



Carol Cook Hagood, Editor

President's Message

JCMGA January Program Notes

January 13, 10 a.m.

Brooke McMinn

**Plant Adventures Program Specialist,
Birmingham Botanical Gardens**

Hello and Happy New Year! In spite of grey skies and low temps, there are many reasons to be grateful and optimistic about the opportunity of a new year. One of those reasons, for me, is the group of people that is the JCMGA! I'm looking forward to getting back together and starting another year of service—and to getting better acquainted with all the members and your many skills, talents and knowledge.

Pat Cosgrove, Vice President, has put together a **strong program plan for 2015**. Be sure to read her columns, mark your calendars, and join us!

Now I'm going to send out a sincere plea to all members/potential members: We want you as **Active Members!** Please pay your MG dues (\$22.00, checks payable to "JCMGA") before the end of January. January 31 will be our cut-off date for inclusion on the newsletter distribution list, State MG membership, and for the updated 2015 Directory. Again, PLEASE mail your dues to Tom Douglass, JCMGA Treasurer. You may bring them to the meeting and give them to him, or drop them by the ACES office. Tom will have a current list of those who have already paid at the January meeting—if you have, please check that to make sure all your information is correct.

Next plea: We want to **celebrate the work that you have done!** Please enter your hours into the ACES system **by January 15**. Anything entered after that date will be recognized at next year's celebration. We'd like to be "up to date" with all that you have done in 2014 when we "**reach for the stars**" at our February meeting! If you need help with computer entry, call Alicia Hall at [205-970-0817](tel:205-970-0817) **before Jan. 13**.

One last plea: We are looking for members to **become more involved**. The Board, under Roger Clarke's leadership and now with our new officers, has been working since our last gathering. We will have proposed updates to our **JCMGA Bylaws** to present at the January meeting. We are also revising the **committee structure** of the Association and will be seeking committee members for many opportunities. If you have served on a committee in the past and are still interested in that or other work, please contact me or one of the other officers. We need you!

Again, Happy New Year! Let's roll up our sleeves and make it a great one for the JCMGA!

Ann Gray

Ann Gray Harvey, President

At our January MG meeting, Brooke McMinn will be sharing exciting news about all the programs and events taking place in the BBG Plant Adventure Zone. The meeting begins at 10, but please plan to join us for the hospitality time before the meeting, starting at about 9:30 a.m. The Hospitality Committee, headed by the Picardys, always provides a great setting prior to our meetings for getting to know our fellow members and greeting those who may be joining or rejoining. I hope you will come early and take the opportunity to chat with old friends and to meet some new ones!

Incidentally, if you will be attending this MG monthly meeting for the first or second time, please introduce yourself to me as you register your attendance at the front table. I want to have all new attendees stand for recognition during the meeting, so that we can all give you a warm welcome and begin getting to know you better.

Thanks to all my fellow Master Gardeners for giving me the opportunity to serve, along with our Second Vice President Hope Cooper and the other new officers, in MG leadership this year. Together we are planning an exciting year of opportunities for learning and service. We hope you will mark your calendars now and plan to attend every Master Gardener meeting!

I'm looking forward to enjoying the New Year with you!

Pat

Pat Cosgrove, First Vice President

Bethany's Extension Extra

Hello all! We have been presented with an exciting opportunity. We have been invited to set up a **Speak with a Master Gardener** booth at the 2015 Birmingham Home and Garden show!

This booth will be highlighted as one of the show's feature attractions and publicized as such. Show attendees will be encouraged to bring all of their gardening questions to us. (Internet access and laptops will be made available for MG volunteer usage.) Take a look at the following link for a spotlight on this feature at the show:

<http://www.birminghamhomeandgardenshow.com/BHGS/AtTheShow/59.aspx>

Also, I would like to use this opportunity to highlight all that you guys are doing, as well as provide related publications and info on the MG program. Each volunteer will be asked to staff a 2-hour shift, and then you are free to tour the show at no charge.

Please see below. Just let me know what date and time you would like to participate. This is gonna be a wonderful opportunity for publicizing the Jefferson County Master Gardener program!

The show hours are as follows.

Thursday, February 12: 11 AM – 9 PM (2-hour shifts, beginning with first shift at 11)

Friday, February 13: 10 AM – 9 PM (2-hour shifts, beginning with first shift at 10, will cover the additional hour with a 3 hour shift, or an additional 1 hour shift)

Saturday, February 14: 10 AM – 9 PM (2-hour shifts, beginning with first shift at 10, will cover the additional hour with a 3 hour shift, or an additional 1 hour shift)

Sunday, February 15: 10 AM – 6 PM (2-hour shifts, beginning with first shift at 10)

Take a look at your 2015 calendars and let me know what slot(s) work for you! Looking forward to this opportunity!

(Column continued at right)

Cumulative CEU Hours from 2014 Meetings

January 14 (James Horton)	1.0 CEU
March 11 (Fred Spicer)	1.0 CEU
April 8 (David Doggett)	1.0 CEU
May 13 (Plant Swap with Linda Emerson and Leonora Robertson)	1.0 CEU
June 10 (Japanese Gardens, Robert Wendorf)	1.0 CEU
June 17 (Charlie Thigpen's Garden Gallery)	1.0 CEU
July 8 (UAB speaker and Leonora Robertson)	1.0 CEU
August 12 (Michelle Reynolds)	1.0 CEU
September 9 (Don Ehrett)	1.0 CEU
October 14 (Lois Trigg Chaplin)	1.0 CEU

(Extension Extra, continued)

Share Your Success!

So many of you are doing so many fantastic things, and we are constantly trying to get the word out! Well, there is now another means by which we can publicize all that you do.

When you log in to the MG Service Report, please click on the "Success Stories" tab at the top of the page. Share your wonderful efforts, and you will be able to post a picture(s) after the story has been saved.

Regarding the pictures, please do not post any with children included in them. We cannot publicize pictures of youth without a signed waiver.

Posting your stories is a great way to let other MG's see what you guys are doing. Also, it is extremely helpful to Kerry Smith (state MG coordinator).

Fun in '15!

We have several new and interesting programs scheduled for 2015. No firm dates just yet, but topics include:

**Extreme Landscapes,
Growing Shiitake Mushrooms,
What's Under Your Sink/In Your Garage?**

Also, we will be bringing back the tried and true from previous years such as **Terrific Tomatoes** and **Growing Organically**. Stay tuned!

Thanks so much for all you do.

Bethany

Treasurer's Report

Nov. 2014/ Dec. 2014

Beginning balance Oct. 30, 2014	\$10,085.58
Deposits	\$1,821.00
Disbursements	\$3,441.97
Ending balance Dec. 31, 2014	\$8,464.61

---Submitted by Tom Douglass, Treasurer

New Year, New You: Why Not Explore A New MG Volunteer Role This Year?

Join the GPIC Crew: Educating the public and responding to gardening inquiries is what we are all about, and helping out at the GPIC booth is an invaluable public service that our Master Gardeners provide. If you have not worked at the GPIC for a while, consider calling Annette Drummonds at 205-879-6964, ext.10, to claim a spot in the 2015 schedule.

Lobby Flowers Program: If you are interested in either making a donation to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens Lobby Flowers Fund, or would like to contribute your time and expertise in floral design, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Taylor Steele by email at tsteele@bbgardens.org or by phone at 205-414-3962. These flowers will be displayed each week in the urn at the base of the stairwell in the Garden Center lobby.

The Library at The Gardens: The Library has immediate needs for volunteers in the following time slots:
3rd Saturday (10 - 1 p.m.) - 3rd Saturday (1 - 4 p.m.) - 5th Saturday (1 - 4 p.m.)

If you or someone you know may be available during these hours, please contact Taylor Steele at 205-414-3962 or tsteele@bbgardens.org.

Birmingham Fern Group: Each Thursday in the Fern Glade, volunteers are needed from 9 - noon. If you're interested in joining, contact Volunteer Coordinator Taylor Steele at 205-414-3962 or tsteele@bbgardens.org.

Get Into The Gardens! Individuals interested in helping facilitate demonstration activities and talks on the weekends at Birmingham Botanical Gardens now until November are encouraged to contact Volunteer Coordinator Taylor Steele at 205-414-3962 or tsteele@bbgardens.org.

Hikes for Tykes: A Saturday morning field trip at The Gardens geared toward preschool children and their parents. The program is a partnership between Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Fresh Air Family that engages children and their parents in an outdoor educational adventure.

Multilingual Volunteers: The Gardens is currently searching for volunteers that speak more than one language. If you or someone you know fits the description, please contact us.



As you know, volunteering as an MG not only helps you accomplish many worthwhile things at the Gardens and in the larger community, but can also be a very rewarding experience for you --and often a whole lot of fun!

A Few More Requests for your Volunteer Assistance...

Harvest for Health Program: A Call for Volunteers from Antonia Viteri

The **Harvest for Health** program is an extraordinary example of community building among Master Gardeners, nutritionists, UAB doctors, and cancer survivors in the Birmingham area. My participation in this project has been instrumental in developing my outlook as a future clinician of Herbal Medicine and Nutrition, as well as a better gardener. For me and my future self, the relationship between a person in need of healing and the one who is facilitating the process is a fundamental priority which requires constant cultivation and understanding; healing occurs on many levels and is a mutual gift.

In sharing my thoughts, I hope to encourage others to participate in this program, especially if you are a talented gardener, lover of plants, or just want to share your enthusiasm about what a home-grown tomato offers in regards to taste and pride.

The **Harvest for Health** program has giving me the opportunity to hone my skills in interpersonal communication, and practice compassion and accountability when it comes to being a mentor. Aside from the formalities, I feel I have gained a unique perspective when you sow seeds in communion and watch something grow that can nourish you both physically and spiritually. I entered this program with the intention to help someone's journey in healing by contributing and learning about how programs like this work to benefit communities all over. I also wanted to make connections: meet new people, discover new places and learn new ways to grow food/medicine, in addition to opening myself towards serving my community.

In the short time that I have participated in this program, I have learned that I too have so much to learn and that "not knowing" the answer to questions empowers me to seek answers and ask for help; thus a mutual gain in the overall healing process: humility.

Volunteering has given me a friend, even if for a short time. I have connected with another person over how much she loves turnips, dislikes radishes (which grew effortlessly), learning what Swiss chard looks like, and that carrots and beets take a long time to grow and require more patience than lettuce; but more importantly, that we are all connected. This short encounter will inform me in ways I may not fully understand today, perhaps a mystery for the future, which I would like to believe is the magic of plants, good soil, sun and water combined with human connections.

Be A Good Scout, and Get Involved with the BBG Girl Scouts! from Carol Hagood

Since December, I've been involved as a troop leader for **our very own Birmingham Botanical Gardens Girl Scout Troop** (although they are really leading *me*, into all sorts of interesting adventures!) Our troop is currently small, with only five girls now involved, primarily Senior/Cadet Scouts, but we hope to grow the troop as the year progresses, and if you know of any girls of this age looking for a troop to join, we'd be happy for you to steer them our way for more information. (They can ask for more details from me at Cchagood@aol.com, with the subject heading BBG Girl Scout Troop). Already during the past year, the troop has assisted the Gardens by helping plant a pollinator garden near the BBG apiary, and Taylor Steele and the troop are in deep discussion about many other ways the Scouts can be of service here at BBG.

It's my hope that many of our Master Gardeners might enjoy working with the girls to help them learn from your expertise. If you would be willing to prepare a hands-on gardening lesson in one of your areas of special interest, or would like to offer the girls a tour of the BBG garden in which you volunteer, we'd be interested in learning of opportunities as we plan our 2015 schedule of meetings and special events. Again, you can reach me at the email address above, with the subject heading BBG Girl Scout Troop.

The Scouts are also hoping to plan an international learning and service event in a few years (depending on the final destination chosen, they might, for example, do a service project at Kew Gardens in London), and are now entering into GS cookie sales season to help finance that adventure. If you want to support their sale with a cookie purchase, please ask me for more information at the January meeting.

Upcoming Events at Aldridge Gardens

Find more information or to register for classes, visit <http://aldridgegardens.com>.

FLORAL DESIGN WORKSHOP

Sunday, January 25, 2015 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

What better way to chase away the winter blues than by brightening up your space? In this hands-on workshop, participants will learn to create beautiful, bright bouquets that start with store-bought flowers. Attendees will leave with their own handmade centerpiece and the confidence to create again and again!

Class size is limited, so if you are interested, please reserve your space now.

Volunteer Opportunities at Aldridge Gardens

If you are interested in volunteering at Aldridge Gardens and would like more information, contact Phyllis Giles at 205-682-8019, or send an email to volunteer@aldridgegardens.com. For more information, visit the Aldridge Gardens website.

News from the Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

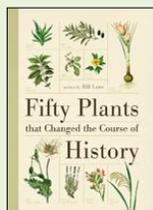
For more information, visit www.bbgb.org/library.

Make a New Year's resolution to take full advantage this year of the many resources of our wonderful Library at BBG, among them:

Main Art Gallery:

The work of Fran Nagy and Billie Dupree will be displayed and for sale at the Art Gallery during January. An opening reception will be held on January 9 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Thyme to Read book club:



The **Thyme to Read** book club will meet Tuesday, February 3 in the Library at BBG to discuss *Fifty Plants that Changed the Course of History* by Bill Laws.

For a full listing of book club selections for the coming year, visit the Library web site (see above).

Come join the group!

- Large selection of new gardening books (Check Library web site for a link to a list of the newest titles available.)
- Children's section. [Click here for the Kid's Catalog!](#)
- Over 65 different circulating gardening and horticulture magazines
- Archives and Rare Book Room
- A large collection of DVDs
- Free internet access
- Free Wi-Fi
- Eyewitness books and DVDs
- Multiple copies of Peterson's First Guides: Forests, Trees, Urban Wildlife, Butterflies & Moths and Caterpillars
- The entire Discovering Alabama series on DVD
- Teacher Resource Area with lesson plan materials
- Used books & magazines for sale
- Friendly staff and volunteers to help with all your gardening questions

Library Volunteers Needed

Jason Kirby notes that The Library at the Gardens has an immediate need for additional volunteers.

Please contact Taylor Steele at 205-414-3962 or tsteele@bbgb.org for more information and a volunteer application.

Educational Opportunities at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Register online at www.bbgardens.org or, for more information, call Dawn Coleman at 205-414-3958.

Among upcoming classes at BBG - look online for additional opportunities:

A Few of My Favorite Things

Instructor: Bradley Gilbert

Location: Birmingham Botanical Garden – Adventure Classroom

Sunday, January 11 | 2 – 4 p.m.

\$15 Members | \$20 Non-Members

In this class we will create a tablescape that defines who we are using our favorite containers, favorite flowers and the objects we surround ourselves with. Participants are encouraged to bring a small cherished item from home to display during the class.

From the Ground Up

Learn how every day plants in your yard can be used to enhance your beauty regimen and pesky weeds can actually benefit your garden. Every second Saturday, January – May, Herbalist Antonia Viteri and Clinical

Herbalist Cameron Strouss will help you

discover history and benefits of the fauna around you from the ground up.

Giving “Weeds” a Chance

Instructor: Antonia Viteri & Cameron Strouss

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Saturday, January 10 | 2 - 4 p.m.

\$15 Members | \$20 Non-Members

“Weeds every gardener and budding herbalist should know.”

In an interactive and fun workshop, led by Herbalist Antonia Viteri and Clinical Herbalist Cameron Strouss students will learn about the medicinal uses of common weeds and how they can benefit you and your garden. After this class you will never look at weeding your garden beds the same again. In addition, we will look at traditional uses of what we call “weeds” in hopes to avoid using harmful pesticides and chemical sprays to plants you just may need.

Herbs: From the Ground to Medicine Cabinet - Part I

Instructor: Antonia Viteri & Cameron Strouss

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Saturday, February 14 | 2 - 4 p.m.

\$15 Members | \$20 Non-Members

“Learn how to treat common household ailments using Southern herbs.”

Part one will introduce 20 Southern herbs. Discussion will focus on traditional uses for promoting relief of common ailments such as: colds, coughs, flu, stress, insomnia, and seasonal allergies. Class time will be spent on plant identification, herbal properties, growth habits, and seasonal times for harvesting medicine. Herbal highlights include: Cayenne, Elder, Goldenrod, Hydrangea, Passionflower, Peach, Solomon’s Seal, Yarrow, and Yellow Root. Students will leave this class with informative handouts and recipes.

Certificate in Native Plant Studies Program

Find more information or register for classes online at <http://www.bbgardens.org/native-plant-studies.php>.

Among upcoming CNPS classes---look online for additional opportunities:

(You don't need to be enrolled in the entire series to attend these, or any other CNPS events.)

Understanding Botanical Names (elective)

Instructor: John Manion

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Saturday, January 10 | 12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

\$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members

Many people avoid using botanical names for a variety of reasons. Because these names are in a foreign language, they can be intimidating and overwhelming, hence they are often avoided. Learn how fascinating, enlightening and humorous botanical names can be! You'll be surprised how much you can discern about a plant based only on its botanical name.

Botanical nomenclature topics to be discussed will be their history, formatting, pronunciation, common prefixes and suffixes, recommended references and much more.

Introduction to Plant Taxonomy/Classification (core)

Instructor: Tom Diggs, Ph.D.

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Saturday, January 17 | 8:30 - 4:30 p.m.

\$80 Members | \$90 Non-Members

Plant taxonomy is the science of recognizing, classifying and naming plant species. This fascinating field of study gives insights into evolution, natural history and ecology. Participants in this class will learn about the history of modern taxonomy, the basics of naming plants, the fundamentals of phylogenetics (plant family trees), the plant classification hierarchy and the use of keys in plant identification. Participants will engage in hand-on activities.

Plant-Soil Relationships (core)

Instructor: Henry Hughes

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Saturday, February 7 | 8:30 - 4:30 p.m.

\$80 Member | \$90 Non-Member

Explore the physical, chemical and biological properties of natural soils as well as the characteristics of the native plant communities growing in them. Plant growth reciprocally modifies soil properties. This class will explore the ways that natural soils and native plants together form unique systems with interdependent living and non-living characteristics.

Methods for amending compromised soils to improve plant growth and the technique for obtaining a soil sample for testing will be demonstrated. This class will include some field work.

**Check online for other upcoming CNPS classes and field trips;
they often fill fast, so plan ahead!**

Volunteer Opportunities in Native Plant Studies

Volunteer Workdays: Kaul Wildflower Garden Curator John Manion will lead volunteer sessions in the Kaul Wildflower Garden on January 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 27 and 29.

The propagation group will gather each Friday: 9, 16, 23, and 30.

For more information, write John Manion at jmanion@bbgardens.org.

Reach for the Stars!

Looking ahead: *Our February meeting will celebrate the wonderful volunteer work you have done in the past year.*

But in order for your work to be fully recognized, **you must enter your hours into the ACES system by January 15.** Anything entered after that date will be recognized at next year's celebration.

We'd like to be "up to date" with all that you have done in 2014 when we "reach for the stars" at our February meeting.

If you need help with the computer entry, you can call on JCMGA Secretary Alicia Hall at 205-970-0817, but be sure to contact her as soon as possible, **before January 13.**



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We're on the Web! Visit us at www.jeffcomg.org.

Also see Facebook pages for *Jefferson County Cooperative Extension System* and *Jefferson County Master Gardeners Association*