

Garden Thyme



Monthly Newsletter of the East Central Alabama Master Gardeners Association

February, 2014

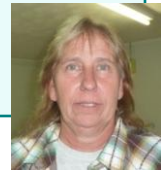
From Our President, Ann Hammond...

We have made it thru January and what a January it has been. This is the kind of winter I remember. The past couple of years I did not know whether to plant or wait. January was supposed to be cold - no planting, only planning.

As we go into February we can get geared up for spring. Already we have new beginnings: the new year with new meetings. We also have a new master gardener class that will give us new interns. We have renewed members -- welcome back. And hopefully we will have new ideas and new projects.

Thank you for your continued support and all your hard work. Hopefully you have rested this winter and are ready to get back to work. Remember our Garden Friend program. It is so much easier (or seems like it) when we all do it together. I look forward to working with you again this year.

On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. Zechariah 14:6



Our 2014 Meetings...

It has been decided that our monthly meetings will be used to conduct association business and to have presentations on topics of interest. These will continue to be the third Monday of each month at Ava United Methodist church. All trips will be made separately from our monthly meetings. Some of the trips that were discussed are 1) Hayes Jackson's yard in Calhoun County; 2) Birmingham Botanical Garden; 3) a hosta grower in

Tyus, GA; 4) Hills and Dales Estate in LaGrange, GA, and 5) a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) location (this could also be a topic for presentation at a monthly meeting). **Please let Ann Hammond know if you have topics you would like to have presented or if you are interested in making a presentation to our group. Also, we are very open to ideas for trips we can take.**

Upcoming Seminar...Morning of February 17

Dani Carroll and ECAMGA will host a blueberry pruning seminar that will be open to the public on **February 17th from 10 am to 12 noon at Ava United Methodist church.** As a part of the seminar we will go to a blueberry field that is in need of pruning, and do some work. Be sure to

bring your pruning tools. This will be more of a hands-on type seminar and will be an excellent way to earn CEUs. We will need helpers and volunteers to bring refreshments (cakes, cookies, muffins, etc.). Please let Ann know if you can help. Please invite anyone you know who can benefit.

Our February Meeting...Afternoon of February 17

Our February 17th meeting will be held at Ava United Methodist Church at 1:30 pm. Dani Carroll will continue the discussion on blueberry bushes. This will be more of a lecture-type meeting for ECAMGA. If you would like to bring your lunch, we can eat at the church after the seminar. This will also be a great way to earn some CEU hours.

Upcoming Events/Items Of Interest...

2014 MEETING DATES

February 17 – Blueberry pruning
March 17
April 21
May 19
June 16
July 21
August 18
September 15
October 20
November 17
December - No meeting

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Baisy Thompson	2/1
Ralph Sanchez	2/1
Joy Allen	2/3
Elaine Harris	2/14
Almeta Partin	2/20
Trudine Smith	2/21
Sharon McCune	2/27



If you are a Facebook user, be sure to "like" Dani Carroll's page, East Alabama Smart Yard. She updates this page frequently and includes information about all the upcoming webinars. Lots of good information!!

- Our deepest sympathy is extended to Troy and Margaret Smith on the death of Troy's brother.
- Please keep Dee Perkins and her husband, Fred, in your prayers. He has been diagnosed with leukemia and is under hospice care.
- Congratulations to Jackie and Sheila Bolen on the birth of their twin grandsons, Benjamin and Flynn (6 lb. 6 oz.). Pray for Sheila while she is in Alaska taking care of those little babies and the rest of their family.
- Also please keep Barbara (Thomas) Kendrick in your prayers. She was in the class of 2010 and has recently had surgery to remove a large mass. Doctors do not believe further treatment is necessary at this time.

Tentative date for our plant sale is April 26 at Kiwanis Park.

OUR NEW MASTER GARDENER CLASS WILL START ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, AT AVA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. ECAMGA TRADITIONALLY PROVIDES LUNCH FOR THE GROUP FOR THE FIRST CLASS. PLEASE PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR, AND HELP US WELCOME THIS NEW GROUP.



Membership Directory

It's time to update our ECAMGA Membership Directory. Please provide the following information to Sheila Bolen by the end of February; the updated directory will, hopefully, go out in March. Please provide the information you feel comfortable sharing with all our members.

Jack and Sheila Bolen
517 Clairmont Springs Rd
Talladega, AL 35160
256- 354-2188
sheilabolen@hotmail.com
BD: Jack 9/21
Sheila: 5/24
Anniversary: 8/10

For The Birds
During the winter months, save various materials to put outside for nesting birds in the spring. Material such as pet fur, scraps of yarn/string, cotton batting or other bits of material is great for our feathered friends to add to their nests.

What Is A CEU Hour Versus A Volunteer Hour?

There has been some discussion about what constitutes a CEU (continuing education unit) hour versus a volunteer hour. The Master Gardener handbook definition is "Time spent listening to an educational speaker or topic should be counted as CEUs. Certificates stating the number of CEUs are strongly recommended when organizing such events. Otherwise, a description of the location, speaker, topic presented, and amount of time can be included in the service report.

These guidelines will help you decide if an activity should count toward CEU's:

- Does the activity have a specific learning objective?
- Is the speaker at the activity a recognized authority in the subject presented?

If you answer yes to these two questions, then count the activity toward your CEU's. [If you are still in doubt, ask an Extension agent.](#)

On a practical level...a CEU can be earned by attending a lecture, demonstration and/or participating in a learning activity. Examples: the trip to Pat Dye's Quail Hollow...we were given lots of information about growing maple trees. Ameta's presentation on seeds would count as CEU hours. Our upcoming blueberry seminar will count as CEUs (however, working to put together the workshop or preparing snacks would count as volunteer hours).

We must report CEU hours on a different screen from volunteer hours if they were earned at the same event. It is recommended that we report 10 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) each year.

Four guidelines for validating volunteer work:

- Will it benefit the community?
- Is it associated with a non-commercial group?
- Is it related to gardening, the environment, or an Extension program?
- Are you helping people learn?

If you can answer yes to these four questions, then the activity meets the mission of the Master Gardener program, and you should count it as a volunteer activity in the data base.

Following are examples for activities that count toward Master Gardener service/volunteer hours. To encourage Certified MG's to stay active in the program, we are to report a minimum of 25 volunteer hours per year.

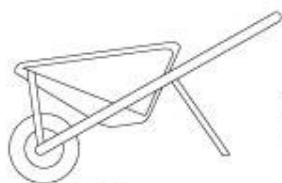
- Any activity accepted or approved by the Local MG Coordinator
- Time spent in Master Gardener Association business meetings
- Writing an article for the newsletter.
- Building raised beds at schools or nursing homes.
- Maintaining beds that we established in the past; i.e., daffodil bed at the elementary school
- Drive time to monthly AMG association meetings ONLY counts when you are involved with a committee or have a specific responsibility at the meeting.
- Travel time to and from ALL other educational or volunteer activities counts as volunteer time.
- Labor in your garden or someone else's in preparation for a program.

Guidelines from IRS

Drive time: All drive time still counts for any and all activities if using these numbers in an itemized IRS tax deduction. Mileage expense for volunteers, as defined by the IRS, is deducted as a direct expense OR at the mileage rate. Mileage is a deduction for the vehicle on the owner's itemized tax form (see IRS publication 526). You may want to consult with your accountant or tax advisor.

Word Search Puzzle Garden

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



Wheelbarrow



Dustpan



Hoe



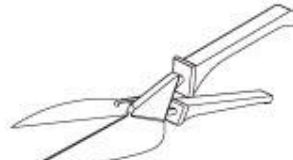
Water hose



Lawnraker



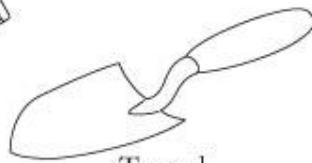
Pail



Shears



Shovel



Trowel



Seeds

Fix Your Foundation

Now is the time when the underlying structure of the garden is most apparent.

Evaluate your garden for areas where architectural elements such as arbors or trellises are needed.

Deciduous shrubs and trees should be inspected and pruned at this time.

Dormant garden shrubs may also be removed or transplanted if the ground is not frozen. Look for winter color in the garden and ways to enhance it with different colors and textures of evergreens.

FOLKLORE AND OLD WIVES' TALES

- The higher the clouds, the better the weather
- Clear moon, frost soon
- When ants travel in a straight line expect rain
- Rainbow at noon, more rain soon
- Rain before seven, fine before eleven
- Cold is the night when the stars shine bright
- Birds on a telephone wire predict the coming of rain
- If birds fly low then rain we will know
- Red sky at morning, sailor take warning; red sky at night, sailor's delight
- A year of snow, a year of plenty



GARDEN FRIENDS

Q. What is it? What does it cost?

A. A group of Master Gardeners willing to work in your garden in return for your doing work in their garden. The only cost is your time and effort.

Q. What kind of work?

A. Here are some examples: prune shrubbery or fruit trees, make a garden path, build a new flower bed, propagate plants, put in bedding plants, move or install shrubs and small trees, make a compost pile, divide perennials, design and lay out a landscape, identify and tag landscape plants, build a trellis, make raised beds, install a drip irrigation system, edge beds, weed and clean up a garden.

Q. How much time is involved?

A. If your garden is one of the work sites then you will be expected to reciprocate with other Garden Friends. If your garden is not one of the work sites then you are welcome to join the work party without any commitment.

Q. What about volunteer hours?

A. This work does not count as volunteer hours since we will be doing work for other Master Gardeners. (Think of this as an old fashion barn raising! Everybody helps and reciprocates as needed.)

Q. How do I join?

A. If you would like your garden to be one of the work sites, do a work order and get it to Ann Hammond at ashmmnd@gmail.com or by mail. Also contact Ann if you have any questions (256-610-1625).

SAMPLE GARDEN FRIENDS WORK ORDER

WORK ORDER: Stan Roark

TIME: 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

DATE: February 21. Make-up: February 23

LOCATION: 1024 County Road 133, Wedowee, AL.

DIRECTIONS: From US 431 turn east on Alabama Hwy 48 towards Woodland. Turn left in front of Randolph County High School onto CR 133. House is a 2-story cedar house 1 mile from Hwy. 48.

CONTACT: (256) 357-4268 or stanroark@gmail.com.

WORK TO BE

PERFORMED : Install bed edging, propagate roses, dig small Japanese maples, prepare planting holes for 6 fruit trees and amend with compost, dig planting bed for boxwoods, divide one area of variegated lirope, move 2 large stones.

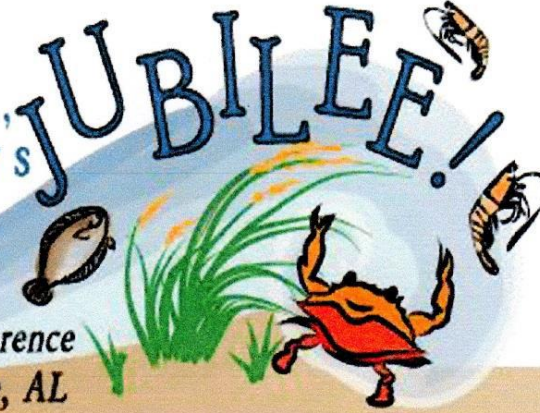
TOOLS NEEDED: Gloves, digging tools.

OTHER: I will provide bottled water, coffee and cookies.

Alabama ...
A Gardener's

2014

AMGA Annual Conference
April 28-30 - Daphne, AL



We are now about six months away from the 2014 Alabama master Gardeners Conference. We will be meeting April 28-30, 2014 at the Daphne Civic Center (DCC) in Daphne, AL. The Baldwin County Master Gardeners have been working with the DCC staff to ensure that we host the best possible conference experience. We have made arrangements for you to participate in some interesting side trips on your way to the conference on Monday April 28th. The tour schedule has been set up so you can tour both the bog and winery. Most are just a short mile or two off of I65.

Monday April 28th you will find our resident expert Fred Nation, at the Splinter Hill Pitcher Plant Bog waiting to provide a personalized tour of the Bog. Fred will lead a tour from 12:30-1:30PM and a second tour 2-3 PM. More information about the Bog can be obtained at the following link, [Alabama Splinter Hill Bog](#).

You may also want to save some time to visit the Perdido Vineyards Winery, [Perdido Vineyards & Winery](#). While there, winemaker, Jim Eddins,

will show you how the wine is made and how they make their internationally award winning vinegar. The tours are scheduled from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m. and a second tour 2- 3 p.m. Jim can easily be persuaded to explain how they produce bio-fuels with a portion of the crop. Just a visit to the gift shop and tasting room is worth the trip.

We have told Dianne at Crenshaw Farms Daylily Garden in Stockton, AL to expect several master gardener sojourners to stop in on their way to the conference. [CrenshawFarms-DaylilyGarden](#).

A stop at the Baldwin County Bicentennial Park may be another interesting choice, especially for history buffs. Bicentennial Park includes a nature trail which contains flora, fauna and wetlands indigenous to Baldwin County. [Baldwin County Bicentennial Park](#).

Just remember to leave time to make it to Daphne for conference registration.

The first day of the conference will culminate with a no host barbeque at the Daphne Bayfront Park Pavilion. It is lo-

cated in beautiful, newly landscaped Bayfront Park on beautiful Mobile Bay. [Daphne Bayfront Park Pavilion](#).

There are several hotels in the area that will be conference host hotels. Favorable room rates have been negotiated with the Daphne Hampton Inn and the Marriott properties (Fairfield Inn and Courtyard) near Bass pro Shop. Each of them has a registration link on the conference web site. We have our own dedicated page on the hotel web sites which automatically provides the code for the special conference room rates. These pages provide links to other events and attractions in the area, for those coming early and or staying a few extra days. The hotel conference rates include several days before and after the conference. Please encourage your master gardener friends, planning their trip, to support the host hotels at: [Hotel Information and Registration](#).

Blakely State Park and Meaher Park will also be available for those master gardeners who will be traveling via RV. Blakely is a new modern campground designed and built to accommodate the largest recreational vehicles. Meaher has 56 new campsites with up to 50 amp electrical connections with water and sewer. Information about these sites can be obtained by clicking on [Hotel Information and Registration](#).

We are looking forward to meeting you at the conference.