

# The Prairie Mud

A Publication of Capital City Master Gardener Association  
Montgomery, Alabama

Volume 10, Number 4 April 2008



Pink Flowering Dogwood

## The Garden Scoop

Well, Spring has finally arrived in its full glory. What a welcome change from the cold, dark and dreary months that we have just endured. All of the beautiful, bright and fresh colors of the blooming plants and the lush greens of the newly emerging leaves and grass just make my heart sing.

A week after Easter, on a sunny Sunday afternoon, I was looking out my kitchen window watching a group of Goldfinches on my feeder when a huge flock of Cedar Waxwings arrived on the scene. They took turns dropping down from the trees to devour the ripe berries on the Fatsia bushes below. I don't know how long I held my breath, but I didn't want to break the spell of those few magical moments. Simple pleasures are the greatest.

As the seasons change, so do we. I am going to see if we can streamline the business part of our meetings and cut down on the distractions that have been occurring when lists are passed around the room. I, as well as some of you, have been concerned about the amount of time that the committee reporting takes. However, this is our busiest time of year and many committees need to report and recruit. Thanks go to all of you who have offered suggestions on how to improve our meetings. Please note the list of new procedures printed in this issue of the Prairie Mud. I am always open to new ideas to make our meetings beneficial and enjoyable to all who attend.

Our Annual Plant Sale is our second biggest money-making project of the year. As you well know by now, we have a huge undertaking coming up in 2010 and will need some extra funds to see us through this. The plant sale is a relatively easy way to add money to our treasury. However, it is going to take EVERYONE donating at least one plant to make this project a success. I know you will do your part.

I hope to see you at our next meeting at Ken Johnson's nursery in Wetumpka, on April 22. He is a delightful and entertaining horticulturalist and his program will be a wonderful and educational experience.

**Karin Carmichael**

## CCMGA Officers

President-  
Karin Carmichael  
Vice President-  
Maggie Stringer  
Secretary-  
Jan Gill  
Treasurer-  
Jane Shalhoop

## Newsletter Staff

Lisa Lenox- Editor  
Betsy Coley- Assistant Editor

Alabama Cooperative Extension Office  
Montgomery County Extension  
Two East Office Center  
400 Eastern Blvd, Suite 107  
Montgomery, Al. 36117-2043  
334/270-4133



---

## NEW MEETING PROCEDURES

Thanks to all of you for your thoughts and suggestions. The following changes will be incorporated into our meetings until further notice:

1. All reports or requests from committee chairs that need immediate attention will be published in the monthly newsletter and must be sent to Lisa Lenox by the 7th of the month.
2. All announcements will be published in the monthly Newsletter.
3. A quarterly Committee Report Bulletin will be published separately from the Newsletter. All committee chairs are encouraged to give a short update on their progress for that quarter. This report could be as short as a couple of sentences. If nothing occurred during the past quarter, then no report is necessary.
4. Signup sheets will no longer be passed around during the meetings. Anyone needing signers, including the meeting roster, should set up an appropriately labeled sheet on a table by 9:30 so that everyone will have ample time to look them over and act accordingly before the meeting begins. If explanation is necessary, a member should be standing by the signup sheet.
5. The room arrangement will be turned to face the windows to allow for a wider and shallower viewing area and the tables will be eliminated.
6. Any business or important announcements that come up after the monthly Newsletter will be addressed at the next meeting.

**PLEASE** let me know what you think about these ideas. I am always open to your suggestions. Since we will be out in the field for the next two meetings, we can test some of these ideas.

**Karin Carmichael**



On Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup> 2008 from 5:00 to 7:30 pm, Southern Homes and Gardens presents **Taste of the Gardens**, an evening of shopping, bidding on auction items and sampling culinary specialties from area restaurants at the Vaughn Road location of Southern Homes and Gardens. Ticket costs are \$10.00 per person for an evening of fun, food, shopping and entertainment. Join us and enjoy beverages, light tasting from several local restaurants, light hors d'oeuvres, music and 20% off items purchased that evening at Southern Homes and Gardens. Bid on several fabulous prizes - including garden butterflies painted by local artists - during our silent auction, and for only \$5.00 enter a drawing to win one of three luxurious gift packages: \* \$500 Shopping Spree to Southern Homes and Gardens; \* Chef's Table for eight at Somer's Grill; \* An Ultimate Spa Package from Doug's 2 Salon. You do not have to be present to win. For Tickets Call 260-4016 or 260-4016.



#### Announcements from the Montgomery Tree Committee

1. Plant It Montgomery Day - April 19, 9:00 am, Oak Park at the Parks & Rec Headquarters next to the Planetarium. Get a free tomato plant and a free tree.
2. The Legacy Tree in memory of Calvin Whitesell, Jr. will be planted and dedicated in the next couple of weeks. If you would like to attend the ceremony, contact Karin Carmichael.
3. The city of Montgomery requires a permit for the cutting and/or pruning of trees paid for by the tree company at \$5.00 per job site. EACH tree in the Historic District requires a separate permit/tree.

#### GEORGIA GARDEN TRIP MAY 13, 2008

If you have not signed up for the trip, we have room for you. We have room for 53, but only have 40 signed up.

We will leave Montgomery at 7:00 am on Tuesday, May 13, and return between 5:30 and 6:00 pm. This is going to be a really fun day. We will go to Wilkerson-Mill Nursery and Gardens in Palmetto, GA, first. They specialize in Hydrangeas and native southern plants with plenty to purchase. We will have a box lunch before leaving Wilkerson Mill. Then we will come back to Hills & Dales Estate where we will have a guided tour of the Callaway home and gardens.

There will be a morning snack. Water and drinks will be available on the bus. Of course, there will be bus prizes.

Give me a call at 277-6989.

**Nell Copeland**

## Spotlight on Betsy Coley

Hosting a State Master Gardener Conference is an enormous endeavor. Capital City Master Gardeners are fortunate to have Cathy Maddox as Montgomery's 2010 Conference Chair, and Betsy Coley as her co-chair, since both have varied conference experience. This month the spotlight is on Betsy, an active member of CCMGA who has served as both Editor and Assistant Editor of *The Prairie Mud*.

Betsy laughingly confesses that she is a "Conference Junkie." Her very first national conference was the Future Homemakers of America conference in Kansas City when she was in high school. As a state officer of the South Carolina Future Homemakers of America, she got to attend the conference. She even presented a break-out session, complete with flannel board illustrations, which she made herself.

A look at Betsy's vitals reveals her background as an artist, an educator at secondary and college levels, a designer, a business woman, a consultant, and an entrepreneur. In her work career, Betsy attended numerous conferences. As an Apple Computer Education Sales Consultant, she worked almost all the state education conferences as a vendor, giving her that unique perspective.

Later, as Executive Director of the Alabama Alliance for Arts Education (AAAE), Betsy attended national conferences on that subject. AAAE was a member of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education, and for two years Betsy served on that group's National Governance Committee which helped to program the national meeting in Washington.

As Executive Director of AAAE, Betsy planned numerous statewide conferences for arts educators. She says that her biggest challenge was programming break-out sessions so that each hour there was something of benefit to art, music, drama, and dance teachers with a range of Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Betsy has won honors and accolades for her work in Art Education. She has been active in Montgomery's civic community, having served on the Arts Task Force of Visions 20/20 and the Education Council of the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce. At the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts she was instrumental in the development of the popular "Artworks" gallery, and she was a captain in the Museum's membership campaign. She has also served on Boards of Directors for both the Carver Creative and Performing Arts Center and the Montgomery Civic Ballet.



When asked why she takes pleasure in planning conferences, Betsy reflects, "It is an interesting challenge. Rather like a puzzle—it feels so good when it all falls into place. But maybe the best part is seeing a large group of people coming together with a common interest and having a great time learning and making new friends." With pros like Cathy and Betsy at the helm and a membership of committed volunteers, there is no doubt that CCMGA will produce a first-rate Conference in 2010! **Yvonne Evans**



### Field Trip! Fresh Air!

Our April program takes us to the Natural Beauty Garden Center in Wetumpka, AL. Ken Johnson is the owner. Some of us have known Ken for a long time and remember this about him: **Prior to** opening his own nursery/landscape design business, he developed and managed some of the most prestigious gardening and landscape projects in the southeast, including director of the Sibley Center and Plant Production at Calloway Gardens, and in Montgomery, Ken designed, developed and maintained landscape projects at Wynnlakes, Deer Creek and the Blount Cultural Park. During his 43 years in the high end gardening/design business, Ken says, "Oh what a journey". We are fortunate to have him share a part of that journey.

Directions to Natural Beauty Garden Center: From Montgomery take U. S. Hwy 231 North to Wetumpka. When you enter the business area, look for a Wal-Mart on the right and an about to open Lowe's on the left. From this point it is 4.2 miles to the NBGC. Right before you get there you will see a Russell Do it Center on the right and immediately the nursery is on the left. You cannot turn across the highway at the nursery, but will have to go to the traffic light and make a u-turn, then an immediate right into the NBGC. In addition to a tour of the nursery, Paul Sadler, Ken's partner, will do a short presentation on Irrigation in the World of Drought and Landscape Lighting. You will have plenty of time to look at and purchase plants.

On the way back home, if you like, we can stop for lunch at Casa Napoli Italian Restaurant which is on Hwy 231. I have heard raves about the food. If Italian fare is not your choice, there are several other eateries along the route—Catfish Country, Ruby Tuesday's, Shoney's... As we have done on other program trips, members have car pooled, some meeting at the Vaughn Park Church to connect. You should arrive at the nursery by 10:00 AM. We hope to see you at the Natural Beauty Garden Center!

