



JEFFERSON COUNTY
Master Gardeners

Roots and Shoots

FEBRUARY 2009

FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

The days are ever so slowly lengthening and there are chores galore to prepare our gardens for this coming growing season. It is time to start on February's chores and I have not even finished January's.

Here are some suggested February chores:

1. Continue to select and plant roses.
2. Begin to spray fruit trees to control scale.
3. Continue to select and plant woody ornamentals.
4. Prune established tea and floribunda roses around the 25th of the month. Also prune fruit and nut trees, evergreens, summer-flowering shrubs and landscape trees.
5. Plant Gladiolus bulbs and continue to do so at two week intervals until about July 15th.
6. Apply dormant spray to deciduous trees and shrubs.
7. Major tree pruning can continue this month, if needed.
8. The following flower seeds may be sown directly in properly prepared flower beds this month: Balsam, Calendula, Coneflower, Four O'clock, Hollyhocks, Annual Phlox, California Poppy and Nasturtium.
9. Begin to harden off tomatoes, peppers and other cold frame or indoor plantings. Water less and begin to expose plants to cool weather gradually.
10. Weed previously tilled flower beds.
11. Look at all of those new seed catalogs that you have been getting recently.

I personally like chore #11. I have two new catalogs calling my name so I will go for now. See each of you on February 10th at 10:00 a.m. The program will be the annual Reach For The Stars Awards Program with a potluck lunch so there will not be a social time before the meeting.

Pat

Pat Bullock

JCMGA Potluck Lunch February 10, 2009

The following people have signed up to bring a dish for the luncheon that will follow the Reach for the Stars Awards program:

- 1) Nancy Nash
- 2) Joanne Carnes - Vegetable
- 3) Nora O'Connor
- 4) Martha Picardy - Meat
- 5) Rhonda McClennan - Dessert
- 6) Jan Shultz - Dessert
- 7) Sandy Bergeron - Vegetable or Salad
- 8) Kelly Boone
- 9) Norma Aldridge
- 10) Ann Katholi - Vegetable
- 11) Frances W. Owens
- 12) Janet Andrews-Smith - Dessert
- 13) Bernice Hill - Casserole
- 14) Anne Parrish
- 15) Holly Goettege
- 16) Madelon Rushing
- 17) Lacey Henderson
- 18) Connie Barron
- 19) Anne Thomas
- 20) Harold Deason
- 21) Pat Bullock

Additional contributions are welcome. Please call Nancy Nash at 661-9120 to let her know what you will bring. Members of the Hospitality Committee, please come early to help with set-up.



GARDENER'S BOOKSHELF

Check out what's new in
The Library at Birmingham
Botanical Gardens:

*Mind-altering and
Poisonous Plants of the
World* / Michael Wink
581.6 WIN

*Keep Chickens!: Tending
small flocks in cities,
suburbs, and other small
spaces* / Barbara Kilarski.
636.5 KIL

*Woody Cut Stems for
Growers and Florists: How
to produce and use
branches for flowers, fruit,
and foliage* / Lane Greer
635.97 GRE

*A Backyard Flower Garden
for Kids* / Amie Jane Leavitt.
J635.9 LEA

*Everything I want to do is
Illegal: War stories from the
local food front* / by Joel
Salatin 630 SAL

-Hope Long

"Tony Talks"

Wow – 92 folks came to the January meeting. I think everyone who came enjoyed Jason Powell's presentation. The business meeting ran a little long due to the numerous announcements and information that was presented, but the newsletter will go a long way to streamline (speed up) that part of the meeting. The main objective we have is to make sure you are informed about **your** association. Keep coming and bring an inactive MG friend along.

I appreciate those of you who have responded to my call for help to put on a series of beginning gardener classes. This is not a class designed for Master Gardeners, but for true beginners. I would like to see MGs teach this class as an educational outreach. We have decided to call the series, "Home Grown Traditions" but the first event is called "GROW-eries" and will focus on the following tentative topics: Gardening Basics, Soils & Plant Nutrition, Raised Bed Gardening, Container Gardening, Edible Landscapes, and Pesticide Safety.

The first class is scheduled for March 28, 2009 (Saturday) from 10:00 a.m. til 3:00 p.m. and will be held at the Green Industry Resource Center. They are located on the top floor of the North Shelby County Library on Highway 119 about half way between Highway 280 and I-65. In addition to this class, I am planning a similar program to be held at the Jeff State Campus in Pell City. If you are near that area I could use some help there as well on March 20, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.

Please look over the topics and let me know if you are interested in being a presenter or helping in any capacity at either of these events.

One other educational opportunity I want to mention is an advanced level Master Gardener program on Urban (Suburban) Tree Care. My current plans are to assess the interest in conducting this program this spring and then conduct the program in the late summer and fall (if we have enough interest). The program would consist of about three or four day-long programs about once a month for three or four months. There will be at least 20 hours of classroom and hands-on activities and graduates will be asked to conduct at least that many hours of volunteer service on "tree" related projects. If you are interested, please drop me an email and let me know. I will let you know more as the program is developed. Extension is conducting a "pilot" program on this subject in the Florence area this winter. I will be teaching part of the program and attending other sessions to learn from them. My e-mail is gloveta@aces.edu.

Dues Reminder

Dues for 2009 are now past due. If you have not yet paid dues, please mail your check, payable to JCMGA in the amount of \$17, to Anne Thomas, 1497 Jones Road, Springville, AL 35146. Any active member who does not remit dues by Feb. 23, 2009 will be removed from the mailing list until dues are paid.

January 14, 2009 Minutes Jefferson County Master Gardener Association

The Jefferson County Master Gardener Association met January 13, 2009 in the Hodges Room at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. President Pat Bullock called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Pat recognized several interns as well as Janet Smith, a transfer from the Chilton County Master Gardener Assoc.

Several announcements were made: The new Master Gardener Class will begin January 15. Pat asked everyone to make sure their names, phone number and e-mail address were correct. Harold Deason announced that the new yearbook would be ready next month at the Awards Banquet. T-shirts will be available for \$10.00. Hope Long, the Librarian at BBG, announced that the Hoover Library landscaping project is back underway and asked for help from anyone who can spare some time to help with planting. The Grand Opening is scheduled for February 9, 2009.

Secretary Sue Stinson read the minutes from the December Board Meeting. The minutes were approved as read. Anne Thomas gave the Treasurer's report. The balance at the end of the year was \$14,438.00.

Total volunteer hours for each member should either be recorded on the ACES website or a hard copy sent to Tony Glover. Membership dues are due now and are \$17.00. Make checks to JCMGA and mail to Anne Thomas.

The JCMGA has received an acknowledgement from Auburn University for the \$5,500.00 donated to the Auburn MG Endowment Fund.

NEW BUSINESS:

The State Master Gardener Association meeting will be in Huntsville April 2nd through 4th. You may download a registration packet at www.alabamamg.org. Volunteer hours will now be 25 hrs. minimum. In the past they have been 20 hrs. CEU's will be counted apart from volunteer hours.

Tony Glover explained the "Home Grown Tradition". It is a series of workshops scheduled over the next two years. These workshops are not for Master Gardeners but for folks who have never planted a vegetable garden. He would like for Master Gardeners to teach these classes.

A vote was held for JCMGA to host the State Master Gardener Association conference in 2012. The motion was seconded and a majority voted for us to do so. Pat announced it is a lot of work and would be a rewarding experience as well as challenging. John Baker, chairman of the Board has a guidebook on the way.

A list of committees was published and an opportunity to sign up to serve was provided. Pat will let everyone know which committee. Last year's Committee chairs will remain the same this year. Tony announced there is a document on the web site listing all the committees. Chair people will give a report each month. Volunteer and travel time will be approved.

The April meeting will be a field trip, to be announced.

Volunteers are always needed especially in the GPIC office. Pat has made a list for certain folks each month to bring snacks for our meetings. This will be announced each month.

Our annual plant sale will be April 16th through 19th. This is Thursday through Sunday.

Nominations for the Mary Lou McNabb Award need to be in as soon as possible.

The lecture on March 12th is the annual Spencer Lecture and the speaker will be Mary Palmer Dargan. BBG Special Events Coordinator is taking reservations for the lecture. Robert Eskew's annual Rose Pruning is Saturday March 7 from 8 a.m. until noon. He will give instructions on pruning roses.

To encourage everyone to wear a name badge, there are two drawing each month. Everyone who wears a badge will have his name will go into the hat for a door prize.

Our speaker today was Jason Powell from Petals from the Past. He gave an interesting talk on antique roses and perennials, as well as herbs, that survived the drought.

Tony announced that replacement badges are available at a small charge. They have to be ordered in bulk so it may take up to 6 weeks to receive them.

The next meeting will be February 10, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15.

Respectively submitted

Sue Stinson

Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

JANUARY 26, 2009

Balance Forward: 1-01-09 **\$14,748.40**

Received:

Graduation Banquet (Deposit 1-8-09) 168.00
AMGA Dues -16 (Deposit 1-8-09) 80.00
JCMGA Dues- 16 (Deposit 1-8-09) 192.00
Special Ed Fund (Deposit 1-8-09) 13.00
AMGA Dues - 59 (Deposit 1-26-09) 295.00
JCMGA Dues -60 (Deposit 1-26-09) 720.00
2009 Class - 5 (Deposit 1-26-09) 850.00

Total Received: **\$2318.00**

Disbursements:

#1854 - AMGA - State Dues 2009 170.00
#1855 - Jason Powell (Honorarium) 35.00
#1856 - Tricia Farris (Yearbook) 22.01
#1857 - Tony Glover (2009 Class Exp.) 393.45
#1858 - AMGA (Reach for Stars Pins) 60.00

Total Disbursement: **\$680.46**

Balance: 1-26-09 **\$16,385.94**

Due to AMGA - \$ 375.00
Sp. Education Fund - \$1588.00
Active Alumni - \$95.00

Budget Items - Expenditures:

Dues to Alabama MG Assoc. - \$170.00 (pd)
Honorariums - \$35.00 (pd)
Yearbook Expenses - \$22.01 (pd)
MG Class Expenses - \$393.45 (pd)
Reach for Stars Expenses - \$60.00 (pd)

*When gardeners garden, it is not
just plants that grow, but the
gardeners themselves.*

- Ken Druse



Congratulations 2008 Master Gardener Class

Class members receiving their certificates at the Graduation Banquet held in November included: Norma Aldridge, Connie Barron, Kelly Boone, Marilyn Brooks, Betsy Cooper, Kelly Echols, Melanie Greer, Stacey Gunderson, Judy Hard, Rebecca Hardin, Fletcher Harvey, Paulette Johnson, Molly Knudsen, Cecelia Latham, Lynne Long, Katie Lucas, Stephanie Tullis Melonas, Jo Anne Niden, Patricia Palmer, Melissa Peters, Connie Prather, Harry Register, Sue Stinson, Patricia Straka, Janet Waters, and Claudia Wyatt.

Fletcher Harvey was awarded the first Extension Help Line Intern of the Year Award for logging 160 hours working in the GPIC. Four other interns--Norma Aldridge, Jo Anne Niden, Sue Stinson, and Janet Waters--each logged over 100 hours.



Check out our web site

Don't forget to visit the JCMGA web site, **www.jeffcomg.org** to learn more about upcoming programs, meetings and volunteer opportunities. You'll also find useful information about Master Gardener membership, as well as links to the Alabama Master Gardener Association web site, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System web site, and other helpful sites for MGs. If you have extra plants to share, or are looking for a new plant (what MG isn't?), be sure to take a look at the Plant Swap page.

Webmaster Debra Burrell asks that members e-mail her at webmaster@jeffcomg.org if you have pictures of JCMGA activities or other information to share.

MEETING/PROGRAM SCHEDULE SET FOR 2009

The Jefferson County Master Gardener Association meets at 10:00 a.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, unless otherwise noted.

The program schedule for 2009 is:

Jan. 13	Toughest Plants for Southern Gardens, Jason Powell of Petal from the Past
Feb. 10	Reach for the Stars Awards/Potluck lunch
March 10	Winter Forest: How to Identify Trees by Henry Hughes. Weather permitting, we will be going on a walking tour of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens.
April 14	"Hummers" by Bob and Martha Sargent. The Sargents are well-known and respected in their field and have founded "The Hummer/Bird Study Group".
May 12	Plant Swap with Linda Emmerson
June 16	Field trip to the Daylily Garden of Nora and Dale O'Conner
July 14	Food safety, preservation and canning for the harvest to come this fall with ACES agent Angela Treadaway
Aug. 11	"The Propagation of Ferns from Spores" by Ruth Reichwein, followed by a field trip to the Fern Glades
Sept. 8	Discuss the election of officers, introduce the committees, followed by a program on bees by Sally Lee, ACES, a member of the Bee Society
Oct. 13	Election of 2009 Officers, program TBA
Nov. 10	Banquet with guest speaker Hayes Jackson, Calhoun County ACES agent and avid gardener
Dec.	No meeting



19th Annual
Alabama Master Gardener Association
State Conference
April 2 - 4, 2009
Huntsville, AL
www.alabamamg.org

The Master Gardeners of North Alabama (Madison County) in cooperation with Master Gardeners from Limestone and Morgan counties will host the 2009 Alabama Master Gardener Association Conference, *A Garden for All Seasons*, in Huntsville, April 2-4, 2009.

Conference activities begin at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens with a variety of workshops and guided tours of the Huntsville Botanical Gardens, Trillium Garden and Nature Trail. A complimentary welcome reception at the HBG will be followed by a barbecue dinner. Activities continue on Friday and Saturday at the Von Braun Civic Center with a variety of programs and workshops. Speakers include Harvey Cotten, of the Huntsville Botanical Gardens; Joe Lamp'I, host of PBS's *GardenSMART*, Patricia Lanza, author of *Lasagna Gardening*, and professional nature photographer J. Paul Moore. The registration fee is \$75 if paid by March 1st; \$90 after March 1.

More information and registration forms are available on the Alabama Master Gardener site at www.alabamamg.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 7 "Winter Gardening" Join Larry Quick to learn more about winter gardening. Larry will share tips and time-savers on preparing your garden for spring. Also includes refresher on pruning. Aldridge Gardens, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m., Cost \$15/\$10 for Aldridge Gardens members.

February 10 February Master Gardener Meeting. Reach for the Stars Awards program followed by potluck lunch, 10 a.m., BBG

February 21 "Tree Fruits in the Home Garden" Dr. Arlie Powell will discuss variety selection, care, and maintenance of tree fruits, 10:30 a.m., Petals from the Past in Jemison. Lunch available at noon for \$10 and must call 205-646-0069 for reservations. 12: 30 p.m. - Walking tour of Petals' tree fruit areas and pruning demonstration.

February 28 Arbor Day Celebration. Certified arborist and tree surgeon John Ingle will discuss tree care. The Hoover Beautification Board will provide trees to interested individuals throughout the morning. Students from Hoover schools will share award-winning essays. Aldridge Gardens, 9:00 a.m.- noon.

March 12 Virginia Beeland Spencer Lecture. Speaker: Mary Palmer Dargan, ASLA, "Timeless Landscape Design", 6:30 p.m., BBG. Reserve FREE tickets by calling 205-414-3965 or e-mail sbusby@bbgardens.org.

April 2 - 4 "A Garden for all Seasons" 19th annual Alabama Master Gardener State Conference, Huntsville, AL. For conference information and reservations: www.alabamamg.org.

April 16 - 19 Birmingham Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale, Colonial Brookwood Village, old Bruno's location.

Volunteer Opportunities

Aldridge Gardens, Children's Garden Workday, Feb. 7, 9:00 a.m.- noon. Volunteers needed to help install raised beds for spring planting. For more information contact Colleen Bedics at 682-8019/ext. 3.

Annual Rose Pruning, March 7, 8:00 a.m. - noon. Bob Eskew will lead volunteers in pruning roses in the BBG rose gardens.

Home Grown Traditions, Volunteers are needed to help Tony Glover with the first of a series of gardening workshops for beginning gardeners. The first workshop, "Backyard GROWseries" is scheduled for March 28, 10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. at the Shelby County Library. A similar program will be held on March 20th from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the Jeff State campus in Pell City. For more information, contact Tony at 205-879-6964/ext. 15 or e-mail gloveta@aces.edu

Gary Gerlach Plant Information Center HelpLine. MG volunteers are needed to man the help line and answer gardening-related questions from the public. For information, contact Tony at 205-879-6964/ext. 15 or e-mail gloveta@aces.edu

BBG Spring Plant Sale, April 16-19. Volunteers are needed to help with all aspects of the annual plant sale. For more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Carolyn Snow at 414-3962 or e-mail csnow@bbgardens.org.

Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Garden Docents are needed to help give tours of the BBG. Training sessions are held every third Tuesday of the month from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Garden volunteers and plant group volunteers are always welcome. For more information, contact Carolyn Snow 414-3962 or e-mail csnow@bbgardens.org.

Spring Lawn Care in the South

by Tony Glover



Question:

I have a lawn weed problem and I was wondering if I should use a weed killer and herbicide blended product?

Answer:

The so called "crab grass/weed preventer with fertilizer" products are marketed as convenient to use but that convenience may come at a price. The first cost is the product itself which can be quite expensive. Another cost may be the decreased health of your turf. Those products which contain fertilizer plus pre-emergent weed killers must be applied before warm season weeds (like crabgrass) germinate, which may be in mid to late February, in order to effectively kill those weeds. Unfortunately, that is much too early to apply fertilizer for all grasses except fescue or bluegrass. When fertilizer is applied that early the grass may start to grow much too soon if we have a couple of weeks of warm weather. Past experience has taught us (remember the Easter weekend freeze of 2007) that a late frost can do a lot of damage to warm season turf grasses. Bermuda, Zoysia, Centipede and St. Augustine grass are all tropical grasses that are much better adapted to heat than cold. These grasses can be easily "tricked" into growing too early in the spring. This can be true for any warm season grass but according to Jim Jacobi, Extension Pathologist, it is especially damaging to Centipede grass.

The more prevalent "weed and feed" products have a fertilizer plus a post-emergent weed killer. These products are normally applied to young developing weeds. In most years these weeds are most susceptible to herbicides during the same time the grass is in the "green up" stage. This is the correct time to fertilize but it can be a very bad time to apply herbicides. The reason it can be bad is because warm season grasses are most easily damaged or stressed at this stage of their growth.

You may be wondering if there is a correct time at all to use "weed and feed" products and that is a very good question. Those products that contain a post-emergent weed killer and fertilizer blends may have a window of usefulness after spring green up when late germinating summer weeds are small. For instance, if you use a pre-emergent weed killer (without fertilizer) in mid to late February it may wear off enough that some later weeds emerge. These weeds could be controlled with a "weed and feed" in late May or early June after the grass has past the stressful green up phase.

There is a correct way to approach weed control and proper fertilization but it involves an extra bit of effort. Pre-emergent weed killers may be used by themselves at the time just mentioned and fertilizer should be applied by itself in late April to early May. Fertilization type and amounts should be based on soil test results not guess work and this is a good time to have a test done to add lime if needed and find the correct fertilizer for your lawn.

I have had people tell me they have done it the "wrong" way for many years without a problem. My response has always been I know people who live very unhealthy lifestyles and live to a ripe old age but we seldom hear about all those who die young because the former is the exception not the rule. For instance, we regularly see soil test reports with excessively high amounts of phosphorus and potassium. These lawns may go for a long time with no problem but problems may arise at some point down the road. Even if you never see severe problems you are at the very least wasting fertilizer and possibly polluting ground water, streams and rivers. Also, we regularly see lawns that are fertilized too early get hammered by a late frost. If you fertilize too early the law of averages will eventually catch up with the luckiest gardener. Lastly, we see turf with unexplained lack of vigor and poor health problems that may have been severely weakened by a poorly timed herbicide application. For information on proper care of your turf grass visit the publications area with the Alabama Cooperative Extension Program (<http://www.aces.edu/pubs/>).

Find answers to gardening questions in Tony's blog: "Heart of Dixie Gardener." You can also submit a question for Tony to answer in a future blog or subscribe to receive new blog entries as they are posted. Check it out at: <http://hodgardener.blogspot.com>.

Tony Glover
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