

# THE PRAIRIE MUD

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 8

August 2010



**Capital City  
Master  
Gardener  
Association**  
Montgomery, Alabama

## SOWING SEEDS

What a wonderful tea and celebration! All who made it possible are greatly appreciated.

At this time every year, I find myself longing to live in the mountains. It seems a higher elevation would solve all my problems.( heat, humidity, and heat) So, I tell myself work in the house and keep everything watered in the yard. Rise up early and enjoy those hardy plants that embrace heat and humidity. Various gingers , moon vine , and sweet autumn clematis are blooming now along with the faithful zinnias, marigolds, vinca , cosmos, morning glories, salvia, and begonias.

Indeed, the days will march forth into different seasons. We can look forward to the changes while we embrace today. Rest, count your blessings, and keep striving to make your niche reflect the beauty of God's glory!

Cecelia Terrell

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CCMGA will Meet August 24, at Vaughn Park Church of Christ at 10:00 am to 12:00. We will have a presentation and demonstration on Hypertufa.



**Hypertufa troughs at Sissinghurst Castle, England 2009**



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CCMGA MEETING JULY 27, 2010 MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by President Cecelia Terrell, and the devotional was given by Judy Crockett. Refreshments were furnished by Michelle Burns, Jane Martin, Yvonne Evans, Anne Hamner, Suzanne Brookhart, Emily Fry, Jarome Thomas and Chris Henderson. Last month's minutes were approved and accepted as written. Suzanne Brookhart gave the treasurer's report. The beginning balance of June 8, 2010 was \$5,547.37 and the ending balance after money was returned from conference was \$8580.37.

Directories are still available at the meetings and forms for the upcoming Master Gardner class can be picked up at the meetings and ACES office.

Our program for this month was a tea and celebration of our 10 years as a Master Gardner chapter in Montgomery County from the years 1999 to 2010. Karen Webber and Maggie Stringer gave a brief history of our organization. Charlotte Wood gave a demonstration on making Trifle and Maggie Stringer talked about the proper way to drink tea and a brief history of tea.

Jimmy Smitherman spoke and would like a member to be added to the Advisory Board when it is reorganized. On August 18 the Montgomery County Comm. will meet and decide where our ACES office will be moved. Jimmy asked that everyone contact their County Commissioner about where the ACES office will be. Jimmy mentioned the court house annex 3 building that has parking. The Commissioner's meeting is Aug 9, 2010 at 9:30. Attendance at meeting: 67.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Anna Owen

many, many, many THANKS! to all who helped with the Sister Schubert's Tea and 10th Anniversary. Special Thanks to Charlotte Wood for her



great demonstration and great stories and Maggie Stringer for her talk on Tea. Thank you to Karen Webber for telling us the history of CCMGA and also Maggie for helping all of us to remember the beginning of CCMGA. Thanks to Elaine Galt for her special skill in decorating and helping everyone. Thank you Anne Hamner for all your help to the very end. Thanks Jane Martin and all those who brought special refreshments to make the day more festive. Thanks to Jerry Belcher and Maureen Emerson for 'slaving' in a hot kitchen over boiling water. Thanks to Cookie Ruth and Suzanne Reaves for the cook book favors. Thanks to Jimmy Smitherman for continues support of the MG Program. Thanks to all who took the time to say how much they enjoyed the event. Thanks to anyone I forgot to say thanks to and did not bless me out for it.

**Treasurer's Report**

July 9, 2010

**Beginning Balance \$8477.75**

Deposits

Raffle/Badges \$54.00

\$8531.75

Checks

#1309 AMGA dues

(replaces #1303

Already subtracted) --\$95.00-

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**Ending Balance \$8531.75**



Charter Members of CCMGA from left to right: Mary Bullard, Christine Shoup, Karen Weber, Martha Blackwell, Maggie Stringer, and Ken Whitacre

## Capital City Master Gardeners meeting with the County Commissioners

August 9, 2010, Jane Martin, Richard Moore, Maggie Stringer, and Kellie Sensintaffar along with Jimmy Smitherman, County Agent for the Montgomery County Extension System met with the County Commissioners at the regular meeting of the Commissioners. We approached the Commissioners to inform them about the growth of CCMGA over that last few years and to convey to them what our current goals are for serving the community. Because we have more than doubled in size since 2005, we are outgrowing our current meeting facility. We expressed our needs for a meeting facility that along with adequate and safe parking, would have not only adequate space for our members but also be available for evening seminars and public education opportunities for the community. A map of Montgomery was presented to demonstrate where each of the members live in Montgomery County.

The map indicated that we have members from every corner of Montgomery County.

Jimmy Smitherman, stated that he feels that CCMGA could be given a permanent space at the Commissioners Annex Building, on the 3rd floor, 101 S. Lawrence Street. The commissioners stated that the decision for moving the Montgomery County Extension office have not been finalized and that they will "do what is best for the county."

I hope that all of you will take time to send your Commissioner a letter or email and express your opinion about this. We probably need to have a discussion about what plans (if any) need to be made about our future meeting facility. We ARE growing, by this time next year we will be up to 130 members. Our way of approaching the public is changing. If we are going to carry out our mission statement, "Community outreach through horticulture", we need a place that will allow us to reach the public, this includes a facility that will allow us to have evening seminars for those who work or have small children. Please, thoughtfully consider what you want for the future of CCMGA.



## *Getting to Know You: Amanda Griffin*

*by Jerry Belcher, Master Gardener 2010*

### *Tell a little about yourself*

I have lived in Montgomery for just over two weeks now! It's a wonderful town, and I'm very excited to discover everything it has to offer. I came here from Gainesville, Georgia (where I became a Master Gardener), but grew up in Asheville, North Carolina and Northport, Alabama. I live in Cloverdale-Idlewild with my husband James, who will start at St. James School as an English teacher, and our basset hound Roscoe. James and I both love to travel and make it a top priority. I also love getting to know people from different places, and have lived in Scotland and Japan and worked as an ESL teacher and international student advisor. My other interests include hiking, swimming, art, home improvement projects, and reading.

### *What other volunteer organizations do you participate in?*

So far this is it in Montgomery, but I plan to add to the list. In Georgia, I was a member of the Basset Hound Rescue of Georgia. I also volunteered with the garden that my husband co-founded at his school.

*If you are asked to participate in this column please say YES! This is one of the best ways for CCMGA members to get to know each other. Thanks.*

### *How did you get interested in gardening?*

My grandmother knew everything about plants and plant-related topics. Her side of the family was full of landscape architects, florists, and nursery owners, so she had a very rich gardening background and vast knowledge. Being around her, and around my dad, who also loves plants, my interest developed organically. The gardening bug really hit me when I was living in Japan though. Most people in the countryside there have gorgeous vegetable and cutting gardens, which I admired and envied. I ended up growing potatoes in pots on my windowsill, and have kept container gardens ever since.

### *What is your favorite type of gardening?*

My yard here in Cloverdale-Idlewild is the first one I've owned, and I'm so eager to get my hands on it! I definitely want to work in blueberries and vegetables and am watching the sun every day to see where I have enough light to do this. I'm very interested in perennials and self-seeding annuals. My dream would be to replace the entire front yard with a shade-tolerant cottage or woodland garden and have espaliered fruit trees in the back. Right now, I'm getting my kicks clearing brush, attacking poison ivy, and thinking about composting.

### *What projects would you like to see the Master Gardeners take on next?*

I still have a lot to learn about the projects in which the Montgomery Master Gardeners are involved. A project of personal interest to me would be reviving the greenhouses that I've seen at St. James School and starting projects with the students there. I'd also love to help the Cloverdale Community Theatre with landscaping and maintenance when they get to that point.

# whats comin' up?

## CCMGA Event Calendar for September and October

Tuesday, August 24, 2010, CCMGA Monthly Meeting, Vaughn Park Church of Christ. 10:00-12:00. Hypertufa Presentation and Demonstration. Business Meeting.

Tuesday, September 28, CCMGA Monthly Meeting, Vaughn Park Church of Christ. 10:00-12:00. Preparing for a Flower Show and Business Meeting.

Tuesday October 26, a field trip to Pat Dye's new garden. Meeting time will be 10:00am, but please check for details later.

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### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ready, Set, Grow! Harvest Festival 2010 and Arts & Craft Fair

Saturday, September 11, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
3975 Vaughn Road, Montgomery, AL

*Pecan grove at the corner of Perry Hill and Vaughn Roads perpendicular to Vaughn Road Park\**

You are invited to participate in the **4th Annual Harvest Festival and Arts & Crafts Fair**.

The Harvest Festival celebrates the Ready, Set, Grow! Pumpkin Growing contest. Proceeds from the Harvest Festival fund this six year old educational program that is offered free to children ages 5-12. Find out more about the contest at [www.readysetgrowal.webs.com](http://www.readysetgrowal.webs.com).

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**IPM Training:** Sept. 1st meeting at the Autauga Co. Ext. Office  
Sept. 8th meeting at the Elmore Co. Ext. Office  
Sept. 15th meeting at the Montgomery Co. Ext. Office  
See the information from Mallory on page 6,7, and 8, the registration form is included.

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**Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration.**

- Lou Erickson

## Master Gardener School: IPM Training

From: Mallory Kelley, Regional Extension Agent Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests



The information below is from Kerry about the IPM trainings we are going to have with all the Master Gardeners in the southern states of-AL, MS, GA, SC, and NC through an internet training and then afternoon hands on training in September. The dates are on Wednesdays, starting at 8:30 until around 2:30/3:00 on Sept. 1, 8th, and 15th.

For our tri county area I am planning the locations of the training to be as follows:

Sept.1st meeting at the Autauga Co. Ext. Office  
Sept. 8th meeting at the Elmore Co. Ext. Office  
Sept. 15th meeting at the Montgomery Co. Ext. Office

Please go ahead and print off the Registration form and send it in to Kerry so I will have a count of how many MG's to expect....and again your lunch will be provided for all three dates for a one time cost of \$25 at the above locations.

This is a cool opportunity to be with other MG's in the surrounding counties, but also a great opportunity in that all MG's in all the southern states will be learning together on those dates to be better trained to help others in the communities in which they live. The idea is to help each of you be able to better determine the problems that you have on you landscape plants, lawns, and vegetables...determining whether it is a disease, fungus, or insect problem and then learning how to treat that problem and help others with their problems as well!

I sure hope each of you will consider attending as I think it will be a fun time to all be together and also learning so much in the process!

Thank you to each of you for all that you do in your communities to help me assist those with Horticulture needs!

Thanks again,

Mallory Kelley

CCMGA Officers, 2010:  
Cecelia Terrell - President  
Kellie Sensintaffar - Vice president  
Suzanne Brookhart - Treasurer  
Anna Owen - Secretary

Thanks to this month's contributors; Mallory Kelley, Melinda Merijanian,, Suzanne Brookhart, Anna Owen, Karin Carmichael, Jerry Belcher, Shelia Robertson and Kellie Sensintaffar. Please send any contribution you can make (pictures, stories, areas of interest, short research questions) to Kellie Sensintaffar, by the first Friday of the month (September 3). All are welcome.

# IPM FOR MASTER GARDENERS



## LEARN – SHARE – SUCCEED

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### 2010 Master Gardener Training:

#### September 1

Session 1: Intro to IPM and Plant Identification

Session 2: Garden CSI and Pest ID

#### September 8

Session 3: Best Management Practices

Session 4: Turfgrass IPM

#### September 15

Session 5: IPM on key Ornamentals

Session 6: Vegetable Garden IPM

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Tired of being stumped in the field? This series of six Master Gardener training modules is designed to improve your trouble shooting and problem solving skills as you apply IPM to landscapes and gardens. Team taught by experts throughout the southeast, you will learn the techniques and approaches from the best. Morning lectures and afternoon hand-on activities will enable you to develop local educational outreach and approach landscape and garden challenges.

This unique regional training is a collaborative effort between the Cooperative Extension and Master Gardener programs in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, S Carolina, and N Carolina. Ask your local Extension agent about broadcast locations in your state and how to register!



**Registration – IPM for Master Gardeners  
(Registration fee, \$25)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date and location of MG certification \_\_\_\_\_

Master Gardener signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Keep a copy of this application for your records**

Master Gardener advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Make Check to: **ACES Master Gardener IPM class**

Mail to:       **Kerry Smith**  
                  **ACES - Home Grounds Team**  
                  **101 Funchess Hall**  
                  **Auburn University AL 36849**

(For office use)

Fee enclosed = \$25    check # \_\_\_\_\_

date received: \_\_\_\_\_

## “Fall Armyworms are on the March”

by Mallory Kelley

It is about that time again, time to be scouting your lawn and garden for the fall armyworms. There have already been many reports of them in the central part of the state and it looks like this year they are going to be a problem again.

The armyworm caterpillars will feed on almost all forage grasses, as well as corn and cotton which is bad for the cattlemen and farmers. In addition fall armyworms will also feed on approximately 100 additional plant species. Most often in the homeowner setting we see them in the lawn and then in the vegetable garden (especially on the tomatoes). The caterpillar stage of the armyworm develops into a moth that lays eggs and begins the cycle all over again and in Alabama, there may be as many as five to six generations of this pest every summer (Usually beginning in mid July to early August).

The best method for control is scouting to detect them when they are young. Fall armyworms can be found on foliage at any time of day, but are more easily detected early in the morning or late in the afternoon. In heavy infestations, you will see caterpillar droppings on the ground underneath your plants. In the lawn you will start to see brown patches in the yard where they are eating all of the green tissue off of the grass right down to the roots.

When fully grown, armyworms are 1.5 inches long. They are always striped, but their coloring is not always the same. Their background color ranges from light green to almost black.

You can identify fall armyworm caterpillars by four black dots on the back of the tip of the abdomen. Larger caterpillars typically have a light-colored, upside-down Y-shape on the head and three white lines on top of the segment just behind the head. "The earlier an infestation is detected the better. Young fall armyworms (under a half inch in length) don't eat much," says Kathy Flanders of Auburn University. "As the caterpillars get bigger, their food demands increase dramatically and the bigger they are, the harder they are to control."

Scouting is particularly important in your home vegetable garden and in your lawn with the hot, dry weather currently affecting the state. Scouting for the worms and finding them and treating when they are young is your best defense.

Scouting for fall armyworms is a relatively simple process, but for a homeowner they are often undetected until you go out to harvest the ripening tomatoes and there you find them boring into the fruit. In the lawn they are usually undetected until after the lawn has been mowed and you pull your mower into the garage and walk out an hour later and there are worms all over the ground. Also they are usually undetected until homeowners notice the worms that have crawled out onto the sidewalk or out into the driveway.

Again the best way to scout for them is to go out early in the morning or late in the afternoon and check all of your plants well. For the lawn get down and pull back the grass blades and look for the worms. Control of fall armyworms is justified when the population exceeds three 0.5-inch caterpillars per square foot. Fall armyworms need to be treated when they are still small — about 0.5 to 1 inch long. Detecting infestations when the caterpillars are small gives more time for control measures to be implemented.

When armyworms are fully grown, they are less susceptible to insecticides and, therefore, are harder to kill. In addition, if most of the caterpillars are nearly grown, most of the damage will already have been done. In this case, keep the lawn watered well to reduce stress and more than likely the grass will grow back in that area over time, it just leaves an unsightly look to the lawn.

Armyworms do seem to prefer bermuda lawns over all others, but that does not mean that the other grasses are less susceptible, they will truly eat any kind of lawn. If the worms are large they have done about all the damage they are going to do and we do not recommend treating, but if you detect them when young you can spray with insecticides to treat them. To achieve the most effective chemical control, mow and lightly irrigate your lawn before treatment and **Treat late in the day when the caterpillars are actively feeding.**

Insecticides containing carbaryl, trichlorfon, or one of the pyrethroids (active ingredients bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, cypermethrin, deltamethrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, permethrin) are effective fall armyworms. Active ingredients are listed on the insecticide label. Always read and follow label instructions.

## OLD ALABAMA TOWN UPDATE

First of all, thanks to those who have helped keep this garden going this year, their contributions have helped keep the courtyard looking good. Thanks to Jane Martin (for planting potatoes with me even though she was facing possible surgery), Elaine Galt, Cecelia Terrell, Karin Carmichael, Ellen Clute, Dianne Bush and others who have encouraged me. One particular plant I'm very proud of is the little Cranes Bill Geranium, which I think is a wild species, and seems to be flourishing. For such a dainty little thing, it seems very hardy. Each year the volunteers have carefully preserved it. The ferns, Campanulas and the large white Flocks look very good under the shade of the old Crepe Myrtle tree. The Oak Leaf Hydrangeas that were planted last year are looking very good, and the antique rose on the west wall is doing well; however, the Coral Vine has disappeared (probably bugs) and someone (I think it was a maintenance person) cut the grape vine down to the ground when the fence was painted. That grape vine it **TOUGH**, it is trying to come back! I'm going to start calling it Lazarus. I'm sorry to report the old rose on the north wall died (it had the misfortune to fall over at one point) and was never the same.

The vegetable garden has not been planted yet, but I have taken advantage of the time to kill weeds such as nut sedge. I'm hoping to get rid of as much as possible of this type weed by just letting it grow up and then using herbicide on it to kill the actual plant source (the 'nut'). I will plant a fall vegetable garden there by the end of this month. I have spoken to the tour coordinator and history curator at Old Alabama Town, Florence Giles, she plans to send some tours through the garden in September, they will be adults and school age children. This would be a good time to have a Master Gardener to give a talk about gardening in 1850, and relate that to being able to have a garden which would feed your family year round in Alabama. If you are interested in helping with this garden please email me, [kelliegardens@yahoo.com](mailto:kelliegardens@yahoo.com).



Beautiful Mama and babies, submitted by Melinda Merijanian, MG 2009

All Gardening, All the Time!  
Kellie Sensintaffar



Pictures from Melinda's kitchen window. Mama, daddy and babies.



Members of Flatwood Community Center and Master gardeners, Kellie Sensintaffar and Maggie Stringer



Master gardeners, Kellie Sensintaffar, Martie Hicks, and Jerry Belcher at Goodwill Industries, survey the new garden space.

## Planning Ahead

August is fast drawing to a close, summer is starting to wane, hopefully people will be able to get out and about and resume activities soon. I have been getting prepared for fall. I've clipped back all viable (those things I think will live) foliage in my yard, removed all the non viable (otherwise known as 'dead'), rearranged some of my pots and do-dads, sharpened up the grass borders, replenished the pine straw and generally spruced up the place. I hope to start getting ready for the plant sale next year. My plan is to start some Bay Laurel (*Laurus Nobilus*) plants. Since this is a woody plant I will have to give them plenty of time to root. I may try to start some Camellia's the same way. There are some very old varieties over in Cloverdale, I'm hoping to work out a way to get some cuttings from them. I will be down at Old Alabama Town planting a fall garden soon. Now is the time to start thinking about what bulbs you want for next spring. Planning ahead is the key to success.

Just like we plan ahead for our own gardens, we need to plan ahead for what projects we would potentially support next year. I have found two potential projects this summer. First is the Goodwill Industries on Airforce Blvd. Under the direction of Dennis Charlesworth, the employees are starting a vegetable garden. Martie Hicks, Jerry Belcher and I have laid some ground work for them. This project is an opportunity for master gardeners to give a monthly talk about a pertinent subject and to do a garden assessment to assist the employees with problem solving and planning. This is a ongoing project that master gardeners could use their skills for teaching and sharing information. They (the employees) are very excited about the garden and now is a good time for us to be available to support their efforts.

The second potential project is the Flatwood Community Center raised bed vegetable garden. Mr. James Williams, Superintendent, Montgomery County Parks and Recreation approach me in July about having CCMGA help with this community garden as well as some other projects that the County Parks and Recreation are planning. These projects include: a outdoor classroom at Catoma and a town square garden at Ramer. Mr. Williams was hoping to get money through the County Commission from a grant called ACHIEVE. We met, along with Jimmy Smitherman on August 11 with the Commissioners. I do not know what the outcome of this meeting was or what we can currently do to help the Flatwood Community. There is still a possibility that we can assist with this project. **Now is also the time to be thinking about what projects we will be involved in next year. Do you have ideas or know of projects that CCMGA could support? If you do, please write them up and bring them to the next meeting.**