings.

A Project, A Tour and A Program—Terry requested a few minutes to review projects. Jane said our project would be in July - a trip to the senior center to teach seniors how to make fairy gardens. She anticipates it will cost about \$750. Jane has talked to the lady at Fain and learned that there are approximately 50-55 seniors there daily.

Terry shared that a tour of Oakview Farms would be scheduled in the fall for the public. Mallory plans to do a workshop on hydroponics.

Leigh Ann Moreno will lead our volunteer program.

MaryAnn Hatcher distributed the Helpline Volunteer Line signup sheet. The hours are 9 a.m. — 1 p.m. We have no interns and it will be dependent on us to man the helpline. We need a new computer for the helpline room. Mallory said she would request funds for new hard drive. Discussion ensued regarding purchasing a computer. Auburn must purchase the computer as part of their inventory. Bill suggested we authorize \$300 for Auburn to purchase a computer. Sandy suggested that Mallory be told the helpline can not be done without a computer.

Sandy said she would like to see articles on “Tips in the Garden This Month” in the newsletter. She would like for more people to write articles. Robin said that Mallory previously assigned people to write articles. Jane thinks people don’t read the newsletter. Terry shared that many don’t have email and don’t get the newsletter. Background on newsletter and email - volunteer (Rebecca Ashurst) did it for a while. Lost that volunteer and it stopped. Robin said she would be happy to print and mail the newsletter.

Bill Quaile’s shared the Treasury report. Our balance is \$8,670.62 Incoming dues amounted to \$348. That was our total income. Our expenditures totaled \$1,398.66. The ending balance was \$7,620.16.

Jane shared the history of Rick Beauchamp award. Cathy Whigham recommended a recipient. Rhonda seconded. Approved by acclamation. Sandy asked Cathy to see if the recipient could come at the designated time.

# CAMGA Minutes

## January 2019

By: Deann Stone, Secretary



Sandy Adkison shared that we had a large crowd for the Lunch and Learn at the new location. 44 people attended the meeting. Sandy said the signs for Lunch and Learn are ready.

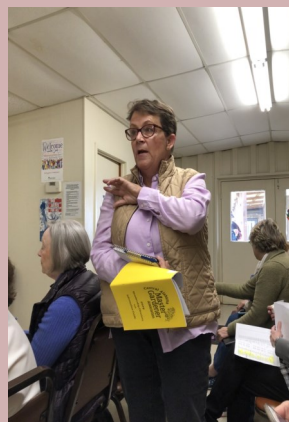
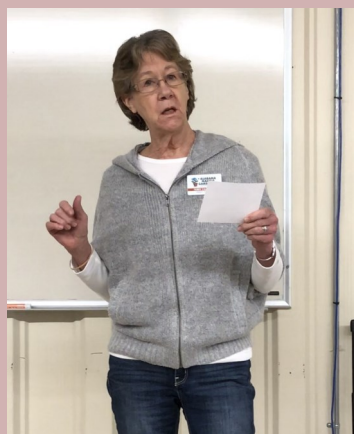
Linda Queen is now on the Advisory Council. Leigh Ann Marono could not do it. Linda will be sworn in.

Linda Edwards introduced Ken Rogers, who led a talk about Camilla's. Taylor Rowan will be here next month to share info about Eat South. In March, we will meet Gary Gray, who is replacing Chip East as our extension representative. We are waiting to hear from Young's Farm regarding a tour. We will tour member's garden's in June, with lunch at the Borden's in Tallassee that afternoon.

Robin and Leigh Ann put together a simple folder for recruitment. Please share when you engage in other groups.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Deann Stone, Secretary*



# January 2019 Lunch and Learn By: Charlotte Hall



## **Starting Seeds Inside** **Presented by: Mallory Kelley** **Regional Extension Agent**

We started our CAMGA 2019 Lunch and Learn series off in a very big way with a wonderful presentation given by Mallory Kelley on “Starting Seeds Inside”. Someone might be interested in what advantage you would have with starting seeds yourself rather than purchasing them already started.

Mallory listed several reasons why you would start your own. First, there is a bigger plant selection and variety. Another reason might be the availability of a particular plant. You can also insure that your plants are clean and do not have any insects or diseases. It can be a cost factor and money can be saved if you are growing a large quantity of plants. And, it’s just fun.

Many home gardeners become discouraged starting their seeds indoors because the plants become weak, spindly, leggy or even die of diseases. It's not that difficult to grow good quality seedlings at home, but there are some important things you need to know before you begin to ensure success.

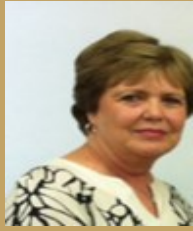
For the best time to sow seeds, it is always better to lean on the side of being too late rather than too early. Keep in mind that you can continue to grow seeds throughout the summer to have a succession of vegetables in your garden rather than planting them all at once. When picking a start date to start seeds, calculate based on the average date of the last frost for your area. Then according to the seeds you are growing, count back the number of weeks to when you should sow. Plants like beans, okra, carrots and corn should be seeded directly into the soil, but other plants like tomatoes, eggplant and peppers respond well to a head start indoors.

One advantage to starting seeds indoors is that you can order from a reputable source and select varieties that you would most likely not be able to find in the garden centers. From the “heirloom” varieties to the latest hybrids, starting seeds indoors opens a whole new world of plant varieties and types of vegetables to try.

Select containers that provide good drainage. If you use containers that you have previously grown plants in, it is best to wash them in a 10% bleach solution to remove any fungi or bacteria. Select a growing media that is sterile and free of weed seed. It is best to start seeds in a media that is labeled “Seed Starter Media.” Always make sure to moisten the soil well before you sow any seeds and prepare all of your labels to identify your plants ahead of time.

Very few seeds need light to germinate, so it is not necessary to provide light to the media and seeds until after they germinate. If the seeds are very tiny you may want to cover them lightly with vermiculite. As a rule of thumb, plant seeds a depth of two and a half times the diameter of the seed.

For good germination, the seeds will need warm soil and humidity. To create the humidity, place a clear plastic bag over the container or a clear lid to hold in the humidity. If you see water dripping inside, it is too hot and wet and could cause disease problems. Make sure to vent the lid or cover if it is too warm.



## **January 2019 Lunch and Learn (Continued) By: Charlotte Hall**

The best place in the home to put your container with seeds is on a warming pad to warm the soil or on top of your refrigerator. Your seeds will need to remain moist and humid and should begin to germination in 10-12 days.

Once the seedlings germinate, remove the cover and place them directly under lights (as close as you can without touching) for 14-16 constant hours to prevent them from becoming long and leggy. No fertilizer is needed until after the first set of true leaves appear. Then use a water-soluble fertilizer at half strength every 2-3 weeks.

If you sow the seeds in very small cell packs or sow all the seeds together in one container, you would then need to transplant them into bigger containers as they grow. This transplanting should be done early and carefully to avoid damaging the plants delicate roots and stems. Once your plants get larger and stronger and it is close to planting time outdoors, you should begin to harden off your plants by taking them outside for a few hours a day and bringing them back indoors. This is done to prepare young plants for the harsher environments outdoors such as the full sun, wind, and varying moisture.

When the day finally arrives to plant outdoors, a cloudy day with little wind is the most ideal.

Next month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, February 12th at noon, Dr. Charles Mitchell, retired professor at Auburn University, will speak on Growing Camellias. Drinks will be provided.

Due to the recent storm damage to the First Presbyterian Church, we will relocate the venue location to the Elmore County Extension Office Auditorium at 340 Queen Ann Road, Wetumpka.

Hope to see you then as we learn more about our beautiful state flower, the camellia.



## Governor's Mansion Report January 2019 By: Amanda Borden



In January, volunteers at the Governor's Mansion weeded in the Herb Garden and other beds. They worked in the strip bed between the Finley house and the mansion driveway, cleaning out and trimming cast iron plants. They planted three Aucuba shrubs (to block the view of the Finley House's garage and swing set), trimmed the variegated liriopie, and transplanted some lycoris bulbs.



Kathy and Anne removing Florida betony and horsetail from the Herb Garden



Cleaning out and planting by Finley House

### 2019 Governor's Mansion Work Week is February 25—28, 2019

Hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Volunteers will prune roses, camellias, crepe myrtles, oaks, hydrangeas, nandinas, ornamental grasses, perennials, etc. Please notify Jane McCarthy at (334-221-9936) if you are interested. You will need to be on the security list at the gate. This list will allow Jane to notify you if we have a weather delay. Enter the mansion through the Finley St. gate...across the street from the Mansion Gift Shop. FYI...no firearms on the mansion complex. Bring your favorite garden tools, and water/snacks.

## Projects Committee Minutes By: Terry Chambliss



### ***Project Meeting January 8, 2019***

Those present were Candy Jones, Johan Beumer, John Butler, Sandy Rosamond, Jane Mobley, and Terry Chambliss.

It was agreed future meetings will continue to be held in the conference room at Extension at 10:30am. The meetings are not to exceed an hour giving members time to travel to the Lunch & Learn programs at the First Presbyterian Church.

The flower arranging class scheduled for this week was discussed. A reminder will be sent to members about what to bring. Candy Jones and Terry Chambliss will arrange the tables.

#### **Projects for 2019 were discussed as follows:**

- Work days at the **Governor's Mansion** (spring & fall)
- Work days at the **Learning Gardens** (spring & fall)
- Work days at **Lanark** (spring & fall)
- Work days at **Wetumpka Middle School** outdoor classroom  
(spring & fall)
- Plants & Pollinators' Festival** at Lanark
  - Earth Day**
  - Plant Swap**
  - Make & Take Project**
  - Project with the Elderly**
  - Public Tour**

Per Jane McCarthy the work day at the **Governor's Mansion** was scheduled for February 25 from 9-12 (Rain day-March 4).

Per Maria Pacheco-West, the work day at **Lanark** was scheduled for April 17 from 8:30-12:00 (Rain day-April 24).

Staffing for **Earth Day** on April 27<sup>th</sup> was discussed.

Staffing for the **Plants and Pollinators Festival** at Lanark on May 18, was discussed. Set up will begin at 8:00am for the 9-3 event. The children's demonstration will include live plants.

Work days at the Middle School and Learning Gardens will be scheduled.





## SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

January 2019

By: Judy May

The Lunch and Learn Program on January 8th was “Seed Starting”, by Mallory Kelley. There were forty-four attendees, thirty-six of them Master Gardeners. Assisting were Sandi Adkison, Charlotte Hall, Cathy Whigham and Bill Quailles.

Refreshments at the monthly meeting were provided by Robin Snyder, Carolyn Placeway, Freda Frye, and Rhonda Miles.

Maria says in December and January, volunteers Carla McCune, Leslie Bingham, Dee Turberville, and Sue Brasel helped keep it together in the Lanark Gardens. They as always, did a fantastic job!

Maria says she is currently dividing spider lilies and daffodils and would appreciate any extra help. She asks people to please call her at 657-9414. She works everyday of the work week, so if you can't come on a Wednesday, something can be worked out. Thank you.

Attending the Flower Arranging class by Charlotte Hall were Terry Chambliss, Lynda Edwards, Ezell Grayson, Marjorie Hannah, Iva Haynie, Rhonda Miles, Lois Pribulick, Dee Turberville, Marie Updike, Candy Jones, Jane Mobley, Mary Ann Hatcher, Deann Stone, Sherri Schaefer, Gale Wheeler Leonard, Robin Snyder, Betty Plaster, Carolyn Placeway, and Virginia Pruitt.

Working at the Governor's Mansion this month were Amanda Borden, Ann Carr, Linda Cater and Jane McCarthy.



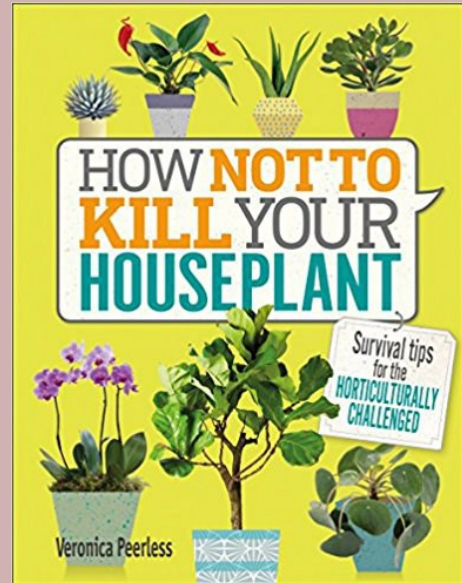
# CAMGA Library News

By: Dee Turberville

## How Not To Kill Your Houseplant; survival tips for the horticulturally challenged by Veronica Peerless

An upbeat primer of 119 houseplants and how to care for them. The text is lively, the photos and illustrations excellent. The book begins with a picture index of plants, continues on to the basics offering guidance on where to purchase, how to feed, water, place, as well as identifying pests and diseases, in other words—how not to kill it!

An easy read with helpful tips.



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The Houseplants

## FIDDLE-LEAF FIG

*Ficus lyrata*

A lush, exotic tree that brings a sense of the jungle to your living room.

SHARE THE CARE

**HOW NOT TO KILL IT**

**LOCATION**  
Choose a bright spot in a warmish room (64–75°F/18–24°C), away from any heat registers or drafts, and no colder than 55°F (13°C) in winter. The plant doesn't like being moved, so once you have found the right spot for it, leave it there.

**LIGHT**  
Place it in bright light, but direct summer sun will burn the leaves.

**WATERING + FEEDING**  
From spring to fall, water only when the top 1 in (2–3 cm) of mix is dry. Water sparingly during winter. Feed monthly in spring and summer.

**CARE**  
Clean the leaves if dusty. Mist them occasionally—more in summer, or if the room is heated. You might need to support the plant with a cane. When the plant is young, repot it into a slightly larger pot every spring. As it matures, replace only the top 2 in (5 cm) of potting mix.

**WHOLE PLANT**

**BUG ALERT!**  
(see pp.24–27)

Prone to mealybugs, scale insects, and spider mites on the foliage.

**SUDDEN LEAF LOSS?**

A sudden loss of a lot of leaves could be due to your plant being moved, which will cause it stress. Alternatively, it could be caused by dry air, over- or underwatering, over- or underfeeding, temperature, and drafts.

♥ **SAVE IT** Avoid moving your plant. If your plant has not recently been moved, check its location and your care regimen.

**LEAF TIPS TURNING BROWN?**

This is probably due to low humidity, or inadequate or erratic watering.

♥ **SAVE IT** Mist the leaves regularly—especially in centrally heated rooms. Make sure you water at regular intervals, and check that the whole root ball gets wet.

**WEeping FIG**  
*Ficus benjamina*  
Care for this fig as you would a fiddle-leaf fig—keep it away from drafts and heat registers, and try not to move it.

**RUBBER PLANT**  
*Ficus elastica*  
An easy-care alternative to the fiddle-leaf fig. Wipe the leaves frequently and don't overwater.

*Ficus lyrata*  
Height: up to 10ft (3m)  
Spread: up to 3ft (1m)

Leaf spot

**DARK PATCHES OR SPOTS ON LEAVES?**

Dark patches could be sunburn. Small dark spots could be leaf spot.

♥ **SAVE IT** Move it out of direct sunlight. If leaf spot, remove any affected leaves and treat with fungicide (see Plant diseases, pp.28–29).



## February Gardening Tips By: Jane H. McCarthy

### What I try to do in February...

Our new president has asked me to present a monthly article spotlighting garden tasks for that month. As you will learn over time, I can be the best of procrastinators. But I will give you recommended tasks for each month based on my experiences and more importantly on professional guidelines. Remember seasons vary from year to year, so think before you cut or plant. Do not forget there is a plethora of reference information available, and a great place to start is the ACES publication Alabama Gardener's Calendar, ANR-0047.

Scouting for pests and problems is very important. Thoroughly search in, on, and under plants for evidence of disease and pests. Don't forget to look up in the trees for those hanging dead branches we call widow makers. Remove any debris, damaged, or dead wood. Be on the lookout for any irrigation issues.

Planting dormant trees and shrubs can still be done in February before the weather warms up and new growth appears. Shrubs planted in the spring have a distinct advantage over those planted in the summer. Getting them established before the hot and dry months is very important. Choose healthy and robust specimens, gently break up (stimulate) the root ball to promote new roots, and avoid using the trunk as a handle while planting as this will compromise the fragile feeder roots. Follow the ACES publication Selection, Planting, & Care, ANR-1405. Apply liquid root stimulator, but read all the directions.

Prune smartly, which means you need to know what to prune, when and how to prune, and not just because your neighbor does it. The functions of pruning are to encourage new growth, create a pleasing and supportive structure, and removing dead and potentially dangerous wood. For the basics, refer to the ACES publication Pruning Ornamental Plants, ANR-0258.



Miscellaneous tasks include pulling weeds, maintaining mulch, mowing lawns as needed to keep leaves off turf, and applying pre-emergent herbicides (ACES publication Homeowner Lawns, IPM-0590).

Know your limits, adjust your expectations, understand not everything is set in stone, protect our beneficials/pollinators, and don't forget that every gardener must be flexible and have vision. And if you don't like the results, do it differently next year.

# Calendar of Events

## February 2019

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

					1	2
3	4 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 to 12 noon</i>	5	6 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	7 <i>Elmore Co. Ext. Office Learning Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	8	9
10	11 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 to 12 noon</i>	12 <i>Lunch &amp; Learn 12-1 p.m. Elmore Co. Extension Auditorium</i>	13 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	14  <i>Elmore Co. Ext. Office Learning Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	15	16
17	18 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 to 12 noon</i>	19 <i>CAMGA Meeting 10-12 noon Elmore Co. Extension Auditorium</i>	20 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	21 <i>Elmore Co. Ext. Office Learning Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	22	23
24	25 <i>Governor's Mansion Work Day 9 to 12 noon</i>	26	27 <i>Lanark Workday 8 to 12 noon</i>	28 <i>Elmore Co. Ext. Office Learning Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>		
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <b>Governor's Mansion Work Days February 25-28</b> </div>						