



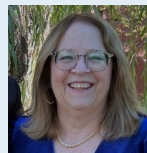
GARDEN BUZZZZZ



Volume 35 Issue 9 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association, Inc.

September 2026

**Message from Cindy
Cindy Augustine
CAMGA, INC. PRESIDENT**



Happy Fall, Master Gardeners! Can you believe we are already in meteorological Fall? It still doesn't quite feel like Fall yet, with heat advisories and little rain still on our horizon. I look forward to cooler temps and trying to get my gardens back under control.

A few reminders of upcoming events:

Lunch and Learn will be Tuesday, September 8th. Our own Kelly Lafreniere will be teaching us "Composting 101". Please come out and support her!

Tuesday, September 15th will be our CAMGA meeting at the Elmore County Extension at 10 AM. I hope you'll be able to attend

October 13th's Lunch and Learn will be Jason Powell from Petals from the Past speaking about Fall Blooming Roses - Planting and Care. He will have roses for sale following the program.

October's meeting on October 20th will be held at the Elmore County Extension Center, not at Lanark. Maria Pacheco recently left her position at Lanark for a new one, and so volunteer activities and events will no longer be available for us at Lanark. We will have our plant swap in October, so be sure to start thinking about what plants you would like to bring.

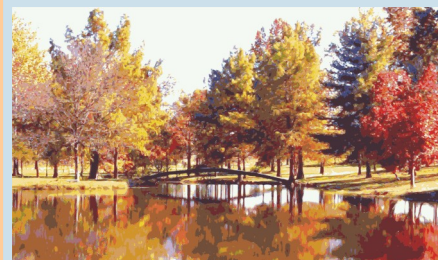
Our nominating committee is currently looking for good candidates for all CAMGA officer positions. If you are interested in serving, please contact Sherri Davidson, Carol Richey, and Cathy Whigham, our nominating committee members.

We are currently collecting dues for 2027 for CAMGA and AMGA if appropriate. Both CAMGA and AMGA dues together are \$25. If you are a Lifetime AMGA member, you will only pay the \$15 CAMGA dues. If you have a primary membership with another organization, you will also only pay the CAMGA dues, as your primary organization will collect your AMGA dues. We will be emailing the links to you soon, and they will be available at meetings. The deadline for paying your 2027 dues is Tuesday, November 17th. We will be sending dues into AMGA by the end of November so that financial records can be closed out for the year after our December meeting (December 1st). Please be sure to get your dues paid by the deadline. I hope you have a happy start to Fall and I look forward to seeing you at our September meeting.

**Happy Gardening!
Cindy**

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Carol Pugh, Editor
Garden Buzzzzz
Newsletter



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

September Garden Tips

Fruits and Nuts

- New catalogs will be arriving soon.
- Start plans for future selection and plantings.
- Take soil test for new planting areas.
- Fertilize established strawberry plantings.

Shrubs

- Study landscape to determine plant needs.
- Check early camellia varieties for damage caused by insects and disease.
- Replace landscape plants as needed that have severe damage caused by insects, disease, or freezes.
- After fall growth is completed, spray all shrubs with a fungicide.

Lawns

- Mow often (5 to 10 days) to remove just 1/3 the grass height at each mowing.
- If daytime temperatures are consistently cooler than 80 degrees F, apply fire ant bait. Read the label carefully for best control.
- If winter or spring weeds were a concern this year, apply preemergent herbicides.
- Reseed tall fescue lawns and fertilize at 1 pound slow-release nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.

Roses

- Protect fall crops of blossoms from aphids and thrips.
- Keep plants healthy.

Annuals and Perennials

- Plant perennials and biennials. This is the last planting time for these.
- Divide old clumps of perennials.
- Plant peonies.

Bulbs

- Plant spring-flowering bulbs late this month in north Alabama.
- Delay planting in south Alabama.

Miscellaneous

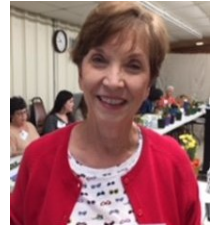
- Clean up infestations of insects on azaleas, camellias, boxwoods, gardenias, hollies, etc.
- If oil spray is needed, don't use in freezing weather.
- Build a compost bin or box; leaves will be falling soon.

Vegetable Seeds

- Central and North:** Continue planting carrots, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, onion seeds, parsley, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, and turnips.

Vegetable Transplants — Whole state: Continue planting cole crops, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, and spinach transplants, and onion sets.

CAMGA, Inc. Minutes Tuesday, August 18, 2026 First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka



President, Cindy Augustine, began a short business meeting at 10:02 a.m., prior to the 2026 Intern Graduation Program. Since many people did not sign in, Robin estimated about 80 plus members, interns, and guests were in attendance. Cindy welcomed everyone and stated that the organization's business meeting will be shortened. She shared the **Upcoming Events**:

Sept 3 - CAMGA provides intern lunch, featuring salads from Learning Garden volunteers (see Mary McCroan), for the 2027 class at the Elmore County Ext. Office; Sept 8 - Lunch & Learn at 12 p.m. on "Composting 101" at First Presbyterian; Sept. 14 - Projects Meeting at 10 a.m. at ACES Ext.; Sept. 15 - CAMGA meeting at ACES Ext. at 10:00 a.m. with speaker from Green Thumb Nursery; Sept. 17 - CAMGA provides new interns with lunch at the Autauga Co. Ext. Office in Autaugaville; and Sept. 26 - participation in the Wetumpka Front Porch Fall Festival.

The **Secretary's Report** and the **Treasure's Report** for July and August will be discussed and approved during the September business meeting. There was no **Report from Mallory Kelley**. **Standing Committee Reports** were not covered in this meeting.

Cindy discussed the CAMGA membership dues for 2027, noting that there will be 3 QR codes to access for payment, depending upon the category that each member belongs within. An email on the renewal process will also be sent out soon. All membership must be paid for by the November meeting. If not, a late fee will be charged. Debbie Boutelier, President of the AMGA, has requested that all the Alabama Master Gardener organizations submit their group's dues by the end of December 2026. If not, there will be a penalty charge. This new policy is the reason Cindy emphasized the need for CAMGA members to pay their dues promptly. She also stressed that all reimbursement request forms must be submitted to the treasurer by December 1; members have 90 days to complete this task. In this way, the books will be clear to present to the Audit Committee in January 2027. Another important request that Cindy made was for all the members to complete and submit their volunteer hours before the end of December. Not only does ACES receive funding based on these hours, but also, members are recognized for their service with awards and certificates.

Program Highlights:

Congratulations to the 2026 Master Gardeners' Class. Kerry Smith, State Coordinator for the Master Gardener Program, was the guest speaker. Robin Snyder provided the "mice in the garden" décor and conducted the graduation program, with the assistance of Autauga's intern facilitator, Darlene Blumentritt. Jason Mattox prepared the slide show of interns while Beth Deaton organized the food for the celebration luncheon.

CAMGA, Inc. Minutes (Continued)
August 18, 2026
By: Dee Turberville, Secretary

There were 21 graduates who completed the program, representing Autauga, Elmore, Montgomery, and Tallapoosa Counties. Robin and Kerry commented on this stellar class: (1) record-breaking highest graduation rate of 91% with 2 more interns to complete their hours soon. (2) another record-breaking fact - the youngest class of interns to graduate. (3) \$83,803.00 earned in over 2,467 volunteer hours. (4) great team effort by the tri county group, the interns and their Bud-Emgs, the coursework, the hands-on labs, the plant sales, the newsletters, and the total community service hours. These hours fulfill the mission of the master gardener program to educate the public on gardening. Several of the interns earned more than 100 hours of service.

Cheryl Fitzgerald, Class of 2018, donated The Garden Primer to the library in honor of the Class of 2026, with the dedication, "May your garden be abundant." Lee Borden led the blessing for lunch by singing gardening lyrics to the tune of the "Johnny Appleseed Song (The Lord's Been Good to Me.)"

Adjournment:

The business meeting and the program ended at 10:50 a.m. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 15, at 10:00 a.m. at the Elmore County Extension Office.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by,
Dee Turberville, Secretary for CAMGA, Inc.*



Governor's Mansion Report For August 2026 By: Amanda Borden



*Ann, Amanda, Robin, Casey weed in the
Serenity Garden*



Jane alerts everybody about poison ivy



Kathy providing much needed water to Herb Garden



Darwin removes a detached branch



Governor's Mansion Report For August 2026 By: Amanda Borden



Pattie and the gang working in shade on a hot dry day



For Carmen, the pause that refreshes



Learning Gardens

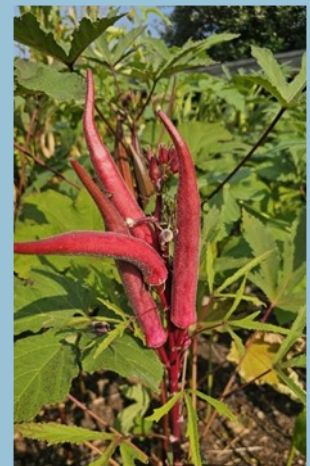
By: Mary McCroan

Our Thursday mornings in the Learning Gardens are tending to start early and end earlier. Quitting time is when it just feels too hot!

The weeds are not as daunted by the heat as the gardeners and one of our weekly chores is to try and stay ahead of them. I tend to spend more time grubbing the weeds than taking pictures of the weeders, but caught a few folks in the act.



Our plant of the month is Red Okra. It is good to eat, but also an excellent ornamental. We stopped harvesting it because it turns out nobody on the Learning Garden Team is a big okra fan. Instead, we are letting it mature and then cutting it when it is dry. It will make a great resource for our next CAMGA wreath or ornament building class.



Learning Gardens (Continued)

By: Mary McCroan

I'm excited to report that we had a big donation of peat moss from an organization that makes and tests palletizing equipment. After proving that the palletizing works properly, they need to find a good home for the product. CAMGA is always happy to be selected to be the beneficiary! In addition, last week Bubba's delivered ten yards of super soil. Some will be used to top off Learning Garden beds, but this product is available both for Projects and for individual Master Gardeners that are propagating plants for our annual plant sale. Ditto the Peat moss. In fact, a mixture of Super Soil and Peat moss might be the perfect growing medium. A few MGs propagate a hundred plants or more and might need a whole bale. Please contact me if you need to take home a whole bale so I can track what happens to them. We've put the black tarp on top of the Super Soil to keep the weeds away.



Learning Gardens (Continued)

By: Mary McCroan

We have some cool things going on in the veggie garden. Purple Perilla (good for a lavender colored lemonade) and Basil (great seasoning and condiment) are an eye pleasing combo in the garden. The summer squash decided to climb the fence—I love vertical gardens! And the Turks Cap in the rain garden continues to be an eye-catching drift of bright red flowers that nourish bees, butterflies and humming birds.



On the negative side, our corn did not do well. Corn is wind pollinated and Ms. Google says that small patches of corn do not produce enough pollen for this mechanism to be effective. So perhaps corn is not the best choice for one small bed.

Learning Gardens (Continued)

By: Mary McCroan

We were startled, but not surprised last week to find a rat snake skin in our shed. Every year it seems like a snake — maybe the same snake — decides the shed is a safe place to update its wardrobe. He/she is a medium sized representative at about four feet. So far we haven't met it lurking in the shed and probably prefer that we don't.

Maria, our favorite Lanark employee took a new job last week. Since there would be nobody to water all the potted plants that she'd been propagating, she was finding new homes among her many friends and coworkers. On Friday, Deb, Beth and I went over the grab whatever was left brought about 50 plants to our holding area. Because the automatic water system isn't working at Lanark, they are a bit stressed and needing some TLC. We will be adding soil, and little fertilizer and talking sweetly to them to get them ready for next years plant sale.

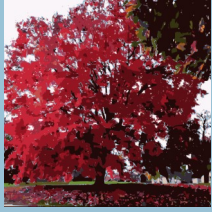


Master Gardener Intern Class August 2026 By: Robin Snyder



The new intern class started in August and will be located at the Autauga County Extension through the end of September. The CAMGA board prepared and served lunch on August 20th. Interns were all invited to join us at any of our meetings and events. You should have the opportunity to welcome the four Elmore County interns in the near future. The September 3rd class will be held at our extension and hosted by the learning garden volunteers. A salad luncheon will be provided by CAMGA.

Darlene Blumentritt, the Autauga County facilitator, Jane McCarthy, the morning speaker and Emily Stamm, the afternoon speaker, on the left and Robin Snyder, Mary McCroan, Kelly Lafreniere, and Cindy Augustine on the right.



September 2026

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		1	2 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	3 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8—12 noon</i>	4	5
6	7 <i>Happy Labor Day!</i> 	8 <i>Lunch & Learn First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka 12-1 p.m.</i>	9 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	10 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8—12 noon</i>	11	12
13	14 <i>Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i> <i>Projects Meeting at Extension Office 10 am</i>	15 <i>CAMGA Meeting 10 a.m. Extension Office</i>	16 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	17 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8—12 noon</i>	18	19
20	21 <i>Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	22 <i>First day of Autumn</i>	23 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>	24 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8—12 noon</i>	25	26 <i>Participate in Wetumpka Front Porch Fall Festival</i>
27	28 <i>Mansion Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	29	30 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-12 noon</i>			