

PATHWAYS

Summer 2022

Courtesy of Huntsville Botanical Garden

LOOK WHAT'S

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AMGA PRESIDENT

Myra Lassere



As the late President John F. Kennedy once said, "Ask not what your Country can do for you – ask what you can do for your Country." Over the last several months numerous activities involving Master Gardeners have taken place. Several MG's have approached me to answer the age-old question, "What does AMGA do for me?"

Keep in mind that the "mission of the Alabama Master Gardeners Association, Inc. (AMGA) is to assist and support the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) in its' education outreach program. AMGA also supports the local Master Gardener Associations (LMGA) in their pursuit of continuing education in the field of horticulture, providing volunteer service through horticulturally based assistance education and community projects."

The balancing act between the State Coordinator, Extension agents, AMGA and LMGAs is no easy task. Each entity functions independently where cooperation and mutual understanding is essential to the vitality of each and to the MG Program. The responsibility of AMGA to the LMGAs is to provide guidance, support, and establish policies and procedures necessary for efficient operations of the local association. Also, AMGA is responsible for providing CEU opportunities through Seminars, Conferences, Online opportunities, and webinars afforded through ACES, partnering with LMGAs to offer undergraduate and graduate scholarships through Endowment funding.

Again, cooperation is a must if we are to present the best research-based information to all 67 Alabama Counties and be successful! We are blessed to have online communications and education, ZOOM meetings, AMGA Conferences and Fall Seminars, Lunch and Learn Programs, Plant Sales and Garden Tours, ACES Webinars and Programs such as Grow More, Give More, and Harvest for Health (though concluding), Grow More, Give More (GMGM) Certification, Annual Awards Program, recognition for Volunteer efforts, ACES Search for Excellence, AMGA Project Funding and more being planned. Check out the latest on the AMGA website at alabamamga.org (a work in progress). Communicate and support the AMGA Advisory Council (AC) as it is the liaison between all – especially AMGA and LMGAs. Yes, through your financial support (dues, donations, and service), we continue our volunteer efforts at all levels.

To Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow.

Myra



AMGA Website

alabamamga.org

AMGA Vice President

Devonne Ellis



Hello, my Gardening friends across the state. I hope this newsletter finds each of you enjoying your gardens. My blueberries are beginning to turn a wonderful blue color, which tells me to pick and enjoy the taste of this delicious fruit. I hope your tomatoes did much better than mine. The heat suddenly got brutal in southeast Alabama. Of course, I have been traveling and plants do need attention. I do love seeing my tithonia, zinnias, hydrangeas, and rudbeckias all in bloom at the same time.

I was blessed to be a part of the Harvest For Health celebrations across the state a few weeks ago. After ten years of matching Master

Gardeners with cancer survivors and showing them how to garden, the program is over as we know it. I am positive the relationships are here to stay, including those survivors who became Master Gardeners. Many thanks to all the Master Gardeners who were involved with this program.

After two years of no AMGA State Conference, we were all in attendance in Montgomery for our Conference in May. "Behind the Garden Gate" theme was appropriate with the wonderful selection of speakers. I want to thank Conference Chairs Janice Jackson and Margaret Cully, and the Capital City and Central Alabama Master Gardeners. You did very well, and we all loved being in Montgomery.

Our next conference is in Tuscaloosa next April. Stay tuned for details.

Gardeners know all the dirt.

AMGA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Debbie Boutelier

In November of 2021, the Advisory Council was polled regarding the greatest challenges facing each LMGA. The results were collated and prioritized according to the greatest number of associations facing a particular challenge. Each of these challenges will be fully discussed at future meetings.

Two major outcomes should come from these discussions. First is a Speakers Bureau for the entire state, which will be hosted on the AMGA website. Second, it is our hope to create a resource document with ideas to address each challenge.

We started roundtable discussions on the exchange of ideas at the April meeting. A number of ideas were shared, and each county was asked to complete some "homework." Upon completion of the discussions, the resource document will be shared with each county and published on the AMGA website. We will continue discussions at upcoming meetings working through each challenge on the list.

The list of challenges will be included at the end of this article. This is your state association and if you have ideas on how to address the challenges, we would love to hear from you. Please either contact your Advisory Council Representative or the Advisory Council Chair,

Debbie Boutelier, boutelieerd@gmail.com.

GREATEST CONCERNS FOR LMGAS FOR 2022

1. *Membership Recruitment
2. *Membership Retention
3. *Increase in the cost of the MG class
4. *Getting members to accept leadership positions
5. *Aging Members – how to keep them involved
6. *Fundraising ideas (other than plant sales)
7. *Communication
8. *Exchange of Ideas
9. Developing community projects
10. Ideas for workshops & speakers
11. List of MG-sponsored gardens
12. Bookkeeping/Budgeting Tool
13. All work, no fun – developing social activities
14. Engaging members in projects
15. Developing a working relationship with neighboring LMGAs
16. Making the state association relevant to LMGAs

*Multiple counties had these concerns

AMGA AWARDS

Lyn Webb, Chair

We were delighted to return to presenting the statewide awards in person at the AMGA Conference held this year in Montgomery on May 2-4. Winners based on AMGA Awards criteria are as follows:

Top Hours of the Year: Catharine Maddox, Capital City Master Gardeners, was recognized for a total of 1208 hours during 2021 and received a trophy and a certificate.

Jean Lee Lifetime Hours: Sondra Henley, Chilton/Autauga County Master Gardeners, received a Lifetime AMGA Badge for volunteering 9404 Lifetime hours.

Outstanding Newsletter

Up to 32 AMGA members without a website: East Central Alabama, *Garden Thyme*, editor Sheila Bolen

33 to 59 AMGA members with a website: Cherokee County, *All the Dirt*, editors Doug and Patti Ford

60 and above AMGA members with a website: Mobile County Master Gardeners, *The Dirt*, editor Alice Marty

Each of these received a certificate and a check for \$100.

The Gary Murray Outstanding Service and Dedication Award: Dani Carroll, Regional Extension Agent, was nominated by Calhoun and Cherokee Counties and received a certificate and trophy.

Mary Lou McNabb Alabama MG of the Year Award: Pat Farmer, Chilton County Master Gardeners, was awarded an AMGA Lifetime Badge, trophy, certificate and up to \$1,000 toward attendance to the International Master Gardener Conference.

Reach for the Stars and Badges Award: Twenty-two counties had qualifying members for awards of thirty-nine gold badges, thirty-two platinum badges, twelve ruby stars, three emerald stars, five diamond stars, and two garnet stars.

Thank you to all who volunteer your time!

AMGA COOKBOOK COMMITTEE

Sondra Henley, Chair

The committee's formation has had several setbacks caused by health problems and a move to Prattville.

At the August Advisory Council meeting, the committee and anyone interested in working with us will meet after the AC meeting at Petals From the Past on Tuesday, August 2. Please make plans to stay and bring your lunch and a drink so we can get down to business over a working lunch!

Sondra Henley
205-567-3333
sondrahenley@gmail.com

AMGA NEWSLETTER

Patricia Peoples, Chair

Terri Scheffler, Apprentice

We are so blessed to live in Alabama, a beautiful state from tip to toe. We enjoy finding photos for the front pages of Pathways and Happenings that show Alabama's beautiful seasons and illustrate scenic pathways. This season's front-page photo is courtesy of the Huntsville Botanical Garden, and we hope you enjoy it.

We hope you enjoyed the 2022 AMGA Annual Conference as much as we did. Seeing old friends and meeting new ones, as well as learning so much, was a real treat.

We are coming closer to meeting our goal of 100% participation of local associations in the newsletter but aren't quite there yet. Out of 33 active associations, only 5 did not submit articles – that's 85% participation! Sharing your association's activities is a terrific way to inform and inspire other local associations, so let us hear from you! The next submission deadline for articles is September 15!

The next Advisory Meeting is on August 2, 2022, at Petals From the Past.

The next BOD Meeting is September 6, 2022, in Anniston at Cane Creek.

AMGA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Rod Penuel, Chair

The Nominating Committee (which has an available position) is a great way to be introduced to the Master Gardeners at the State level. Being a Board member (two open positions) is also a good avenue for involvement. The Nominating Committee is seeking suggestions for the following positions. We welcome interested participants and your recommendations.

Officers to replace: (Two-year term)

President (current VP can assume Presidency)

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer (current assistant can assume Treasurer's position)

Assistant Treasurer

Nominating Committee member (Two-year term)

One open position

Members at large (Three-year term)

Two open positions

My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece .

— Claude Monet

AMGA PROJECT FUNDING

Sheila Bolen, Chair

Project Funding has completed another successful year. There were four recipients in 2022:

DeKalb County - \$1,000.00 for Native Plants in Desoto State Park Native Plant Area
Lee County - \$1,300.00 for Sanford Middle School Raised Beds
Morgan County - \$1,250.00 for Butterfly Garden at Hustonville Elementary School
Shelby County - \$1,000.00 to update, repair, or replace 2-3 raised beds at the Montevallo Community Garden

Congratulations to all recipients!

During my three years as Project Funding Chair, some amazing volunteer work has come to fruition, thanks to Project Funding grants. Not all applications can receive funds, but you never know if it meets the criteria unless you apply and let the committee "pick it apart." As I hand the reins over to a new Chairperson, I would like to share a few insights into applying for funds:

Don't hesitate to apply; you never know what will "win"

Read the guidelines closely

Pay attention to deadlines - don't wait until the last minute to send in the application

When you send in your application, let the committee know via text, email, a phone call, or snail mail that you have sent in an application

Verify that the application was received - no delivery method is foolproof

It was great to finally give the awards in person instead of sending them snail mail. Many thanks to all who served on the committee and for putting up with me. Apply! Apply! Apply!

Happy Gardening!



AMGA TRANSFORMATION GARDEN

Roger Clarke, Chair

ENDOWMENT AND TRANSFORMATION GARDEN COMMITTEE REPORT

A great big THANK YOU To all Master Gardener County Associations and individual Master Gardeners who have contributed to our undergraduate and graduate endowment funds at Auburn University. These endowment funds will generate scholarships that will enable students in the University Agricultural department to complete their education – to achieve their dream. We should all be proud to be a part of that.

Now we are at a crossroad, a fork in the road, a decision point. Additional contributions to the endowment funds are absolutely worthwhile – the larger the fund, the more students we can help.

But in addition, we now have the Transformation Garden being developed by Auburn University. It consists of a sixteen-acre development which will be the largest classroom at Auburn, no doubt in Alabama. Multiple garden areas dedicated to teaching and research, plus facilities for meetings. It will be practical (growing food for the cafeteria) and experimental (think adjusting atmospheric air pressure to increase productivity.)

AND AMGA has an opportunity to be a part of it by naming the pedestrian walkway through the entire development for Alabama Master Gardeners. *Can you think of anything more appropriate?*

The Premier Land Grant University and the Premier Gardening Association in Alabama came together to name THE Thoroughfare “Alabama Master Gardeners Way” BUT, and there is always a but, it comes at a price.

I am asking you to continue to support AMGA by contributing money to enable us to purchase the naming rights to that pedestrian walkway. We do not expect this to be a one-year proposition. We are asking that County Associations consider making an annual contribution to this cause for five years. Your Board of Directors has allocated \$40,000 to start this project PLUS a portion of any conference profits for the next five years. Please consider joining them – and me – in supporting our dream! Anything donated will be held in escrow until such time as we achieve our goal and is fully refundable if we don't!

More details to come at the AC meeting!



When I go into the garden with a spade, and dig a bed, I feel such an exhilaration and health that I discover that I have been defrauding myself all this time in letting others do for me what I should have done with my own hands.



– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Save the Date!

October 6, 2022

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

A Garden Transforming

- Pollinators - Container gardens -
- Growing Vegetables - Fruits -
- The Raine Culinary School Rooftop Garden -

AMGA Fall Seminar

Auburn University, AL

On-line registration available soon!



HAPPENINGS

Summer 2022

Courtesy of Huntsville Botanical Garden

AUTAUGA CO MGA

Debbie Boutelier

How long does it really take to make a pizza? This is the question Autauga County Master Gardeners posed to the elementary students at Autauga Academy in May. Most students answered that it took less than an hour. Pizza delivery is really quick!

However, tracing every pizza ingredient back to its origins provided elementary students at Autauga Academy Elementary School with an awareness of the true length of time it takes to make a pizza. Actually, from start to finish, it takes five years; an olive tree seedling takes that long to start producing olives! Coming in second is the cheese-making process which takes over three years.

Under the direction of Advanced Master Gardener Debbie Boutelier and in collaboration with Team Lead Teacher Dawn Wendland, students set out to grow the ingredients required to make their own pizza. Wheat, onions, garlic, tomatoes, peppers, oregano, and basil were planted in previously laid-out beds on the school grounds and are now growing in preparation for a fall harvest when the students return to school. Ingredients grown will then be used to prepare a pizza!

In the fall, ACMGA will be providing a full, year-long program for the elementary students at Autauga Academy. Students will be engaged in additional rich learning experiences which enhance skills and knowledge in science, math, language, following directions, and being cooperatively engaged with others. Lessons and activities will follow the Junior Master Gardener Curriculum developed at Texas A&M University.



An Autauga Academy second-grade student planting a pepper plant in the pizza garden. Photographer: Debbie Boutelier

BALDWIN CO MGA

Joni Trusty Euler

The pandemic forced us to change how our meetings were conducted and rethink educational opportunities. Those changes are the “new normal” for BCMG. Membership meetings are now hybrid (in-person and via Zoom). Our monthly Zoom one-hour armchair/educational webinars have been renamed *Let's Get Growing with BCMG*.

The Membership Committee stayed in contact by phone and email with members during 2021. For 2022, BCMG has 195 members: 147 active, 19 lifetime, seven honorary, and 22 interns.

BCMG participated in numerous Arbor Day events. Our *open to the public* March Tuesday Evening Spring Workshops had maximum capacity attendance. These two-hour workshops have members from our Speaker's Bureau speaking on a wide variety of topics.

A luncheon was held in January welcoming the new intern class. The March and April editions of *Grass Roots* featured the *Meet the Interns* interviews conducted by mentors. Interns have been busy with their class projects, attending membership meetings, and volunteering at events.

BCMG hosted a Technology Workshop on websites/programs that members access and use. Topics included: an in-depth presentation of the BCMG website (www.baldwinmastergardeners.com), a hands-on presentation on logging volunteer hours and updating ACES profiles, and downloading/logging into Zoom, including how to use the reaction buttons and chatbox.

BCMG's Spring Plant Sale was held April 7-9. Proceeds will benefit the Scholarship Fund. Many thanks to volunteers, who propagated and grew plants, and to everyone who worked the sale.



Baldwin Co MGA Intern Class.
Photographer: Joni Euler

“One of the most delightful things about a garden is the anticipation it provides.”



– W. E. Johns William Earl Johns

BLOUNT CO MGA

Irene Latham

Calling All "Weird" Gardeners:

Do you have a "weird" gardening interest? Maybe you're all about heirloom vegetables or have a special affinity for plant propagation? Good news! There's a program for that. It's called the Advanced Master Gardener Certification program. Whether you came into the Master Gardener program with a special interest, or if it's something you discovered by participating in Master Gardener activities, this program allows you to get credit for leaning into your area of interest and discovering even more. All that's required to jump onboard is a desire to gain specialized knowledge in a specific gardening area and a willingness to share that information with others.

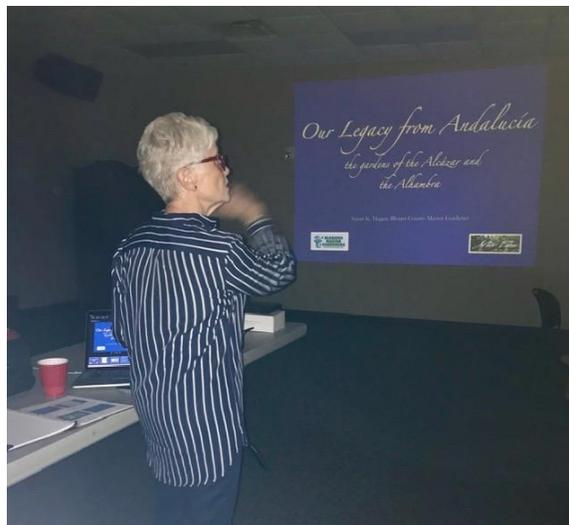
In Blount County, Sherilyn Osborne has previously received Native Plants and Watersmart Practices certification. The following Blount County Master Gardeners are currently working toward certification:

- Amanda Redman—Horticulture and Health
- Deborah Harris—Gardening in Small Places with Unusual Items
- Fran White—The Joy and Ways to Use Herbs

Susan Hagen—The History of European Garden Design

Many thanks to these gardeners for taking their special gardening affinities to the next level! We all benefit from their passion and leadership. If *you* have a "weird" gardening interest or skillset, learn more about the program:

<https://www.mginfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Advanced-Master-Gardener-Program-Document.pdf>.



Susan Hagen is sharing her project with St. Clair Co. Master Gardeners. Photographer: St. Clair Co MGA

CALHOUN COUNTY MGA

Tim Kaylor

"Maybe Not Easy, But Enjoyable"

FINALLY! Summer has arrived. Heed the words of this old song, *It's Summertime and the livin' is easy*. Yes, it is hot and humid, and there is much work to be done. However, take time to enjoy the growth of the vegetables, flowers, herbs, trees, and the many things you have given of yourself and your time. At Cane Creek Community Gardens in Calhoun County, we enjoy blooms from the perennials that return each year and the annuals we planted in the spring. A highlight this year was the return of *Earth Days*, where we entertained and educated 554 fourth-graders from area schools as they toured the gardens and learned about environmental issues which affect their lives. They also had lots of fun!

Lunch and Learn programs were full speed as Dr. David Cline, Auburn University, presented information on *Ornamental Ponds*.

We learned about *Backyard Wildlife Management* from Dew Metzler, Tallapoosa County Regional Extension Agent. One of our own, Jan Morris, presented *Parsley, Sage, Rosemary & Thyme* to help us grow, maintain, and preserve our herbs. Hayes Jackson presented his *Lightning Bugs* talk. Mandy Pearson, Cheaha Park Naturalist, taught us about the *Civilian Conservation Corps*. In September, we ended our Lunch & Learn sessions with Eric Shavley, Etowah County Regional Extension Agent, who presented current information on *Growing Hemp and Medical Marijuana*. On September 17, we hosted *Fall Fest!* After a long, hot Summer, we are looking forward to cooler weather.

CAPITAL CITY MGA

Mary Eleanor Hines

Our Spring was filled with many volunteers working to finalize preparations for the 2022 conference. With the leadership of four chairpersons, two from the Capital City Master Gardener Association and two from Central Alabama, about 300 MGs were in attendance. Obviously, Alabama's Master Gardeners were glad to reunite after a two-year COVID absence. On the first day, there was the opportunity to take guided tours of gardens throughout Montgomery and a tour of historic Wetumpka. The conference opened the second day with a surprise visit from Alabama's Governor, Kay Ivey. She welcomed the attendees with praise for our many volunteers in the gardening beautification of Alabama. There were door prizes for all attendees. A silent auction netted \$5,700. The 2½-day event included good speakers, great accommodations, and delicious continental breakfasts, among other enjoyable amenities. Our own Cathy Maddox received a certificate and trophy for achieving the top volunteer hours (1,175) in 2021.

On May 4, CCMGA members held an in-house plant sale in the Montgomery Botanical Gardens (MBG) greenhouse making \$1,837. Karin Carmichael, Cathy Maddox, and many other hard workers made this event hugely successful.

CHEAHA COMGA

Debby Mathews

Cheaha Master Gardeners made the most of the long, wet winter! This is what we've been up to in the last few weeks:

We celebrated Arbor "Day" twice!

We assisted the Soil and Water Conservation District with the Tree City 20th anniversary event for the City of Heflin on February 17. Debby Mathews brought Leadership Cleburne County Class XVI to observe.

On February 24, Master Gardener Mary Humphries and MG Intern Michelle Bain assisted with the Tree Giveaway at the Alabama Forestry Commission building. Mary helped organize trees by category and made fact sheets for the trees. Michelle assisted with distribution along with Humphries. Debby Mathews added fact sheets for the Kousa dogwoods and Witch Hazel trees.

We made our Demonstration Garden a priority program. All hands were "on deck" in the late winter cleanup phase. Our president Marie Rhoden, Mary, and Debby Mathews pulled garden weeds with abandon! Next, we added the following to our garden: Cool-season vegetables: broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. Four Blueberry plants, Perennial bulbs:

On May 17, a Volunteer Recognition Reception was held in the beautiful MBG's Lion Terrace. Cathy Maddox and her committee coordinated the event to acknowledge the many volunteers who have made the beautiful gardens a showcase for the city to be proud of. A history of the MBG was read, many certificates presented, and delicious refreshments were served, including acorn-shaped cookies.



(L-R) Anne Carr, Janell Diggs, and Charlene Thomas at the AMGA Conference. Photographer: Mary Eleanor Hines

daffodils and amaryllis, Fig tree (Planted in the back corner to give it plenty of room to grow!)

Meetings were held in January, February, and March, business portions followed by programs. At our March meeting MG, Steve Jones shared best practices for watering and potting orchids and orchid identification tips.



Steve Jones shares his orchid knowledge and experience. (L-R) Galena Rhoden, Marie Rhoden, Steve Jones, Michelle Bain. Photographer: Debby Mathews

CHEROKEE CO MGA

Janice Knight

Cherokee County MGs stay busy this time of year. We help take care of street pots planted on Main Street in Centre; some of the local merchants help us with watering these.

The city park looks good with recent work days taking care of the overgrowth.

The sensory garden has plants to be smelled and touched.

We had a tremendously successful plant sale earlier in the spring. Now, we also man a booth at the local Farmer's Market each week, with potted plants for sale.

We recently rewarded ourselves with a bus trip to the Botanical Gardens in Birmingham. It was a fun day!

CHILTON COUNTY MGA

Audrey Giles

First, we want to congratulate our President, Pat Farmer, for being awarded the Mary Lou McNabb AMGA Master Gardener of the Year award!! This is such an honor! Congratulations, Pat!!

Spring has been a busy time for CCMGA members. We held our annual plant sale two days in April. We consulted, designed a layout, selected plants, and installed plants at Maplesville Baptist Church. A team of MGs selected annuals, prepared and planted a brick planter at our current meeting site, Clanton Recreation Center. Several members assisted with planting at Ollie Park in

Clanton.

Our Demo Garden team scheduled four "Talks in the Garden," and our first two were on Native Plants and Pollinator Gardens. The next talks are scheduled for 10 am on September 6 on Herbs, and 10 am on October 4 on Shade Plants. Thanks to a small, dedicated group of MGs, the Chilton County Extension Office beds are looking especially great right now. Our Demo Garden is open for visitors M-F 8 am to 4 pm, or group tours may be scheduled via email to Chiltonmga@gmail.com

We had a lot of fun at our May "Dirty Plant Swap" and potluck lunch! MGs do get serious about stealing plants- enough said!



We consulted, designed a layout, selected plants, and installed plants at Maplesville Baptist Church. Photographer Audrey Giles

COFFEE COUNTY MGA

Jacque Hawkins

CCMGA PRACTICES AIR LAYERING TECHNIQUE

Jacque Hawkins, President-Elect of the Coffee County Master Gardener Association, recently attended the 2022 Alabama Master Gardener Association Annual Conference and Business Meeting held at the Embassy Suites, Montgomery, AL. One of the workshops given by Master Gardeners Rhona Watson and Jane Mobley was on *How to Air Layer Camellias*. Hawkins spoke on the techniques they used for air layering. Air layering is a method of propagation that results in the clone of a plant. Plants that are hard to propagate by seed starting or taking cuttings may be successfully propagated by air layering, which gives you a much larger plant. Ed Speigner, President of CCMGA, then assisted members in hands-on stripping of a horizontal branch and demonstrated how to use root hormone, wrap the moss around the stripped limb, and wrap the moss to ensure air layering occurs.



(L to R): Jacque Hawkins, Dawn Stirling-Smith, Vanessa Allen, Janine Coles, Ed Speigner, Wanda Maddox, Jim Coles, Maggie Sickler, Georgia Fleming, and Coffee County Regional Extension Agent Megan Jones. Photographer: Terry Wilkins

CULLMAN CO MGA

Ben Johnson

Cullman County Master Gardeners are thriving in 2022 and we have these ideas to share from January – June:

- "Welcoming Winter Birds to the Garden" campaign made local news to help recruit students for the 2022 class
- CCMG donated \$1,000 to North Alabama AGRIPLEX for gardening/farm heritage programming
- North Alabama Tourism presented a program on nearby gardens to visit
- HUGE SUCCESS with "stand-alone" Spring Plant Sale after many years of having a booth in another event
- Restored the Community Wildflower Garden at Sportsman's Lake
- "Unknown Soldier" monument garden designed and planted in Veterans Memorial Park
- Alabama Mushroom Society president, Alisha Millican, presents a program in June



CCMG Class of 2022 at the entrance of the Extension Office. (L to R): Lydia Corry, Richard Carpenter, Bill Grimmett, Brad Mitchell, Helen Dunn, Sonya Boyd, and Sue Livingston. Member Jessica Edwards (not pictured) also contributed to the project. Photographer: Sara Gladney, The Cullman Tribune

EAST CENTRAL ALABAMA MGA

Sheila Bolen

2022 has become East Central Alabama MGs year to shine! Our School of Blooms at Wedowee Elementary School won a Search for Excellence Award in the youth category. The garden was established in 2013 and has grown from a few to 10 raised beds, three small pollinator beds, and an amphitheater-style outdoor classroom with worktables and benches, all in a shaded area behind the gardens. We're very proud of The School of Blooms! Ralph and Augie Sanchez, ECAMGA members, brought their observation beehive to the School of Blooms and did educational presentations to over 100 students in one day! That was a long day for all involved.

Another first for us was our Newsletter *Garden Thyme* winning an award for associations with 32 or fewer members – our current membership is 26 plus two interns. Our plant sale was a big success this year and yielded our largest profit to date! We are all very excited to see what the rest of 2022 brings our way. With spring being so busy, we're taking the

next meetings to plan our School of Bloom maintenance workdays while school is not in session.



Ralph Sanchez showing his observation hive to students. Photographer: Martha Burnett

ETOWAH CO MGA

Carol Link

On March 17, Etowah County Extension Agent Eric Schavey presented a hands-on demonstration to a group of Master Gardeners, teaching them how to prune established blueberry plants after they bloom. In addition, he reviewed the tools necessary for pruning and the proper maintenance of the tools. Eric will conduct a second pruning class after the blueberries have been harvested.

The Association conducted its annual spring plant sale on Friday and Saturday, April 15-16, which was a huge success. Before the sale, Master Gardeners revamped several areas of the association's property. The driveway was graded and new slag was applied. A new storage area for cold-hardy plants was developed, and a new watering system was assembled throughout the plant storage area.

Each Wednesday, a volunteer group has a work day at Noccalula Falls to maintain the gardens. A message is sent each Tuesday to inform volunteers where to meet and the scope of work.

A new project has begun in the garden of the *Beautiful Rainbow Café*, which is located at

Gadsden Public Library. Master Gardeners Richard Davis and Rachel Cole planted six types of tomato seeds and plan to show the plants' life cycle to the youth working at the Café. After the plants are well developed, they will be transplanted into the garden.

A new Master Gardener training class is scheduled to begin in the fall.



On the opening day of the annual spring plant sale, Dan Weeks makes sure his fellow MG, Bud Utter, looks spiffy as they begin greeting customers and selling plants. Photographer: Janice Hatley

JACKSON CO MGA

Bill Caudill

Hello from Jackson County!

We had a very successful Spring Plant Sale on April 23, and say thank you to all who came to buy and to all the volunteers also. There was a nice variety of plants from which to choose. We will discuss whether to have one in the fall again.

The members attending the conference said they enjoyed the trip.

Several members again participated in the Annual 2022 Jackson County Catfish Festival. We met many friendly people, sold some more plants, and ate catfish.

Harvey Cotten highlighted Jackson County Master Gardeners' May 5 meeting by presenting the program "New Plants for 2022." He discussed natives, pollinators, planting the right size tree for

your needs, and disease resistance. Very good information!

On the evening of June 2, we met at Jim and Connie Goff's home and enjoyed our annual Ice Cream Social. There were chicken strips and potluck dishes along with a great selection of ice cream, some of which were even homemade.

We continue maintenance and revitalization of the Jackson County Park Vernon Bush Walking Trail and flower beds. Help is always welcomed. We meet Thursdays from 7-10/11 as weather permits. We work in flower beds and walk the trails to ensure they are kept open. Some trimming and weeding, is usually done along the trails.

We hope your gardening is going well and that you can donate to the Grow More Give More Project.

JEFFERSON CO MGA

Fletcher Harvey

Jefferson County Master Gardeners started the new year in fine style by hosting Bill Finch at our January meeting. Rarely one to disappoint, he drew on his years of writing experience and his experiences as a working horticulturist and presented a fine program dealing with Alabama's extraordinary biodiversity.

We celebrated ourselves at our annual *Reach for The Stars* program in February. In all hues and metallic flavors, our folks earned a total of twenty-one stars. Linda Massey earned her gold badge, and Hope Cooper earned her platinum name badge. Special kudos go to

Alicia Hall, who is now 'bejeweled,' having earned her ruby advanced star reflecting over 4,100 volunteer hours!

At our March meeting, we welcomed Ben Wegleitner, Sustainability Director at the Cahaba River Society. A product of the mid-West, Ben obviously hit the ground running when he arrived in Alabama. He was very well aware of his new state and position, and we thoroughly enjoyed his presentation on stormwater management in the garden with an emphasis on rain gardens.

This meeting should become at least a local holiday, as it marks our return to in-person gatherings. Though still a hybrid meeting, it was nice seeing some folks in person. Let us hope this trend continues.

LAWRENCE CO MGA

Susan Steele

Since incorporating in January of 2022, Lawrence County Master Gardeners (LCMG) have been involved in the community supporting projects at a diversity of locations. LCMG helped plant a Storybook Garden Walk at the Town Creek Library, maintained the flowers and shrubs at the Moulton Library, cleaned up the Moulton welcome signs, and at the Moulton Lions Club moved a raised bed and pruned trees. LCMG have ongoing projects at Jackson House in Moulton, Helen Keller Home in Tuscumbia (Colbert Co), and the Joe Wheeler Home in Hillsboro. LCMG fundraised at the Moulton's Strawberry Festival and Lawrence County Farmers Market, sharing information and promoting the Master Gardener program while selling plants.

By partnering with Lawrence County Signature School, and Urban Regional Extension Agent, Allyson Shabel, a multi-phased plan was developed for an Outdoor Classroom Learning Garden. Since January LCMG has worked with students and teachers to take soil samples, build raised beds, plant blueberry bushes, plant "Grow More - Give More" buckets, and more. Students were thrilled when the milkweed was planted in the raised beds, and a visit by Sandy Smith, "the Monarch

Lady," who furnished Monarch butterfly eggs, helped to establish the school as a Monarch Way Station. Monarch butterflies raised from eggs and caterpillars were released in May/June. LCMG learned to weld at the Lawrence County Technical School making flower, butterfly, and dragonfly "yard art" for the Learning Garden, while fundraising enabled us to give the Technical School a monetary gift for helping with the project.



Lawrence County Signature Learning Garden. (L to R): Susan Steele - LCMG Co-Chair for Signature School Learning Garden project, Allyson Shabel - Urban Regional Extension Agent, Kim Jones - K-3 Teacher and School Learning Coordinator. Not pictured: Marti Johnson - LCMG Co-Chair. Photographer unknown.

“A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust”

— Gertrude Jekyll

LEE COMGA

Betsy Akins

More Than Meets the Eye at The Caroline Dean Wildflower Trail

How could we bring the hidden gem of the garden back to its former glory? It seemed too big, too much. In March 2020, the world changed. Our vast woodland demonstration garden was closed for several months. Brambles and vines crept over wild azaleas and smothered shrubs. Deer made salads of oak leaf hydrangeas. Poison ivy crawled like a demon up trees.

We hoped that rejuvenating the trail would help us navigate the pandemic. As a place of tranquility, the trail offered us opportunities for learning and growth. Regular workdays began with volunteers wearing masks while digging, tending, and planting. Over time, we removed our masks and continued to social distance.

The work helped us to grow ideas and camaraderie. We laughed as we often heard the same comment from more than one person--"Well, look at that!" We experienced real-time people-plant connections. Our goal was to allow visitors to be surrounded by native plants and learn of the plants' ecological benefits.

Over time, a wide range of visitors appeared. A young man found solace while playing guitar under the trees. An anxious woman responded to calming words regarding her difficult medical treatment. Young children brought their new puppies to socialize with volunteers. Others shared childhood memories. Life became full and rich along the trail.

The momentum continues. Tours have resumed and visitors thank us for the space. Together, gardeners and the garden are growing and transforming once again. For that, we are grateful to the Master Gardener program.



The Caroline Dean Wildflower Trail. Photographer: Shelly Aistrup.

LIMESTONE CO MGA

Carol Knox

Limestone County Master Gardeners have been super busy this spring. Our Charity Garden has already provided produce to Limestone County Churches Involved Food Pantry and Women Empowering Women. We have enlarged the garden this year and if the weather cooperates, we will increase last year's harvest.

LCMGA has been helping the Library Foundation with planting, weeding and maintenance at their teaching garden. Our Garden Tour was a great success; we hope to have a bigger and better tour next year. Stay tuned for dates and times. We have restarted the "Getting Dirty at the Library," which is held monthly. Last month, Kipp Irland gave a great presentation on the "Culinary and Medicinal Uses for Herbs."

Greenhouse work is progressing. We had the best Plant Sale ever and have provided workshops on raised bed gardens and papercrete. A compost demonstration area is next on the agenda and will highlight several ways to provide compost for your gardens.

Several of our members also supported Chris Becker at the Extension Office with the 4-H program "Your Money Your Life (YMYL)" for all youth who attend Limestone County Career Tech Center. This program shows the students' life as a 25-year-old young adult by tracking everyday living expenses, choices, and some unexpected expenses. We are also involved with the Extension Office with Garden Ops, which is similar to Harvest for Health, where we will teach veterans how to garden successfully.



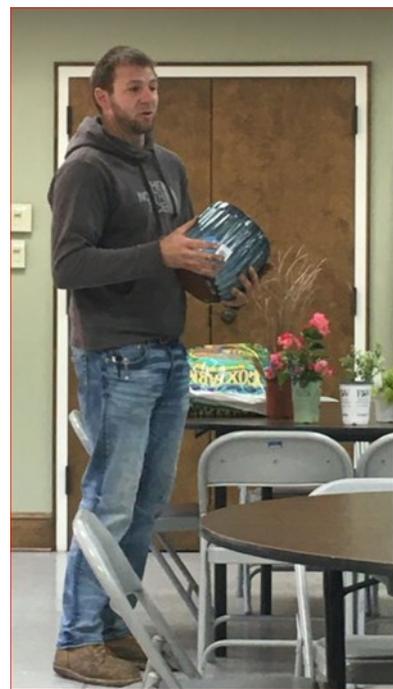
Charity Garden. Photographer: Teresa Brown.

MARSHALL CO MGA

Jo Drueen

Marshall County Master Gardeners (MCMG) were treated with a presentation by Trevor Haynes of Gunter'sville Feed Store (GFS). Trevor reiterated the need to purchase quality pottery when planting in pots; look for frost-resistance and drain holes (very important). As a reminder to us, when planting: Thriller (a tall plant usually placed in the center of the pot), Filler (medium plants surrounding the tall plant), then Spiller (short plants that circle the outer edge of the pot and cascade down the outside of the pot.)

Guntersville Feed Store is a local family-owned business that has supported the Marshall County Master Gardeners CASA Garden project through the years with various donations of supplies and seeds. MCMG thanks GFS for their support; our community is successful with them.



Trevor Haynes, Gunter'sville Feed Store
Photographer: Jo Drueen

MASTER GARDENERS OF NORTH ALABAMA

Barbara Stansky

MGNA - Celebrating a Year of "Getting Back to Normal."

MGNA has met the challenge to reboot and recharge after the past year of limited activity. The Plant Sale committee organized a successful Plant Sale in April.

Our Education Workshop committee hosted an "All About Tomatoes" workshop and a Floral Arrangement workshop just in time for Easter. A workshop on Herb Preservation was well-attended.

The Morris Greenhouse committee welcomed the opportunity to get back to working with fifth graders by taking them on scavenger hunts, studying compost, and teaching them to plant vegetables.

The Demonstration Vegetable Garden at Huntsville Botanical Garden remains a popular destination for garden visitors. The volunteers field questions there while they work. They have been hard at work with seed trials as well! Volunteers participated in Auburn's "Spotlight on Agriculture" in February, and the DVG made a beautiful backdrop for the feature. As participants in Grow More Give More, the DVG contributed 1301 pounds of produce to local food banks.

Our Speaker's Bureau is excited to be back in demand and has presented programs throughout the community. Adopt a Spot maintains a downtown corner, and demonstration beds at the Extension Office.

A contingent of the MGNA enjoyed attending the State Conference and returned brimming with great ideas for the club. MGNA looks forward to continuing to bring value to our



MGNA Members Enjoying the State Conference

(L to R): Soozie Pline, Walt and Cyndi Lindblom, Gigi Bullman, Dan Pline, Dottye Pierce, Owen Hofer, Kendra Spadoni, Allyson Hofer, Sue Bish, Elouisa Stokes, Janet Booth. Photographer: David Boothe

*If you've never experienced the
joy of accomplishing more
than you can imagine,
plant a garden.*

— Robert Brault



MOBILE CO MGA

Carol Williams

Mobile County MGs Enjoy Spring Field Trips.

MCMGs enjoyed outdoor learning experiences this spring for some of our monthly meetings. No masks nor social distancing needed! In February, we visited Mobile Botanical Gardens for a greenhouse tour and plant orientation to help with their Spring Plantasia sale.

In April, Jeremy Sessions of Sessions Farm Market in Grand Bay welcomed us to their pecan and citrus orchards. Blooming citrus filled the air with its sweet fragrance as we conducted a brief business meeting, a marvelous tour, and a farming orientation.

In June, Flowerwood Nursery CEO Ellis Ollinger and employee Susan Dupree drove us on a van tour through their vast Loxley operation. We learned how their hundreds of employees develop, plant, repot, hand trim,

label, sort, and ship hundreds of thousands of plants each year from our area. Beginning in south Mobile in 1946, Flowerwood is now among the largest wholesale nurseries in the world. You have probably bought their Encore Azaleas, Knockout Roses, Endless Summer Hydrangeas, Southern Living Plants, and many more brand names grown exclusively by Flowerwood in Loxley, Mobile, or one of their other southeastern locations.

This spring, MCMG's travels included a flower arranging workshop at Mobile's Zimlich's Garden Center. Hosted by Connie Barron, a previous MCMG president, we visited Navarre, Florida, and Connie's grown-to-order, fresh-cut flower business. MCMGs delighted in the bouquets they took home.

Our Spring MGs of the Month are April: Carol Williams, '16; May: Vaughan Drinkard, '16; and June: Cindy Jane Finley, '21.



MCMGs delighted in the tour of Flowerwood Nursery, Loxley, Alabama. Photographer: Unknown.

MORGAN CO MGA

Anne Ness and Susan Ledbetter

Morgan County Master Gardener Association was awarded a grant from the Alabama MG to add a Butterfly Garden at Austinville Elementary School in Decatur, AL. Along with the grant, an anonymous donor gave a substantial contribution to round out the project as envisioned.

Our goal was to clean up a sunny neglected area next to the school. During the first project day, May 16, several Master Gardeners and students cleared the bed and pulled weeds. The area was raked, pre-emergent herbicide and fire ant bait were laid down, and the area was covered in landscape fabric.

Next, retaining wall blocks were installed to create two new beds, and steppingstones were laid to permit easy access to the beds.

On the second project day, May 23, an

irrigation system was put in place. Then, soil mix and commercial cow manure were mixed in the beds. Landscape edging was installed to separate the plants which include the following perennials: Fennel, Blue Asters, Spotted Bee Balm, Lance Leaf Coreopsis, Butterfly Weed, Milkweed, Sweet Joe-Pye-weed, Blazing Star Liatris, and Purple Coneflower.

The students then spread mulch across the beds.

Signs have been ordered, including one that describes the Butterfly Garden and identification signs for each plant in the garden. They will be installed once they are received.

The students look forward to seeing the plants grow, caterpillars turning into cocoons, and then the butterflies fluttering around. Students, along with a total of seven Master Gardeners, participated in the project.



(L to R): Becky Laremore, Bridgett Hayes, Jennie Sugg, Cecilia Adams, Susan Steele, Anne Ness, Ramsey Huffman. Photographer: R Adams.

PIKE CO MGA

Nell Haigh

Pike County Master Gardeners jumped into spring with our annual plant sale held in April during TroyFest, an arts and crafts two-day festival that draws craftsmen and gardeners to celebrate the arts and community involvement. Members offered plants of all varieties and sizes for sale in a highly successful fundraising effort.

May brought us to the spectacular lakeside garden of Jim Scott. Truly a magnificent development of water features, elegant shade gardens, and a secluded oasis for resting and well-planned paths that form a continuous circuit throughout the seven-acre paradise. Statuary, lush habitat and a beautifully situated lodge overlook the water and demand attention to serenity.

Several members have volunteered to "man" the telephones at the Extension Office while regular staff members are out of the office.

Troy University Office of Civic Engagement and Pike County Master Gardeners have joined hands with the Boy's and Girl's Club in Troy, offering summer classes in gardening to first through fifth graders for hands-on learning, planting, growing, and brief lessons in general horticulture.

Through fundraising efforts, PCMG awarded the Goshen High School AgriScience program a donation of \$250 to be used to purchase supplies for horticulture classes. Members toured the impressive greenhouse facility on the campus, met with students and purchased plants grown by the students in the program.

Taking a summer hiatus from regular meetings, we continue to mentor others, grow our gardens with joy, pray for rain, and stay hydrated. We Dig It!



Jim Scott Garden Lodge. (Standing, L to R): Rhonda Flowers, Tamara Stephens, June Moore, Janice Brock, Sue Fraley, Chris Griffin, Nell Haigh, Leigh Calk, Gwen Threadgill. (Kneeling, L to R): Sara Hixon, Kaye Jinright, Mary Stevens. Photographer: Elaine McLeod.

SHELBY CO MGA

Kate Vogel

In April, Sue Webb, PhD., and Chilton County Master Gardener, spoke on "Planting for the Planet, Native Plants for Beauty and Function." She talked about the many benefits of planting more native plants focusing on plants well adapted to solve problems, such as water runoff, drought, escalating temperatures, wildlife habitat, and food. She also mentioned the best native trees for carbon capture, while also making our gardens more beautiful and sustainable.

The May program was about Project HOPE (Herbs Offering Personal Enrichment) with Shelby County Jobs Coach Cindy Vinson. The HOPE Project was the idea of Cindy Vinson and Taziki's owner, Keith Richards. Students at Shelby County High School supply fresh herbs to

Taziki's restaurants. Special education students grow and sell herbs such as basil, cilantro, rosemary, and oregano to the restaurant chain. The students plant the herbs, harvest them, weigh them and then bag them up for delivery to the restaurant. The venture provides paid employment for the special needs students. We also enjoyed visiting with three of the new interns, and the barbeque lunch.

Also, in May, several of us attended the Chilton County Master Gardener's potluck lunch and plant swap. We shared plant information, made new friends, and visited with old friends.

Member Karen Mims is leading a monthly program on gardening at the Alabaster Senior Center. The April class was on Container Gardening, where each attendee made a container garden to take home. Each attendee planted tomatoes in a five-gallon bucket during the Grow More, Give More class in May.

SHOALS MGA

Lisa Maples

The Shoals Master Gardeners have been busy as bees these past months. Some of our activities include digs for the plant sale and then a wonderfully successful plant sale. Our community landscaping projects were the Deshler fieldhouse, the Rogersville Library, The Healing Place, and the stage area at Ivy Green, home of the Miracle Worker production. Our intern class took on the daunting project of making the entrance to the open-air venue at Ivy Green more welcoming, and the playgoers are complimenting their efforts.

We enjoyed the garden tours and trips organized by Kaye Hillis. She took us to the homes of fellow Master Gardeners Mary Tuggle Martin and Martha Berryhill. It was such a joy to be able to wander their gardens and talk about the history of their projects. Kay also bussed us to Petals from the Past and Gibbs Nursery for a fun day trip. We all had to be sure to buy enough plants to balance the bus!

Our group is saddened to be losing our own Lucy Edwards. She has taken a position in Clanton. We had a farewell gathering to say goodbye and wish her all the best.

And finally, we are continuing our raised bed teaching project with Calvary Learning Center. Each child gets to water, plant, cultivate, and harvest in the beds they tend. Have a look at the volunteer pumpkin vine from their last year's crop! The children are learning about vegetables, flowers, pollinators, and how to think like gardeners.



The volunteer Calvary pumpkin vine.

Photographer: Lisa Maples

ST. CLAIR CO MGA

Pam Garrison

We are entering the summer 2022 season. My tomatoes are experiencing insect and disease attacks. Dr. Blake Layton, an entomologist with Mississippi State Extension, recently shared the spray he uses for his tomatoes: 4 oz. Zeta-cypermethrin, 2.5 tsp. Chlorothalonil 29.5%, and 1 to 2 oz. of copper octanoate 10% mixed in a gallon of water. He sprays this mix throughout the season at 7-10-day intervals. He also suggests using Spinosad as an organic option.

The St. Clair Master Gardeners had a workday replacing pansies with red and white begonias and black-eyed Susans at the Moody Welcome Sign. We added purple Angelonia to the begonias at the Police Department to create a red, white, and blue entrance.

A few of us staffed the opening day of Pell City's Farmers Market. Our Snap-ed person, Cindy Harper, designed a program called Vege-Bucks. It gives children 5-12 a \$2.00 coupon to spend on produce at the market. Our MG group donated money to support this program and we handed out the coupons to children, along with information about the upcoming August MG class and other gardening pamphlets.

Adrienne Bourland and I joined three Alabama Cemetery Support Committee members to identify and plant more native plants at the Overlook location in the

cemetery in Montevallo. We spent five hours cleaning out brush, weeding and planting.

Jim Harris attended the state conference and said it was excellent.



The St. Clair Master Gardeners had a workday adding purple Angelonia to the begonias at the Police Department to create a red, white, and blue entrance; (L to R): Pam Garrison, Marianne Landman, Jim Harris and Sherry Moore.

Photographer: Cherie Hoffman.

TALLAPOOSA COUNTY MGA

Calvin Johnson

The Tallapoosa County MGA is gearing up for another major member-oriented Rose Workshop on October 4, from 9-11 am. Other MGs in the immediate area are invited to attend this educational event. Our featured speaker will be Jason Powell of “Petals from the Past” fame. He will have detailed stories of what to grow, when to grow it, and why it might not have worked out as you had planned! Bring a camera, too! Contact Tallapoosa County Extension Office, Tanya at 256-825-1050, for reservations.

Due to the size of this event, and our climate, we will meet outdoors at New Water Farm, an outstanding gardening example and produce-growing market with acreage to make their crops viable and attractive. We will provide a sketch of the vast array of vegetables growing in their modest outdoor garden. Expect to hear many stories of their growing exploits! And, of course, we will have some great door prizes from our local businesses! We also expect that Jason will arrive with a truck full of his renowned roses (for sale, of course.)

Speaking of soils, our March speaker was the Alabama-famous, retired Extension

Agronomist-Soils expert Dr. Charles Mitchell. Dr. Mitchell presented an inspiring talk to our MG group, describing the many varieties and species of camellias found in, and invented in, Alabama. One variety includes the variety now recognized nationally as the Auburn University mascot, “War Eagle.” Of course, if one wants to see it, one must visit the garden next to the Auburn University President’s home! Cuttings are prohibited, but purchase options may be available upon request!



Dr. Charles Mitchell, speaking to TCMGA about Camellias. Photographer: Calvin Johnson.

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY MGA

Dan Sutton

We are excited to be hosting the 2023 AMGA Annual Conference, to be held at the Bryant Conference Center on the University of Alabama campus next April 3–5. The event may be earlier than usual, but we were told to expect much cheaper lodging rates and better availability than if it were held just a few days later because of campus-related activities. We look forward to seeing you there to enjoy the state-of-the-art facilities!

Other activities keeping us busy have been helping with Jeremiah’s (community) Garden, the University of Alabama Arboretum community garden, and Hospice of West Alabama grounds.

Our Plant Sharing Sale on April 29 & 30 had a great turnout and was a sales success. Thanks for all the contributors and volunteers!



Unidentified shopper reviewing some of the offerings from the Plant Sharing Sale. Photographer: Dan Sutton

WIREGRASS MGA

Cathy Hinesley

Wiregrass Master Gardeners are in full swing this Spring! In April, we had one of the best plant sales ever! We helped several Habitat for Humanity families at our sale by donating \$50 worth of plants to each family for their new homes and yards.

We participated in May's annual Go Public Gardens Day at Dothan Area Botanical Gardens. We had a great turnout, and the event was broadcast via live radio. To spotlight our organization, tables and booths

were set up around the Gardens. We used these setups to educate guests and encourage participation by parents and children alike by using educational programs and fun activities – like carrot pulls, composting, gardening with chickens, bees, and butterfly programs for the public. Also, in May, we had 17 interns participate in a WMGA graduation ceremony.

WMGA is planning summer children's classes at Aunt Katie's Community Gardens and a Junior Master Gardener 4-day Summer Camp at DABG.



(L to R): Master Gardeners Jamie Haire and Linda Rutenkroger. Standing is Kelly Bexley (intern), playing a "Chicken Trivia" game with guests at Go Public Gardens Day. Photographer: Cathy Hinesley.

Advisory Meeting is on August 2, 2022, at Petals From the Past.

BOD Meeting is September 6, 2022, in Anniston at Cane Creek.

Newsletter Articles due no later than September 15, 2022

AMGA Fall Seminar on October 6, 2022, Auburn University

2023 AMGA Annual Conference April 3-5 , Tuscaloosa, AL

2024 AMGA Annual Conference , Baldwin Co, AL



Pathways
Summer
2022



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Got Questions



We've Got Answers

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NEXT ARTICLE FOR PATHWAYS DUE SEPT 15, 2022

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