

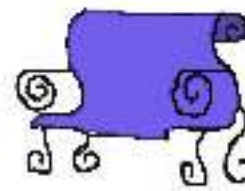


**THE
PRAIRIE
MUD**

**A Publication of Capital
City Master Gardener
Association
Montgomery, Alabama**

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FROM THE GARDEN



Fellow Master Gardeners,

I was headed to Chattanooga, TN on the day of the NL deadline. Lisa granted me an extension, so I will share a bit about my spectacular weekend trip, only because of the nature/ gardening themes of the social event. The overall theme, *Celebrating MO~RI~VA, Mountains~Rivers~Valleys*, was interesting enough, but the fabulous luncheon Saturday was on Lookout Mountain and had a fitting garden theme. The luncheon, *A Mountain Garden Splendor* began with *A Hummingbird Cocktail* hour in the living room of the Fairyland Country Club. The twenty-five tables in the club dining room were named for flowers. I was seated at the *Bird of Paradise* table. At each guest's place was a tin of wildflowers topped with a yellow or blue rose—the national organization's colors. (I shared with my bus seatmates on the way back to the hotel, when and how to plant their wild-flower seeds. They were excited about the seeds, but were clueless about how to plant them. MGs grasp every opportunity to educate. I took mine.) The luncheon menu was great, but notable was the desert, *Flower Pot Creme Brulee* served in a cute glass flower pot. It was beautiful and real tasty. In the President's welcome she referred to the guests, in colorful pastel-hats included, as a bouquet of flowers representing the tables. I must say we did look beautiful in our finest.

The trip up and back down the mountain would catch any gardener's attention. I marveled aloud on the bus as we passed homes with yards that had large patches of rock extending out of the ground and huge boulders covered with lichen. This was truly a nature lover's delight. Oakleaf hydrangeas and towering cypress trees, among other interesting plants, lined the roads along the way. There were a lot of natural streams running through the forest areas. It was a scenic sight from the foot to the top. Though this was not a gardening event, I had one of the best gardening experiences ever.

As we began our descent we were given a test to locate the seven states that can be seen from Lookout Mountain. I flunked the test. But I can say the Chattanooga Carats, Inc. planned a great weekend that delighted and roused this MG's dominant multiple intelligence, the naturalist.

If you missed, as I, the *spring* window for moving shrubs and /or trees, I read an article that might be of interest to you if you do plan to move either of these. Fall is the next best time to move your plants. Here are some tips that was in *Rebecca Kolls' Seasons, Spring 2009* publication:

- ~ On the day before the planting, water the soil around the plant to be moved.
- ~ Dig the hole for the plant to be moved 3-4 times the size of the root ball. The rule of thumb says that every 1" of trunk = 12" root ball.
- ~ When digging up the plant do not worry if you sever some of the roots, it helps to invigorate the plant.

- ~ Shape hole like a large saucer the depth of the root ball.
- ~ If moving a shrub, plant it the same depth it was growing.

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Meeting Time and Place
July 27, 10 a.m. to 12p.m.
Vaughn Park Church of Christ



- ~If moving a tree, be sure the first horizontal root is at or slightly below the soil surface.
- ~Trees are better off not staked.
- ~When finished planting, make a mow circle, an area around the tree that is not planted with grass.
- ~ The mow circle should be 36" and mulched. Mulch should not touch trunk. Put thickest part of mulch on outer edge forming a saucer-like shape to help hold water.
- ~ Water newly planted shrubs/trees with sugar water for the first four weeks to reduce stress and encourage root development. 1-1/2 cups sugar to 1 gallon water. Water with 1/2 gal. once a week for 4 weeks.
- ~ No fertilization is needed.

We are looking forward to our program on wildflowers presented by Mrs Fifield. Come early for delicious refreshments and friendly conversation.

Happy Gardening
Maggie Stringer

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July CCMGA Meeting

July 28, CCMGA Monthly Meeting will feature Shirley Fifield, a well known wildflower enthusiast in Alabama. She is "self-educated" in the identification of wildflowers. She believes in using the botanical names of wildflowers when possible to avoid confusion. Past president of Alabama Wildflower Society and editor for several Wildflower newsletters around the state, she has been interested in growing, preserving, and protecting wildflowers and their habitats since about 1989. Currently, she resides on Bowlinggreen Drive, where she has a garden devoted to Alabama native plants. She also has two ponds on her property with native water species.

June 23, 2009 Meeting Minutes

President Maggie Stringer called the June meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Vaughn Park Church of Christ.

Cat O'Brien graciously volunteered to give our devotion.

Refreshments were provided by Dick Hodges, Michelle Burns, Cat O'Brien, Marie Tomlin, Nancy Bowden, and Jan Scott.

The program topic was *Uses of Rain Barrels*, presented by Ashley Henderson. Hezekiah Early also showed slides of his container gardening at his home in Deer Creek.

The minutes from the May meeting were approved as read.

Jane McCarthy, the horticulturist who works with inmates in gardening on Maxwell Air force Base, was recognized.

President Maggie Stringer introduced friends, Margaret and Bernard, who have several rain barrels. They will share pictures of their barrels and are willing to answer questions about their construction and uses after the meeting.

It was announced that **Mallory Kelley** is our new replacement at the Alabama Cooperative Extension System for Shane Harris. Shane will not be working in Montgomery County due to his large number of duties in other counties for which he is responsible.

Mary Eleanor Hines presented STARS to members who have earned the designated hours for the different levels.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Crockett, secretary

Beginning Balance June 05, 2009		\$6,592.81
Deposits 0.00		0.00
		<hr/>
		\$6,592.81
		<hr/> <hr/>
Checks Maggie Stringer	125.60	
AL National Fair	50.00	
AMGA- Dues (1)	5.00	180.60
Ending Balance July 06, 2009		\$6,412.21

Thinking Ahead: Time to Plan Your Fall Garden

It's time to think about taking advantage of our long growing season in this part of Alabama. Starting a fall garden takes a little planning ahead to ensure you have enough growing time to complete a harvest of vegetables. What can you plant?

Some new crops of pole beans, snap beans, and lima beans can be started July 20-Aug. 5. Broccoli can be started from seed Aug. 1-15. Also, cabbage can be started from seed July 25-Aug. 10. Eggplant can be transplanted. Kale, Kohlrabi, and lettuces can be sewn beginning Aug. 15 through Sept. 1.

For many more fall garden vegetables see Extension System ANR 63. This great guide will tell you the varieties proven for this area, and the days to maturity of these crops.

DISCOVERING ALABAMA
(Hosted by Dr. Doug Phillips)

Dr. Phillips announces a new series, “Alabama in Space.” The show originates from Marshall Space Flight Center’s Historic Redstone Test site and will give us a bit of history as well as current programs.

The new show will usually be shown with a companion piece, “Alabama Night Skies.” Unfortunately the series has already premiered but will be shown again (check your listings for date and time). If you do not receive their monthly programming schedule, you may go to the APT web site.

I have also heard from Doug that funding for the Discovering Alabama series is facing funding reductions affecting their capacity to cover the cost of program production, outreach to schools, and other vital operations. If you are not a supporter of APT, please consider adding them to your donor list and stress the importance of this series. Another suggestion is to write letters of support for the Discovering Alabama series to officials such as Governor Bob Riley, your state senator and representative, State School Superintendent Dr. Joe Morton and APT Director Allan Pizzato.

NOTE: Dr. Doug Phillips will deliver the opening key note address at the AMGA 2010 Conference here in Montgomery.

Persian Shield
Photographed by
Judy Crockett



WHAT'S COMIN' UP?

Calendar for July and August 2009



Master Gardener School

Tuesday/Wednesday, August 4-5, Montgomery (see details in the news letter). Be sure and register.

CCMGA Monthly Meeting

Tuesday July 28, 2009, Vaughn Park Church of Christ, 10:00-12:00. Shirley Fifield, past president of Alabama Wildflower Society, will speak on "Wildflowers around Alabama".

If you have information you would like to pass on to CCMGA membership please call or E-mail Lisa Lenox or Kellie Sensintaffar

Boots Diamond was inspired by Ashley Henderson at our June meeting to attend a Rain Barrel Workshop at Old Alabama Town the following Saturday. Boots and her husband Sam, along with about 20 other participants, used repurposed Coca-Cola concentrate barrels for their projects. Boots made her rain barrel as a gift to her daughter who lives in Atlanta where severe drought resulted in water restrictions for a number of years.

The large oak trees shaded workshop participants as they measured and installed barrel components under the supervision of Ashley and other members of the Alabama Clean Water Partnership. The historic setting in Old Alabama Town was most appropriate, since capturing rainfall in barrels and cisterns is an old but recently revived method of conserving this most precious of natural resources—water.

