

CCMGA MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 12, 2024
CLANTON RECREATION CENTER

CALL TO ORDER – President Skip Coulter called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

PLEDGE TO FLAG – Clem Clapp led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

PROGRAM – Vice President Betsy Smith gave the introduction for this month’s speakers, CCMGA’s own Beverly Williamson and Amy Baker.

African Violets was the topic of Beverly’s presentation. Even before certifying as a Master Gardener, Beverly was interested in African Violets as evidenced by her propagating, growing, show-entering, and professional organization participation. Beverly provided a brief history of the origin of the plant, which was discovered in 1892 in Tanzania, East Africa, by German explorer, Baron Walter von Saint Paul-Illaire. Subsequently, the velvety leaved plant with delicate purple flowers was named *Saintpaulia ionantha* and is still available today. Beverly brought several plants as visuals and along with her photos, she shared information about the variations in flowers, leaves, and sizes. To propagate African Violets, Beverly recommended making a sharp, angled cut, using a root starter, and planting in a starter mix of one part each of soil, perlite, and vermiculite. Beverly shared that African Violets “reach up” when needing more light and recommended an indirect source that is approximately 10-12 inches away. When watering, which Beverly identified as the number one way to kill the plant, consistency is most important; not too wet or too dry. Watering should be done from under the leaves or by using a water tray. Beverly recommended following standard fertilizing directions and selecting the proper pots (pot size should be one-third the diameter of the leaf span and with a smooth, rounded edge). Beverly concluded her presentation with photos of her many ribbons and crystal pieces she has won for her beautiful African Violet show entries.

Amy Baker shared her knowledge base with a presentation titled, “Soil Blocking; A Better Way to Start Your Seeds”. What began from viewing a random TikTok video on the subject, Amy was soon researching and experimenting with this seed planting method and was very successful with the process. Soil blocking is a seed-starting technique that uses small cubes of soil, serving as both the medium and the container, to start plants from seed. Some of the benefits of soil blocking include faster and stronger plant growth, minimal needed space, increased germination rates, reusable equipment, and reduced plastic waste. Amy shared her learning experience by showing her equipment . . . soil blockers (two sizes with interchangeable dimplers and squares) and trays. Other items to assist include a soil mixing tub, measuring cup (for “part” distribution), scraper (to level off soil on the bottom of the soil blockers), and a small-spouted watering can. For her soil mix, Amy uses one part each of coconut coir, perlite, and vermiculite. Amy ended her presentation with a hands-on opportunity for members to try the soil blocking method.

PROGRAM/MEETING BREAK – Betsy Smith led the membership in a stretching exercise. Betsy encouraged all members to incorporate a daily stretch focusing on posture, flexion, and balance.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS – Robin Cagle, Hugh Nichols, Sharon Hosch, Sally Moore, April Oakes, and Kerry Rush.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES COMMUNICATION – Skip Coulter shared the recent effort to better communicate volunteer opportunities. Beginning this month, members will be provided with hardcopy agendas that will include upcoming volunteer opportunities.

MINUTES – With no corrections or changes, Kerry Rush reported that the October 2024 minutes emailed to the membership and posted on the association’s website would stand. Kerry also shared with the membership two received thank-you notes from CEC Lucy (Edwards) Ellington, and CC 4-H/Chick Chain.

FINANCES – Judy Cobb shared the financial report below for October 2024:

**Chilton County Master Gardener Association
Monthly Reconciliation
October 2024**

Beginning Balance	\$ 8,894.81
Ending Balance	\$ 16,592.78
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<u>Total</u> Deposits	\$ 8,463.00
Total Withdrawals	\$ 0.00
Total Checks	\$ 765.03
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Checks Outstanding	\$ 0.00
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Net Balance Checking	\$ 16,592.78
Cash Box Reserve	\$ 100.00
Small Business CD	\$ Cashed Out
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Total	<u>\$ 16,692.78</u>

EXTENSION OFFICE/DEMO GARDEN/REC CENTER UPDATES – Bobby Atkinson provided an Extension Office update that included the process used to eliminate the nutgrass (Celsius™ Xtra). Kerry Rush shared that on November 7th the Demo Garden was host to 24 Master Gardeners and interns from Autauga County. Hugh Nichols provided Hyacinth Bean Vine seeds that grow on the “Stairway to No Where” at the DG. Amy Baker thanked the volunteering members and the donors who replanted the Rec Center front bed. The center’s watering sign-up sheet was distributed among the attendees.

OFFICER NOMINATION AND VOTE – The nominating committee members (Kerry Rush, chair; Diane Clapp, Pat Farmer) recommended the following slate for officers for 2025: Skip Coulter, President; Hugh Nichols, Vice President; Judy Cobb, Treasurer; and Lanell Baker, Secretary. No recommendations were received from the floor. Sharon Hosch moved the slate be approved as presented. Beverly Williamson seconded the motion, and the vote was approved by the membership.

DECEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING/CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION – Skip shared the following details regarding next month’s meeting and celebration:

*The celebration will be on Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at the Clanton Recreation Center.

*10:30am-Bring food items; 10:45am-meeting begins; 11:00am-Lunch; Dirty Santa to follow.

*Sign-up sheets for attendance (member and guests); decoration and set-up (the day before); take-down and clean-up; menu items, and “Dirty Santa” were available at the November membership meeting. If you were unable to sign-up, please contact Diane Clapp (cladi@bellsouth.net).

*As budgeted for 2024, the association will purchase the turkey and ham.

*Participating members should bring a \$10-\$20 gift for “Dirty Santa”.

PUBLIC RELATIONS - Sharon Hosch thanked the participating members for their Master Gardener representation at the Humane Society’s Howloween event and the Alabama Power sponsored Stewardship Expo. She also shared the upcoming MG Highlights article in the Clanton Advisor. This month’s article was provided by Skip Coulter and was focused on MG recruitment.

CONSERVATION GROUP UPDATE – Hugh Nichols shared that seven members of this group attended a field trip on Monday, October 14, 2024, to The Recreative Natives nursery (Cropwell, AL). The group toured the facility and selected three plants awarded for this month’s door prizes. A field trip to the Birmingham Botanical Garden, with an emphasis on its native garden, is currently being considered.

ADVISORY COUNCIL – Harriet Jackson distributed recruitment buttons and pamphlets and encouraged all members to reflect on their daily activities and outings that lend an opportunity to share the Master Gardener program and benefits. Recruitment for the Chilton County Spring 2024 internship is ongoing with registration closing November 30th.

AMGA MISCELLANEOUS – Trisha Williams and Audrey Giles solicited membership feedback regarding our association’s website preferences (use of tabs such as the calendar or directory). This is in regard to the AMGA’s move from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) servers to its own website. Additionally, Trisha shared that the CCMGA will provide a “Gift Bucket” option for the 2025 AMGA conference in Prattville, AL, Apr 3-5. Donated garden and/or Chilton County items will be needed.

CCMGA ANNUAL PLANT SALE – Trisha Williams reminded the association to mark calendars and begin collecting items for the Country Store in preparation for the sale on April 12, 2025 (rain date, April 19, 2025).

ANNUAL HOURS REPORTING – Volunteer hours must be entered by December 30, 2024. Trisha Williams respectfully requested members to check with her before adding an entry under the “Other” category. If you need assistance with reporting, please contact Trisha (trisha325@gmail.com).

CCMGA-SCMGA FRIENDLY COMPETITION – Hugh Nichols shared that an opportunity for the CCMGA and the Shelby County MGA to settle a friendly competition of Corn Hole may be forthcoming. Trisha Williams will be checking with their association.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

This month's door prizes were African Violets (Harriet Jackson, Robin Cagle); Common Button Bush (Sally Moore); Dixie Wood Fern (Jerry Farmer); and Large Flowered Coreopsis (Amy Baker).

The winner of this month's trivia game, "Christmas" went to the annuals!

With no additional new or old business, Skip Coulter adjourned the meeting at 11:43am. The December 2024 membership meeting and Christmas celebration is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at the Clanton Recreation Center.

Members: 26

Interns: 2

Guests: 2

TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 30

Minutes prepared and submitted by Kerry Rush