



GARDEN BUZZZZZ



Volume 32 Issue 8 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

August 2023

Message from Kelly
Kelly Lafreniere
CAMGA President



Hello fellow gardeners,

I hope everyone is doing well and surviving this July and August heat!! The temperature has been in the upper 90's and the humidity is off the charts!

These are times you want to watch for fungal disease and powdery mildews, which are easily treated with fungicides. You can also provide more space in between plants which create air flow to help prevent fungal disease.

This Alabama heat can dry our plants out quickly even in just a few short days without rain so water daily if you're able.

The best time to water is in the morning when the temperature is somewhat cooler that way the plants can absorb the water and get through a long hot day. Try to avoid watering when the sun is directly above. It will just evaporate off quickly.

August is the month I put together a nominating committee for next year's slate of officers. Please consider serving as an officer or chair of a committee. You can even co-chair if you would like.

We are currently in need of a secretary next year and only a few other chair positions. I'll talk more about that at the next meeting.

I see good things happening for us in the future and next year will be an even better year. I look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

Stay cool!!
Kelly

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Carol Pugh – Editor
Garden Buzzzzz
Newsletter



Message from Mallory

Mallory Kelley

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

Planting a Fall Vegetable Garden

If your summer vegetable garden has been a bust, you're not alone, while the occasional pop up thunderstorms give your plants the relief they need from the heat (and you and the garden hose too for that matter) the problems that follow from humidity and wet foliage all through the night bring many other unwelcome problems to the vegetable garden. Remember, if you are dragging that hose, only water the soil and not the plant! As we move into the late months of summer, the fungal issues and insects can take over and there may not be much of your garden left so go ahead and clean out the garden and plan now for fall veggies.

Mid August and September are the months for planting that fall veg in central Alabama so amend the soil with some good organic matter and lime if needed and get ready to start again. The fall months are usually our driest months with very little rainfall so get that hose ready, especially if you plant from seed. Starting seeds outdoors in the ground in August and September can be very difficult as you must keep the soil around the seeds from drying out or it will kill a newly germinated seed. If seeds are not your thing or you like instant gratification with less worry and stress, I recommend transplants and with fall garden veg there are lots of fun options. Again, keep that soil moist and one way to do that with less watering is to mulch. The mulch will also suppress weeds and improve the soil quality over time.

Fall vegetables are really my favorite to grow and I have just about decided I will leave the peppers and tomatoes to the local farmers market and avoid the summer heat, afternoon rain showers and weeding all together and plant when I know we have cooler days ahead with less insect pressure, weeds and humidity!

Many cool-season vegetables, such as carrots, broc-coli, cauliflower, collards, lettuce and brussels sprouts, produce their best flavor and quality when they are maturing during cool weather, but we have to germinate and get them started when it is still warm. These can also be planted in early spring, but in Alabama, the spring temperatures often heat up quickly causing vegetables such as lettuce and spinach to bolt (flower) or develop a bitter flavor. This is why planting these veggies late in the summer to early fall when we are transitioning to cooler temps is more ideal than in the spring.

For a more accurate planting schedule, determine the average date of the first killing frost in the fall, and then count backward from the frost date, using the number of days to maturity to determine the best time to plant in your area. Seeds of lettuce and spinach will not germinate if the soil temperature exceeds 85 degrees F so for these you may need to wait a bit longer before sowing or plant from transplants. A few other plants I highly recommend you plant are kale and swiss chard. These plants are so easy to grow and have very little insect and disease pressures and maybe add a few to your containers or flower beds as they can be beautiful additions all winter. Harvest these leafy plants like lettuce, collards and spinach from the outside leaves as the plants continue to grow for a constant harvest for months.

You can extend your summer vegetables that are still producing and your semi-hardy vegetables like lettuce, mustards and broccoli on into the fall and early winter by protecting them from frost. In Alabama, we often enjoy several weeks of good growing conditions after the first frost. Cover growing beds, rows or individual plants with burlap, old bedsheets or a floating row covers supported by stakes or wire to keep the material from directly touching the plants and remove each morning. Plants like kale, onions, collards and cabbage can take a pretty heavy frost with no protection and will bounce back with no problem.

Root crops such as carrots and radishes should be harvested or mulched heavily before a hard freeze. Mulched root crops can often be harvested well into the winter and during mild winters, harvest may continue until spring. Also don't forget to plant your potatoes in late January/ February and plan to harvest in May when you dig them up and then start again with your tomatoes, peppers and squash.

CAMGA Minutes
July 18, 2023
First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka
By: Sheila Radford, Secretary



Vice President Sandy Rosamond and fellow CAMGA member Deb Kelso presented an enlightening program on using herbal oils.

Deb demonstrated using the sun method of infusing herbal oils. Use a clean, dry wide mouthed glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Place the herbs of your choice in the jar, but do not pack them. Don't put herbs above the shoulders of the jar to allow room for the oil to be added. Pour the oil of choice into the jar until the oil is 1 to 2 inches above the herbs. Keep the jar of oil in a cool, dark place for 24 hours. It may be necessary to add more oil if the herbs have settled in the jar.

Before taking the next step in this process use a grease pencil or permanent marker of some sort to mark what sort of herbal oil has been created. Re-cover tightly with the lid, and place the jar of oil in a warm, sunny spot for 2 to 5 weeks (depending on what sort of herbal oil is being made). Gently shake the jar occasionally during this time. Strain and bottle the finished product into a clean, dry receptacle and store in a cool, dark room.

Deb recommends using only cold pressed oils in order to preserve the vitamins and fatty acids in the oil. Sweet almond oil has anti-inflammatory properties and can reduce under eye circles and puffiness. Calendula oil is sometimes referred to as "liquid sunshine". Grapeseed oil is easily absorbed by the skin. Apricot kernel oil, olive oil, sunflower seed oil, and coconut oil all have great qualities. Just remember that a little goes a long way.

Some books that Deb recommended are: "Southern Herb Growing" by Madalene Hill and Gwen Barclay, "Herbal Recipes" by Rosemary Gladstone, and "Medicinal Herbs" also by Rosemary Gladstone.

This presentation concluded at 10:51 a.m.

#

The business meeting was called to order by Kelly at 11:00 a.m. She moved that month's minutes be accepted and this was seconded by Sherri. There were 26 members signed in on the membership record. Heartfelt prayers go out for Lynda Edwards and her family. She has "good days and bad days".

Lyn Webb, the secretary for the Alabama Master Gardener Association, spoke briefly about the Auburn University Transformation Garden. CAMGA will be receiving more info as to what all the donations being requested will be being used for. Plans are being made to have Anthony Yarborough from Autauga County M.G. come to a CAMGA meeting and give a presentation to clarify this matter.

Lyn also stressed the importance of members keeping track of and entering ALL their volunteer and continuing education hours. Members have "bragging rights" for their efforts in support of the master gardener program. ACES must have this information to justify the existence of the Master Gardener program in Alabama.

A nominating committee needs to be formed to find a new secretary and a new vice-president. Sheila and Sandy, respectively, are stepping back from these positions.

July 18, 2023 Minutes (Continued)

By: Sheila Radford, Secretary

Sherri reported that CAMGA has now had 77 members pay their dues for 2023. CAMGA has \$900.00 additional income from members buying engraved bricks for the honor plaza at the Elmore County extension office.

Treasurer's Financial Report

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Beginning Balance (June 20, 2023) | \$23,157.22 |
| Total Income | 385.00 |
| Total Expenses | <u>-63.00</u> |
| Ending Cash Balance (July 17, 2023) | \$23,479.22 |

Roger Clarke, the accountant for Alabama Master Gardner Association has confirmed that tax must be paid on plant sale income. He is sending Sherri a packet of information.

Dee related that there are several books pertinent to today's herbal oil presentation in the CAMGA library.

Mallory informed the group that graduation for the outgoing interns will be August 9th at the Autauga County Extension office in Autaugaville. The first day of class for new interns will be the following day August 10th, at First Presbyterian Church in Wetumpka. There are 13 new interns. Six are from Elmore County, six are from Autauga County, and one is from Montgomery.

There will be a class "Bees, Butterflies and Pollinators" at the Extension office in Autaugaville on Friday August 18th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The \$25.00 fee includes a catered lunch and a bee house to decorate and take home.

Robin gave additional information about the intern classes. Elmore County will host the interns at First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka for the first six weeks of classes. The second six weeks of the internship will be online those Thursday mornings and hands on in various locations in the afternoons.

Lunch & Learn continues to need volunteers to furnish refreshments for September--December.

Mary gave an update on the progress of the Learning Gardens. The \$2500 grant has been spent improving the gardens.

Katrina contributed monies on the latest shopping expedition to complete the purchase. Mary is requesting an additional \$400.00 to complete the original plans. A motion was made to approve this sum and was seconded. The majority of CAMGA members present approved of this motion with a show of hands.

The Learning Gardens volunteers get together at the garden every Thursday. Visitors are encouraged and more volunteers are welcomed.

Rhona said the engraved bricks are expected for delivery by the end of July. Plant swap will be held at the CAMGA meeting at Lanark on October 17th. Darlene Dixon has volunteered to take on the responsibility of organizing CAMGA's participation in the Wetumpka Community Market.

Old business: 0

New business: 0

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon

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



CAMGA Library News

August 2023

By: Dee Turberville

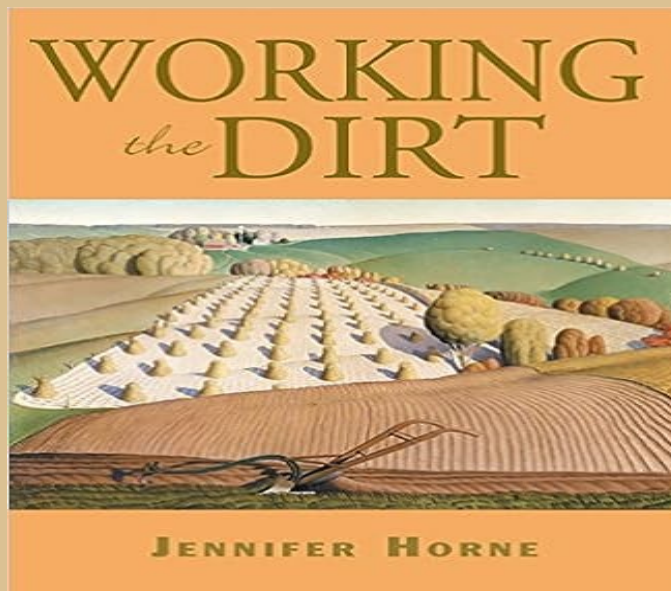
Working the Dirt: An Anthology of Southern Poets

Edited by Jennifer Horne

Jennifer Horne is a poet, freelance writer, editor and teacher who grew up in Arkansas and has lived in Alabama since 1986. A finalist for the Southern Book Prize, her book *Working the Dirt* (2003) brings together over 100 poems about farming and gardening in the South. Although it turns twenty this year, it is still relevant to those who appreciate poetry and feel a connection to the South and its land.

The poems are divided into six categories: (1) The Farm, (2) Moving On, Digging In, (3) As For Man, (4) Strong Women, (5) Fruits And Vegetables, and (6) Yards And Gardens.

Some of the poets include Wendell Berry, Henry Taylor, Andrew Glaze, Robert Morgan, Nikki Giovanni, John Crowe Ransom, James Applewhite, C.D. Wright, Rodney Jones, Robert Penn Warren, Naomi Shihab Nye and many others. My two favorite poems are Nikki Giovanni's "A Theory of Pole Beans" and "Lazy Gardener" by Helen F. Blackshear.



"*Working the Dirt* is a harvest of Southern poets' best words about the land. These poems still have dirt under their fingernails, still hold cool, spring moisture to their leaves." Joe Survant, Kentucky Poet Laureate.

Why not cool off in your rocking chair this August with a glass of sweet tea in one hand and a book of dirty poems in the other!



Governor's Mansion Report For July 2023

By: Amanda Borden



During July, we weeded, trimmed, dead-headed and thinned in the Mansion Herb Garden.

We thinned a very old and elegant crepe myrtle that had spent its early life being pruned incorrectly. It hasn't been butchered in 13 years, and now it's a stunning specimen requiring very little maintenance. We limbed up magnolias, weeded, did our last pruning of the azaleas and camellias for the year, and weeded some more.

Volunteers were Sue Berry, Amanda Borden, Linda Cater, Ann Colvin, Ann Hamill, Jane McCarthy, Cheryl McKiernan, Dawn Mitchell, Darwin Prewitt, Kathy Quinn, Alicia Robertson, and Robin Snyder.



Dawn weeding in herb garden



Herb garden after



Weeding in Serenity Garden



Linda trimming near
Serenity Garden

Governor's Mansion Report (Continued)

For July 2023

By: Amanda Borden



Jane thins crepe with Ann holding ladder



Crepe myrtle after thinning



Surveying our debris pile



Darwin trimming



CAMGA Projects Minutes July 11, 2023 By: Terry Chambliss

Those present in person were Jason Mattox, Sheila Radford, Jane Mobley, Michelle Sharpton, Darlene Dixon, Sandy Rosamond, Terry Chambliss, Rhona Watson and Rebecca Ridley by phone.

Rhona shared that 50 bricks have been sold for \$900. They should be coming this month. Two bricks are already in place. Rhona suggested having a formal dedication sometime in November from 10-11:00 a.m. with refreshments for those who have purchased bricks and those whose bricks were purchased for them. It will be brought up to the membership for a vote.

The Propagation Workshop was discussed. It was suggested it be longer next time as there was not enough time for the training and the hands on part of it. It was also suggested to get Mary's input on the plants that need thinning or propagating. The teaching portion was said to be excellent.

Michelle and Rebecca think they have all that they need for the Make and Take Workshop scheduled on August 16th. A notice will be sent to the membership that 10 slots are still available. The closing date for sign up will be on July 31st. They think they will be able to stay within budget for the seniors. The basic wreath kit will include the wreath, light, bark, moss, fairy, and dried orange slices. Sandy will donate some stones. Floral wire will be needed.

Sandy discussed our continued participation at the Community Market. There has been a lack of participation from the community and members of our organization. Sandy organized and did the market for 4 years and would like someone else to assume the responsibility. Darlene volunteered to take this over. It was suggested we just do the market two times in the spring—right before the plant sale for advertising and intern recruitment and one time in the fall. It was decided not to have a theme, but provide information and possibly sell some plants.

Oktoberfest, scheduled on September 30th was discussed. It was agreed we participate from 4:00 -9:00 pm. Literature and plants will be on hand.

Jane solicited assistance with refreshment for Lunch and Learn during the months of October, November and December. Sandy volunteered for October and Terry volunteered for November.

It was agreed we should participate with Dickens Christmas on both days. Besides handing out sachet bags while walking the street, it was suggested an information table be set up.

*Respectively submitted by,
Terry Chambliss*



Learning Garden Report LATEST IN THE LEARNING GARDEN

By: **Mary McCroan**

July saw us finishing up almost the last of the construction in the Learning Garden. Except for the gates and just a little tweaking to add some bracing, the project is done. Yay! Many thanks to those that came out to operate saws, drills, screw drivers and install 4x4s and 2x6s to form our fence and beds. Everything is mostly level and plumb and looks pretty good! Contributing Master Gardeners include: Alan Griffith, Amada Borden, Bill Quales, Candy Jones, Terry Chambliss, Cheryl Fitzgerald, Darlene Dixon, Deb Kelso, Jason Maddox, Virginia Pruitt and Mary McCroan. Interns Jason and Darlene were particularly faithful!

The part of the garden that was completed first has been filled with super-soil and part has been planted as a demonstration garden for culinary herbs. It includes annuals such as basil (four different types), lemon grass and roselle hibiscus. And perennials such as thyme, oregano, rosemary, and French sorrel.



An existing element in the garden is the four-year rotation demonstration beds designed by Amanda Borden. Currently growing are carrots and celery (Apiaceae or carrot family) in one of the beds. And beans and sweet potatoes (Convolvulaceae or morning glory family) in another bed. There is also a bed with tomatoes and peppers (Solanaceae or nightshade family). The purpose of crop rotation in the raised beds is to reduce pests and diseases and avoid nutrient depletion. For example, legumes add nitrogen to the soil that benefits the crop planted next in that bed. We also had one bed planted in the Cucurbitaceae or squash family (cucumber, squash, etc.), but these plants didn't survive the infamous squash borer.



So some status: Our celery is pretty bad. Although it was successfully grown from seed, even early on it was tough and not too tasty. That has not improved over time. It's still green and growing, but that is about all I can say.

It's likely fate is to get tossed in the bottom of one of our new beds that we haven't added soil to yet. I feel a little better when some research suggests that celery is too tough to grow for us. It doesn't like cold weather, it doesn't like hot weather and perhaps we should pay more attention to what southern cooks did for centuries--use collard, turnips, mustards, and chard.

Learning Garden Report (Continued)

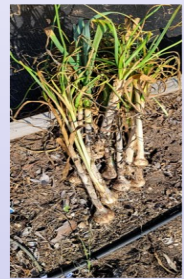
By: Mary McCroan



Carrots, on the other hand are doing wonderfully. They were good early in the year and are still tasty. I picked and cooked some this afternoon. They are more bitter than early on. So I wondered--add a little sugar, or treat them like we do bitter greens and add some vinegar.

I went with a pear flavored white balsamic vinegar and the result was wonderful! Amanda sowed the carrots pretty thick and we never thinned the row except to pick them and this has been a good strategy. I plan to continue to pick these, and cook them a few at a time and will let you know if and when they quit tasting good. A few are starting to flower now, but so far these carrots are small and tough and no great loss.

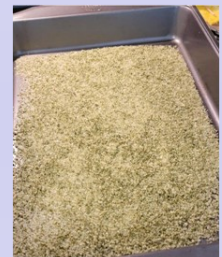
We harvested garlic again this year. It did well, as it usually does. Garlic is planted in the fall and harvested in the spring. The general idea is to hang it up to dry and then it should keep for months to flavor your various recipes. My personal success at drying garlic has been mixed and I prefer to use it fresh, freeze it fresh, or roast the cloves and freeze them. This year we pulled the garlic in June and Amanda came out and gave a tutorial in when, where and how of planting, pulling and storing.



One of the strategies that we've added into our Learning Garden this year is companion planting. With that in mind, we planted basil and marigolds with the tomatoes. To keep basil tasting sweet, you have to cut off the flowers.

What to do with those aromatic basil snippings? Well, one possibility is to make some basil salt. Take 2 cups of leaves and flowers, blend them in a food processor, add 1/2 cup of salt, blend a bit more. Then spread the mixture out in a pan and bake at 250 degrees for about 30 minutes. Let cool and put your

basil salt in a spice jar. I tried this recently and found it to be delicious on tomato sandwiches!



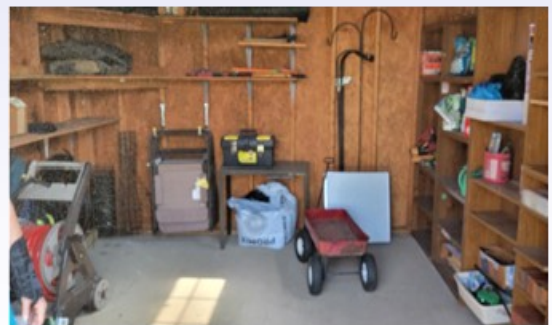
After working on the fence for so long, it was past due for some spring cleanup. Our last couple of workdays have been dedicated to cleaning out the shed and the storage area behind the shed. We pulled EVERYTHING out, swept, and restored order.

There were about four 80 pound concrete bags that had hardened. They are now under the oak tree and if you need some mostly solid, 80 pound, rock like objects for erosion control, feel free to adopt them.

Everything looks pretty good now, and we would appreciate the help from the membership in keeping it uncluttered. A neat and presentable work area can be a challenge.



Please don't drop off random pots and trays at this time. We currently have plenty!





Bees Butterflies & Pollinators



Friday, August 18, 2023

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

**Autauga Extension Auditorium
2226 Hwy 14 West
Autaugaville, AL 36003**



**Come learn how to attract pollinators to your backyard!
We will discuss how to create the habitat to attract bees, butterflies and
other pollinators and each participant will take home a Bee Hotel.**

**Horticulture Agents, Mallory Kelley and Dani Carroll
& Master Gardeners, Soyna Moore and Glenn Huovinen**

**Scan with your phone camera
or visit link below**

**\$25.00 Registration
Moes Catered Lunch & Bee
Hotel Included**

**Questions:
(334) 361-7273**

**Register Here:
<https://www.aces.edu/qo/3514>**



www.aces.edu

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August 2023

Sun

Mon

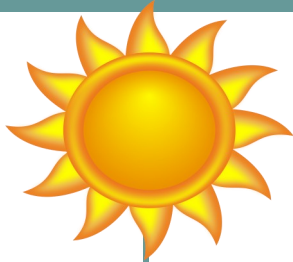
Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat



1

2 Lanark Gardens Workday, 7-10 a.m.

3 Learning Gardeners, 7-10 a.m., Ext. Office
First Community Market 4-7 p.m., Wetumpka

4

5

6

7 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.

8 Lunch & Learn, First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka 12-1 p.m.

9 MG Intern Graduation at Autauga Co. Extension Office, 10 a.m.
Lanark Gardens Workday 7-10 a.m.

10 MG Intern Class, First Presbyterian Church, 10-2 p.m.
Learning Gardeners, 7-10 a.m. Ext. Office

11

12

13

14 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.

15 CAMGA Monthly Meeting, First Presbyterian Church, 10-12 noon

16 Lanark Gardens Workday, 7-10 a.m.

17 MG Intern Class, First Presbyterian Church, 10-2 p.m.
Learning Gardeners, 7-10 a.m. Ext. Office

18

19

20

21 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.

22

23 Lanark Gardens Workday, 7-10 a.m.
Tending Roses, 9-11 a.m., First Presbyterian Church

24 MG Intern Class, First Presbyterian Church, 10-2 p.m.
Learning Gardeners 7-10 a.m. Ext. Office

25

26

27

28 Governor's Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.

29

30 Lanark Gardens Workday, 7-10 a.m.

31 MG Intern Class, First Presbyterian Church, 10-2 p.m.
Learning Gardeners, 7-10 a.m. Ext. Office