

Pathways

Winter 2020—2021

Photo by T Ponder

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AMGA Website
alabamamg.org

AMGA PRESIDENT

Michael Thomason- Shoals



Happy New Year, Master Gardeners,

I hope you had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I hope you and your families had a safe and healthy Holiday season. 2020 was such a year of unknowns with the pandemic, meeting cancellations, Zoom meetings and social distancing. As we relax in our warm homes, we gardeners are awaiting the spring of 2021 and preparing our gardens. One of those expected spring activities will be the 2021 Annual Conference and Business meeting in Anniston on April 20-22, hosted by the Calhoun County Master Gardeners. As I look over the conference brochure, they have a stellar lineup of keynote speakers and educational sessions. It has been a long time since we have had a conference in the beautiful Northeastern part of the state, especially in the spring and I am so looking forward to it.

2020 was an extremely hard year for all of us. Your AMGA officers and Board of Directors work hard to ensure that the Local Master Gardener Associations are supported and the LMGAs have resources and information in a timely manner. I want to express my sincere appreciation to the AMGA Board of Directors, Advisory Council, Local Conference Chairmen, Local Presidents, and everyone working to make AMGA a better organization. Your efforts have not been overlooked.

Congratulations to all the new local association Officers, Directors, and Committee people. I wish each of you success in 2021.

Garden with Authority,

Michael

AMGA VICE PRESIDENT

Myra Lassere



The anticipation of the new year with the intentions, projects, resolutions and the hope of a better year where we regain a part of the normalcy we lost and left behind in 2020 is felt in the air we breathe filtered through our face masks. A new season is upon us, and we feel the chill that the weather brings this time of year. As we have just turned the page on a new year and we are all cozied up in our favorite chair dreaming and planning the coming season, imagining the spectacular colors of Spring and Summer, plus the vegetable harvest, let us not forget to capture HOPE for the New Year. This January and the preceding year have forced many of us to slow down. Mother Nature has wreaked havoc across our state, but I believe this gives us pause to think of ways in which we can all become better stewards of the earth and our environment. Opportunities abound to try new plants and create environs for birds, bees, butterflies and us.

From AMGA's perspective, teams from Calhoun County led by Skeeter Sims and Dick Pritchett are in the final stages of planning the late April 2021 Business Meeting and Conference to be held in Anniston. Capital City is busy capturing the essence of the AMGA Business Meeting and Conference to be held in Montgomery in early May 2022. Master gardeners in Tuscaloosa have graciously accepted the invitation to host the 2023 Conference. Further details to come. Plant sales in many counties are being organized with different ways of how they will be conducted. Classes for interning master gardeners are being held on Zoom. So, mark your calendars and save those dates that are mentioned in Pathways.

To Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow.

Myra

AMGA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Sondra Henley, Chair

The November AC meeting was moved to December 9 because of widespread storm damage to the landscape and cell/internet towers. The Zoom meeting welcomed all Advisory Council representatives and ushered in the 2021 Officers by an association roll call vote. The 2021 AC Chair is Sondra Henley, the Vice-Chair is Debbie Boutelier, the Secretary is Elouisa Stokes and the Parliamentarian is Fletcher Harvey.

Additionally, a roll call vote was taken to amend the Advisory Council Standard Operating Procedures. These amendments included procedures for Zoom meetings and expounded more on the Representative's responsibilities. The new SOP's will be posted on the AMGA website soon.

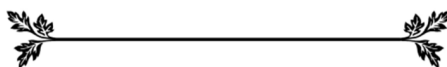
As with everyone, this year has been extraordinary. Whether Zoom or face to face, the Advisory Council officers plan to make 2021 a year of information, education, and networking for the LMGAs; using caution, we will always try to meet face to face; however, at this time, we cannot offer face to face and Zoom meetings together.

2021 Meeting Dates are as follows:

(First Tuesday) February 2, May 4, August 3, November 2,

Time: 10:00 to 12:00 (unless otherwise notified)

Place: Petals from the Past (unless otherwise notified)



AMGA AWARDS

Devonne Ellis, Chair

Happy New Year 2021. This year's awards will be presented in Anniston at the 2021 AMGA Annual Conference, April 20-22. All associations are encouraged to submit award nominations by the deadline – **January 31, 2021.**

Order forms for Reach for the Stars are found by going to alabamamg.org, looking under "AMGA Forms." Select and print the forms needed. Instructions are on the forms. Checks should be made out to **AMGA** and submitted to the **Reach for the Stars Chair, Lee Ann Marona**, 292 Magnolia Ridge, Millbrook, AL 36054, with the order form. Please do not send checks to the AMGA Treasurer. You can reach Lee Ann here, amgastars@gmail.com.

Advanced Badges and Stars Awards order forms are sent to Devonne Ellis, devoellis@msn.com. Information and instructions for the other award nominations are found on the same website, alabamamg.org, again under "AMGA Forms." Please remember to fill out both pages for those who have more than 10,000 hours. To see the requirements for submission, select "AMGA Awards and Criteria." Each award is listed separately with its unique instructions. Please follow those instructions.

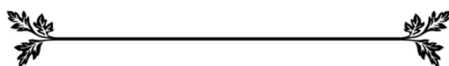
The newsletter award changed last year. **Those without a website will submit newsletters by email and mail. Those with websites will submit newsletters by mail and send a link to your website.** Entries for Outstanding Newsletter Award should be for the association's **March and September** Issues. All associations are encouraged to make submissions in the appropriate category. If your association has previously won this award, you must wait three years before your next submission.

One important note to remember – all nominees for AMGA awards, except for the Gary Murray Outstanding Service Award, honoring Non-Master Gardeners, **must be current AMGA members in good standing.** Please help AMGA reward its most deserving members! If you have any questions, contact **Devonne Ellis, AMGA Awards Chair, devoellis@msn.com.**

AMGA ENDOWMENT

Rose McCauley

It has been a very stressful and trying year, but I would like to thank the LMGAs for their continued support of the AMGA Graduate Student Endowment. Your donations provide scholarship funding for graduate horticulture students at Auburn University. Contributions for 2020 will be reported at the Annual AMGA Conference in Anniston in 2021. At that time, we will also announce the undergraduate and graduate recipients for the 2020-2021 school year. Checks for the Endowment should be made out to AMGA and sent to Roger Clarke, AMGA Treasurer, at 527 Greenbrier Way, Birmingham, AL 35244. Please include an address so the Auburn Foundation can send a thank you letter. These scholarships and awards are very much appreciated by the students who receive them.

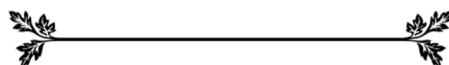


AMGA NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Patricia Peoples

You can make sure to receive your AMGA Pathways if you keep your information updated. Each county has a dues tracker, but you are responsible for keeping your email and physical address updated. Either you can update it or ask the member of your association in charge of the dues tracker to update the information for you. Go to alabamamg.org, and on the right-hand side of the page in GREEN, you will see AMGA INTERNAL - scroll to ACES Service login, enter your email address and password, then that will take you to a welcome page - on the far right, you will see MY PAGE, then choose EDIT MY CONTACT INFO - and there is where you make your address change. Please be sure to save the changes. Also, on the same page, there is a place to enter your photo, interest in volunteering, and gardening interest. My Volunteer Interests and My Gardening Interests. It would be helpful to fill in that information.

I would like to thank Patricia Patty and Carolyn Wade for their help in keeping Pathways looking great.



AMGA PROJECT FUNDING

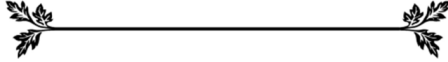
Sheila Bolen, Chair

CHRISTMAS! CHRISTMAS! Do you know what that means? GARDENING! GARDENING! It's that time again and PROJECT FUNDING is gearing up for 2021. 2020 was. Let's just say, 2020 go away, we need to get out in our gardens and play! 2021 AMGA Conference is April 20-22 in Calhoun County, so get your project plans and LMGA Wish List going. AMGA has monies specifically allotted for your LMGA projects or needs. For information on how to apply, go to <https://alabamamg.org/>, click on AMGA Project Funding Program on the right side of the page. That is where you will find information and guidelines on how to apply for a grant. It is not hard; it just takes a little paperwork and a good plan. The deadline for applying is January 15, 2021. Please send your completed applications to me, Sheila Bolen, Project Funding Chairperson, at sheilabolen@hotmail.com. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email or call me at 256-698-4214(c) or 256-354-2188 (h). If I do not answer, please leave a message. After all applications have been received, the Project Funding Committee will study each application and decide which LMGA(s) will be recipients of grant monies. Grant recipients will be announced at the 2021 AMGA Conference in Calhoun County.

Stay healthy and safe!

2022 AMGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2022 AMGA Conference on May 2 – 4, 2022 will be held at the Embassy Suites in Montgomery, Alabama. Our theme is “Behind the Garden Gate” and is hosted by Capital City and Central Alabama Master Gardener Associations. Janice Jackson and Margaret Cully are the Chairs from CCMGA. Sandy Rosamond and Candy Jones are the CAMGA co-chairs. We are in the process of contacting speakers and will have a pamphlet early next year with more information.



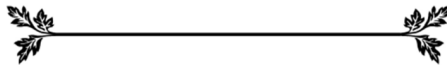
AMGA TREASURERS REPORT

Roger Clarke

We can finally say goodbye to 2020! Let's hope 2021 is the year we can get back to normal.

AMGA finishes the year in a strong financial position. Thanks to the Board of Directors actions we enter 2021 with a solid balance sheet, and a balanced budget.

County Master Gardener Association treasurers should mail 2021 dues payments to me at:
Roger Clarke, 527 Greenbrier Way, Birmingham, AL 35244



Hello, ALL Alabama Master Gardeners,

First and most importantly, I send all of you my gratitude. I and the entire Extension Home Grounds team appreciate your generous volunteer hours that support us each year. Thank you for being an Extension Ambassador!

How did 2020 feel for you? For me, it was a roller coaster of unimaginable lessons learned, weekly tests of patience, many Plan-B's, and even Plan-Z. One effort, derailed by the challenges of Covid19, was a strategic assessment of Alabama's Extension Master Gardeners program. Our process started with a small advisory group, having representation from all levels across this program.

One recommendation from the advisory group was to collect insight from everyone involved with our program. As a result, we are surveying Extension personnel who work with Master Gardeners and you, the volunteers, to collect everyone's perspectives and experiences.

This is an official survey reviewed and approved by Auburn University's Institutional Review Board. It will collect valuable information to influence future programming and program management.

We need everyone to participate! All Alabama Extension Master Gardeners, currently active, interning, or inactive, are invited to respond to this online survey. We have incorporated several features to encourage participation.

The complete survey is broken into four mini-surveys.

You can stop, take a break between each section, and then pick up where you left off.

Each mini-survey should only take 10 to 15 minutes of your time.

Completing all four mini-surveys earns you FOUR HOURS of volunteer time (that's quadruple time!).

Your answers are anonymous, and every precaution has been and will be taken to ensure this.

The survey was sent in mid-December and will remain open through February 9, 2021.

We greatly appreciate your help with this project.

All survey sections are important for a thorough strategic assessment. We're interested to know: your favorite volunteer activities – your community's valuation of these activities – your motivations for volunteering – your opinion of the program's benefits – and your demographics information. Please encourage all Master Gardeners to participate. We will share a summary of the results in late 2021.

As we leave 2020 behind, overcoming its challenges and sometimes embracing the unknown, we look ahead to the new year with fresh eyes. For myself, at least, I admit seeing almost everything around me with a new perspective. I look forward to seeing our Extension Master Gardeners program continue seeking and accepting future opportunities that benefit Extension, Master Gardener volunteers, and our communities.

Kerry



2020 AMGA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Katherine Musso, Chair
Susan Hagen
Linda Wakefield

The 2020 AMGA Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following nominees to serve on the AMGA Board. Election and installation of these Officers, Board Members at Large and the Nominating Committee Member will occur at the AMGA Annual Conference in Anniston, Alabama, April 20-22, 2021.

AMGA OFFICERS Terms Expire 2023

AMGA PRESIDENT

MYRA LASSERE, Baldwin



Myra grew up on a farm in Louisiana on the banks of the Mississippi River. She graduated with degrees in Biochemistry, Virology, and Pharmaceuticals, and furthered her cancer and viral studies knowledge. She retired from Pfizer as a Research Scientist and became a Master Gardener in 2010. She served BCMG as Hospitality Coordinator. In 2013 she became Vice-President and coordinated Monthly

Meeting Speakers. Myra then became President-Elect in 2014 and was the Fall BCMG Seminar Chairman. As President, in 2015, she won the Wayne de la Rua Award, voted on by the membership as Master Gardener of the year. In 2016 she was Past President and coordinated the Policy and Procedures Manual Revisions. At the 2018 AMGA State Conference, she was awarded the Mary Lou McNabb Award and in 2019, at the AMGA Conference, she won the Jean Lee Lifetime Hours Award. Myra is the current AMGA Vice-President. She continually combines her love of nature and her science background, sharing her knowledge of plants and gardening with all.

VICE-PRESIDENT:

DEVONNE ELLIS, Wiregrass

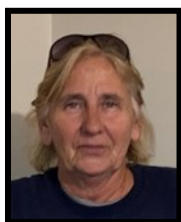


Devonne was raised in Birmingham and moved to Dothan in 1992. In 2013 she took the Master Gardener Class. Before the class was completed, she became an annual plant parent and currently maintains the demo annual bed at the Dothan Area Botanical Gardens. She served as Vice President and President from 2014-2018 for the Wiregrass Master Gardeners Association. Not only does Devonne take on leadership roles, she is busy teaching children at Aunt Katie's

Community Garden and Junior Master Gardeners at DABG. Devonne became the 2016 AMGA Conference Chair and served on the speaker committee. As an AMGA Board Member, she has served as the AMGA Awards Chair since 2017. Devonne is a representative for Advisory Council and has served on the nominating committee. Her volunteering has earned the AMGA Top Hours of the year Award (2018) and the Mary Lou McNabb Master Gardener of the Year Award (2019). In 2020 Devonne earned three Advanced Alabama Master Gardener Certifications in Herbaceous Plants-Annuals, Youth Gardening, and Community Gardening.

SECRETARY:

ANN SCHARKO, Covington



Ann Scharko is a well-known multi-tasker. She balances time with her grandchildren, community service, Master Gardening, and works with ease. As to the grandchildren, there are three with one on the way. Community service

includes volunteering in school gardens and curriculum. Ann's Master Gardener activities are a long list; she served as Chair of the AMGA Advisory Council as a recent example. And work involves stone masonry, a skill she has honed her whole life in a business she took over from her father. Ann and her family grow a wide range of vegetable crops in addition to a full garden of flowers and herbs.

OFFICERS Terms Expire 2023

TREASURER:

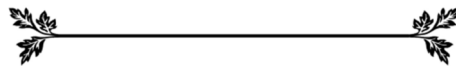
SUNITA GRAVES, Etowah



Sunita Graves became a Master Gardener in 2012, almost immediately after she retired from her role as a clinical lab technician and professor at Gadsden State Community College. Sunita's passion for gardening and service is evident in all she does.

Introducing children to nature and the joys of gardening is of particular interest—whether through presentations to school kids on Ag Day or Classroom in the Forest. She brings the same lessons home for her

four grandchildren. She loves community projects (Habitat-landscape for the new homes). Sunita and her husband, Jack, have served in leadership positions with their local association, Sunita, most recently, as Treasurer. Sunita absolutely loves math and has tutored students and teaches her grandkids, who cannot understand why their nana loves math. Sunita also serves as a board member for the Etowah County Extension 4H program. She served as a judge for several contests in that program. She is also involved with the CIF (classroom in the forest), where she spoke in schools about plants and trees and then later took students to the woods and spent the day there. It was one of the best 4H programs!



AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBER

TERM EXPIRES 2024



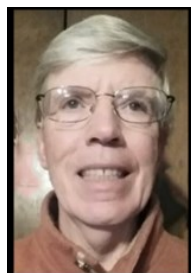
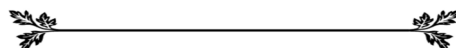
PHYLLIS CLAY, Jefferson

Phyllis Clay, is a retired French/Spanish Instructor from Jefferson County. Her last teaching assignment was at Shades Valley/Jefferson County International Baccalaureate, where she taught Spanish-I IB, Spanish I, II, and III- Shades Valley.

She is a believer in sharing, so she was inspired to organize a Spanish Mission at Ephesus Seventh Day Adventist Church. She tutored adult E.S.L. students with the Literacy Council of Alabama and Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama. Phyllis also did a presentation on Cultural Diversity at the JCEO Head

Start.

Phyllis's lifestyle includes birding with Alabama Audubon, practicing Mysore Yoga, traveling, acquiring new languages, gourmet cooking (when my family tolerates it), watercolor painting and gardening. She left the best for last because gardening brings so much joy to her daily life. She is presently a volunteer with the Herb Army at the Botanical Gardens. Finally, whether she is starting seedlings under lights in the kitchen, growing winter veggies in raised beds, fussing over indoor plants that are continually searching for light, or working in the heat of the summer with herbs and flowers, she knows that this "Late Bloomer" made the right decision to join the Master Gardeners!



AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBER

TERM EXPIRES 2024

JIM HARRIS, St Clair

Jim lives in Moody, AL, in St Clair Co. He was certified as a Master Gardener in 2013. He was asked to serve as the Alternate Delegate to the Advisory Council in 2015. Since 2016, he has served as the Advisory Council Delegate. Serving on the Advisory Council has given him insight into each county association and the members.

He served as the President of the St Clair Co Master Gardeners in 2016 and 2017 and presently serves as Vice President. In 2017, he also served on the AMGA Audit Committee.

Jim's skill set includes secretarial, grant writing, teaching and financial reviews. As President of St Clair Co Master Gardeners, he has spoken before audiences and classes. He is familiar with editing and financial reviews.

AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBER

TERM EXPIRES 2024

SHERILYN OSBORN, Blount

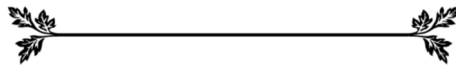


Sherilyn Osborn became a Blount County Master Gardener in 2002. She eagerly served that group as Treasurer, Vice President, President, Membership Chair, Program Chair, and many committees. A friend said of her, "she volunteered before she even knew what the job was!" She led a team of about 70 Master Gardener volunteers to make the Blount County Fair an award winner. She orchestrated a fun and educational mini-conference at Palisades Park each fall. She supported Extension Agent Dan Porch in everything from setting events

to planning future classes. She is currently working with the **Grow More Give More** Program seeking local drop-off spots in all areas of the county.

Sherilyn served AMGA as willingly as Blount County Master Gardeners. She attended all AMGA Conferences but one. Sherilyn handled finances for the 2012 AMGA CEU Workshop and hosted AMGA Seminar along with the Blount County Fall Conference in 2019. She worked on the Hospitality Committee for the 2012 AMGA Conference. She was Co-Chair for the 2015 AMGA Conference.

After serving Blount County Master Gardeners as representative to the Advisory Council, she then served the Advisory Council as Secretary and Vice President. Sherilyn is currently serving as AMGA Secretary. She continues to be ready to serve the Master Gardener Program at all levels.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Terms Expire 2023

ROD PENUEL Coffee

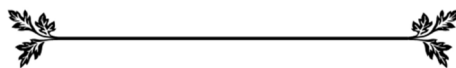


Rod began his Master Gardener training in 2016 while living in Shelby County and was certified in 2017. After several years as a Forest Consultant throughout the southern US, Rod began his career with the State of Alabama, where he spent the next 34 years working at Forester/Surface mine reclamation. A few years after retirement, Rod returned to Enterprise, Alabama, where he grew up, and has been active in the

Coffee County Master Gardener's for the past two and a half years.

Rod's interest in plants, nature and the outdoors began at an early age when he earned a forestry merit badge in Boy Scouts. This set him on his career path and interest in gardening, leading to a degree in Forest Management from Auburn University and an associate degree in Landscape Horticulture.

In addition to gardening Rod enjoys traveling. He has had several great adventures across the US and throughout Europe. During his travels, he met his wife Judy, who worked in the travel business and now they enjoy traveling and gardening together.



IN MEMORY OF KATHIE BASS

Sue Khoury



AMGA and MGNA member and past officer Kathie Bass passed away earlier this year of kidney disease and scleroderma complications.

Kathie was selflessly involved in the Alabama Master Gardeners Association and Master Gardeners of North Alabama (MGNA) for many years. She served as the 2016 MGNA president and fundraising chairperson for both MGNA and State Alabama Master Gardeners. Kathie received numerous awards for her service with the Master Gardeners

Association, including the Mary Lou McNabb award for 2010, the Jean Lee Award for 2010, and the Top Hours award for 2011 for MGNA. Kathie also received a lifetime member award for her extensive work and devotion to the Master Gardeners of Alabama.

Kathie was married to MGNA member CW3 (Ret.) Dwight Langley Bass, Sr.

During her tenure with AMGA and MGNA, Kathie donated her time and expertise as webmaster, fundraising chair and served on numerous Boards. She assisted with numerous MGNA and AMGA projects, always applying her seemingly endless energy and enthusiasm to everything she touched.

Alabama Master Gardeners lost a real gem when Kathie passed. She is sorely missed.



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Got Questions



We've Got Answers

aces.edu/questions

Next Articles for Pathways, Due March 15 2021

2019-2021 AMGA BOD, OFFICERS

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VICE-PRESIDENT – Myra Lassere, Baldwin
SECRETARY – Sherilyn Osborne, Blount
TREASURE – Roger Clarke, Jefferson

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TERM 2018 - 2021
Pat Cosgrove, Jefferson
Tillie Morgan, Cherokee
Paula Seamon, Autauga

TERM 2019-2022
Sue Khoury, MGNA
Sheila Bolen, East Central

TERM 2020-2023
Lyn Webb, Chilton
Anthony Yarbrough, Autauga

AMGA COMMITTEES

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Chair: Devonne Ellis, Wiregrass

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Chair: Sue Khoury, MGNA

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Newsletter Editor: Patricia Peoples, St Clair
Copy Editor: Patricia Patty, Calhoun
Proofreader: Carolyn Wade, MGNA

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
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ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: Rose McCauley, Autauga

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Susan Hagen, Blount
Linda Wakefield, Calhoun

PROJECT FUNDING COMMITTEE

Chair: Shelia Bolen, East Central

RECORDS & RETENTION COMMITTEE

Chair: Michael Thomason, Shoals

STATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Myra Lassere, Baldwin

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

2021 CALHOUN Co MGA
Co-Chairs: Skeeter Sims & Dick Pritchett

2022 CAPITAL CITY MGA
Co-Chairs: Janice Jackson & Margaret Cully

2023 TUSCALOOSA Co MGA
Co-Chairs: Dan Sutton & Wanda Smith

CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Chair: Kerry Smith, State MG Program

AMGA ADVISORY COUNCIL
Chair: Sondra Henley, Chilton

AMGA WEBSITE COMMITTEE
Webmaster: Sue Khoury, MGNA
Michael Thomason, Shoals
Myra Lassere, Baldwin