

PATHWAYS

Spring 2021

Photo by Paul Webb, MG of St. Clair CO

LOOK WHAT'S

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AMGA Website
alabamamg.org

AMGA PRESIDENT

Michael Thomason



Hello Master Gardeners,

Hopefully, you will read this before April 21. That is the date set for our Annual Business Meeting. Usually, the business meeting is held during our AMGA Conference, but most of you know the conference was canceled because of the pandemic.

I encourage you to attend the business meeting via “ZOOM” if at all possible. If you read this after April 21, then timing is everything and I hope you attended the business meeting. It is your meeting.

Speaking of timing, it is that time in our organization when there is a changing of the guard. A new set of executive officers and three new At-Large Board Members will be in place. When I took over as your President two years ago, I never dreamed we would be faced with a pandemic. The pandemic put such a crippling hold on our nation and our association. We had to make some quick adjustments and feel around to determine how to go about business in this new atmosphere. With the help of a great Board, we were able to work our way through it. The association has some great people coming on board, some new faces to bring fresh ideas and some veterans to keep the ship steady.

I want to thank the Board and Kerry Smith for their wisdom and insights during my tenure as your President. I could not have done it without you. God bless the Alabama Master Gardener Association. I love each and every one of you.

Garden with Authority,

Michael

AMGA VICE PRESIDENT

Myra Lassere



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

"There's a silver lining to every cloud that sails about the heavens if only we could see it." So much has happened in our lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I've heard that many of us throughout the state have managed to receive the Vaccine, myself included. Winter took a toll on many of my plants, but I have seedlings started and I'm anxiously looking forward to seeing the results of the many seeds I have begun. I keep in mind the other saying that "April showers bring May flowers." We can all eagerly anticipate the many plant sales occurring, replacing frozen dead plants and perhaps purchasing a few new varieties that we do not have.

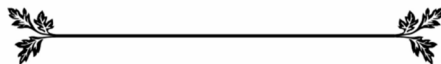
Much has happened with the cancellation of our Conference that was to be held in Anniston in April. AMGA will hold a Zoom meeting on April 21, beginning at 10:00 am. Please mark your calendars and join us. I do thank Skeeter Sims, Dick Pritchett, and all committee chairs and volunteers who donated their time and effort to put together the 2021 Conference. Kudos, my friends! Montgomery is busy planning the 2022 Conference and Tuscaloosa is engaged in preparations for 2023. And, look for an announcement concerning the 2024 Conference soon.

As the current 2019 - 2021 AMGA Officers, Board Members-at-Large and Committee Chairs' terms come to a closure; I want to take the opportunity to thank all for the tremendous effort put forward during these challenging times, especially Michael Thomason, our President!

Hoping all have a Happy Easter! Happy Spring! Stay healthy and safe!

To Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow.

Myra



AMGA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Sondra Henley, Chair

February 4, 2021 Zoom meeting had 64 participants! That was an affirmation of folks getting used to Zoom. We learned a tip about keeping our mikes muted and when having to speak, push the space bar on the computer, or unmuting your telephone. Implementing this gave us a quieter meeting with no background noise. Thank you all for your efforts and cooperation!

Since December 2020, we have been working on the Advisory Council Roster. We are only a couple of counties away from having contacted everyone. With 36 counties and four positions of names, email addresses, phone numbers and then county meeting info, we have been dealing with approximately 500 plus Excel cells to add information. Everyone has been so patient, and I thank you! We hope to have a corrected roster to send out soon!

We hope to have a face-to-face meeting on May 4, 10:00 - 12:00, at Lanark Wildlife Park in Millbrook, near Prattville. Interested AMGA members who would like to attend, along with each county's AC representative, are asked to bring their chair. We will have coffee, bottled water and packaged treats. If you prefer, you may bring your own coffee cup. All condiments are packaged, and stirrers will be for your use only. Although we will be outside under a pavilion, please follow CDC guidelines. AND not knowing what the weather will bring, wear layers and comfortable clothing. There are always a few extra chairs needed, so if you have an extra one or two, please bring them.

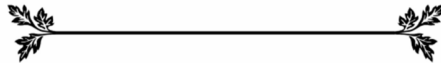
More news is coming on our guest speaker and directions to the park.

We expect to have time to fellowship, so do not forget your smile! See you soon!

AMGA AWARDS

Devonne Ellis, Chair

Our awards this year were not the same as in past years. Reach for the Stars was down from 2020 total of 339 to 2021, totaling 141 from twelve associations. Please encourage your association to log in their time on the service report. Do not forget you can watch webinars for CEUs. We had 18 associations order 42 badges. Those badges, along with advanced stars, have been sent out. My committee has been busy reading over the nominations for the various awards. We have a great selection of nominees this year. There are six nominations for Top Hours of the Year, two nominations for Gary Murray Outstanding Service and Dedication, five nominations for Mary Lou McNabb, Alabama Master Gardener of the Year, and four nominations for the Jean Lee Lifetime Hours award. The award winners will be announced during the business meeting in April. Thank you to the associations that reward their members. An updated award list will be posted on the AMGA website after the Business Meeting. Thank you, LeeAnn Marona, for your work on the Reach for the Stars. I want to thank my committee, Lyn Webb, Dottye Pierce, Amanda Redman, Patty Householder and Tanys Waldron. I appreciate your volunteer service and help on this awards committee.



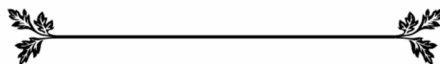
AMGA MEMBERSHIP

Mary Howe, Chair

AMGA's paid membership for 2020 totaled 1858 and the lifetime membership was 96 for a total of 1954. The 2021 membership dues deposits through the end of February stand at 752, with a prior-year lifetime membership of 123 for a total of 875 for the 2021 membership year. Several of the local associations have not yet deposited membership dues for 2021. An AMGA lifetime membership fee increased to \$150 for memberships purchased after February 28, 2021.

Dues Tracker includes a number of duplicate records. Several records appear to have been established with both the member's given name and a nickname. Before a record is established in Dues Tracker, the individual posting records should check to make sure there is no established record with an alternate name for the individual. If a member transfers from one local association to another association, the local Extension agent should be notified so that the transfer can be properly recorded in the AMGA Service Report database to allow the member to report volunteer hours in their new association.

If anyone has a membership question or needs assistance with the Dues Tracker, please let me know. I can be reached by e-mail at amgamembership@gmail.com.

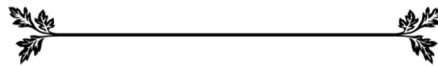


AMGA NEWSLETTER

Patricia Peoples, Editor

I want to thank Michael, Myra, Sue and Devonne for allowing me to get the Spring Pathways out ahead of schedule. I also want to thank the associations that sent their articles in on-time. I wish I could say that I have a fun trip scheduled, but this is not the case. However, I do have a fun trip coming up in June. Don't worry, I won't ask for your article early at that time, but you can always send it before the due date. For the most part, my tracking works well and I can keep up with the articles that have been sent to me, etc. Patricia Patty and Carolyn Wade make my job so much easier.

I look forward to working with the new BOD and will miss seeing familiar faces.
Patricia



2022 AMGA Conference

May 2 – 4, 2022



Hosted by Capital City and Central Alabama
Master Gardener Associations
Montgomery, Alabama



AMGA TREASURER

Roger Clarke, Treasurer

I want to thank everyone who has helped me throughout my term as treasurer. Your support and advice have been invaluable.

Included in this issue of Pathways is a Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2020, a Statement of Revenue and Expense for 2020, and a revised Administrative Budget for 2021, all of which will be presented at the upcoming virtual annual business meeting on April 21, 2021.

If you have any questions about any of these, please contact me by text at 205-533-4961 or by email at roger1944clarke@gmail.com.

Please welcome Sunita Graves as the new treasurer.

ALABAMA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

BALANCE SHEET

December 31, 2020

TOTAL CASH IN BANK \$136,047

TOTAL FUND BALANCE \$136,047

STATEMENTS OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2020

	2020 CONF.	2021 CONF.	ADMIN.	TOTAL
FEES COLLECTED, NET OF REFUNDS	(\$12,230)	\$15,451	\$0	\$3,221
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP FEES	\$0	\$0	\$19,180	\$19,180
ALL OTHER REVENUE	\$0	\$0	\$1,102	\$1,102
TOTAL REVENUE	(\$12,230)	\$15,451	\$20,282	\$23,503
CONFERENCE RELATED EXPENSES	\$488	\$2,389	\$0	\$2,877
NEWSLETTER	\$0	\$0	\$3,704	\$3,704
AWARDS PROGRAM	\$0	\$0	\$2,166	\$2,166
PROJECT GRANTS TO LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS	\$0	\$0	\$9,633	\$9,633
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP	\$0	\$0	\$1,800	\$1,800
ALL OTHER EXPENSE	\$0	\$0	\$798	\$798
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$488	\$2,389	\$18,101	\$20,978
NET REVENUE OVER (UNDER) EXPENSE	(\$12,718)	\$13,062	\$2,181	\$2,525

*All revenues refunded in 2021.

ALABAMA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

REVISED ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET FOR 2021

	2021 BUDGET
ADMINISTRATIVE REVENUE:	
MEMBERSHIP DUES	\$18,000
AWARDS PROGRAM RECEIPTS	\$1,400
INTEREST INCOME	\$25
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE REVENUE	\$19,425
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES:	
REGULAR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES:	
ADVISORY COUNCEL	\$500
AWARD PROGRAM	\$2,200
BANK CHARGES AND FEES	\$50
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE	\$200
NEWSLETTER	\$3,850
OFFICE SUPPLIES AND SOFTWARE	\$250
POSTAGE	\$150
PROJECT GRANTS	\$8,300
SCHOLARSHIP	\$1,800
VICE PRESIDENT BUDGET	\$350
TOTAL REGULAR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	\$17,650
EXCESS REVENUE OVER REGULAR EXPENSES	\$1,775
ADDITIONAL BUDGET EXPENSES FOR 2021	
COMPUTER AND SOFTWARE FOR NEWSLETTER	\$1,500
UPDATED DUES TRACKER TO COMPLY WITH AUBURN CODE	\$2,000
MARY LOU McNABB AWARD EXPENSE	\$1,000
	\$4,500
FINAL EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE BUDGETED FOR 2021	(\$2,725)
A REBUILD OF THE AMGA WEBSITE AND CONTINUED PROGRESS ON THE DOCUMENT STORAGE AND RETENTION PROGRAM HAVE BEEN PLACED ON HOLD BECAUSE OF THE ADDITIONAL BUDGET EXPENSES FOR 2021 LISTED ABOVE. THE AMGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WISHES TO EXPRESS ITS CONCERN OVER THESE DELAYS.	
BOARD WISH LIST IF FUNDS AVAILABLE	
WEB SITE REBUILD	\$5,000
DOCUMENT STORAGE AND RETENTION	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$6,000

AMGA PROJECT FUNDING

Sheila Bolen, Chair

Project Funding had another great year. Six applications were received, and all six associations will receive funds. Total funds requested were above our budget, so we had to examine each application to determine what funds they would be granted. The following associations will be receiving funds:

Baldwin County - \$1,400.00 for transport/display racks, pots and soil to be used in the Fairhope Propagation Greenhouse.

Central Alabama - \$1,400.00 for computer, time-lapse camera, and wall mount for their *Stubborn Old Gardeners* video outreach program.

Cherokee County - \$1,700.00 for a bench, plants, trees, shrubs, soils, and plant signs to enhance Centre City Park.

Chilton County - \$1,730.00 for computer and audio/visual equipment for educational horticulture programs to the public and MG educational programs.

Mobile County - \$1,750.00 for school teaching garden restoration on Dauphin Island.

St. Clair County - \$500.00 for a sign at Lakeside Park Native Plant Walking Trail.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

Special "THANKS" go to Ann Sharko, Judy Stout and Harold Deason for their willingness to serve on the Project Funding Committee.



<https://oe.packard.org>

NOW THAT I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION!

If you've ever written articles for newsletters, magazines, local papers, even social media, you've likely pondered this thought. Does anyone really read this stuff, and I mean truly contemplated the intent of my message? After the Pathways Winter issue, I learned that some of you REALLY do read this article. Either that or the knowledge of gaining three free volunteer hours for one hour of work was more powerful than I realized. So now that I have your attention, there's more work to do on this important project... I need a few good volunteers to help us proceed with this Strategic Assessment. Here are some activities I'm considering.

A survey of EMG Volunteers' clients. Much like we survey the people who attend and receive our Extension Agents' teaching/advice, what do your clients think about their partnership or teaching received from you?

Promotional campaign. The Zooming Zinnias campaign a start, but maybe there are additional avenues to publicly promote the linkage between Extension Home Grounds and the Master Gardener Volunteers.

Find and test new ways to measure the value of the outreach and activities provided by Extension Home Grounds Agents and Master Gardener Volunteers.

In short, what steps will ensure a strong future for our Extension Master Garden program?

What do you think we should do next? Please contact me through email or phone if you're passionate about this statewide Extension program.

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In case you might be interested, here are a few tidbits from the MG Strategic Assessment surveys.

851 MGs replied to the surveys – 13 read the information letter and declined to reply

580 attended college of some level or attended a college degree

801 feels that the MG program contributes to community growth and development

790 answered they would "likely" or "very likely" recommend this program to others

While this is a small sample of your replies, I'm anxious to find the patterns as we sort through all the data. It looks like I'll be calling Dr. Kessler, our resident statistics advisor. More to come later!

Thank you for everything you do in support of Extension, and specifically our Extension Home Grounds programs – Kerry



Extension Home Grounds Team Co-Coordinator &
State Master Gardener Program Coordinator
smithkp@auburn.edu
334-844-3036



HAPPENINGS

AUTAUGA CO MGA

Nancy Waggoner

Autauga County Master Gardeners Association proudly announces "Garden Glimpses 2021", an eight-stop tour of various Master Gardener public and private gardens located in and around Prattville in Autauga County.

What's in store? Start at beautiful Prattvillage Garden, our jewel in downtown Prattville. Tour the Autauga-Prattville Demonstration Garden, where in-season vegetables are growing. Then, with a route map to six ACMGA members' properties in hand, off you will go! Visit a happy little neighborhood garden oasis, then a backyard laboratory of gadgets, grow bags and irrigation systems in an interesting mélange of ornamentals and edibles. On the edge of town, stroll a meandering pathway through an enchanting garden of surprises at every turn: a purple cottage among the trees, happy chickens and ducks, fairy gardens, McGregor's Herb Patch and more. Your next stop might be acres of beautiful hardwood forest where native shrubs and perennials are propagated and grown on sloping terraced beds in dappled shade. Then, drive or walk through 45 acres of formerly undeveloped woodland, now becoming Gardenview Plantation, a stunning park of native plants, ponds and walking trails. Finally, a place where *nothing* goes to waste: a quirky garden of "cool junk" (the gardener's

words) - whimsical yard art of odds and ends that just must be seen. Native plants are scattered throughout and seeds and cuttings are propagated in raised beds. Chickens, cats, and guinea fowl are on hand to greet visitors.



non-royalty modified illustration submitted by Nancy Waggoner

We hope that you will have found our gardens to be educational, inspiring, and downright gorgeous!

April 24, 8:00-12:00 Plant Sale Prattvillage Garden, Downtown Prattville

May 15 9:00-4:00, Garden Tour Begins at Prattvillage Garden, Prattville and Autauga County
(May 22 rain date)

Tickets, reasonably priced at \$20.00 per person, will be available at the ACMGA plant sale in April, the day of the tour at Prattvillage Garden, and from ACMGA members.

BALDWIN CO MGA

Gerry Lester

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

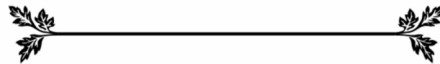
We continue to use the ZOOM platform to deliver mini-seminars to our members so that they can accrue armchair hours. On March 16, Wanda Martin discussed Orchids, and Mike Healy talked about The Hemp Revolution. We will also be present at the Gulf Shores First Baptist Church Women's Seminar, where Melissa McCarty will do a presentation on butterflies. Later in the month, we will be at Ottawa Springs Subdivision to offer horticultural advice for subdivision homeowners.

Another armchair hours opportunity will take place on March 30 when Andreu Riebe

will introduce us to Google Docs, and Marilyn Mannhard will talk about Backyard Chickens.

Our volunteers continue to work at our three greenhouse locations – our own BCMG greenhouse on the Daphne High School campus, and at a large greenhouse on loan to us from the high school, and last but not least at our greenhouse on the campus of Coastal Community College in Fairhope. Work at all greenhouses revolves around the preparation and propagation of plants for our Spring Plant Sale.

Last year because of COVID restrictions, our Spring Plant Sale had to be canceled. This year we are going full throttle in our preparations and look forward to being outside with plants and people.



CALHOUN CO MGA

Sherry Blanton

Our Association is staying involved with projects in keeping with COVID-19 guidelines. Winter weather interfered with our January and February monthly meetings. The meetings were canceled as we have been gathering outside, socially distanced, under the clubhouse pavilion.

Our Cane Creek Community Volunteer Crew has hardly skipped a beat volunteering safely at Cane Creek Community Gardens. The crew meets weekly, weather permitting, to maintain our seventeen-acre home site. Their current project is Moss Hill Village, a creation designed to enhance our landscape.

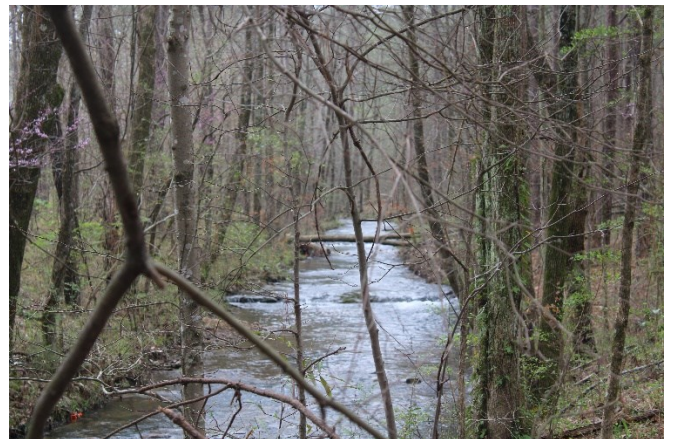
We now have a presence on Instagram, www.instagram.com/ccmgsala, Twitter, twitter.com/calhounmgs, as well as Facebook, Calhoun County Master Gardeners. Check us out!

A small but enthusiastic group of MG interns are taking the training class weekly by Zoom.

The Tree Amigos 4-H Master Gardeners

are planning their early April Spring Plant Sale. MGs who volunteer at Long Leaf Botanical Gardens are planning their late April Spring Plant Sale.

Despite a difficult winter and the inability to gather as we would prefer, our Master Gardeners continue to be of service to our community and learn via informative AMGA webinars. Like associations over the state, we look forward to healthier times and the return of warm weather.



Cane Creek, the namesake of our home site, is a picturesque part of our home site. Photo by Sherry Blanton

CAPITAL CITY MGA

Mary Eleanor Hines

As we approach the downside of COVID-19 and a bright awareness of the coming of Spring, we set our sights on the awakening of sleeping gardens and creating new ones.

Our new slate of officers has already begun their duties for 2021. Janell Diggs, our President, led us into a new year of great programs and fresh ideas. Our intern class has begun with 22 interns meeting by either ZOOM or in the openness of the Shakespeare Garden, Grace Church grounds, Lilly's Garden, or the Montgomery Botanical Gardens.

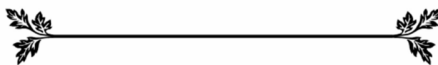
Volunteers with the Montgomery Botanical Gardens are well into plans for creating new blooming beds to grace the gardens' main entrance. Additional plans are to create a dry creek bed, learn how to grow and maintain plants in the greenhouse, and design educational materials for outdoor activities.

Karen Weber, horticulturist and valuable CCMGA member, chairs the Shakespeare Garden Committee that maintains the beautiful Shakespearean-themed garden.

This magnificent area, developed in the summer of 1999, is shaped in an amphitheater design with a thatched roof pavilion, arbors and benches. All of the plants are taken directly from the plays of the Bard himself. This stately garden has been the ideal venue for many meetings and a gathering place for visitors. CCMGA is proud to have a central responsibility in maintaining this garden.



Raking Day - CCMGA members who lovingly cleaned up the Shakespeare Garden. L-R: Claire Hubbard, Billie Crawford, Terese Goodson, and Anne Carr. photo by Karen Weber



CENTRAL ALABAMA MGA

Iva Haynie

The 2021 officers are off to an enthusiastic start. You cannot keep a good association down. The January, February and March meetings were held via ZOOM. The programs were "Highlighting Ongoing Community Opportunities," "Growing Wildflowers," and "Garden Tillage," respectively. Plans are to have outdoor meetings as the weather permits.

Opportunities abound to earn volunteer hours and get in some CEUs. Our extension agent, Mallory Kelley, sent out a long list of virtual series programs. There are also new books in our library. A spring workday is scheduled at the Governor's Mansion. There

will be a whole lot of pruning going on. Lanark always welcomes volunteers and we have our learning gardens which need attention as well.

March brings a chance to get together outside the extension center for a seed swap and a tour of the learning garden. Plans are in the works for our spring plant sale, affording numerous opportunities for earning hours. It will probably be handled a little differently than normal. COVID changes everything.

Two of our Master Gardeners are working on a landscape plan for around the flag pole in Millbrook.

New opportunities become available regularly.

CHEAHA MGA

Debby Mathews

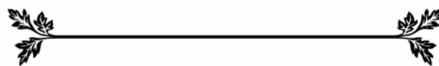
Arbor “Day” events kept the Cheaha Master Gardeners busy during February! Mary Humphries created fact sheets for the seven types of trees given away on February 18. She also was there at the event to help with tree distribution. Another fact sheet by three Extension horticulture agents on tree planting best practices was also shared with “customers” at the Alabama Forestry Commission that day. Our CMG president, Marie Rhoden, participated in the tree giveaway, and Master Gardener Debby Mathews brought Leadership Cleburne County Class XV as a follow-up to learning about the Tree City program.

Later, on February 25, a tree planting event was held at the Cleburne County Farmers Market by the Soil and Water Conservation District Board. Master Gardeners participated by actually planting three trees and by giving a brief presentation. Marie Rhoden, Mary Humphries and Debby Mathews assisted

with planting two Pink Lady Apple Trees and an Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry Tree. The serviceberry tree was the topic of the presentation at the tree planting. We chose the Autumn Brilliance tree for its size and for the fact that it flowers in the spring, has great fall color, and attractive white bark in the winter. We are eager to watch it grow and display these traits!



L-R: Master Gardeners, Marie Rhoden, Mary Humphries and Debby Mathews with two Heflin street department workers at the tree planting event. Photo by Cindy K Beam



CHEROKEE CO MGA

Janice Knight

At our last meeting of 2020, our project chairman, Susan Beavers, thanked all the members who had worked on projects in the past year by gifting a beautiful potted plant. We also reviewed our projects and work for the year with a slide presentation from our program chairman, John Holbrook. Thanks to all who made 2020 a success!

Now on to 2021: our new officers are off to a roaring start. Our projects have been divided, with *champions* leading each area of endeavor. To mention a FEW: City hall workers relocated several rose bushes. With our AMGA \$1,700.00 grant money, the City Park will have new planter pots, trees and bushes, a pollinator garden, and a bench. The greenhouse at the area Technical School is coming in handy, helping us start and hold plants for the upcoming plant sale on April 10, 2021. The Main Street planters in Centre had new soil added and six new *thriller* plants replaced. The fillers and spillers will be added after the last frost date. The Post office has a bunch of new daffodils and a new sturdy stand for the water barrel. Cherokee Rock Village, a popular rock-climbing venue near Sand Rock, is getting 25 new blueberry bushes for the frequent campers' enjoyment and use to the area. We still maintain the Slackland Beach property

with Alabama Power and the City Little League park garden. Leesburg town hall is getting a new planting for their helicopter pad this spring.

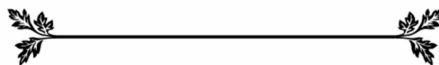
So many projects! We will be busy all year!

We are planning an area of native azaleas in memory of our long-time member, Dave Rogers, who had over 4,000 hours volunteering in Etowah and Cherokee counties and passed away last year.

Our members work hard together for the beauty of the local landscapes and the public's education. We hope to be able to gather in larger groups later in the year.



Our new officers for 2021-2023 for Cherokee County: L-R, Sandra Ledbetter, Treasurer; Bill Holland, Vice President, programs; Deb Sanden, Vice President, projects; Sharon Swanson, Secretary; and our new President, Becky McMichen. Photo by Mary Thompson



Sir Basil's wife, Rosemary, is so arrogant she refuses sage advice regardless of the source. There's even a rumor that they helped their daughters Juniper and Angelica murder Colonel Mustard for his life insurance.

They must have made a mint.

CHILTON CO MGA

Trisha Williams and Audrey Giles

Chilton County Master Gardeners are looking forward to a better year in 2021 and have enjoyed meeting again, always masked and socially distanced. In February, our program was "The Hype about Hemp," presented by Jessica Kelton, ACES Regional Extension Agent for Farm and Agribusiness. David Doggett, Jefferson County MG and Aldridge Gardens docent, taught us "Winter Hydrangea Pruning and Propagation" in March. Our April program was "Aquaponics: How to Have a Home System," presented by Mollie Smith from Auburn University.

CCMGA members helped give out trees on Arbor Day, one day in Clanton and another at the Chilton County Alabama Forestry Service location. We manned "Ask a Master Gardener" tables on Saturday mornings in March and April at Garrison's Farm and Home Center in Thorsby and Holleywood Gardens in Clanton. Members were also available to answer questions at

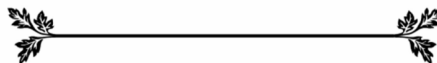
the "Spring Garden Event" at Peach Outdoor Agricultural Equipment in Clanton. Several members are participating In Harvest for Health. We are promoting Grow More Give More by encouraging our MGs to plant more through our Facebook page and GMGM promotional materials.

We will hold a Plant Sale on April 17 at Goose Pond Park in Clanton from 8 am-2 pm. The rain date is April 24. We expect to have a variety of perennials, a few annuals and some natives.



LARRY JONES FAYE COLLINS JERRY FARMER
WORKING "ASK A MASTER GARDENER" AT
GARRISON'S FARM & HOME CENTER, THORSBY, AL.

Photo by Audrey Giles



EAST CENTRAL ALABAMA MGA

Sheila Bolen

We are not sure about you, but we are very ready for Spring and the opportunity to start our meetings again. We have new officers for 2021-2022: Susan Reynolds, President; Lee Culver, Vice President; Martha Burnett, Secretary; and Cheryl Smith, Treasurer. We are planning our Spring Plant Sale for May 1 and are busy getting our plants ready. Since September, we haven't met and following Chilton County's lead last fall, here is a gardening word search for you....

See page 23 for the word search.

ETOWAH CO MGA

Carol B. Link

The pandemic may have changed operating procedures for Etowah County Master Gardeners, but that hasn't prevented members from working. For most of 2020, the executive board met, but regular business meetings were suspended. In February 2021, the new executive board decided to get Etowah County MGs together, by having an open house on association property, in the morning, on the regular business meeting day. The board wanted members to see the work that had been accomplished during the pandemic. In March, a meeting was held at Noccoalula Falls, at 10 am, in the Kiwanis building.

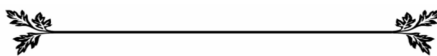
Every Tuesday, from 9 am until noon, a group of master gardeners meet and work in the landscape at the Kiwanis Pavilion, weeding and sprucing up the landscape. Work will soon begin in the landscapes at Darden Rehab Center and several Community Gardens.

In the largest of the four greenhouses on the Association property, new tables have been built to hold plants, and a new floor has been installed. A new heater has been installed in another greenhouse and new propagation tables

have been installed in the propagation greenhouse. Three greenhouses are filled with landscaping plants, and planting has begun in the vegetable greenhouse. Vegetables will be ready for sale by mid-March. All other plants at the greenhouses are for sale now. Workers are watering, maintaining, and potting plants each weekday, from 9 am until 11 am. The gates are open to the public at that time and plants are being sold.



L-R, Barbara Harrington and Mary Walker, two members of Thursday's greenhouse work team, are hard at work potting plants and taking care of the greenhouse business. Photo by Carol B Link



JACKSON COUNTY MGA

Bill Caudill

With the current climate, our 2020 Officers and Board members have agreed to continue for 2021. They are Lilly Noble, President; Bill Caudill, Vice President; Kim Johnson, Secretary; Cynthia Smith, Treasurer. Board members are Donna Hawkins, Jason Shelton, Stacey Woods, Diane Blizzard, Lois Horton, Pat Schwichtenberg, and Gary Bullock. We thank them and wish them well.

Upkeep continues on the Jackson County Park trails and lily gardens. We meet most Thursday mornings, about 9:00 am until 11 or so. We will be dividing some lilies for sale at our upcoming April 24 drive-thru Plant Sale in the Jackson County Senior Center parking lot 8-12 noon.

We plan to be present for the Catfish Festival at Jackson County Park on May 15.

Members have agreed to support the Grow

More - Give More program this year. We will grow and share extra vegetables with others. A formal organization is in the works.

To the memory of lost members during 2020, we say we miss you to Janice Hansen May 19, 2020; Harry Swaim June 2, 2020 and Dorothy 'Dot' Black Claybrook November 23, 2020.



The Jackson County Master Gardeners again supported the Scottsboro Tree Commission and the Alabama Forestry Commission. We helped prep and hand out tree seedlings at the annual Arbor Day Tree Giveaway February 27. as you can see There was good turnout Photo by Bill Caudill.

JEFFERSON CO MGA

Fletcher Harvey

It's a new year! Or is it? We're still in the throes of the COVID Pandemic, but with the advent of vaccines, there appears to be a light at the end of the tunnel that may not be a train.

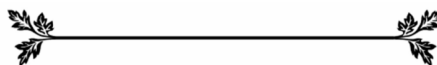
In January, we were treated to a wonderfully implemented in-depth report on true community involvement...the 2020 Intern Project involving the Midfield High Ore Line Trail Project. Initially designed to prevent erosion and establish a pollinator habitat, the project brought together elements of the public and private sectors and has proven to be a life-enhancing factor in the area.

February proved to be equally exciting. Twenty-two deserving folks received upgrades in their stars and badges at our "Reach for the Stars Non-Luncheon." Alice Moore, Volunteer Coordinator at BBG, apprised us of increasing opportunities for volunteering, including the possibility of a Spring Plant Sale!

Our March meeting featured Dr. Nancy Loewenstein from Extension in Auburn, who brought an excellent program on "Plant Selection." Invasive, aggressive and native were operative words. This program should be required "viewing" for all Master Gardeners. Thank you, Nancy.



Though not "native," Alabama's State Flower, the camellia, is heralding the end of winter. Resplendent in pink, Debutante is fast filling her dance card. Photo by F Harvey



LIMESTONE CO MGA

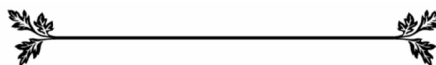
Carol Knox

Who says winter isn't busy for gardeners? The Limestone County Master Gardeners have been busy all winter with the repair and maintenance of the greenhouse. New top and side panels were installed along with a new overhead door. The grounds were cleaned up and made ready for spring plantings.

We've been propagating plants and starting seeds

for our plant sale and the greenhouse is filling up. A workshop we gave on starting seeds was so popular we had two sessions and everyone went home with knowledge and practical experience.

The Ask A Master Gardener at the Library has been active, with library patrons coming to us with their gardening questions. It is so much fun talking to people about gardening! Kipp Irland has continued her weekly series on gardening in the Athens News Courier. We are working with the Athens Library to set up a podcast on gardening.



Q. Why did the cranberry farmer quit his job?

A. Because the work kept him so bogged down.

MARSHALL CO MGA

Jo Druen

It is with much gratitude we say THANK YOU to our 2020 MCMG Officers: Ray Barnes, President; Elaine Benzio Hild, Vice President; Sarah Martin, Treasurer; Colleen Hunkapillar, Secretary; Kathy Barnes, Volunteer Hours Coordinator; Dixie Martin, Lead Hostess; Linda Widner, Photographer.

We WELCOME our 2021 Officers: Elaine Benzio Hild, President; Tom Andress, Vice President; Jo Druen, Treasurer; Colleen Hunkapillar, Secretary; Kathy Barnes, Volunteer Hours Coordinator; Dixie Martin, Lead Hostess; Linda Widner, Photographer. Many thanks to all the dedicated MGs who volunteer their time and energy to the MG program.

We would like to recognize and thank our MGs who have been diligently supporting MCMG since last century: Jenny Estes, 1990; Dixie Martin, 1993; Carol Lusk, 1999. You are an inspiration to us all.

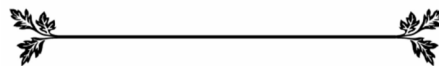
We want to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of Gerald Cofield (member since 2003), Doris Benson (member since 2005), and Sue Walters (member since 2004). May they forever watch over our gardens.

Alan Richardson, Cecilia "CC" Pullen, and Elaine "EV" Hild met in Grant at DAR on January 20, to speak with the AG teacher, Coach Hicks. We are looking forward

to working with DAR Horticulture/Agriculture students. The student program will provide seedlings to MCMG to plant in the garden where produce grows for CASA and TESA. When restrictions for COVID are lifted, the DAR students would like to tour the garden (what a GREAT idea!) showing the students the result of their hard work and the hard work of the MGs.



Master Gardeners in the DAR Greenhouse are Elaine Benzio Hild, President, Cecelia "CC" Pullen, and Alan Richardson. Photo by: AG Teacher, Coach Hicks



MASTER GARDENERS NORTH ALABAMA

Barbara Stansky

Members of the Master Gardeners of North Alabama were excited to see a dream become reality as the hoops of a 60' x 24' greenhouse were erected in January. The greenhouse, located behind the Extension Office in Huntsville, will provide educational workshops for MGNA interns and the Madison County community. MGNA members will have space to propagate plants, nurture plant donations, and catalog the inventory in preparation for the annual MGNA plant sale.

An AMGA grant provided funding for three demonstration beds installed at the front of the Extension Office. Volunteers will maintain the 3' x 6' beds to educate the community on the benefits and advantages of growing perennials, pollinator plants, and herbs.

In addition to the greenhouse and the demonstration beds, the location provides space for a rain barrel demonstration area. Visitors will have the opportunity to see a working rain barrel system and learn how to

create a similar system in their home gardens.

MGNA is excited to have a centrally located space in Madison County that will enable us to do what we do best - share our knowledge, love of gardening, and gardening skills with our community!



MGNA members, Interns and spouses on a recent work day. The individuals in the photo left to right are Susan Beam, Walt Lindblom, Joe Hazeltine, Jim Mullen, Paul Wieland, Carlita Edwards, Cyndi Lindblom, Ken Johnson, Kimberly Warner, Brian Knight, Jackie Johnson, Anna Bright, Wayne Bright. Photo by Dan Pline

MOBILE CO MGA

Carol Williams

Local Master Gardeners Lead Local Gardening Initiatives

Mobile County Master Gardeners participate in Auburn's Grow More, Give More initiative under Carol Dorsey's leadership. We have gotten buy-in from local garden centers which are displaying GMGM banners as they get their vegetable sections up and running. Elise Saunders, our association president, appeared on our local Fox affiliate to explain the program to our community. Our local CBS affiliate is also visiting our demonstration gardens and publicizing our GMGM initiative on their evening news this week.

Carol Dorsey also helps lead volunteers in Mobile Urban Gardens, along with MCMG Pat Smith. Smart Axe Peppers contacted MUG, offering free seeds to community gardens. When the gardeners ship fruit back to them, Smart Axe will purchase them for their hot sauces. The income will support the MUG community initiatives.

One such initiative that Carol and Pat also participate in at the local youth center is Grow Up: Building Leaders in the 21st Century targeted to the girls in detention. The series covers background information and the process for starting a garden paralleled with starting a business. The population is not consistent because the girls transfer in and out, but the comments from students are encouraging, "Are you coming back tomorrow or next week?" and, perhaps most importantly, "This was not boring." They have done hands-on seed planting, rooted cuttings, and transplanted seedlings, along with lectures for particular subjects and vocabulary building.



Carol Dorsey, '16, and Pat Smith, '16. Photo by Alice Marty.

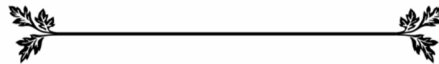


Photo by Alice Marty.

MORGAN CO MGA

Susan Ledbetter

During these COVID restricted times, the MCMGA greenhouses provide a therapeutic source of spaced activity and comradery. A lot of work has been done on the greenhouses. We have improved the watering systems, electrical, heating and grounds safety. The latest favorite improvement is a six-Gal hot water heater that allows us to wash pots in warm water.

We are currently preparing for our annual Plant Sale scheduled to be held May 15 and 16, in the Point Mallard open-air pavilion in Decatur, Alabama. This promises to be a banner year at a new site with new dates, if all goes well. We are also looking forward to participating in several of the local Farmer's Markets when they open.

Fortunately, our area has many local community gardens that provide

opportunities for our association to participate in the Grow and Harvest program. Plans are being developed to provide vegetable plants to these local gardens. This seems to be the most productive idea for us due to our site restrictions. To provide more plants, we are adding raised beds using scavenged/recycled materials.

To help with our community education goals, some of our members have been writing garden-related articles that have been published bi-weekly in The Decatur Daily. Public Lunch and Learns will hopefully start back in April or May with a great lineup of presentations. We are also in the initial phase of developing a website, with a blog, for our group.

In early February, five members were awarded Bronze Stars, two received Silver Stars and one reached the Gold Star status. We have ten new members that were presented with Certificates and Badges upon completion of course requirements.



One of the MCMGA greenhouses. Photo by Susan Ledbetter

SHELBY CO MGA

Kate Vogel

The Shelby County Master Gardeners Association has 52 active members.

We met in January, February, and March 2020, but due to COVID restrictions, not again until an outdoor meeting in October 2020.

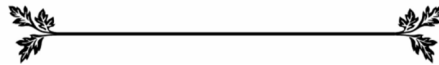
We were able to work on and participate in several community activities, including planting fall crops in the Seed-to-Table Community Garden in Montevallo.

SCMGA members also participated in

Harvest for Health and Grow More Give More.

Kerry Smith from ACES joined us via Zoom at our January 2021 planning meeting to answer questions about CEUs during COVID.

SCMGA members resumed regular monthly meetings on March 12, 2021, with a workday to get the raised beds at the Seed-to-Table Community Garden ready for spring planting. Plans are being made for outdoor meetings during the spring.



SHOALS MGA

Cynthia Kershaw

The SMGs welcomed in a new year at the January Awards program recognizing the members and their work during the unusual year of 2020. We found other venues to hold our meetings during the year and adjusted to provide educational programs for our members.

In February, the Master Gardener Intern classes began with eight in-person students and six virtual. Our members are teaching several of the afternoon classes. We are looking forward to our March speaker, Troy Marden, from Nashville Public TV, The Volunteer Gardener. Our April meeting speaker will be Harry Wallace, a Shoals landscaper who is known for incorporating native plants into his landscaping designs. The members will have an opportunity to tour one of his landscape projects. Our May meeting will feature Cindy Shapton, The Cracked Pot Gardener, speaking about herbs. Although some of our members could not attend meetings, ACES did a wonderful job of providing excellent opportunities for members to gain information with their webinars and garden walks.

The members were excited to help refurbish the raised beds for the Shoals Common

Ground organization located at the Handy Homes Community Clinic. Members began the project in 2014. It involved constructing raised beds for the clinic. Each summer, the beds provide fresh produce for the center and members of the community. Shoals Common Ground gives its students the opportunity to care for the beds—planting, maintaining, and gathering the produce.



L-R: John Norton, Foy Persell, Kaye Hillis, Rodney Whiteside, Susan Steele, David l'Anson, Jenn Whiteside, Lisa Maples, Cynthia Kershaw, Dwight James, Michael Wilson, Jerry Lewis, Wray Dillard, Hans Elderman, Allen Nix, and Tommy Flurry. Photo taken by Lisa Morris

ST. CLAIR CO MGA

Pam Garrison

We are all preparing plants for our annual plant sale. It will be on April 9-10 at the Pell City Civic Center. I hope the weather will be nice.

Our program committee had two workdays at Williams Intermediate school. They have a large fruit garden. We pruned it and taught the students about the fruit and how to care for it.



St Clair Master Gardeners at Williams School. Pam Garrison, Carolyn Pennington, Tom Terry, Donnie Olis and Janice Wadsworth. Photo by Sara Zannis

TUSCALOOSA CO MGA

Pam Sloan

Sunny bright days in Tuscaloosa are bringing out all gardeners to start new projects! Frosty nights still remind us to be selective in which projects to begin.

Seed Starter Sunday was held March 7 at The University of Alabama Arboretum Pavilion. Members brought soil, containers, and a multitude of seeds. These seeds are used to grow plants for the annual Pass Along Plant Sale. This year's plant sale will be on April 30 - May 1, at the Tuscaloosa County Extension Office Auditorium. To meet the need for plants that attract butterflies and bees, gardeners will offer annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs, houseplants, shrubs, and trees. In addition to the plants on sale there will be information tables, displays, and knife sharpening demonstrations.

Construction of raised beds at the Arboretum is complete and the beds are about half full of soil. Scott Miracle Grow in Vance, Alabama is donating soil to finish filling the beds. Members

February's meeting took place outside at the Moody Miracle League Ballpark. After the meeting, we pruned shrubs and beautified the park. It was formed in 1998 so children with disabilities could participate in a youth baseball league. This park was the first of its kind in the United States. It now serves more than 500 children from St. Clair, Etowah, Jefferson, Shelby, Talladega, Calhoun and Blount counties. Every player gets a hit, gets on base and crosses home plate.

will volunteer once the soil arrives to move the soil and fill those beds. Members are weeding the Children's Garden and pruning roses at Hospice of West Alabama.

The University of Alabama Bee Club is planning to begin native plant gardens on their campus at the Alabama Museum of Natural History and Gorgas Home, to attract bees and pollinators. In their presentation to the TCMG they showed candles that they are making and selling to raise money for the gardens and providing education outreach to children. TCMG will consult the group on plant selection and soil preparation.



Native Bee Balm. Photo by Kendra Abbott

Wiregrass MGA

Cathy Hinesley

The Wiregrass Master Gardeners have been very busy getting ready for spring. We have an excellent intern group that started class in February and has been extremely active. In January, we hosted our annual Seed Swap in the Stokes Activity Barn at Landmark Park. This year's event looked a little different than all the rest! We added a Garden Expo to our Seed Swap. In addition to Master Gardeners bringing and swapping seeds with the community, several members set up tables to showcase their area(s) of expertise. Master Gardener Barbara Jowers

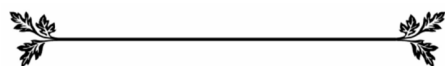
did an outstanding job putting the Seed Swap and Garden Expo together. This event was so well received and we anticipate it growing every year!

Landmark Park's Spring Farm Day continues to provide invaluable lessons for all ages! Attendees get to experience farm life in the 1890s. Master Gardeners work in the Kitchen Garden and provide spring planting information to the visiting public.

Our Plant Parents are in full swing, getting ready for the Spring Plant Sale in April. This will be our twenty-fifth consecutive plant sale and hopefully our best ever.



Master Gardeners are working the annual Seed Swap and Garden Expo. Photo by Becky McManus



Q. What does a farmer talk about while milking his cows?

A. Oh, just udder nonsense.

EAST CENTRAL ALABAMA MGA

Sheila Bolen

Garden Word Search

L Y M I L A D Y B U G F S X Q B L O L Z C U L W
B B N U E H W H E E L B A R R O W R P F Y Y L W
U T U X K K J J F G T F G Z W X X X P Y I A N O
C D X S T B B E D S I Q X P W R W K U C M B O R
K T D R Q U J C W E N S O V E O A R D G S X I G
E A I M X D O T C S T E J N R T W B L R C H T U
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G R E F B H U W J C R F A D H E D O O G W U I H
X E T G Y Y B N B A T G I P S T V L M I J D L B
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X I L C E A V I W L O D R P X O I J F O Q P Q M
Y T U S E E C N E F E P P Q Y N M U H K D U A U
O H C L U M X V T N A W K Q G D L S B M C M K O

Outdoors	Gardener	Pots	Seasonal
Grow	Yard	Dirt	Digging
Fertilization	Gloves	Leaves	Worms
Wheelbarrow	Water	Weeding	Vegetable
Sunflower	Strawberry	Stem	Soil
Seeds	Ladybug	Herbs	Harvest
Greenhouse	Mulch	Beds	Compost
Flowers	Fruit	Fence	Bucket
Gate	Garden	Shovel	



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**Got
Questions**



We've Got Answers

aces.edu/questions

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