



# THE PRAIRIE MUD

A Publication of Capital City Master Gardener Association  
Montgomery, Alabama

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## FROM THE GARDEN

It is winter and many chores await us in the garden. There are many delights awaiting us as well. I know because I have peeked under layers of mulch and see signs of green life. Some things have not gone dormant-many of my herbs are quite showy in this up and down temperature period. I have noticed other things blooming here and there.



Speaking of chores, the Plant Committee is strongly encouraging ALL of us to begin seedlings and cuttings for the plant sale on May 9, 2009, Herb Day at Old Alabama Town. Our goal is to top last year's dollar amount. Several members told me recently they have already begun propagating and planting for the sale.

All of our committees are in full swing for the year. You will hear soon where the Trip Committee is taking us for gardening fun and delights. The 2010 Conference Host Committee is more intense in planning for the Conference itself as well as plans for the "Call to 2010 Conference" invitation display at the 2009 AMGA Conference in Huntsville, April 2-4. The talents, creativity and commitment of our committees guide what and how much we do in CCMGA. If you value the things that membership in the Association offers you, remember that what you are truly placing value in are the people who make those things possible.

Cookie Ruth, Marie Tomlin and I gave the 2009 MG interns a warm welcome February 5, when some of the twenty select women and men attended an open house at the ACES office. They seemed excited and ready to start one of the best journeys they will ever take. We appreciate your willingness to prepare lunch

for one of their Thursday classes. Training begins February 26.

If you are planning to attend the 2009 AMGA Conference in Huntsville, you may register online or use the registration form in the recent Garden Pathways newsletter. One of the Conference keynote speakers, Joe Lamp'l, wrote an interesting article in Garden and Deck Design Women's Day Special Interest edition. (On display until May 27, 2009) I purchased mine at one of the

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### Meeting Time and Place

February 24, 10-12pm  
Vaughn Park Church of Christ



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There are many gardening activities going on in our area. We will e-mail and/or publish them in the newsletter. Some offer volunteer opportunities and a chance to learn too. See What's Coming Up Calendar, in the Newsletter. We can look forward to a very interesting program this month. Our own member, Kellie Sensintaffar, is the presenter. See Program announcement in this NL.

REMINDER: Don't forget to record your volunteer hours regularly so that at the end of the year it will be a "piece of cake" to tally and report them. Better yet, you can report your hours online throughout the year.

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*Happy Gardening,*

*Maggie Stringer*

*CCMGA President*



### **Plant Sale 2009**

Everyone needs to get involved now to have plants ready in time for our sale on May 9. It is not too early! Lowe's has their Spring seed rack display set-up in the store entrance. I have started a dozen Moon Flowers in soup cans from seeds I got there this weekend. Soup cans make great planters! Think about vegetables like tomatoes and cucumbers that you could start in cans for the sale. You don't have to give up your nice pots, plant in things you have around the house.

Southern Homes and Gardens/Vaughn Rd has a recycle bin full of plastic pots just waiting to be picked-up and planted. It is located in the parking lot by the nursery, check it out!

Even if you have never participated, try something. It is so exciting to be involved in the Plant Sale. I guarantee you'll enjoy yourself and it is pure profit for us.

**Suzanne Brookhart**

**Plant Sale Chairperson**

**CCMGA Officers**  
President Maggie Stringer  
Vice President Cecilia Terrell  
Secretary Judy Crockett  
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## PLANT OF THE MONTH-

Most of us are familiar with the yellow trumpets of the daffodils that we see popping up around the neighborhood. Did you know, however, that the daffodil is actually one of the twelve divisions of the Narcissus, which is in the Amaryllidaceae family (Amaryllidaceae)?



Since there are about 50 species of daffodils and literally thousands of cultivars, you can find them in all sizes, shapes, and colors. Not only can you find them in yellow, orange, and white, you can even grow pink daffodils. And for those who love variety, these “eager to please” flowers also come in bi-color cultivars.

By using the catalog or nursery ratings of early, mid-season, or late blooming, gardeners are able to plant some of each category and have blooms emerging at different times. This type of planning will give beautiful blooms for 3 months or more.



Just remember that this plant loves well-drained soil and full to partial sun. Plant them early in the fall so the roots will have time to grow before cold weather arrives. Planting depth varies depending on the size of the bulb, so check the instructions for each type you buy.

Judy Crockett

Feb. 20 6:30 - 11:30 p.m. 1st Annual Root Ball at Embassy Suites, Montgomery, AL Dinner and dancing  
first 100 tickets - \$30 per person  
remaining tickets - \$50 per person  
send checks payable to MTC  
P.O. Box 70333  
Montgomery, AL 36107-2304

This event welcomes the volunteers of Project ReLeaf to the River Region  
For information contact michelle Cole 334-740-9863



Old wine bottles make up the borders of Suzanne Reaves garden in Forest Hills.

### GARDEN TIPS FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

Bulbs-Plant cannas, amaryllis, gladiolus, and zephyranthes in South Alabama: delay planting for a few weeks in north Alabama

Vegetable seed- Plant tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts to cold frames

Vegetable plants- Plant cabbage, onions, lettuce, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts.

Shrubs-Planting season continues. Spray all shrubs with a fungicide before new growth starts. Good time to prune all shrubs, before new growth starts. Don't prune early-blooming species because flower buds will be removed

Roses-Prune hybrid tea roses in South Alabama, continue planting. When new growth appears watch for aphids. Begin a spray or dust program. Begin fertilizing



## A SPECIAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY PROJECT

As interns in the 2008 Master Gardening course, Sheila Robertson and Martha Given decided to plan a gardening project in celebration of St. Patrick's Day with a first grade class at Garrett Elementary School. After approval was obtained from the school, the teacher helped them make plans and set a date.

Sheila had an abundance of shamrock bulbs in her garden, these were dug and separated into individual bulbs. With the help of two of Sheila's grandsons, Styrofoam cups were decorated with St. Patrick's Day stickers and filled with soil. At the end of February, Sheila and Martha took the bulbs and cups to Garrett School and helped each student plant shamrock bulbs. They talked with the children as a group about the growing requirements of plants as well as the meaning of the shamrock and St. Patrick's Day

A follow-up visit was made to check on the growth of the plants. The children were excited to watch their plants sprout and by spring break each child had a plant to take home for St. Patrick's Day!



## TASTE OF THE GARDENS

American Red Cross of Central is again planning our annual fundraiser, "Taste of the Gardens." We need some volunteers to work on the committee, as well as Master Gardeners to attend and save 20% on everything in the store at Southern Homes & Gardens on Vaughn Rd. We also need 12 artists to paint the metal butterflies to be auctioned.

### TASTE OF THE GARDENS

Thursday, May 7, 2009

@ Southern Homes and Gardens on Vaughn Road

5:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Cost \$10 per person

Come out and enjoy a 20% discount on all items purchased during the event; Great food sampling from local establishments; A chance to bid on many silent auction items; and for a \$5 donation a chance to win a Southern Homes and Gardens Shopping Spree, A Spa Experience at an Aveda Salon or a Chef's Table for Eight at a local Restaurant. For more information please email Kelly Hodges @ [hodgesk@montgomeryarc.org](mailto:hodgesk@montgomeryarc.org) or call 334-260-4016. All proceeds benefitting American Red Cross of Central Alabama.

Thanks,  
Jackie Buck

## A WALK-ABOUT AT CYPRUS CREEK, MONTGOMERY, AL FEBRUARY 7, 2009

Members of the "Tree Committee" and others enjoyed a special walk through a Cypress swamp, right in the middle of Montgomery. An area that has been identified for preservation call Cypress Creek. Among those participating were three, CCMGA members, Kellie Sensintaffar, Laurice Goorley, and Robert Cope. Bill Campbell led the group. Several species of plants were identified:

Florida Anise tree/*Illicium floridanum*

Sweet Bay or Swamp Magnolia/*Magnolia virginiana*



Eastern Hophornbeam/*Ostrya virginiana*, also known as "Iron Wood"

Walter viburnum

Bald Cypress "Swamp cypress"/*Taxodium distichum* (L.)

Wild ginger

For more information of how you can become part of the efforts to preserve this area call Robert Cope or Laurice Goorley.

## WHAT'S COMING UP? MARCH/APRIL CALENDAR



**Saturday, February 14**, Montgomery, Home Depot on Eastern Blvd. and Curb Market Downtown, **Seedling Giveaway, celebrate Arbor Day.**

**Friday, February 20**, Montgomery, **First Annual Root Ball** at Embassy Suites, Montgomery, Dinner and Dancing. First 100 tickets - \$30 per person, remaining tickets - \$50 per person. Send checks payable to MTC, P.O. Box 70333, Montgomery, AL 36107-2305 For Information

**Friday, February 20**, Montgomery, Southern Homes and Gardens, **Southern Favorites Home & Garden show.** Free seminars on Saturday. Call 387-0440 for more details.

**Saturday, February 21**, Montgomery **Jackson & Perkins, Weeks Rose Seminar**, 334-277-6746. Free. Southern Homes and Gardens, Wetumpka Hwy. (10:00 a.m.) Vaughn Rd. (2:00 p.m.) Guest speakers instruct on taking care of roses.

**Saturday, February 21**, Montgomery Zoo, **Family Fun Day/Butterflies.** 334-240-4900. [www.montgomeryzoo.com](http://www.montgomeryzoo.com). Admission charged. Learn more about butterflies and what to do to attract them to your yard. 10:00 a.m.-noon.

**Saturday, February 21. Prattville Regreening Arbor Day 2009.** 334-358-3245. [www.prattville.com](http://www.prattville.com). Free. Church of the Living Water 435 Sheila Blvd. To commemorate the anniversary of the devastating tornado that hit Prattville, there will be planting of 1000 five-gallon trees in areas that were affected. Volunteers are needed 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**February, 23-27**, Mobile. **Arbor Day Celebration.** 251-973-2217. [www.bellingrath.org](http://www.bellingrath.org). Admission charged. Bellingrath Gardens and Home, Theodore. Learn about planting and caring for trees. This is the perfect time to plant trees at Bellingrath and in you garden.

**Tuesday, February 24.** Montgomery. **Capital City Master Gardener Association monthly meeting.** Kellie Sensintaffar, "Taxonomy for Dummies", and "A Tomato Cage Topiary". 10:00a.m.-12:00. Vaughn Park Church of Christ.

**Wednesday, February 25**, Montgomery. **Horticulture Day**, Old Alabama Town's Loeb Reception Center, 8:30 a.m. Send your \$15.00 registration fee plus your name, address, club (CCMGA) and district to Debbie Summerlin, Horticulture Day Chairman, 724 Mitchell Creek Rd. Wetumpka, AL 36093. Call 334-567-2812. Registration deadline is February 23, The registration fee includes lunch and door prizes. Speakers include Morgan Smith, Donny Tomlin, Linda Griebel, Mary Mcroan, and Jane Mobeley. Also, Rita Newton, a talented concrete artist from Elmore County. Her work is displayed at Highway 231 N, at Con-Creatures (just over the hill from the welcome center).

**Saturday, February 28. Arbor Day Celebration**, Hoover, 205-682-8019. [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com). Free. Aldridge Botanical Gardens—Sponsored by the Hoover Beautification Board. 8:00 a.m.-noon.

**Saturday, February 28, Montevallo Arbor Day.** 205-665-1519. Free. Orr Park Recreation Bldg. More than 1,500 tree seedlings given away, drawing for trees and planting supplies, demonstrations on proper tree planting. Local vendors and walking tours of the tree carvings in Orr Park. 9:00 a.m.- noon.

**Thursday, March 23.** Birmingham Botanical Gardens, **Spencer Lecture, Mary Palmer Dargan**, "Timeless Landscape Design", 5:30 p.m. book signing, 6:30p.m. lecture. Free tickets, contact Shelly Busby, phone 205-414-3965.

**Thursday through Friday, April 2-4, "A Garden for All Seasons"** 19 Annual AMGA State Conference, Huntsville, AL to obtain a copy of the registration form go to [www.alabamamg.org](http://www.alabamamg.org).

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW (CCMGA Meeting, January 2009):

Plant Sale: Suzanne Brookhart, Chair. Start your seeds now for the plant sale. It will be May 9th, the Saturday before Mothers' Day.

Please label your plants with waterproof ink (such as permanent markers or Sharpies) Consider cutting out pictures from magazines to accompany the plants. A good picture will help potential buyers to see what kind of plant they are getting. Popsicle sticks make good labels for small pots. Just write the name on the stick and put it in. Put bulbs together neatly, tie with string, or place in a breathable container. Plants will be brought to the April meeting,

Cookie Ruth will be putting together books for the new master gardener class, if you would like to help, call Cookie. She anticipates she will be doing this on February 19, at the Extension Service Office If you haven't already done so, please check your picture and profile (information) before it goes into the directory. You can contact Jan Gill.

[www.alabamamg.org](http://www.alabamamg.org) This is the AMGA website. You can get your enrollment package for the 2009 AMGA Conference from this site. click on conferences, then on "here"/.

<http://www.aces.edu/mg/assn/montgomery> This is the ACES website with the newsletter. You can change the montgomery to any county that has a Master Gardener Club to find their newsletter (if they publish one).

Shane Harris, County Extension Service Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator for the Montgomery area, was present. He encouraged everyone to report their volunteer and CEU hours. He stated that annual reports have been completed and that the collective hours are used to evaluate Master Gardener Associations all over the state. He suggested that all members try to report by computer if at all possible. You are allowed to use the computers at the Extension Service if you need to.

Marie Tomlin, Chair of the Help Line, stated that she would volunteer to help anyone who would like to start the process of entering their hours on line. You can call her to set up a date and time.

You can still volunteer to help with lunch for the Master Gardener Class. Call Cookie Ruth.





## CCMGA PROGRAMS 2009

January 27th 2009: Business Meeting

February 24th: “Taxonomy for Dummies” and Tomato Cage Topiary presented by Kellie Sensintaffar, CCMGA member.

March 24th: Propagation and cold frames. Presented by Ken Tilt, Auburn University, Department of Horticulture

April 28th: Spring Bulb and Flower Show. Presented by Judy Youngblood, CCMGA member and certified flower show judge.

May 26th: Daylily Garden tour, Millbrook, AL, at the home of Georgia Rhenburg.

June 23rd: Lisa Addison’s Greenhouse 231 Troy Hwy, Pottery Store, shop for ferns. Lunch at the Tin Top

July 28th: Hickory Grove Nursery will present a program on Wildflowers.

August 25th: “Alabama Yards and Neighborhoods.” Presented by Amy N. Wright, Auburn University, Department of Horticulture.

September 22nd: Landscaping and Design in Your Yard. Presented by Southern Homes and Gardens. Lunch available upon request.

October 27th: Trees in our environment. Presented by Russell Stringer.

November 24th: “Container Gardening and Raised Beds: Presented by Buddy Murphy and Pam Murphy.

December: Christmas Party TBA