

FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

Do any of you remember the song from the 70's by Jim Stafford that had the line in it that went: "I don't like spiders and snakes?" Well, I really don't like either of these two things. Some of you may actually have one or both of these things in your homes as pets. Not me!

I remember that when we lived in California my older brother Steve would shoot those big spiders that make the zigzag web with his BB gun. Every once in a while he would let me shoot at one. My aim wasn't as good as his. So as you can see, my dislike of spiders goes way back. If your brother doesn't like them, then you don't like them.



I formed my own dislike of snakes. Once we moved back to Alabama, my Daddy farmed. One day while he was out on the tractor Mom sent me to the field with a fruit jar of cold water for him. Daddy said for me to take the jar and put it in the creek so the water would stay cold. On the way to the creek a big, black snake crossed the path and started towards me. I ran. Fast. Needless to say, the fruit jar did not get to the creek.

Two years ago I was walking up my driveway (not watching where I was putting my feet) when I stepped on something soft: a snake. After I got the hoe, it was a dead snake.

Last year I was watering the cows when one of them started making a lot of noise. I started toward her and happened to glance down. About two feet in front of me was a rattle snake. I slowly backed up and called Calvin on the walkie-talkie. I told him that there was a big rattle snake and I needed him right then. As he came around the side of the house with a hoe, I told him I thought he needed the shotgun. This was a big snake with 15 rattlers on it.

Several of you know that I have chickens, only nine of them. Six lay brown eggs and three lay green eggs. (The grandbabies like green eggs.) I enjoy my chickens and go out to their pen several times a day. Back in June I went out to gather eggs. There was a snake in one of the nests. Calvin came to the rescue again. (This time with a hoe.) Last month I found another one in a nest. This time I caught it trying to eat an egg. It was faster than Calvin so it got away. I keep a wooden egg in one of the nest. The chickens like to sit on it. Last week when I went to the chicken pen, I found another snake. This one happened to be in the nest that had the wooden egg in it. Again, Calvin came to the rescue. This snake did not move very fast. It had actually eaten my wooden egg. Calvin wanted to know what I was going to do about the wooden egg and I told him I was going to retrieve it. After all I am a surgical nurse and that egg had cost me \$1.

I'm really looking forward to cold weather and no snakes.

Pat

Pat Bullock

October Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 2009

9:30 a.m. - Hospitality

10:00 a.m. - Meeting

Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Report of the Nominating committee and Election of 2010 officers, followed by a presentation by Ellen Davis of Red Mountain Park. Field trip to park will follow meeting. Directions will be available at meeting.

Mark your calendar:

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2009

Installation of 2010 officers and Master Gardener class Graduation Banquet, 6:00 p.m. at BBG. Look for more information to follow.



October Hospitality

The following people have signed up to bring refreshments:

Anne Thomas

Kelley Boone

Connie Barron

Mary Jo Quintana

Thelma Stichweh

Donna Martin

Nancy Nash

Bruce Steele

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

2009 CEUs to date

Several people have asked how many CEU hours have been awarded for programs presented at the monthly meetings so far this year. CEUs through September are:

- Jan. 13, 2009 1.25 hours Jason Powell Antique Roses
- Feb. 24, 2009 (night meeting) .75 hours Sallie Lee Invasive Plants
- March 10, 2009 .75 hours Henry Hughes Winter Forest program
- March 10, 2009 .75 hours Walk in the BBG Forest with Mr. Hughes
- April 14, 2009 1.0 hours Bob & Martha Sargent Hummers
- May 12, 2009 2.0 hours Linda Emerson Plant Identification and Swap
- May 26, 2009 (night meeting) .75 hours Richard Healy Basics of Herb Gardening
- June 9, 2009 2.0 hours Nora & Dale O'Connor Day Lily Garden Tour
- July 14, 2009 1.0 hours Angela Treadaway Food Safety & Preservation
- Aug. 11, 2009 .5 hours Ruth Reichwein Fern Propagation
- Aug. 11 2009 .5 hours Walk in the Fern Glade
- Aug. 18, 2009 (night meeting) 1.25 hours Herb Lewis Backyard Wildlife
- Sept. 8, 2009 1.0 hours Sallie Lee Honeybees

If you need help logging your CEU and volunteer hours please contact Glenda Dicks at 620-0758, or e-mail her at gmdicks@bellsouth.net.

Congratulations

to JCMGA member Cathy DeLozier who has been appointed to serve on the Vestavia Hills Beautification Board.

"Tony Talks"

I have had several requests for an **anti-rain** barrel program but could not think of a good name. Sallie Lee suggested we develop a sun barrel program where you collect the excess sunlight and use it later when we need to dry out. I am too busy working on an ark to pay any attention to her silly ideas. I can tell you the rain harvest business has dropped off considerably and my son is looking for a new line of work.

On a more serious note, I want to continue to answer your questions. The latest question is a perennial favorite. What can I count as volunteer service hours and how are they totaled for "Star Awards"?

The bottom line is that the Local Master Gardener Coordinator (me) can use his/her own discretion to determine if an activity qualifies. I don't have time (nor do I need to micro-manage this decision) so I leave the judgment up to you but I ask you to honestly think about whether it meets these criteria.

Four guidelines for validating volunteer work:

- Will it benefit the community?
- Is it associated with a non-commercial group (non profits – schools, churches, etc)?
- Is it related to gardening, the environment, or an Extension program (such as 4-H, GPIC, office help, etc)?
- Are you helping people learn?

If you can answer yes to these questions, then the activity meets the mission of the Master Gardener program and you should count it in your annual service report. The main issue to consider is: Are you using your horticulture knowledge and helping a non-profit?

We always encourage you to volunteer through a variety of activities. You more effectively represent the program and its mission when considering a variety of audiences to interact with during activities.

The second part of the question relates to a recent change in reporting. The MG "Star Awards" use a cumulative total of volunteer service hours and CEU hours. For instance you may have 100 service hours and a large number of CEUs – say 40 - for the year. Your total hours would be 140 added towards the "Star Award" program. This change was made to encourage as much continuing education as possible because we believe it makes you an even better volunteer.

Just a reminder that the graduation for those of you from the night class of 2008 and this past spring's day class is coming up very soon (evening of Nov 10th). I will be using the on-line reporting system to verify your required hours of service. If you have not entered your hours you may do so by going here: <http://www.aces.edu/mg/> and clicking on "Volunteer Area". A tutorial for using this system is found at that site. If you can't use the on-line system please let me know and I will make sure you know how to submit a written report. I need to verify hours before ordering name badges in mid – October.

Nominating Committee Report: Proposed Slate of Officers 2010

Your Officer Nominating Committee presents the following slate for consideration as officers of the Jefferson County Master Gardeners for 2010:

President: Bruce Steele, Jefferson County MG Class of 2007

Bruce has served as Vice President and is interested in perennials, ornamentals and especially orchids.

Vice President: Harold Deason, Jefferson County MG Class of 2005

Harold has served most recently as President (two terms) and as Treasurer. He was instrumental in organizing the vegetable garden at the Birmingham Zoo and enjoys picking and preserving his own fruits and berries. He produces and maintains our membership directory, a major undertaking!

Treasurer: Blair Cox, Jefferson County MG Class of 2007

Blair is Vice President of the Fern Society. His new life's work is landscaping and building walkways in his back yard. He also is supportive of his wife, Bimi, and applauds her accomplishments in container gardening.

Secretary: Susan Jackson, Jefferson County MG Class of 2002

Susan has served as Treasurer and is known for her work with perennials. Among other spectacular plants, she has an extensive collection of salvias.

Respectfully submitted,

Fletcher Harvey, Chairman

Madelon Rushing

Anne Thomas

Jan Shultz, Alternate

Proposed JCMGA By-laws Changes

The following changes to our by-laws have been proposed by the JCMGA Board:

Article IV Section 2 reads: *Annual dues for active and provisional members shall be twelve dollars (\$12.00), payable in January and delinquent on March 31.*

*Proposed change: Annual dues for active members shall be twelve dollars (\$12.00), **payable on or before January 1st, and delinquent on April 1st.***

Article VIII Section 1 reads: *The President shall...Be a voting member of the Board the year following his Presidency.*

*Proposed change: The President shall ... Be a voting member of the Board **while he/she is the immediate past president.***

These changes will be presented to the membership for final approval at the October meeting.

Volunteers Needed For Fall Plant Sale

Volunteers are needed to help with the Birmingham Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale. The two-day sale will be held at the BBG on Oct. 17-18. Positions include Loaders, Cashiers, Totalers, Hospitality, People Counters, Line Monitors and Floaters.

Available shifts are:

Friday, Oct. 16 (set-up)

12:00 - 2:30 p.m.

2:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 17

6:00 - 9:00 a.m. (set up)

8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 18

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

For more information or to sign-up contact Hope Long at 414-3931 or e-mail her at hlong@bbgardens.org.

Out of Africa



Photo by Harold Deason

JCMGA Member Harold Deason is currently on a mission trip in Kenya helping to work on a water purification system. Follow Harold's trip at: www.haroldtidbits.blogspot.com.

Jefferson County Master Gardeners Association Minutes September 8, 2009

The Jefferson County Master Gardeners Association met in the Auditorium at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. President Pat Bullock called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Business Meeting:

Pat welcomed first-time attendees Wanda Sandlin and Becky Parr. Both the August minutes and the Treasurer's report were approved as published in the newsletter. The Treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

Officer & Committee Reports:

Treasurer : Anne Thomas reported that the financial books of the association have been turned over to Blair Cox for audit. She also announced that she will present a proposed 2010 budget at the October meeting.

Hospitality: Nancy Nash thanked everyone who brought snacks and encouraged members to sign up to bring snacks for the October meeting.

Scrapbook/Historian: Connie Barron announced that she has the 2009 scrapbook if anyone wants to see it. She also asked that members send pictures of MG events.

Newsletter: Tricia Farris reminded everyone who has news that needs to be in the newsletter to send it to her prior to the monthly deadline. Several people are not getting their information to her in a timely manner. If your information is not received by the deadline date it will not be included in *Roots and Shoots*. If you are a chairman of a committee you should be contacting her each month whether you have news or not. If you don't have anything for the newsletter just say "No News this Month." Also if you have any volunteer opportunities please send those to Nora O'Connor (Community Service Project Committee chairman) and copy Tricia and Tony Glover (Regional County Agent). Nora will send these requests on to Tricia. The deadline for information to be included in the October newsletter will be Sept. 28th

Past-President: Harold Deason announced that the contract has been signed and the 2012 AMGA Conference will be held at the Marriott Grandview Hotel located on Hwy. 280. Dates for the conference are March 22-24, 2012. Member Mike Rushing announced that he is organizing garden tours around town for this conference. If you have gardens that look good in March or know of someone who does please let him know.

Membership: Sally Tyler announced that 2010 dues are now payable. Also, please check the membership records and make sure your name, address, phone number and e-mail address are correct.

Old Business: Pat received a card from Ashley Baker thanking us for completing the "Deer Repellent" Surveys last month.

New Business: Nominations for the Nominating Committee for New Officers for 2010. Nominees from the floor were: Madelon Rushing, Fletcher Harvey and Anne Thomas. Jan Shultz was chosen by President Pat Bullock to serve as the alternate. This committee is charged with nominating folks to serve as President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. They will present their slate of officers at the October meeting.

Proposed changes to the Bylaws: Pat announced the following proposed changes to the Bylaws:

-Article IV Section 2 reads: *Annual dues for active and provisional members shall be twelve dollars (\$12.00), payable in January and delinquent on March 31.*

Proposed change: *Annual dues for active members shall be twelve dollars (\$12.00), payable on or before January 1st, and delinquent on April 1st.*

-Article VIII Section 1 reads: *The President shall...Be a voting member of the Board the year following his Presidency.*

Proposed change: *The President shall ... Be a voting member of the Board while he/she is the immediate past president.*

The proposed changes were approved by a majority vote and will be presented for final approval at the October MG meeting.

Pat announced the Board had approved the formation of a new committee called the Master Gardener Class Committee. It will be comprised of three or four active JCMGA members. These members will be selected by the Regional Extension Agent/Coordinator of the JCMGA Program. The membership voted to approve this new committee.

The membership also voted that the Board could give 10 paid 2010 JCMGA Memberships as door prizes at the November 2009 Meeting/Graduation Ceremony. You must have already graduated from the MG program and be present to win. If you have already paid your 2010 dues they will be refunded to you.

Volunteer Opportunities: Pat announced that Tony requested help for Sept. 23rd and Sept. 30th at Robinson Elementary and Forest Hill Middle Schools. Send Tony an e-mail if you can help. Pat also noted that members could find current volunteer and educational opportunities in the Sept. *Roots and Shoots*.

Bruce Steele introduced our speaker Sallie Lee, County Extension Agent, who gave a very interesting and revealing talk on Bees. Ms. Lee is an expert in many areas, but is really knowledgeable about bees, bee hives and bee behavior.

Sally Tyler was the lucky winner of the Door Prize. Norma Aldridge won the prize for wearing her name badge.

Volunteer hours: 1.0 for today CEU's: 1.0 for today's presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Stinson, Secretary

Audit Report

I have completed the audit of the JCMGA books for 2007 and 2008. Other than two very minor entry errors for check amounts (which have already been corrected), the books accurately reflect the receipts and disbursements of the organization.

I had some confusion as to how the amount in the Special Education Fund, which is maintained as a separate amount within the General Fund, is determined. In order to clearly track the Special Education Fund Amount I am making the following recommendations:

If a class refund check is written, whether cashed or not, it should show as an expenditure (disbursement) on the books.

If the person to whom the refund check (or any other check for that matter) has been written decides to contribute (or not cash) his/her check, the check should be voided and the amount shown as income/revenue (receipt) on the books. The amount of the voided check should also show as a contribution to the Special Education Fund in the separate accounting for this fund.

If a person decides to contribute his/her class refund prior to the check being written, the amount should show as a contribution to the Special Education Fund without any income or expense entries on the books.

I think that if these changes are made, the amount in the Special Education Fund can be more easily tracked as a separate amount to be identified as part of the General Fund.

Respectfully submitted by
Blair Cox,
Audit Committee

TREASURER'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER, 2009

Balance Forward: 8-24-09 ----- \$9,033.47

Received:

2010 Dues (State) ----- \$135.00

2010 Dues (Local) ----- 336.00

Rain Barrel Orders ----- 450.00

Collection for Guard --- 22.00

Total Received: ----- \$943.00

Disbursements:

Ck #1888 – Drew Glover \$315.00

(Rain Barrels)

Ck #1889 – Drew Glover 70.00

(Rain Barrels)

Cash – Tony Glover - 12.72

(MG Meet. Supplies)

Total Disbursements- ----- \$397.72

Balance: 9-28-09 ----- \$9,578.75

CD ----- \$5,000.00

2009 Paid Members – 158

2010 Paid Members - 28

JCMGA Membership Form

Dues for fiscal year Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 2010 are due and payable on or before Jan. 1, 2010. Members are very important to our association, and we hope you will join or renew your membership.

Please complete the following information, and return it with your dues to Treasurer Anne Thomas at our next meeting or by mail to: Anne Thomas, 1487 Jones Rd., Springville, AL 35146. Dues are \$17 (\$12 local dues + \$5 state dues). Please make checks payable to JCMGA.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Class Information:

County of Training: _____ Yr. of Graduation _____

Raised Planter Beds

by Helen Hernández

Editor's Note: Helen Hernández is a member of Girl Scout Troop 9418 in Montgomery. She is working on her Gold Award, the highest award in Girl Scouting. Helen constructed raised planter beds for the Alabama Wildlife Federation. As part of her work on the award, the Girl Scout Council asked her to submit an article to all MG newsletters in Alabama for publication.

Volunteers are a great source of help for all kinds of organizations and clubs. It is also a great way to complete a project with little to no cost involved. However, most people are too caught up in school, work, or other activities. For this reason, I believe active volunteers from senior homes would be a great resource for any organization. Not only do they have time during the day to help out, but also they want to help out people in need and do not require payment for their kind actions. It is also a great opportunity for the volunteers because it is a great way to help out their community and to make friends or connect with different people.

Volunteering opportunities can be found in numerous places all over your city. Organizations such as soup kitchens, museums, zoos, and even gardening clubs are always doing projects that require additional volunteers. The Alabama Master Gardening Association is a great way to help out the community because it requires its members to do certain amounts of volunteer work. I recently volunteered with the Alabama Wildlife Federation by building some elevated planting beds in one of their gardens for my Gold Award, which is the highest award in Girl Scouts. For this award, the Girl Scout Council requires you to do a project which helps solve a need in your community.

In my experience as a Girl Scout, I have noticed that it is very difficult for many people, especially the elderly, to bend over and work on a flower bed for long periods of time. In order to help out planters with back problems, I decided to build planting beds that are elevated from the ground and easy to reach by any person. Not only did this provide a place to plant for the Alabama Wildlife Federation, this also allowed more elderly people to be able to volunteer. My planters are a great way to maximize the time available and the strength of the volunteers, most of whom are usually elderly due to their increased availability during the usual planting hours.

My project is easily reproducible in other communities, clubs, and organizations. I was able to complete my project with the help of about 16 volunteers, and in one day we were able to build four fairly large beds. It's a great idea for any kind of gardening club looking for a project, and it allows more gardeners to be able to do what they like to do.



Night blooming cereus; photo shared by Larry Michaelove.

Turkey Creek Nature Preserve Seeks Volunteers



Proposed site of Meadow Garden

The Southern Environmental Center at Birmingham-Southern College began its latest education project with the dedication of the Turkey Creek Environmental Education Center in May 2009. The education center focuses on environmental education and nature programs for school-age children, and also serves as an interpretive center for public and private programs held out at Turkey Creek.

Over the past year, the Southern Environmental Center along with Alabama State Lands Division has made some dramatic improvements to the preserve, including the Turkey Creek Ecoscape adjacent to Turkey Creek Falls. The Turkey Creek Ecoscape serves as a landscape demonstration area that showcases many of the native plants species found in the preserve. The ecoscape also serves as a riparian buffer for Turkey Creek allowing surface water runoff to slowly infiltrate into the constructed bioswales that also irrigate the native plants and improves water quality.

The Southern Environmental Center is now looking at the construction of a meadow garden adjacent to the Narrows gate entrance at the preserve. The meadow garden will be used as a teaching and demonstration site focusing on the importance of creating suburban meadow gardens to promote biological diversity of native insect, plant and animal species. Anyone interested in helping out with this project can contact Taylor Steele, Education Manager Turkey Creek Nature Preserve at 680-4116, or e-mail tsteele@bsc.edu.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 17-18 *Fall Plant Sale Birmingham Botanical Gardens* For more information visit www.bbgardens.org or call 414-3900.

October 18 *Holiday Pots Horticulturist and free-lance garden writer Linda Askey will show how to plant a pot of evergreens that can change with the season to accommodate pumpkins, mums, and even a poinsettia when the weather is mild. Petals from the Past, 2:00 p.m. For more information, call 646-0069 or visit www.petalsfromthepast.com.*

October 20 *The Unspooky Side of Spiders* Learn about the world of spiders from W. Mike Howell, Ph.D., author of *Spiders of the Eastern United States: A Photographic Guide*. Learn how to distinguish venomous from non-venomous spiders. Bring flashlights for a half-hour, fun-filled field trip in search of Wolf spiders on the grounds of Aldridge Gardens. This is a family-oriented class for young and old. Aldridge Gardens 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Cost: Members \$12/Non-Members \$15 1 child age 6+ free with each adult, \$3 for each additional child age 6+. For more information, call 682.8019 or visit www.aldrigegardens.com.

October 23-24 *Fall Hydrangea Sale Aldridge Gardens* For more information, call 682-8019 or visit www.aldrigegardens.com.

October 24-25 *Stone Troughs* Master Gardeners Hope Long and Anissa Copes are the instructors for this hands-on experience in making your own hypertufa container. Hypertufa is the art of duplicating the look of old stone troughs using a mixture of perlite, peat moss and concrete. Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Saturday, Oct. 24, 9:00 a.m. - noon; Sunday, Oct. 25, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Cost: Members \$60/Non-Members \$75. For more information visit www.bbgardens.org or call 414-3900.

October 29 *Hikin' for Lichen* Biology instructor Carl Sloan will lead a night hike through the forest at the BBG looking for lichens, the crusty growths of fungi and algae found on rocks and tree trunks. Cost: Members \$10 (\$5 children)/Non-members \$15 (\$10 children). For more information visit www.bbgardens.org or call 414-3900.

Volunteer Opportunities

Fall Plant Sale, BBG. Volunteers are needed to help set up for the sale, and work during the sale. See page 3 of this newsletter for more details.

Turkey Creek Nature Preserve. Volunteers needed to help with planting of a Meadow Garden. See page 6 of this newsletter for more details

BB Gardens Library. Volunteers are needed for the following shifts: Tuesday, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1- 4 p.m.; 3rd 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 Drummonds at 879-6964.

Deadline for the next issue of *Roots and Shoots*: October 26