

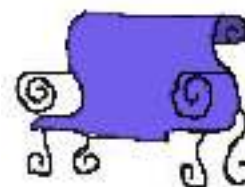


**THE  
PRAIRIE  
MUD**

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

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## FROM THE GARDEN



Hello Fellow Gardeners,

Reflecting on and counting the innumerable blessings in your life this year is no more over used than saying “I love you” to your loved ones. I am grateful every day for so many of the things about which I often complain:

—My poor aching back from pulling weeds that the needed, wonderful rain made multiply this season

—The meetings that filled every space on my calendar in which I enjoyed the comradery of friends and sharing of ideas, not to mention my *reasonably* good physical and mental health to get me to the meetings.

—The endless e-mails (delete, delete) that take hours to read and respond to, but keep me in touch with my friends, family and the rest of *my* world.

My thankful list could go on and on. Why not take some time to do the same!

If you want to continue your green thumbing this winter when it’s too cold to go outside or you don’t have the proper conditions or time to grow houseplants, you could satisfy your green thumb with a small garden in a terrarium. I have had several in the past and am now renewing that interest. Terrariums can be any glass enclosure to house a large variety of plants, from a simple miniature ivy to more showy carnivorous, begonia, bromeliad, or orchid plants. Several terrariums placed together or larger ones alone make a striking inside garden, taking hardly any time to care for—needing little water or a more sunny place as regular plants. If you need help getting started, get Tovah Martin’s latest book, *The New Terrarium* (Clarkston and Potter, 2009). Create your own little ecosphere and enjoy the winter months with a little green.

**Reminders:** MG volunteer and Reach for the STARS hours are due by the end of the year—THANKS for making our world greener, beautiful and bountiful through your gardening efforts. Be mindful of other notices about CCMGA activities in this NL. See you at our November meeting at Vaughn



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**Meeting Time  
and Place**

November 24, 10  
a.m. to 12p.m.

Vaughn Park Church  
of Christ

Park Church of Christ. Come early for food and fellowship.

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving!!

Maggie Stringer

## **Ordeman Shaw- Butterflies and Vegetables**

This has really been the year for butterflies. I have an area in my yard where there are Buddleja, Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), flowering Basil, Lantana, and Pintas. I have seen a lot of honey bees and bumble bees and a number of different butterflies including: Viceroy, Monarch, Swallowtail, and Painted Lady, and yellow and white cabbage butterflies. Also, at Ordeman Shaw House, in Old Alabama Town, there have been many butterflies due to the large Lantanas there. They are really spectacular in the fall. The Ginko trees are turning in this area, creating great fall color.

Ordeman Shaw House vegetable garden did produce a pretty good crop of cabbage, about 30 lbs. Unfortunately, cabbage butterflies and grasshoppers got into the leaves. The collards there were simply

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gigantic. Also, tomatoes, eggplant and peppers produced very well. All in all, a pretty good attempt for the first time in this site. Plans to plant turnips, potatoes, green peas, radishes, and onions for the winter garden are in progress. I believe that this garden could be used to demonstrate how early residents of Montgomery could have had a garden that they ate from year round.

Already, it is possible to see that tomatoes could be canned. Cabbage keeps at temperatures around 50 degrees, collards can remain in the ground and the center leaves eaten until late in the winter. I hope some of the CCMGA members who are interested in vegetable production will sign up for the Ordeman Shaw House Garden Committee this year!

Sincerely,

Kellie Sensintaffar, Chairman, Ordeman Shaw House Garden 2



The Horticulture Excellence Award for the first annual flower show went to a Thunbergia variety, ‘T.grandiflora’, commonly known as the **Sky Vine** for its blue color. I had so many complements and questions that I decided to tell you all about my experience with this wonderful plant.

First off the vine is NOT for everyone. You need some space and patience, but it is well worth the wait. It can grow over 20 feet. As a perennial for our area, it dies back to the ground, so I just cut the stems back in the winter. In late spring, it pops out with a new lime green foliage. Each year, I get more and stronger shoots

. After the first month of training the vine around a deck-support column, it is a very carefree plant. Likewise, it is not prone to insects or disease. Around August, the buds open to a dark periwinkle blue. The color begins to fade with time in the hot August sun. The blooms are not fragrant, but must be sweet since they attract sugar ants. The big negative is that it took 5 years for the plant to bloom. Boots had the same problem, so it obviously needs to

mature like a fruit tree.

I routinely have trouble conditioning the plant, but I lucked out this year with the help of my husband on a ladder! Fran and Judy saw the vine in bloom in late Sep and were stunned by its showy color. I encourage you all to try the Sky Vine and win a top award and be the envy of your neighbors.

Christine Shoup

#### Hospitality Committee

A great big thank you goes out to all of you who contributed to the door prize baskets for the 2010 AMGA Conference. Because of your thoughtfulness and generosity, we now have enough items to fill the projected number of baskets for which we were aiming. Our committee is so looking forward to arranging these baskets and getting them wrapped in the pretty and elegant manner that Anita Ward and Emily Frye designed. Thank you again for your help and cooperation.

CCMGA hosting:  
AMGA 20th Annual Conference  
March 18-20, 2010  
Montgomery Renaissance Hotel and  
Spa at the Convention Center  
Montgomery, Alabama  
(See AMGA website for room reservation link)

## THE MONTGOMERY MUSEUM CIRCULAR GARDEN IS

thriving beautifully on the talents of CCMGA volunteers. It is groomed every third Monday by deadheading the red knockout roses in the center, which is the permanent part of the garden. This past summer we planted bright yellow lantana interspersed with purple petunias, resulting in an eye-catching combination of colors. In Oct. we pruned back the lantana and planted many flats of blue Ocean Mix pansies. This month we will put in 200 King Alfred daffodil bulbs. Sounds like back-breaking work, but it's not with many willing volunteers. What a pleasure to work in this garden enjoyed by many viewers.

Many thanks go to KAREN WEBER who monthly oversees our efforts and works along with us. This has been a great learning experience as well as lots of fun. I highly recommend volunteering for this very worthwhile project.

Mary Eleanor Hines





## WHAT'S COMING UP?



### Things to Remember:

Remember to bring your check for the Christmas Party December 8. You will need \$18.00. The party and induction of new Master Gardeners will be December 8 at Wynlake's Country Club. Please bring gardening items or Christmas items for the silent auction. Your spouse or significant other is welcome to come. Please include \$18.00 for them.

Don't forget to report your volunteer hours. If you are reporting on line there is a tutorial available. If you are handwriting them, send them to Lula at the Extension Service office.

A new intern class will begin January 14 and end April 22. All applications are due by December 31.

We would like to remind everyone to write the mayor, as was suggested by Russell Stringer. Speaker at the October meeting. Russell encouraged all of us to express to the mayor how our city environment has changed for the better. Remember, some of these changes have allowed us to invite the master gardeners around the state to the conference in March.

If you are participating in the 'Reach for the Stars' program. Please report your hours (total of volunteer and CEU's Sandra Thompson by e-mail or phone by November 30, 2009.



### Reminder

**The annual Christmas Luncheon and Silent Auction will be held December 8, 2009 at the Wynlakes Golf and Country Club, 7900 Wynlakes Blvd. Everyone is asked to bring an item for the silent auction. Items for the auction will be received beginning at 10:00 AM. Lunch will served at 12:00 Noon. Officers for 2010 will be installed and intern graduation will be held following lunch.**

# Why Do Leaves Change Color?

Three factors influence autumn leaf color. They are leaf pigments, length of night (photoperiodism), and weather.

Leaf Pigments are:

**Chlorophyll**, gives plants their green color and manufactures sugars (photosynthesis) for the plants food.

**Carotenoids**, produce yellow orange and brown color. They are always present in the cells of the leaf.

**Anthocyanins**, produce the red color. Mostly, they are produced in autumn in response to bright light and excess sugars in the leaf.

Length of night (photoperiodism): At the time of the Autumnal Equinox (Sept. 22), nights become longer, days are shorter. The veins that carry fluids into and out of the leaf gradually close off. Sugars are trapped in the leaf. The colors of the carotenoids and anthocyanins appear as the chlorophyll is decreased (photosynthesis slows).

Influence of the Weather:

The amount and brilliance of the colors that develop during autumn depends

on the weather. Temperature and moisture are the main influences. A severe drought can delay the arrival of fall colors by several weeks. Soil moisture is a definite factor. Because this can vary from year to year no two autumns are exactly alike. A warm wet spring, favorable summer weather and warm sunny fall days with cool crisp nights produce the most spectacular shades of autumn wonder.

*This article researched by Kellie Sensintaffar and presented at the Alabama State Fair flower show exhibits, 'Shades of Autumn Wonder'.*



# 2010 CAPITAL CITY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please mail this form and dues to the membership chairman; Jane Shalhoop @ 8143  
Wynlakes Blvd, Montgomery, AL 36117 email [jshalhoop@bellsouth.net](mailto:jshalhoop@bellsouth.net)

Checks should be made payable to CCMGA and submitted prior to November 30.

Dues are \$15.00 for full members

Dues are \$10.00 for interns, provisionals and any dual members that have their primary membership in another county.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELLPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR OF YOUR MASTER GARDENER CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK \_\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a dual member, where is your primary membership \_\_\_\_\_

Have you completed your required 25 annual volunteer hours? \_\_\_\_\_

These must be completed by December 31. "Reach for the Stars" hours should be reported separately.

To opt out of the electronic receipt of the CCMGA and AMGA newsletters, please contact the data base manager – Jan Gill

To help in planning future projects, please answer the following questions:

Please list the areas where you worked this year. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What special skills do you have that could be used to help our association?

\_\_\_\_\_

What topics would you like to see presented in a program? Do you know a person who could present a program on this topic (or another)? Use the back if needed

\_\_\_\_\_