

FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

Don't Say That Too Loud!

Tuesday, June 9th, while I was strolling through Dale and Nora O'Connor's daylily gardens, Calvin was at home mowing and doing other chores in the yard. After I got home he and I were sitting on the front porch and he said, "That oak tree right there is my favorite tree on the place." I looked at him and said, "I wouldn't say that too loud."

Well, today is four days later. It is Saturday, June 13th. It's 8:30 a.m. and I'm sitting at my desk with no lights on. It's raining outside. The closeness of the thunder and lightening tells me that this particular storm is almost overhead. The reason I don't have any lights on is the winds that came through last night took down the above mentioned "favorite" oak tree in the front yard. As the tree fell it took down our power and phone lines. The power company says it may take them a few days to get the power back on and the phone company says it will be at least next Tuesday.

The tree (thank Goodness), fell away from the house, into the front pasture. As it fell it took down a pine tree, two dogwood trees, the pasture fence and (to me) the worse thing, one of my twenty-year-old camellia bushes. It, of course, messed up the yard and tore up the concrete driveway.

We are counting our blessings. As I said, we are fine. The house was not damaged. The cat, the nine cows and the nine chickens are all accounted for, so all is well in our little corner of the world.

I told Calvin that if he has another "favorite" tree to keep it to himself.

I pray that all of you came through the recent storms with no damage. I look forward to seeing each of you at the July meeting. Until then be safe and don't work outside too long in the heat.

Pat

Pat Bullock



July Meeting

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

9:30 a.m. - Hospitality

10:00 a.m. - Meeting

Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Regional Extension agent Angela Treadaway will present a program on food safety, preservation, and canning. This program is just in time to be thinking about canning those fresh vegetables for next winter.

July Hospitality

Volunteers Needed!

Since only one person signed up to bring refreshments to the July meeting, please consider bringing snacks or baked goods to share with your fellow MGs.

Hospitality Committee members, please come early to set up and make coffee and stay after to help clean up.



**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY
FOURTH OF JULY!**



**JULY
GARDENER'S
CALENDAR**

FRUITS AND NUTS- Protect figs and other ripening fruit from birds.

SHRUBS--Continue to root shrub cuttings until late in the month and mulch to keep soil moist. Remove faded blooms promptly from crape myrtle and other summer-blooming plants.

LAWNS-Watch for diseases. Mow regularly. Water as needed.

ROSES-Keep roses healthy and actively growing. Apply fertilizer. Wash off foliage to prevent burning if any fertilizer falls on plants.

ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS-Water as needed to keep plants active.

BULBS--Iris and spider lilies may be planted late this month.

MISCELLANEOUS-Keeping flowers, shrubs, trees, and lawns healthy is the major task this month. This demands close observation for insects and diseases. Water.

VEGETABLE SEED-Plant beans, field peas, rutabagas, squash, New Zealand spinach, and Irish potatoes. Plant cabbage, collards, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and celery for the fall crop.

VEGETABLE PLANTS-Plant tomatoes in Central and North Alabama.

"It's hard to think anything but pleasant thoughts while eating a home-grown tomato.

--Lewis Grizzard

"Tony Talks"

Well, we all knew the cool wet weather would not last forever because we are in the deep South and hot humid weather is to be expected – sooner or later. The cool weather wet weather we experienced this spring brought a number of fungal and bacterial disease problems we have not seen in a several years. I can't tell you how many calls we have had on oak trees losing their leaves from a disease called oak leaf blister. Lawn diseases have also been at severe levels all spring. Jim Jacobi has been pulling his hair out (and he like me doesn't have much to lose) since he lost his lab tech, Cathy, in January. Hopefully he will be getting some relief soon because he looks like he could use a rest.

This has also been a busy year for education meetings. The surge in vegetable/fruit gardening interest has been dramatic. The vegetable workshop surveys indicated a large percentage of first time gardeners (54%) and an even larger percentage of people attending an Extension meeting for the first time (81%). Master Gardeners were and can continue to be a big help in reaching these beginning gardeners. From my perspective, as budgets get tighter and tighter, Extension is going to depend even more heavily on volunteers like you to help us meet the demand for solid, unbiased information. I believe you have proven you are up to the challenge and I appreciate your willingness to respond when called upon.

The GPIC call center has had a busy spring and lots of MG interns are getting some valuable on the job training. I have heard several of them say they have learned more working the phone lines then they did during the course. That hurt my feelings a little, but I knew from my own experience that would be the case. I have often said I learned more in my first couple years of Extension work than I did in four years of undergraduate school at Auburn University. The interns have been a huge help, but we could not have an effective GPIC without our regulars. We have a great core group of volunteers that come on a regular (usually weekly) basis to maintain some continuity and to help me in the process of training the interns. On the real busy days it is a relief for me to see these familiar faces. I think one of our regulars, Mitzi Owen, may have the record for the most calls in a single three-and-a-half hour shift this spring (over 20 calls - I think). If you are interested in helping at the GPIC just drop me an email or a call and I will be glad to sign you up. If you are intimidated by answering the phone, why not come on the weekend and be a greeter to BBG visitors. Fred Spicer loves it when we have someone to greet folks as they come in the GPIC.

When we were in the drought the last couple years there was a lot of interest in rain water harvesting. This spring may have dampened (pun intended) your enthusiasm but nevertheless we have a Rain Water Harvest workshop planned for July 14th from 1:00-3:00 PM. This is the same day as our regular monthly meeting, so why not pack a lunch and stay with us. If you are interested you may find more information at www.aces.edu/~gloveta/upcomingmeetings.php or www.aces.edu/homegarden/HomeGrown.php. Non MGs will need to complete a registration form and send it in before the event but MGs may register at the door (send me an email however and let me know you are coming – gloveta@aces.edu). There is a \$5 registration to cover refreshment and material cost and any extra funds will go to the Jefferson County Master Gardener Association. Harold Deason, Sallie Lee and I will be converting a 55 gallon drum into a rain barrel ready to add to a downspout. At the end of the meeting we will have a random drawing to give the finished barrel away. The lucky winner will need to make their own arrangements to get it home but we can hold it a few days if needed. I plan to repeat the Rain Harvest Workshop on July 24th in Pell City from 10:00-12:00 if you live in that direction and can't come on the 14th. You will need to send in your registration ahead of time for that event and the registration information is at the same web site as shown above.

Rain Barrel Workshop

Tuesday July 14th, 2009

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens - Auditorium

2612 Lane Park Road Birmingham, AL 35223



This workshop is designed to teach people how to make their own rain barrel. During this workshop there will be a presentation on harvesting rainwater and a demonstration on how to make a rain barrel. This will include instructions on how to attach the rain barrel to the down spout of the gutter system of your home. One lucky person will win the completed rain barrel by a random drawing to be held at the end of the program.

The cost of this workshop is \$5.00 to cover our material cost and refreshments.

Pre-registration is required with payment for this event and should be sent to:

Rain Barrel Program

Hanna Center

2612 Lane Park Road

Birmingham, AL 35223

Master Gardeners may pay at the door with e-mail or phone confirmation of attendance: 879-6964 x 10

Or e-mail: Tony Glover gloveta@aces.edu

**JCMGA Business Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2009****TREASURER'S REPORT**

The JCMGA met at the home of Nora and Dale O'Connor. President Pat Bullock called the meeting to order and welcomed every one. There were two first-time MG's present, Frances Thompson and Paulette Johnson. We also had five members from the St. Clair County MGA visiting with us.

The minutes from the April meeting were approved as written. The Treasurer's Report from April was approved and will be filed for audit.

There was a correction to the minutes from May. Mary Hooper was the winner of one of the prizes. After this correction, the minutes were approved. The Treasurer's Report from May was approved and will be filed for audit.

Harold Deason, Chairman for the 2012 MG State Conference, announced that the site committee would be meeting next week to pick the site for the 2012 State Conference.

Anne Thomas, Treasurer, announced that we have 153 active members per the state roster.

Scrapbook/Historian Connie Barron asked everyone to take pictures of any events you are involved in and forward the pictures to her. Be sure to name the MG's in the pictures.

Pat announced that at the August, 18, 2009 MG night meeting, Herb Lewis will present a program on Backyard Birding. This program will be open to MG's, family, friends and to the public. Please put this date on your calendars.

New Business: No new business.

Volunteer Opportunities: Carolyn Snow has requested monthly help from the MG's to assist with membership mailouts. She also has a need for other office type assistance. Call her at 414-3962 or csnow@bbgardens.org.

Bruce Steele awarded door prizes. Winners were Courtney McCrory and Mitzi Owen.

The meeting was adjourned and everyone toured the O'Connor's lovely garden. Every lily was labeled, as were many other plants. Our sincere thanks to Dale and Nora for inviting us to visit their beautiful garden.

CEU's:

2.0 CEU's were awarded for the May Plant Swap

.75 CEU's were awarded for Richard Healy's Basics of Herb Gardening program.

2.0 CEU's were awarded for the O'Connors' garden tour.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sue Stinson, Secretary

JUNE, 2009

Balance Forward: 5-25-09 **\$ 8,607.91**

Received:

AMGA Dues	\$ 15.00
Local Dues	36.00
T- Shirts	100.00
Guard(Night Meeting)	15.00
Home Grown Class	145.00
Rain Barrel Class	35.00

Total Received: **\$346.00**

Disbursements:

#1878 Jason's Deli	\$ 83.48
#1879 Connie Barron (Scrapbook)	39.84
#1880 Bruce Steele (Door prizes)	86.88
#1881 Debra Burrel (Website)	81.39

Total Disbursements **\$291.59**

Balance Checking Account: 6-25-09 **\$ 8,662.32**

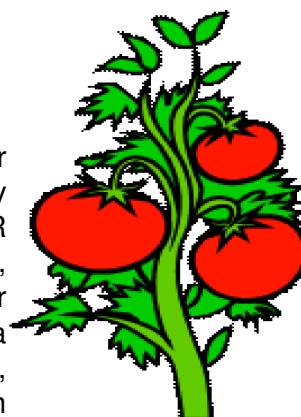
Certificate of Deposit - \$ 5,000.00**Budgeted Items:**

AMGA Dues Owed	\$15.00
Class/Conference Expenses	83.48
Scrapbook Expenses	39.84
Door Prizes	86.88
Website Expenses	81.39

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE
OF *ROOTS AND SHOOTS* :
JULY 27TH**

Blossom-End Rot in Tomatoes: Causes and Prevention

Tomato growers must take care to avoid blossom-end rot (BER), a disorder that can dramatically reduce both quality and quantity of tomato fruit. By using a few simple irrigation and fertilization practices, damage due to BER can be prevented or reduced. Blossom-end rot is a physiological disorder, **not a disease**. It is easily identified as a brown, leathery rot developing on or near the blossom-end of the fruit. It starts with a dry brown lesion the size of a dime, generally increasing in diameter as the condition worsens. In time, lesions often become covered with a black mold. BER is caused by calcium deficiency, usually induced by fluctuations in the plant's water supply. Because calcium is not a highly "mobile" element in the plant, even brief changes in the water supply can cause BER. Droughty soil or damage to the roots from excessive or improper cultivation (severe root pruning) can restrict water intake preventing the plants from getting the calcium that they need. Also, if plants are growing in highly acidic soil or are getting too much water from either heavy rain, over-irrigation, or high relative humidity, they can develop calcium deficiency and BER. To control BER, take the following steps:



- Keep the pH of the soil at 6.0 to 6.5. Perform a soil test and apply the recommended rate of lime, using dolomitic or high-calcium limestone. Be sure to apply lime 2 to 4 months before planting tomatoes.
- Apply the required amount of fertilizer when necessary based on soil test results for tomato. Applying too much fertilizer at one time can induce BER. Following soil test recommendations is the surest way to fertilize properly.
- Use mulches to conserve moisture. Use pine straw, straw, decomposed sawdust, plastic or newspapers. Mulches conserve soil moisture and reduce incidence of BER.
- Give your plants adequate water. Tomato plants need about 1.5 inches of water per week during fruiting. Extreme fluctuations in soil moisture can result in a greater incidence of BER.
- If your plants develop BER, spray them with a calcium solution at the rate of four pounds of calcium nitrate or calcium chloride per 100 gallons of water (or four level tablespoons per gallon of water). Be careful with calcium chloride. If day temperatures are greater than 85 to 90 °F, calcium chloride can burn plants. Under high temperatures, use calcium nitrate. You should spray 2 or 3 times each week, beginning when the second fruit clusters are blooming. Spraying calcium is not a substitute for proper irrigation and fertility management.
- Some varieties of tomato tend to be more sensitive to conditions that cause BER. Try growing several varieties and keep notes as to their performance.
- If you experience severe problems with BER, you should remove the infected fruits. Once a fruit develops BER it will not re-grow or repair the infected area. Remove the fruit, otherwise the damaged area could serve as an entry point for disease causing bacteria or fungi.

Joseph Kemble, *Extension Horticulturist*, Associate Professor, Horticulture, and **Edward Sikora**, *Extension Plant Pathologist*, Professor, both with Auburn University; and **Mary Beth Musgrove**, former *Extension Associate*

For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

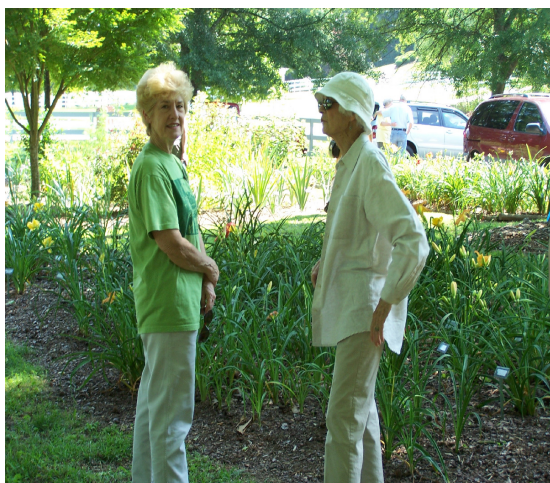
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June Meeting

*Many thanks to
Nora and Dale O'Connor
for allowing us to visit their
lovely garden.*

photos by Connie Barron



Blackberry Wine Cake

*By popular request, here is the recipe for the Blackberry Wine Cake.
Pat Bullock brought to the June meeting:*

Cake:

- 1 (18.25 oz.) package white cake mix
- 1 (3 oz.) package blackberry flavored gelatin (I use Jello brand Blackberry Fusion)
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup blackberry wine

Glaze:

- 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 cup blackberry wine

- 1) Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease and flour a 10 inch Bundt pan.
- 2) In a large bowl, stir together cake mix and gelatin mix. Make a well in the center and pour in eggs, oil and blackberry wine. Beat on low speed until blended. Scrape bowl, and beat 4 minutes on medium speed. Pour batter into prepared pan.
- 3) Bake in the preheated oven for 40 to 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Pour 1/2 of the blackberry wine glaze over top of cake while still warm. Let set for 10 minutes then remove cake from pan. Allow cake to cool fully before pouring the remaining glaze on top.
- 4) To make the Glaze: In a small bowl, stir together the confectioner's sugar and 1/2 cup blackberry wine.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 8 Lunch and Learn: *Suprising Succulents*. Succulents are becoming increasingly popular in gardening schemes outdoors and indoors because of their almost infinite varieties of size, shape and color in foliage and flower. Learn how to appreciate, plant and propagate these plants from a self described succulent addict, Michelle Reynolds, a collector of succulents for the past ten years whose own garden was featured in Birmingham Home and Garden Magazine. Aldridge Gardens 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Cost: Members \$10/ \$17.50 with lunch; Non-Members \$15/ \$22.50 with lunch. Registration and prepayment deadline: Monday, July 6. For more information, call 682-8019 or visit: www.aldridgegardens.com.

July 14 JCMGA meeting, 10:00 a.m., Hannah Center, BB Gardens

July 14 Rain Barrel workshop, 1-3 p.m., BB Gardens. See page 3 of this newsletter for registration information.

July 15 Lunch and Learn: *Handmade Paper Series, Part 1*. Artisan Etta Robinson will show how to turn scrap paper, leaves, and petals into handmade botanical papers. Aldridge Gardens 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Cost: Members \$10/ \$17.50 with lunch; Non-Members \$15/ \$22.50 with lunch. Registration and prepayment deadline: Monday, July 13. For more information, call 682-8019 or visit: www.aldridgegardens.com.

July 24 Rain barrel workshop. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Jeff State Campus, Pell City. For more information: www.aces.edu/~gloveta/upcomingmeetings.php or www.aces.edu/homegarden/HomeGrown.php.

August 1 *Petals from the Past 3rd Annual Tomato Contest*. All entries must be delivered and ready for tasting by 9:15am. Judging will begin at 9:30 promptly. Prizes will be awarded for taste and appearance in the categories of heirloom (open pollinated), Roma/plum, cherry/pear and hybrid slicing. There will also be prizes for the largest tomato and ugliest. Limit one entry per category and each entry must consist of 2 to 5 tomatoes. 10:00 a.m. Growing Great Tomatoes. Chip East, Regional extension agent, will discuss tomato variety selection, care and insect and disease control. *Petals from the Past*, Jemison, AL. For more information, call (205) 646-0069 or visit: www.petalsfromthepast.com.

August 2 *Tour of the Figs and Bunch Grapes*. Dr. Arlie Powell will discuss variety selections and care of figs and bunch grapes. Sample some of the varieties available. 2 p.m. *Petals from the Past*, Jemison, AL. For more information, call (205) 646-0069 or visit: www.petalsfromthepast.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

BB Gardens Library. Volunteers are needed for the following shifts: Tuesday, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.; Wednesday, 1 - 4 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.; 2nd Saturday, 1-4 p.m. For more information, call Elizabeth Drewry at 414-3932, or Jason Kirby at 414-3967.

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

ACES office, Beaty-Hannah Center, BBG. Volunteers needed to help answer phones, file, etc. For information contact Annette Drummond at 879-6964.

BB Gardens Volunteers are needed to help with the following BBG events: Cocktails in the Gardens, Aug. 13, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.; Great Pumpkin Festival, Oct. 17, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Fall Plant Sale, Oct. 17 - 18. Volunteers are also needed to provide flower arrangements for BBG lobby. For more information on these and other volunteer opportunities, contact BBG volunteer coordinator Carolyn Snow at 414-3962.