

February 2015 CCMGA Newsletter

THE • P r a i r i e M u d •

Mark Your Calendars!

February 24th CCMGA Monthly Meeting

Frazer UMC, 9:30 Social, 10:00 Program and Business Meeting

March 4th - Lunch and Learn, "Back Yard Tomatoes"

March 23, 24th, 25th A.M.G.A Spring Conference, Cullman, Sign Up Deadline
March 1

April 16th BUS TRIP!! Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Garden Gallery and
Aldridge Botanical Gardens in Hoover - Sign up at CCMGA meetings

April 24th Plant Sale Prep Day

April 25th CCMGA Plant Sale at Frazer UMC, 7:30-Noon.

President's Message

We are almost there! Just a few more weeks and Spring will arrive in Montgomery. Maybe the calendar won't call it spring but we know we will be seeing trees budding and bulbs beginning to wake from the winter. I already have bulbs which have poked their leaves up in my back yard! Have even seen butterflies and more birds than in the past few weeks!

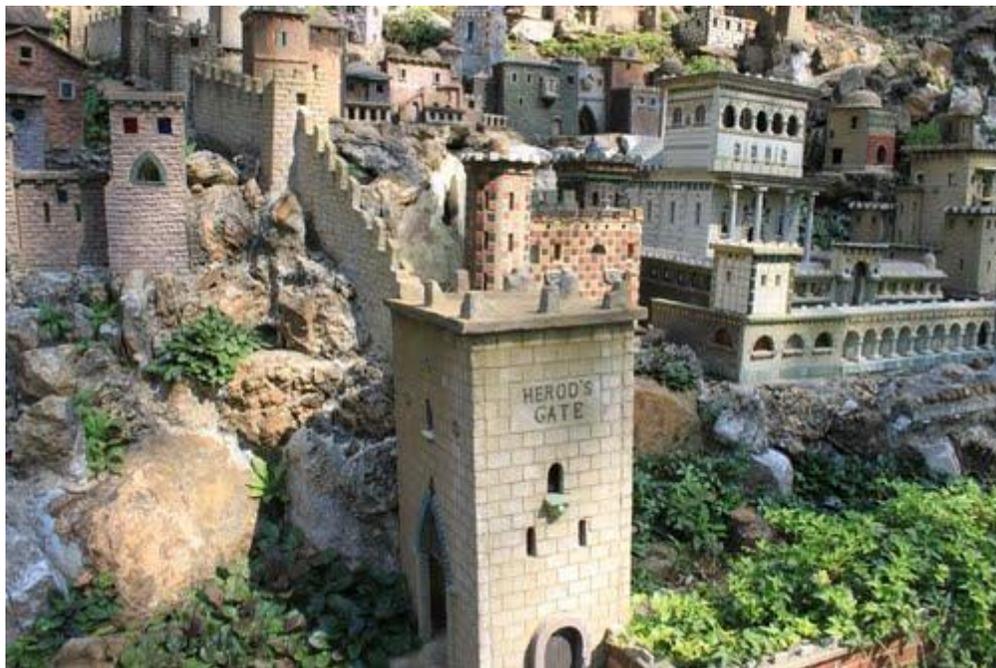
(Addendum- well the weather just thought it was going to stay warm, I know many are now concerned that those budding plants are going to freeze. What a difference a week can make. Hopefully this too shall pass). If you have not already heard, the intern class did not have enough applicants to move forward this year. While I am saddened by this, maybe it will give a lot of you some much needed rest, and we can all work hard later in the year to begin recruiting again. What that means is that we will have to make a concerted effort to man the Help Line. There is training scheduled for a group who will be our 'superusers'. Carolyn Love-Dorsey plans to use those people who attend become train the trainers when we man the lines! Great idea, Carolyn. Preparation for the Plant Sale, April 25th at Frazer is in full gear. Hopefully we will have glorious weather and another banner sale this year. Thanks to Karin Carmichael and Jerry Belcher for all their hard work to make this such a successful event. Of note, Suzanne Reaves has volunteered to be the Coordinator, and I know that that will be a great relief to Karin and the Plant Sale team!

Expect to see initial work which will be beginning in the Botanical Garden soon! A protective barrier fence has already been erected so that work can begin. Hopefully we can have updates at our next meeting.

Warm Regards,
Margaret

January 2015 Treasurer's Report prepared by Jan Gill

January 2015 Minutes prepared by Brenda Coleman



One of the tours being offered at the AMGA conference will be to the Ave Maria Grotto. It is amazing.

It's not too late to sign up for AMGA Spring Conference

Come meet fellow master gardeners from around the state and learn something new from the sessions and speakers March 23rd and 24th in Cullman, Alabama. The Alabama Master Gardeners Conference is early this year! But that gives us plenty of time to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our organization, not to mention time to implement all that we will learn from the outstanding slate of speakers and workshops we have lined up for this conference. We hope you will join us as we host "Gardening...WOW!" on March 23rd, 24th, and 25th, 2015 at the Cullman Civic Center in Cullman, Alabama. The conference will begin with a terrarium workshop on Monday afternoon given by internationally renowned Tova Martin, followed by a fish fry Monday night. In addition, Blount and Cullman Counties have some amazing sights to see. Some are well known, like the Ava Maria Grotto in Cullman and the Covered Bridges of Blount County, and some are local treasures just waiting for you to discover, like the Palisades Park in Oneonta and the CCMG Demonstration Garden in downtown Cullman. We have several more features within a two-mile radius of the Civic Center that you can easily explore if you come early or stay later.

Conference registration is open to the public, so invite your gardening buddies and come discover new ways to put the WOW! in gardening.

[View Conference Form Here](#)



MPS Arboretum March Work Schedule

Here is the March schedule for the M.P.S. Arboretum. Cindy and Brian would be grateful for any time that you could volunteer this month. It's going to get warmer and the grounds are beautiful in the spring.

Terese Goodson, CCMGA

MPS Arboretum Children in Nature Chairperson

[View Arboretum Work Schedule Here](#)



The Wednesday Morning Work Group at Blount Cultural Park. Interested in helping? Call Karen Weber at 277-8649.

Arbor Day Tree Seedling Giveaway - February 25

Montgomery Trees to host the Seventh Annual Seedling Giveaway.

Montgomery Trees, the urban forestry group for the city of Montgomery, sponsored by the Alabama Forestry Commission and Alabama Power, is hosting its seventh annual Seedling Giveaway in celebration of Arbor Day.

The Seedling Giveaway will be located at the top of the Capitol steps on Wednesday, February 25 from 11:30am - 1:00pm. The Mayor's Arbor Day Proclamation will be read in front of the Capitol prior to the Seedling Giveaway.

Native hardwood species and ornamental trees will be offered and include planting instructions. Again this year, an information table will be staffed with professionals and Master Gardeners to provide advice on proper planting techniques.

Anyone who becomes a member of Montgomery Trees on Arbor Day will be automatically be entered into a drawing for a 16GB iPad Mini.



Vegetable Gardening Starts Now

by Mike Forster

I know it's cold and damp outside and finishing your IRS 1040 is higher on your "To Do" list than vegetable gardening. But now is the time to get your garden ready for your cool season crops. Whether your vegetable garden is in ground or in a raised bed, it's time to dig up the weeds and grass, and pull up all the dead vegetable plants from last year. Turn the soil over mixing in good organic materials, compost, top soil and a little balanced fertilizer 8-8-8, 10-10-10, or 13-13-13. I also mix in a bag or two of composted manure, which can be purchased at most of the nurseries, Lowes, Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Farmer's Feed & Seed etc. Cool season vegetable plants and seeds can also be purchased in most of these same stores. My cool season favorites include: onions, radishes, cabbage, broccoli, arugula, leaf lettuce and potatoes. ACES publications ANR-0063, ANR-0479 and ANR-47 all have very nice charts for

when and what to plant whether it is cool season or summer vegetable gardening. A little work now will pay off all season long.



Prime Magazine Gardening Articles

Thank you to Laurice Goorley for her article on Terrariums submitted for publishing in the March Prime Magazine edition. Laurice recently was the speaker at Lunch and Learn on the topic of terrariums. To read her article (after March 1) and previous gardening articles written by CCMGA members in Prime Magazine, go to: <http://primemontgomery.com>



Monarch Butterflies and Milkweed

The monarch butterfly has flown into the national spotlight, and it's brought milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) along with it. Because they are the host plants for monarch caterpillars, the butterfly's survival depends upon an abundance of milkweeds in the landscape. With countless native plant species under threat from habitat loss and in need of conservation attention, will the public's love of monarchs be enough to save milkweeds, too?

Though milkweeds are sometimes maligned and misunderstood, they are currently some of the most sought-after plants in the country, in large part because their protection and restoration is essential for the future of the North American monarch migration. Despite being saddled with a common name that suggests they are a nuisance, milkweeds are a diverse group of native wildflowers -- over 70 species are native to the United States! -- that grow in a variety of habitats including deserts, prairies, woodlands, and wetlands.

Seeds and plants are widely available for the four most familiar and broadly distributed: butterfly (*A. tuberosa*), common (*A. syriaca*), showy (*A. speciosa*), and swamp (*A. incarnata*) milkweeds. Here, we'd like to introduce you to a few lesser-known species, for which seeds and plants are becoming increasingly obtainable. These may not be suited for your home region, but if you do live within their natural range, please consider using them to create monarch habitat -- or to diversify the one you've already planted!

Thank you to Lynette Morse for sharing this article from the Xerces Society. You can find more information at their website at <http://www.xerces.org/>

CCMGA Member Birthdays

January Sorry these were missed last month

Charlotte Wood Bent - Jan. 7

Martha Given - Jan. 14

Robert Cope - Jan. 17

James Canerday - Jan. 22

Cecil Barnes - Jan. 24

Ann Waldo - Jan. 26

Karin Carmichael - Jan. 26

Andy Jackson - Jan. 31

February

Ira Howard - Feb. 1

Audrey Shelnuttt - Feb. 5

Daphne Nations - Feb. 6

Janice Jackson - Feb. 11

Ludy Sanderson - Feb. 13

Barbara Samuels - Feb. 14

Erica Clark - Feb. 14

Mary Eleanor Hines - Feb. 18

Lynette Morse - Feb. 21

Elaine Barron - Feb. 21

Ericka Anderson - Feb. 21

Jarome Thomas - Feb. 26

Sheila Robertson - Feb. 26

Eileen Webb - Feb. 27

March

Nancy Gilreath - March 1

Gene Payne - Mar. 1

Christine Shoup - Mar. 4

Vickie Raney - Mar. 4

Sadler McLemore - Mar. 6

Laurice Goorley - Mar. 9

Mary Jane McCracken - Mar. 9

Judith Kyser - Mar. 14

Jan Gill - March 18

Justin Skipper - Mar. 21

Karen Steineker - Mar. 22

Anita Ward - Mar. 25

Chris Henderson - March 25

Emily Brown - March 25

John Dorminey, March 28

Volunteers Needed at E.A.T. South School Gardens

E.A.T. South has requested volunteers to supervise/give input on work various gardens already established in the local area, mainly at schools and churches. If you are interested, please call Denise Blake Greene at denise@eatsouth.org or call at 590-5031. You may also go to their website.



Capital City
Master
Gardener
Association
Montgomery, Alabama

The Prairie Mud will be published mid-monthly. Please send photos and announcements to Eileen Webb at capcitymga@gmail.com. If you have a flyer to submit, please make sure it is in a PDF format. This publication would not be possible without the help from our photographers Janice Jackson, Carolyn Dorsey and Mac McLellan. Thank you to Sara Brown for seeing that printed copies are mailed each month to those requesting them.

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