

CCMGA MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2024
CLANTON RECREATION CENTER

CALL TO ORDER – President Skip Coulter called the meeting to order at 8:58am.

PLEDGE TO FLAG – Ron Herbster led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS – Imogene Bresse, Leslie Durham, Linda Hand, Kathy Oakes, Jane Rabey, and Lee Walters.

PRESIDENT’S WORDS – Sitting President Skip Coulter took a moment to thank Past President, Jerry Farmer, for his service and dedication this past year. In appreciation, Jerry was presented with a gift card to Petals From the Past. Jerry then passed the gavel to Skip.

PROGRAM – This month’s guest speaker, Mrs. Debbie Boutelier, was introduced by Vice President Betsy Smith. Mrs. Boutelier currently serves as the Vice President of the Alabama Master Gardener Association. She is an herbalist and has served as the President of the Herb Society of America. She is the owner/consultant of Rooted in Thyme Apothecary (Prattville). Potager Gardening was the topic of Debbie’s presentation. Potager is a French word that means “for the pot”. This type of garden (Jardin in French), is intentionally located near the kitchen, provides vegetables, herbs, and edible & nonedible flowers “for the pot”. Compared to a standard vegetable garden, a potager garden places an emphasis on freshness (as opposed to preservation) and instead of traditional rows, incorporates small, compact areas with design principles. Debbie shared the following principle designs and associated details:

1. **Location:** gets 8-10 hours of sunlight, is close to the kitchen, has wind protection, and is near a water source and compost site
2. **Enclosure:** has defined boundaries (walls, fencing, building sides, tree or shrub plantings, etc.) and fits your garden style
3. **Line:** has some form of raised beds (square, rectangular, circular, L-shaped, etc.)
4. **Color & Texture:** endless possibilities . . . golden sunflowers, wrinkled kale, etc.
5. **Focal Point:** draws the eye toward the middle or the back of the potager
6. **Seating:** has a “landing point” to sit and stay awhile
7. **Pathways:** are wide enough to harvest from multiple sides and are wheelbarrow-friendly (recommended); can be brick, gravel, mixed-media, etc.

Debbie’s plant recommendations varied greatly and included a mixture of vegetables, fruits, and flowers (edible and non-edible). Vertical growing plants were recommended to maximize space. Debbie highlighted high-variety plants such as Swiss Chard, tomatoes, peppers, Aubergine (e.g., eggplant), Courgettes (e.g., squashes), lettuces, basil, parsley, and chives. To close her presentation, Debbie included photos of her own potager Jardin!

MINUTES – Kerry Rush reported that the December 2023 minutes were posted on the CCMGA website and members should have received two emails of the same. Trisha Williams announced that she and Betsy Smith will be sharing membership communication responsibilities this year and will be using the Gmail account “chilton gardener” with the address of chiltonmga@gmail.com. With no changes or additions to the minutes they will stand as posted.

FINANCES - Judy Cobb shared the December 2024 financial report as listed below:

Chilton County Master Gardener Association
Monthly Reconciliation
December 2023

Beginning Balance	\$ 4679.33
Ending Balance	\$ 3752.63
Total Deposits	\$ 875.00
Total Withdrawals	\$ 0.00
Total Checks	\$ 1801.70
Checks Outstanding	\$ 0.00
Net Balance Checking	\$3,752.63
Cash Box Reserve	\$ 100.00
Small Business CD	\$8,318.03
Total	\$12,170.66

Pending Grant	\$5000.00
Spent	\$4954.27
Available from Grant	\$ 45.73

Judy Cobb and Hugh Nichols distributed and presented the membership with the CCMGA 2024 budget. A line-by-line review with amendments was delivered. John Higginbotham made a motion to accept the budget as presented. Skip Coulter seconded the motion and upon membership vote, the motion passed unanimously.

MASTER GARDENER OF THE YEAR – Trisha Williams presented the membership with the MG of the Year nominee criteria and nominee ballot. Along with the qualifying criteria of 100 volunteer hours and regular monthly meeting attendance of 75%, Trisha asked the membership to consider the following leadership qualities: 1) Furthers the image of the Master Gardener Program; and 2) Is involved in volunteer activities which support the mission and purpose of the Alabama Master Gardener Program. Ballots were distributed and collected among the membership.

DEMONSTRATION GARDEN – Hugh Nichols and Kerry Rush will share the responsibility of overseeing and leading the Demo Garden. A review of the garden’s beds and growing spaces was reviewed. Areas of needed leadership were identified. Members interested should contact Hugh (ghughnic@yahoo.com; 256-506-7953) or Kerry (dkr07@bellsouth.net; 205-616-4371).

EXTENSION OFFICE – Gail Brooks will again head up the Extension Office responsibilities this year but would like to encourage a member to share this leadership with her. If you would be interested, please contact Gail (leniorgail@yahoo.com; 256-366-1536).

VOLUNTEER SERVICE REPORT – Trisha Williams reminded the membership of the new reporting system which launched January 3rd. Using her log-in page, Trisha briefly shared the similarities and differences between the two systems. If you are interested in learning more, plan to attend an opportunity scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2024 (9:00am) at the Extension Office.

2024 SPRING INTERN CLASS – Trisha Williams, along with Pat Farmer and Betsy Smith, will be facilitating the spring MG cohort. There are currently two individuals scheduled to participate and their first day of class is Thursday, January 18, 2024.

PUBLICITY/COMMUNICATIONS LEADERSHIP - Skip Coulter presented the opportunity for a member (or co-members) to accept a position to extend and improve the CCMGA’s public presence, relationships, and communications among our community and our membership. Trisha Williams prepared a descriptive list of needs, ideas, and outreach opportunities. If you would be willing to accept this position or would be willing to discuss, please contact Skip Coulter (coul6577@bellsouth.net; 205-620-2974).

ALABAMA BEEKEEPING SYMPOSIUM – Betsy Smith reviewed the volunteer opportunities available Friday and Saturday. If you can assist, please contact Lucy Edwards (lee0003@aces.edu; 205-280-6268).

Friday, February 2, 2024

1:30 to 4:00pm-Registration Set-Up (need 2)

Saturday, February 3, 2024

7:30 to 10:00am-Pre-Registration (need 1)

7:30 to 11:30am-Refreshment Attendee (need 1)

PEACH PRODUCTION WORKSHOP – A volunteer is needed to attend the refreshment table for the Wednesday, February 7, 2024, workshop, from 8:00am to 2:00pm. If you can assist, please contact Lucy Edwards (lee0003@aces.edu; 205-280-6268).

CCMGA ANNUAL PLANT SALE – Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 13, 2024 (rain date is April 20). Please contact Trisha Williams with what plants and what quantity you are planning to provide trisha325@gmail.com; 205-410-5074). More information will be forthcoming!

APPRECIATION - Skip Coulter extended appreciation to Pat and Jerry Farmer, and Hugh Nichols for leading the Shade House effort. From initial concept, to grant writing, to research and purchasing, to installation, their contributions were duly noted. Additionally, Skip extended appreciation to Judy Cobb and her Hospitality Committee. The membership has benefitted frequently and greatly from their contributions throughout their service.

CLOSING ACTIVITY – Skip Coulter ended the meeting with an “AYLMG . . . Ask Your Local Master Gardener”.

The following three questions were asked by members:

1. What can I do to successfully grow squash and zucchini? . . . they seem to fizzle out very quickly.
2. Why can't I grow radishes: . . . they look like icicles.
3. With the predicted below freezing temperatures coming this week, how should I protect the pots I have growing for the Plant Sale?

If you have any advice for these three, please send to Skip Coulter who will compile and share with the group (coul6577@bellsouth.net; 205-620-2974).

Skip Coulter adjourned the meeting at 11:31am.

ATTENDANCE:

Members: 24

Guests 1

TOTAL 25

Minutes submitted by Kerry Rush