

PATHWAYS

FALL 2024

Courtesy of [Pexels](#)

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AMGA Website

alabamamga.org



AMGA 2025 CONFERENCE

Sondra Henley, Conference Chair

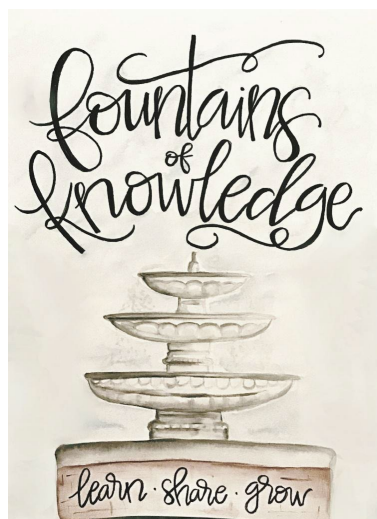
For current conference details, click [here](#).

Our conference committee has worked steadfastly. Workshops, tours, speakers, menu options, vendor booth opportunities, hospitality and sponsorships, that's just a few of the things our well-planned conference will bring you. We are hoping that you will want to join us in early April 2025. If you have questions, please contact Sondrahenley@gmail.com, and put CONFERENCE in the subject line.

The Co-chairs are Jane Boysen and Rose McCauley. I am so glad to be working with such accomplished women. They both bring strong skills to help manage the conference procedures.

Be watching in your January Pathways for the PlanetReg Registration form link and ALL the details of the upcoming 2025 AMGA Conference.

May your holiday season be joyful and safe!



Join Us
in Prattville, Alabama
for the
2025 AMGA Conference & Business
Meeting
April 3 - 5, 2025
First Baptist Church Prattville
Hosted by
Autauga County Master Gardeners
Association

AMGA PRESIDENT

Devonne Ellis

Hello, my gardening friends! This summer flew by and now fall is here. I love the cooler temperatures until winter sets in. Yes, I am bah-humbug when it comes to winter. I know we have flowers and shrubs that need to rest through the winter.

We are fortunate to live in Alabama. Across this state, we have cold temperatures in one area of the state along with warmer temperatures in another part of the state on a given winter day. With the temperature variations across our beautiful state, we can grow a wide variety of plants, shrubs and trees. For all the plants we sell during our plant sales, we pass along information to the public about planting and helping them grow to their full potential. I hope you can travel to other master gardeners' plant sales. My group has fall and spring plant sales every year.

Plant sales is one topic talked about during Advisory Council meetings. We all receive valuable science-based information from classes we took in becoming Master Gardeners and now we pass this information on to the public during the plant sales, workshops and intern classes. These classes are not only informative but also inspiring. We encourage people to sign up for master gardener classes and be part of this inspiring journey. I am very thankful for members who travel to AC meetings to share what their group is doing in promoting the master gardener program.

I am immensely proud of the master gardener associations around this state. Your impact on the community, as evidenced by the impressive work detailed in *Pathways*, is truly commendable. You teach each other and the community about what you love doing, and this enthusiasm is contagious. Keep up the excellent work your association is doing in beautifying Alabama and encourage others to take the classes we took.

Congratulations to Kerry Smith for winning the National Extension Master Gardener award!

I grow plants between the weeds,

Devonne

AMGA VICE PRESIDENT

Debbie Boutelier

So very thankful for the blessing of rain this weekend! With the high heat and no rain for almost a month, it's taken a high toll on my garden. Just couldn't get enough water on the plants. My entire garden and the animals have breathed a heavy sigh of relief with this rain and cooler temperatures. Now, I'm actually ready to think about the fall garden! I have some new varieties that I want to try. Today was spent pulling those pesky summer weeds. The soft ground made an onerous task go much faster. Plus, three downpours definitely kept me cooled off!

Preparations for the 2025 conference are in full swing. Autauga County shared a conference brochure with all of the counties that attended the Advisory Council meeting in May offering a peek at the speakers, topics, tours and workshops. Mark your calendars now for April 3 through April 5. The theme of the conference is *Fountains of Knowledge Learn - Grow - Share*. We are excited to have our favorite gardening friends to visit!

Then we will be headed north to Huntsville in 2026. Members from Limestone, Morgan and Master Gardeners of North Alabama are already knee-deep in planning the event. They have chosen a venue in downtown Huntsville that is close to everything. The dates for that conference will be May 6 - 8, 2026 with the theme *Gardening to the Moon and Back*. More information to come.

Where will we go in 2027? I would like to encourage associations that have not hosted a conference in the past to consider inviting AMGA to your area. If you think your association is too small, consider partnering with a neighboring association. Each area of the state has something unique and exciting to offer. Please contact me if you have any questions or want to consider hosting.

Always remember, time began in a garden!

Debbie



November 5 @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

AMGA Advisory Council Meeting

Petals from the Past

Everyone is welcome to attend.

December 3 @ 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

AMGA Board Meeting

Petals from the Past

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Check out what's going on for AL Master Gardeners anytime with the [AMGA Calendar of Events!](#)

AMGA AUBURN TRANSFORMATION GARDEN and AMGA ENDOWMENT FUND

Roger Clarke, Chair

AUBURN TRANSFORMATION GARDEN COMMITTEE REPORT

SUCCESS!! AMGA will pay off its \$200,000 pledge to Auburn and complete the purchase of the naming rights to the Transformation Garden Pedestrian Walkway at the Fall Seminar at Auburn on October 10, 2024. There are a lot of people to thank for helping us get to this point: my committee (Cecilia Adams, Fletcher Harvey, Jim Harris and Skeeter Sims); current and prior AMGA presidents: Devonne Ellis and Myra Lassere; our own Kerry Smith; the AMGA Board of Directors for such great support and all the Master Gardener Associations who contributed to the cause. **THANK YOU!**

An extra **THANK YOU** goes to Fletcher Harvey for his help and counsel throughout. His personal commitment in the Transformation Garden and to AMGA were essential to making it all happen. Thank you, Fletcher!

ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE REPORT

Watch this space for more exciting news in the winter Pathways. Master Gardener Associations continue to support the AMGA Graduate Endowment. **THANK YOU!!**



AMGA AWARDS

Julie Conrey

As we get ready to celebrate cooler weather and the upcoming holiday season, the following are three things local EMG associations can do now to get ready to submit award nominations for the 2025 AMGA conference:

Please encourage all members to keep up with posting hours in the ACES Service Report. Who will receive advanced badges in 2025? We won't know until all hours are entered. Go to [AMGA Website](#) and click on the ACES Service Report tab located near the bottom of the landing page.

It's a great time to begin discussing who in your organization would be a phenomenal Mary Lou McNabb Award nominee. Also, begin looking around for an individual (not an EMG) who has greatly contributed to the success of the organization. Consider nominating this person for the Gary Murray Award for Outstanding Service and Dedication to the Alabama Master Gardener Program. Check out the award criteria tab at [Alabamamga.org](#).

If your association newsletter has not won an award in the last three years, please submit it for an Outstanding Newsletter Award. The criteria for this award have changed and can be accessed on the AMGA Website [here](#).

Please don't wait until January to begin preparing your association's award submissions. Today is a great day to start the process. Email the Awards Committee at awardsamga@gmail.com with any questions you may have.

AMGA MEMBERSHIP

Rose McCauley, Chair

I am pleased to announce that we have completed the changes and upgrades to the Service Report. Now SuperAdmins can view all the information on the Service Report or download it to an Excel spreadsheet to sort it out to show what is needed. After logging into SuperAdmin, this data is located in the three blue boxes found in the upper right corner of the page and labeled "Download Directory," "Hours - Detailed," and "Hours - Annual Summary." As a reminder, some members have chosen not to have certain information shown, so please respect those requests.

We are currently in the process of reviewing the issues we have been experiencing with Dues Tracker. Your input is invaluable to us as we assess how to improve this program. If you have any suggestions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

AMGA NEWSLETTER

Patricia Peoples and Terri Scheffler, Co-editors
Sheila Bolen, Apprentice

We love looking at the local associations' pictures of their projects and activities, and hope you do, too! However, we often must shrink the size of the photos for them to fit easily in the newsletter. If you'd like to see the original photos shown in Happenings, just click on the photo in the article - and it will be full size. Do you have any feedback on this change you'd like to share with us? If so, please click [here](#).

We want to take this opportunity to thank Patricia Patty of Calhoun County MGA for her years of great work serving as our copy editor! She will be missed!

We also want to thank those of you who showed interest in filling her position and are pleased to announce our new copy editor is Brenda Tapp, whom many of you know. Welcome, Brenda!

AMGA NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Doc Scheffler, Chair

As we look forward to our Annual Conference in April, the Nominating Committee is working to identify the next group of Master Gardeners to serve on the AMGA Board of Directors, as well as the Nominating Committee.

The Board of Directors consists of four elected officers and seven elected at-large members. The officers are elected to a two-year term and at-large members are elected to a three-year term on a staggered-term basis. The Nominating Committee consists of three elected members on a staggered-term basis.

In 2025, we will be electing all four officers, two at-large members and one Nominating Committee member.

If you have the chance to talk with any current or former board members, you will hear the same thing said over and over. They all loved the experience of serving their fellow Master Gardeners. Having a positive impact on our organization is repeated over and over again. It is not only rewarding, but a lot of fun, too.

I'm confident that there are many Master Gardeners who would be perfect for our Board, but there is natural apprehension because they don't know what the work involves.

Per our Board Manual, Board Members are expected to commit the time and resources necessary to accomplish the mission of the AMGA Board. At a minimum, this includes quarterly board meetings, the Annual Business Meeting, and the AMGA State Conference. Communication is critical, and maintaining computer/internet skills is a must.

The Nominating Committee is working hard to spread the message to all Master Gardeners of positions open, to include details on duties and expectations of time required to adequately perform the elected positions. For more specific information, contact [Doc Scheffler](mailto:Doc.Scheffler@amga.org) (256-224-2386). For more detailed information, we suggest reading the AMGA Board Manual.

AMGA PROJECT FUNDING

Kate Vogel, Chair

The Project Funding Committee aims to develop and administer a program that annually provides AMGA financial assistance, up to \$2,000, to outstanding Master Gardener Projects throughout the State of Alabama.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION IS JANUARY 31ST of the year in which you are applying.

All applications are to be sent to amgaprojectfunding@gmail.com

Priority will be given to those projects that most closely meet the mission of AMGA and Master Gardeners in general.

1. Master Gardeners must be directly involved in the project and should be the main force in the initiation and implementation.
2. The project should be non-profit and/or charitable in nature.
3. The project must have the potential to benefit a significant number of citizens.
4. The project should have on-going value.
5. The project should reflect creativity and uniqueness.
6. The project will be evaluated based on the information submitted. The Evaluation Committee will make no further contact to obtain information.
7. An applicant may submit only one application per organization.
8. An applicant may receive funding for only one approved project within a three-year period.

AMGA SPEAKERS' BUREAU

Susan Hagen, Chair

Typically, in *Pathways* reports for the AMGA Speakers' Bureau, I encourage Master Gardeners to add their name and expertise to the Bureau's list and share their knowledge with others. Or, I remind program chairs to take advantage of the list when looking for presenters for their local association meetings. While gathering interesting stories this fall from the Bureau's speakers for the winter issue of *Pathways*, I want to do something a little different in this report.

This fall's report challenges each Master Gardener to recommend the AMGA Speakers' Bureau to at least one non-extension-related club, civic organization, school, or community organization. Just recommend the Alabama Master Gardener's home webpage (<https://alabamamga.org>) to folks, or send them directly to the Bureau's list, <https://alabamamga.org/amga-speakers-bureau/>, for dozens of program options that they might want to book. If we all do that, hundreds of Alabamians will become newly aware of Extension Master Gardener volunteers' services.

AMGA TREASURER

Cecilia Adams

2024 dues for State remain \$10 per member and are due beginning October 1 - December 31. The Association Checks should be made out to AMGA and mailed to:

AMGA Cecilia Adams, Treasurer.
PO Box 3031
Decatur, AL 35602

If your association would like to make a monetary contribution to the 2025 Conference Silent Auction, a check may be mailed to the above address. Please include "Silent Auction" on the "For" line.

We continue to receive donations to the Transformation Garden. Please include [this form](#) with your donation.

Please include contact information with all checks in case there are questions regarding your check.



Courtesy of [Pexels](#)



A Season of Change

As you know, we have a 5-year plan for our Extension Master Gardener Program. The first noticeable change is the name. This program has always been an Extension program, going back to its beginning at Washington State University Extension in 1973. So, to emphasize our connections, 'Extension' and 'Master Gardener' belong together. Our plan includes a revised mission statement and a brand-new vision statement.

Mission: We improve the lives of Alabamians through research-based horticulture education delivered by a dedicated, trained, and involved Extension volunteer team.

Vision: As Alabama Extension Master Gardener volunteers and ambassadors, we aspire to:

- ***teach all generations***
- ***inspire a lifelong pursuit of research-based knowledge***
- ***serve as environmental stewards***
- ***draw all people to the joys of gardening.***

We have guiding principles that illustrate our team members and teamwork, a foundation in research-based knowledge, how we address community needs, our support for environmental stewardship, sustainment for the future of our program, and of course, a passion for gardening.

To support our plan, the State Program Steering Committee is working on many tools. We're developing communication methods and content for public messaging (in social media, public presentations, etc.) – standards for training beyond the Internship (Helpline and Advanced EMG) – re-establish and communicate program guidelines and expectations – new webpages on Extension and AMGA websites – and in general find where our statewide team needs support and find/create tools to address needs.

MANY thanks to our 2024-2026 Steering Committee:

- Social media policy and training: Angela Whorton (Etowah), Anita Reeves (MGNA), Brian Brown (NE-REA), Erin Keller (Coffee), Harriett Jackson (Chilton)
- Helpline coordination and training: Jack LeCroy (SW-REA), Lori Terrell (Autauga), Marta Stauts (Baldwin), Bill & Ginny Holland (Cherokee), Teresa Logiotatus (Lee)
- Program guidelines: Jim Mullen (MGNA), Joyce Christiansen (Wiregrass), Maureen Krison (Baldwin), Kerry Smith (State Program Coord.); [Joining in 2025: Cathy O'Sheal (Jefferson), Tony Wallace (Etowah)]
- Advanced EMG certification standards and expansion: Bionca Lindsey (Autauga), Candy Jones (CAMGA), Charlotte Laverne (Tallapoosa), Dianna Fortner (Lee), Mallory Kelly (Central REA), Megan Jones (SE-REA)

We'll share news from the Steering Committee and its activities through webinars, meetings, and emails. I ALSO hope that you'll invest in our plan by suggesting ways you can support it. If you haven't read it yet, find our plan in your [Extension Service Report](#).

Thank you for everything you do to support Extension Home Grounds and Extension Master Gardener!

State EMG Program Coordinator

smithkp@auburn.edu

www.aces.edu

*Fountains
of
Knowledge*



2025
AMGA Conference
and
Business Meeting
April 3 - 5, 2025
Prattville, AL

Hosted by Autauga County Master Gardeners Association

Welcome to Prattville, the Fountain City!

Autauga County Master Gardeners Association welcomes you to Prattville, Alabama, for the 2025 Alabama Master Gardener Association Conference April 3-5 in the beautiful First Baptist Church. Located in Autauga County and nestled in the heart of Alabama, Prattville was established in 1833 when Daniel Pratt founded the town and built a cotton gin factory, which became the largest manufacturer of gins in the world. Today, gins are no longer manufactured in the historic buildings which anchor downtown Prattville, but they remain as a reminder of the city's rich and storied history. Although Prattville is considered part of the Montgomery Metropolitan Area, it is very much a business and residential community. A mild climate, adequate rainfall, and ideal soil types positively impact horticulture and agriculture.



Prattville is known as "The Fountain City" because of free-flowing artesian wells throughout the area, producing fresh, cool, potable water. Like this water, the 2025 AMGA Conference promises to refresh, renew, satisfy, fulfill, and energize by confirming and advancing knowledge in a variety of subjects. There will be opportunities to network with old friends, make new contacts, and discover helpful resources. Add to all of this, interesting tours, a silent auction with cool stuff, fun workshops and a garden party. Y'all come!!!



ALABAMA
MASTER
GARDENERS
ASSOCIATION

alabamamga.org

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Got Questions?



We've Got
Answers

ACES Helpline
1-877-252-4769



Have a
wonderful
Fall!



Courtesy of [Pexels](https://www.pexels.com/)

NEXT ARTICLE FOR PATHWAYS DUE DECEMBER 15, 2024

2023 - 2025 AMGA BOD OFFICERS

President: Devonne Ellis, Wiregrass
Vice-President: Deborah Boutelier, Autauga
Secretary: Amanda Redman, Blount
Treasurer: Cecilia Adams, Morgan

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

TERM 2022 – 2025

Susan Hagen, Blount
Kelly Lafreniere, Central

TERM 2023 – 2026

Kate Vogel, Shelby
Julie Conrey, Mobile

TERM 2024-2027

Janell Diggs, Capital City
Kim Johnson, Jackson
Susan Steele, Lawrence County

AMGA COMMITTEES

AMGA AWARDS

Julie Conrey, Chair, Mobile

AMGA COMMUNICATIONS

Caroline Etheridge, Chair, Blount
Pathways Co-Editor: Patricia Peoples, Lee
Pathways Co-editor: Terri Scheffler, Jackson
AMGA Webmaster: Caroline Etheridge

AMGA ENDOWMENT

Roger Clarke, Chair, Jefferson

AMGA MEMBERSHIP

Rose McCauley, Chair, Autauga

AMGA NOMINATING

TERM 2024 - 2025

Doc Scheffler, Chair, Jackson

TRANSFORMATION GARDEN NAME

Michael Thomason, Chair, Shoals

AMGA PROJECT FUNDING

Kate Vogel, Chair, Shelby

AMGA RECORDS & RETENTION

Michael Thomason, Chair, Shoals

AMGA SPEAKERS BUREAU

Susan Hagen, Chair, Blount

AUBURN TRANSFORMATION GARDEN

Roger Clarke, Chair, Jefferson

AMGA STATE CONFERENCES

Deborah Boutelier, Chair, Autauga

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

2024 BALDWIN CO MGA

Paula Pritchett, Sandra Stepan, Wanda Martin,
Terri Wallace

2025 AUTAUGA CO MGA

Sondra Henley, Rose McCauley, Jane Boysen

2026 MGNA/LIMESTONE/MORGAN MGAS

Jennifer Johnson (MGNA), Sooz Pline
(Limestone), Doty Henry (Morgan)

ACES CONTINUING EDUCATION

Kerry Smith, Chair

ACES VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Emily Burchfield, Coordinator

AMGA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Edwin (SKEETER) Sims, Chair, Calhoun

AMGA WEBSITE

Caroline Etheridge, Blount, Webmaster
Devonne Ellis, Wiregrass
Deborah Boutelier, Autauga

AMGA WEBSITE INFO APPROVAL:

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Devonne Ellis
Deborah Boutelier