

President's Message. . .

I think everyone enjoyed the February meeting as much as I did. It was great to see everyone after such a long break. Speaking of the February meeting, I had two people request the recipes for the following: Lentil Salad and "Little Shortbread Rectangles with Pecans on Top." If the people who brought these items will share their recipes, please let me know. I'll insure the requestors receive the information.

This unseasonably warm weather has really encouraged me to get outside. It is great to have this type of weather just in time to start prepping for Spring - trimming, relocating, and planning. As you are out and about in your garden, I hope you will remember to check for any of the plants that Dianne Brannon has requested for the Glenwood Project. The list can be found in this issue of *Roots and Shoots*.

Please mark your calendar for the Glenwood Work Day April 28 at 9:00 at Glenwood

Look forward to seeing everyone at the March meeting. Please call a Master Gardener who wasn't at the February meeting and don't forget snacks are always welcome.

Glenda

Glenda Dicks
620-0758
gmdicks@bellsouth.net

2011 Dues

If you have not already done so, please remit your 2011 MG dues of \$17 (\$12 local, \$5 state). Checks made payable to JCMGA can be given to Treasurer Roger Clarke at the March meeting or mailed to him at 414 Norfolk Lane, Homewood, AL 35209. Dues should be received before March 31, 2011.

March Master Gardener Night Meeting March 15

Birmingham Botanical Gardens
6-8 p.m.

Join us for a Rain Harvest
Workshop presented by ACES
staff members.

March Master Gardener Meeting March 8, 2011

Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Hospitality – 9:30 a.m.

Business Meeting – 10:00 a.m.

Presentation—10:30 a.m.

Is mulch good or bad?

Have you ever wakened from a deep sleep with this question nagging on your brain? Join us on March 8th when Tony Glover, Extension Agent Extraordinaire, addresses this pressing topic and other important subjects in his informative and always entertaining presentation on "Gardening Myths Debunked." Why might topping a tree be compared to a bad haircut...or can it? Tony will tell us.

Many thanks to Leaf and Petal at the Gardens for their lovely door prize at our February meeting. Thanks also to Mike Rushing for his donation of the potted succulent as a prize.

Our March door prize has been donated by Billy Angell's Oak Street Garden Shop in Crestline.

"TONY TALKS"

Well, I guess you might say "Tony Talks" for the last time. You may have heard through the Master Gardener "grapevine" that I have been offered and accepted the position as the Cullman County Extension Coordinator. I am not leaving Extension but will be leaving my current position. This is the most bittersweet job change I have ever faced because I love what I do more than any position I have ever had in my career. However, I live in Cullman and the 120 mile commute has been tough on me in many ways both financially (with these gas prices) and personally (family time, etc.)

There are many things about my job that are very rewarding. Very few "government" employees have the opportunity to work so closely with people and help them solve problems and improve their quality of life in some way. The most rewarding facet of the job has been the close relationships I have built with you as Master Gardener volunteers. In addition to being the most rewarding part of my job, it is just frankly the most fun and it truly has made my life richer. I will miss each of you more than I can express. I am kind of an emotional person and I am getting emotional just writing this farewell note.

I believe the Jefferson County Master Gardener program is the strongest and most talented group of volunteers in the state and as a result the program will continue to flourish without me in the picture. I feel very confident the position I vacate will be filled soon. The documentation we have provided (in large part through your reporting) has helped us make a good case for the value of the program and position here at the BBG. I knew all those reports would come in handy one day. I know only a few critical positions are being filled but thanks in large part to your efforts I feel this position will be among them.

I will be assuming my new duties on March 1st but I do plan to attend the March monthly meeting – I am the speaker that day and I know Fletcher won't let me off the hook. Also, I have several speaking commitments at the BBG and elsewhere in the area that I will be fulfilling over the next couple months. I hope this will give me several opportunities to thank many of you in person for what you have done to make my time at the BBG both successful and rewarding. Thanks again for making my job so enjoyable and "fruitful." May God bless each one of you and I hope to see you at the March meeting if not sooner.

Sincerely,
Tony Glover

February 2011 Treasurer's Report

Submitted By: Roger Clarke, Treasurer

Beginning Balance 11/24/10: \$12,729.41
Receipts: \$ 935.00
Disbursements: \$ 51.00
Ending Balance 1/20/11: \$13,613.41

March Gardener's Calendar

FRUITS AND NUTS-Continue strawberry and grape plantings. Bud apples and peaches. Start planting blackberries. If weather conditions prevent prompt planting, heel the plants in by placing the root system in a trench and covering the soil.

SHRUBS-Fertilize shrubs (except azaleas and camellias) according to a soil test. Late plantings may be made, particularly if they are container-grown. Watch shrubs for harmful insects.

LAWNS-Plant bermuda, zoysia, and centipede in South Alabama. Seed bluegrass and grass mixtures in North Alabama. Fertilize established lawns.

ROSES-Watch new growth for aphids. Begin a spray or dust program. Begin fertilizing.

ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS -- Tender annuals may be planted in South Alabama. Check garden centers for bedding plants.

BULBS-Plant gladiolus every two or three weeks if a long blooming season is desired.

Plant tuberous begonias in pots. Plant dahlias.

VEGETABLE SEEDS - Plant hardy crops recommended for January and February. After danger of frost is past, plant tender vegetables.

VEGETABLE PLANTS-Plant cabbage, onions, lettuce, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts in North Alabama; plant tomatoes and peppers in lower South Alabama.

**Jefferson County Master Gardener Association
February 2011 Minutes**

The Jefferson County Master Gardener Association met on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. President Glenda Dicks called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. She welcomed first-time attendees including six interns from the current Master Gardener class as well as several visitors.

Glenda announced that because of the holiday schedule and the cancellation of the January meeting due to inclement weather, it was necessary to approve both the minutes and Treasurer's Report from the last general meeting in October. Members voted to approve both as published in the November newsletter.

In New Business, Bruce Steele announced that Nora O'Conner wished to resign her position on the State Advisory Council and moved that Glenda Dicks become the JCMGA representative. The motion was seconded by Fletcher Harvey and approved by acclamation.

As there was no Old Business to discuss, Glenda called for announcements and committee reports. It was announced that the Master Gardeners of North Alabama will hold a Pruning Workshop on Feb.23 at the Huntsville Extension Office followed by a trip to Mary Lou McNabb's farm for hands-on training. A fee of \$20 for MGs/\$25 non-MGs includes snacks, lunch, handouts and door prizes. The Alabama Medicinal Plant Growers Association will hold a workshop on March 26 in Selma. The 2011 State Master Gardeners Association Conference will be held in Mobile on March 24-26. Registration forms are available on the state website. The fees for registration will increase after March 1.

Treasurer Roger Clarke reported that 80 of 194 active members have paid their 2011 dues. If you are unsure if you have paid your dues, e-mail Roger at treasurer@jeffcomg.org.

Harold Deason reported that he is waiting to print the 2011 membership directory until more members have paid their dues. If you would like a new directory picture, see Harold.

Planning is underway for the 2012 MG Conference to be hosted by the JCMGA. The Program Committee is finalizing the list of speakers. A logo has been chosen which will incorporate the image of Vulcan as a symbol for Birmingham. Harold is waiting for written permission to use the likeness. If you have questions or would like additional information about conference plans, e-mail Harold at chair2012@aol.com. Conference Volunteer Chair Karen Larsen announced that volunteer forms are available at today's meeting, as well as in the newsletter. Forty members have signed up for committees, and many more volunteers will be needed now and as the conference draws nearer.

Dianne Brannon reported on needs for a gardening project at Glenwood Autism and Behavioral Health Center. The project incorporates creating a landscape plan, providing guidance in growing vegetables, and developing greenhouse projects. Plant donations are requested and a list will be submitted for the newsletter. Plants can be brought to the April meeting or members can contact Dianne to arrange pickup. There will be a work day to install plants on April 28th.

Robert Eskew announced that volunteers are needed to help with pruning in the Dunn Rose Garden on March 5 from 9 a.m. – noon. Please notify Bob if you plan to attend.

Glenda Dicks noted that sign-up sheets were also available for members to sign up for this year's JCMGA committees. She will also have a suggestion box at each meeting, and encouraged members to share their ideas.

Tony Glover introduced Master Gardener Program Coordinator Kerry Smith who discussed several aspects of the state MG program. Using the new system of reporting volunteer hours implemented in 2010, Jefferson County had the second highest total in the state with 12,210.28 hours. The GPIC recorded the highest number of calls to any of the state volunteer help lines. The "Smart Yards" program rolled out last year is helping novice as well as more experienced gardeners understand the "nuts and bolts" of gardening. Kerry also encouraged members to sign up for the "Forty Gallon Challenge," and pledge to conserve water through specific activities.

Tony Glover presented bronze, silver, and gold stars to members who have reached new achievement levels in volunteer hours. Thirteen members received bronze stars; five members received silver stars, and six members received gold stars. Seven members will be recognized with gold name badges at the state convention; three members will receive platinum name badges, and two will also receive ruby stars.

Vice President Fletcher Harvey awarded door prizes provided by Leaf and Petal. He then asked the blessing and the meeting was adjourned to enjoy a potluck lunch provided by the members.

Respectfully submitted,
Tricia Farris for Anne Thomas

JCMGA Members are Star Volunteers

Congratulations to the JCMGA members who received volunteer service awards at the February "Reach for the Stars" meeting and potluck luncheon.

Members receiving Bronze Stars for 100 - 299 hours of service include: Janet Andrews-Smith, Roger Clarke, Thomas Douglass, Tonya Drake, Debbie Evans, Rosemarie Fernandez, James Finney, Becky Greenlee, Louis Heck, Maura Horton, Anne McAdams, Katherine Rostand, and Taylor Steele.

Silver stars representing 300 - 499 service hours were presented to Norma Aldridge, Joseph German, Linda Grissom, Karen Mitchell, and Anne Parrish.

Achieving gold stars for 500 - 999 hours of service were: Edna Alderman, Jeanne Clever, Fletcher Harvey, Martha Picardy, LeAnne Porter, and Madelon Rushing.

Gold name tags representing 999 - 1,999 service hours will be presented at the 2011 State MG Convention in Mobile later this month. Recipients will include: Camille Becker, Ann Katholi, Mitzi Owen, Glenn Peoples, Mary Jo Quintana, Mike Rushing, and Bruce Steele. JCMGA members Harold Deason, Robert Eskew, and Susan Jackson are scheduled to receive platinum name badges for 2,000 - 3,999 hours of service.

New this year is the addition of the Advanced Hours Recognition Program. In addition to the current Stars and Badges, recognition will be given at the state conference to those Master Gardeners who complete more than 2,000 volunteer hours. The following is the breakdown for the new Silver Star with Gem Stone which can be attached to the Platinum Badge: 4,000 - 5,999 Ruby; 6,000 - 7,999 Emerald; 8,000 - 9,999 Diamond; 10,000+ Lifetime membership in AMGA with Lifetime Membership Badge.

Fran Brandon and Nancy Nash have both reached the Ruby level and will be recognized at the conference.



Sign up now for your Alabama Master Gardener License Plate

Proceeds benefit the Alabama Master Gardener program and the AMGA Horticulture Scholarship Fund Endowment. You may sign a commitment to purchase form at your local DMV office through November 30, 2011.

Don't Forget to Record Your Volunteer Hours

When you record your volunteer hours you are not only documenting your level of achievement, you are also helping to demonstrate the value the Master Gardener Program provides to the community. Last year, JCMGA members logged 12,210.28 hours for the second highest total among state MG programs.

The following is the number of Volunteer /CEU Hours to date for this year's JCMGA meetings:
Jan Meeting – Meeting Cancelled
Feb Meeting – Stars Award : 1 hour volunteer time if you brought food for the luncheon.

Take the Challenge

At our February meeting MG Program Coordinator Kerry Smith urged all JCMGA members to join with other MGs across the state to "Take the 40 Gallon Challenge." The 40 Gallon Challenge is a call for residents and businesses to reduce our region's water use on average by 40 gallons per person, per day by adopting new water-saving techniques. The pledge card outlines water-saving practices and the daily water-savings to expect. For more information visit: www.40gallonchallenge.org/about.cfm

"Botanically Speaking"

John Manion, curator of the BBG's Kaul Wildflower Garden, invites all MGs to check out "Botanically Speaking," for news about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities in the KWG. Check it out at: <http://bbgardens.org/BotanicallySpeaking.php>

Volunteer Opportunities

2012 State Master Gardener Conference: Jefferson County Master Gardener Association will host the 2012 Alabama Master Gardener Association Conference to be held on March 22-24 at the Birmingham Marriott and other area venues. Committee chairpersons have been selected and are looking for volunteers. If you would like to help, please e-mail the information below to amg2012cvols@att.net

Your full name:

Local Master Gardener Association:

Contact number(s):

Email address:

Describe any relevant experiences/skills/offices held:

To help place you on the appropriate committee please rank your top three committees (#1 being your first choice):

- ___ FINANCE COMMITTEE
- ___ EVALUATION
- ___ PROGRAM/PUBLICITY
- ___ TOUR/TRANSPORTATION
- ___ REGISTRATION
- ___ FACILITIES
- ___ FOOD FUNCTIONS
- ___ HOSPITALITY/HOSTS
- ___ DECORATIONS
- ___ BOOK SALES/SIGNING
- ___ T-SHIRT/PRODUCT SALES
- ___ SILENT AUCTION
- ___ VENDORS
- ___ DOOR PRIZES

BBG Spring Plant Sale 2011: Volunteer Recruitment has officially begun for the Spring Plant sale to be held April 14 -17 with pre-event set up April 12-13. Join the Spring Plant Sale Volunteer team for jobs including plant loader, cashier, box-builder, or hospitality volunteer. Volunteers get a discount coupon and first pick at the Volunteer Sale. Contact Mary-Bestor Grant at 414-3962 or mgrant@bbgardens.org to sign-up!

Gardening Through the Seasons -Join Amanda Clark, BBG Gardener, every Wednesday morning from 9:30 a.m.- Noon. Meet Amanda at the Water Sculpture on Blount Plaza at 9:30 a.m. prepared to prune, dig, tag plants, scout bugs, mulch, and other tasks in the Iris, Lily, Hosta, and Foreman Gardens. Bring your pruning shears.

Gardendale Farmers Market, June 16 (rain date June 23rd), 1-5 p.m. Volunteers are needed to man a MG booth at the Gardendale Farmers' Market to hand out garden publications, soil test boxes, etc. to people at the market. To volunteer, please contact Jim Parola at 285-9170 or jimparola@charter.net.

Volunteer Opportunities (continued)

Glenwood Autism and Behavioral Health Center - JCMGA member Dianne Brannon reports that the Glenwood Autism and Behavioral Health Center is in need of plant donations and volunteers to help with planting. Glenwood is a nonprofit agency dedicated to serving children, teens, adults and families affected by autism and mental health disorders.

Goals for the gardening project at Glenwood's Adult Day Center for adults with autism are: 1) Design and install a Sensory Garden; 2) Assist in starting and maintaining a vegetable garden; 3) Develop greenhouse projects for therapeutic and fundraising purposes

Most of the hardscape has been installed. What are now needed are the perennials and the helping hands to plant them. The important dates are:

April 12 - Bring perennials, see list below, to MG meeting, or if purchased at the BBG plant sale contact Dianne at dbrannon3553@charter.net or 967-6636 and we will make arrangements for collection.

April 28 at 9:00 – Meet at Glenwood to plant. Bring gloves and trowels. Directions are as follows:
If traveling north on I-459 take the Liberty Park exit #23 and turn right off of the exit ramp.
If traveling south on I-459 take the Liberty Park exit #23 and turn left off of the exit ramp.
At the light turn right (Do not take the hard right onto Overton Road). Follow Liberty Parkway through Liberty Park (corporate and residential sections) past the elementary school, out of the subdivision. At the stop sign, turn left onto Sicard Hollow Road. Travel approximately ¼ mile. Glenwood is the 2nd driveway on the right. Go through the iron gates, continue straight ahead a short distance and turn right at a sign reading Adult Day Center. There will be a chapel at the turn. The road ends at the Day Center. The greenhouse is to right of the building and towards the back. We will meet at the greenhouse.

Perennials and Herbs needed:

Lantana
Purple coneflower
Rudbeckia
Daffodil
Coreopsis (C. verticillata)
Lamb's ear
Shasta daisy
Ox-eye daisy
Yarrow
Salvia greggii
Indigo spires salvia
Black and Blue salvia (S. guarantica)

Mexican sage bush (leucantha)
Russian sage (perovskia atriplicifolia)
Jerusalem sage (phlomis fruticosa)
Stokesia
Phlox (P. drummondii)
Irises – purple and yellow
Foxglove
Daylilies
Thyme
Sage
Oregano

Mark Your Calendar

State Master Gardener Conference, "Gardening for Life," March 24-26, Mobile Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel. For more information or registration forms go to <http://www.alabamamg.org/>

Upcoming Plant Sales:

Aldridge Botanical Gardens:

March 6 – Trees and Shrubs, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

March 11 – 12 - Native Plants, Shrubs and Ground Covers; Friday, Noon – 5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – Noon

April 8 – 9 – Annuals and Perennials; Friday, Noon – 5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - Noon

May 20 – 21 – Hydrangeas: Friday, Noon – 5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – Noon

Birmingham Botanical Gardens

April 15 – 17 – Spring Plant Sale, Old Food World location, Hwy. 31 S., Vestavia.

The Shades Valley Rotary Club's Fourth Annual BOTANICAL BASH will be held at BBG on April 8th from 6 to 9 p.m. Jefferson County Master Gardeners are invited to attend this event featuring music by the Heritage Band, dinner and a silent auction. Tickets are \$35 per person, and proceeds fund the Gardens' Summer Intern Program. For reservations or additional information, contact Fletcher Harvey, John Meier or Karen Larsen.

Work with What Ya Got...Make Your Yard a Smart Yard, a series of classes on sustainable garden care will be offered at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens beginning March 15. Find more information at www.bbgardens.org/adult or call Phyllis Sutton 205-414-3958.

"Thinking Outside the Ground Cover Box," Sunday, March 30, 3-5 p.m., Aldridge Botanical Gardens, \$11 Members/\$15 Non-members. Rip Weaver, Executive Director of Aldridge Botanical Gardens will discuss new ground cover ideas for the landscape from ground glass to reindeer moss to plants previously considered as weeds. For more information and other classes and events at Aldridge Gardens call 682-8019 or visit www.aldrigegardens.com.