MEETING SCHEDULE

Our December 15th meeting is our Christmas Party. It will be held downstairs in the Chapel at SBG at 6:00 pm. Go to page 3 for all the details.

Mike Sikes
Vice President & Program Chair

Unless otherwise notified, our meetings will take place at 6:00 pm for a potluck supper and at 6:30 pm for the meeting. They are held on the third Tuesday of each month and in the Gardenside Room downstairs below the Conservatory level.

Executive Board

President - Anne Walker
Vice President - Mike Sikes
Secretary - Kay Petroff
Treasurer - Shirley Baker
Athens-Clarke County Extension Agent: Amanda Tedrow

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Elizabeth Thurmond
Newsletter Publisher & Listserv
AAMGAlistserv@gmail.com
AAMGA Committees

Audit: Ruth Smith, Chair
Members: Jackie Williams, Susan Drinkard

Budget: Doug Lair, Chair
Members: David Hoechst, Merry Anderson

By Laws: George Watson
Members: Bob & Carol Wolf

Historian: Betty Rice

Hospitality: Heather Gray-Jordan
Cheryl & Frank Johnson

Membership: Jean Ryan, Chair
Members: John Aitkens

Nominating: Jean Colquett, Chair

Programs: Mike Sikes, Chair
Members: Gary Wade and Jean Colquett

Photography: Andrea Fischer

Publicity:

TREASURER’S REPORT
Oct 24 to November 17, 2015

Beginning Balance 18,743.16
Deposit-Member Dues 0.00
Deposit-Raffle Sales 29.00

Total Deposits 29.00

Expenses:
Clarke PAR 23.39
Oconee PAR 23.39
Athena Gardens 23.39
20% of Bulb Sales to SBG 199.08

Total Expenses: 269.25

Ending Balance: 18,502.91

Submitted by
Shirley Baker, Treasurer
Shirleybaker555@gmail.com

AAMGA Projects

Projects: Barbara Turner, Chair
Barbara Turner@mac.com
Co-Chairs: Gary Wade and Dortha Jackson

Clarke PAR: Merry Anderson & Pam Bracken, Co-Chairs
Merry: merry.anderson@att.net
Pam: pamb824@aol.com

Winter Garden: Gary Wade Gwade@uga.edu

Flower Garden at Clarke PAR: Jill Hyche, Chair
jillhyche@gmail.com

Flower Bulb Project: Andrea Woodall & Jean Colquett, Co-Chairs
Andrea: aawoodall58@gmail.com   Jean: greent39@yahoo.com

Oconee PAR: Gary Wade & Frank Johnson, Co-Chairs
Gary: Gwade@uga.edu   Frank: frankandcherylj@bellsouth.net

Junior Master Gardener Classes:
Gaines School Elementary - Brenda Beckham, Chair
BBeckha2@bellsouth.net
Dortha Jacobson: dorthafjacobson@yahoo.com

AAMGA Plant Sale: Heather Gray Jordan & Donna McPipkin, Co-Chairs
Heather: hgheather29@gmail.com
Donna: DYates01@yahoo.com

Horticultural Therapy Project: Brenda Beckham, Chair
BBeckha2@bellsouth.net

Backyard Pollinator Garden at SBG
Co-Chairmen: Jackie Williams, Shirley Baker
Jackie: jkwill82@hotmail.com   Shirley: ShirleyBaker555@gmail.com

Barnyard Demonstration Garden at U Garden
Co-Chairmen: Shirley Baker, Betty Thomas
ShirleyBaker555@gmail.com   BettyThomas@gmail.com

Salvation Army Vegetable Garden
Chairman: David Hagaman
dchagaman@gmail.com

Athena Gardens Retirement Community Vegetable Garden
Chairman: Gary Wade   GWade@uga.edu

Great workday at the Pollinator Garden at SBG.
Thanks everyone!
You Are Cordially Invited to our Annual
Athens Area Master Gardener Association’s
Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 16th, at 6:00 pm

The annual AAMGA Christmas dinner party will be held Tuesday, December 15th at 6 pm downstairs in the Chapel at SBG. Spouses/Significant others are invited. The Association will provide the meat and members are asked to bring a side dish. It will be BYOB (caution the area has carpet that stains). Cheryl and Frank Johnson and Heather Gray-Jordan will be in charge. Each member is welcome to bring only one guest.

After the meal, the evening festivities will include a fun and lively gift exchange with a special twist where gifts can be stolen twice by those you assumed to be your gardening friends. In the end, everyone leaves with a gift, but the gift you first receive may not be the one you take home. Each person (including guests) who would like to participate in the gift exchange is asked to bring a wrapped gift. Please note: the gift exchange is optional. You do not have to bring a gift or participate in the gift exchange to enjoy the meal and fellowship, so don’t let that make you stay home.

Gifts should be garden-related and can be purchased, hand-crafted or home-made. An unusual plant has always been one of the most popular gifts. The price of purchased gifts should not exceed $15. Please no white elephants or gag gifts.

Our Christmas Party will take the place of our regular monthly meeting.
November 17th, 2015 Meeting Minutes  
Kay Petroff, Secretary

President Anne Walker welcomed a good crowd to the November meeting in the Gardenside Room of SBG. Vice-President Mike Sikes introduced David Freed who gave a presentation on his approach to grafting Japanese maples. He also answered member questions and showed varieties suitable for our area.

Business Meeting:

Secretary’s Report- There were no corrections so the report was filed as submitted.

Treasurer’s Report- There were no corrections so the report was filed as submitted.

Project Reports:

Clarke PAR-Merry Anderson reported that fall crops are being harvested. A Clarke Middle student is working with Peggy Bailey to conduct a science experiment in one of the beds. The bed is divided into sections with one getting commercial fertilizer, the second a homemade fertilizer and the last section getting no additives. The student will take the harvest from the bed to the food bank.

Oconee PAR-Frank Johnson reported that 38 pounds was harvested today to bring the yearly total to 2001 pounds. The last of the summer plants have been removed to make room for collards and turnips. An abundance of lettuce has been transplanted. Workdays are Tuesdays at 9:00AM and all members are invited to come.

Salvation Army Garden- No report was given.

Pollinator Garden at SBG-Jackie Williams thanked everyone who helped on the recent workday. There was a good turnout. The beds were cleaned, compost donated by SBG was added to the soil and new pine straw was put on top in anticipation of many blooms next year.

UGArden-Shirley Baker reported the gourds have been pulled and the plan is to make them into birdhouses. The garden has been weeded and will be dormant until spring.

Athena Gardens Retirement Community Garden-Gary Wade reported that six gardeners are happily gardening but the raised beds were built from untreated lumber and are coming apart. The plan is to build a prototype bed to help get funding to rebuild the other beds. Members will have an opportunity to help. The estimated cost for each bed is $180.00. Members suggested applying for a grant from GMGA and a possible donation of materials by Lowe’s.

Unfinished Business-None

New Business-George Watson reminded members to start potting extra plants for the plant sale. Heather Gray-Jordan added that any activity related to plants for the sale earns required hours. Any one needing labels, contact Heather. Paper labels don’t last so use a durable material with lettering in pencil.

Announcements:

Anne Walker reminded everyone that the December meeting is the Christmas Party. It will be held downstairs in the Chapel at SBG on December 15 at 6:00PM. Spouses are invited. Meat will be provided and members are asked to bring a side dish. It is BYOB (caution the area has carpet that stains). Cheryl and Frank Johnson and Heather Gray-Jordan will be in charge. The gift exchange is optional with the gift being garden-related and costing $15.

There are 37 people signed up for the 2016 Master Gardener class.

Connie Cottingham said a flyer is available at the front desk with upcoming events at SBG. The Native Plant Symposium in January will focus on Meadows. Orchid Madness is scheduled for February with proceeds funding garden displays and deer prevention.

The meeting was adjourned and Kristi Sego called numbers for the plant raffle.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kay Petroff  
Secretary
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Hope Garden
Salvation Army Vegetable Garden
Chairman: David Hagaman  dchagaman@gmail.com

Athens-Clarke Plant A Row for the Hungry

Harvesting continues at the CMS Plant-A-Row garden. The last of the peppers have been picked and that bed has been cleared. Turnips, mustard greens, collards, lettuce, and baby bok choi are still being provided to the Emergency Food Bank.

We are always looking for ways to involve the students at CMS. One of the students who helped plant the beds in October has taken over one of the turnip beds and is using it as a science experiment. She has divided the bed into three sections and, under the direction of teacher Peggy Bailey, is comparing the use of homemade and commercial fertilizers. With Peggy’s help, she will also harvest the turnips and take them to the food bank. We are looking forward to seeing the results of her comparison.

Still need 2015 volunteer hours? There will be harvesting and weeding to be done for the rest of the year. Just let Pam Bracken know so she can plug you into the schedule.

Please let Pam Bracken know if you can help! Just zap Pam Bracken an e-mail at pam.bracken@georgiacenter.uga.edu!

Merry Anderson

Athena Gardens Project Update
Gary L. Wade, project chair
Cathy Roth and Lamara Martin, Volunteer Participants

There has been little to do recently at Athena Gardens now that the fall crops are in and performing well. Since all the gardeners take care of their own raised beds, we simply visit with them each two weeks to help with weeding, watering or other chores that need doing.

Although the garden is only 5 years old, the twelve raised beds are falling apart. They were obviously built with untreated lumber which is rotting, and there were no upright brace boards on the outside of the beds. Hence the beds are exploding from the weight of the soil. (see photos below).

This winter we plan to build one new prototype bed, then solicit funding to re-build others. The new bed will be half the size of the original beds. The existing beds are 24 feet long and 4 feet wide. The new raised bed will be 10 ft. long and 4 ft. wide, so each of the old beds will be sub-divided into two new beds.

Athena Gardens is a retirement community on the east side of Athens, behind the Publix shopping center. All volunteers are welcome. We will need assistance building the prototype bed in January, so if you have carpentry skills or just like building things, please contact me at gwade@uga.edu
Volunteer Opportunities, continued

Oconee Plant-a-Row Update
Gary Wade and Frank Johnson, co-chairs

The Oconee Plant-a-Row garden at Thomas Orchards has transitioned from summer to the fall crops. It was a great summer, despite not planting the garden until May 20th due to spring rains that prevented garden preparations. The cucumbers (Sweet Success) were phenomenal, and the dwarf red okra (Bulldog) was fantastic and sure to be on the list for planting again next year. The tomatoes were somewhat disappointing and were plagued with leafspot diseases, aphids and stink bugs, but they still managed to yield 266 lbs. The peppers (bell, banana and hot) went non-stop from spring to fall, adding 375 lbs. to our total. Although the tomatoes fell short of our expectations, this was the year of the squash. They lasted a month longer than usual and yielded a combined total of 316 lbs. (yellow and zucchini).

Most rows at the garden are now filled with fall greens, turnips, cabbage and lettuce. We plan to be out of the gardening business by Christmas, at which time we will seed the rows with clover and put the garden to bed for winter.

### Summer Crop Harvest Total at Thomas Orchards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peppers</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Squash</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zucchini Squash</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Beans</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okra</td>
<td>242.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatillos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbs</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Peas</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melons</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Squash</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>2029</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s Easy Being Green

Recycle Your Christmas Trees

You can recycle your Christmas tree and keep it from going to overflowing landfills. Here’s how:

**Make mulch**
Cut off the boughs and place them on the ground like a blanket to protect plants that are susceptible to windburn, plants that are marginally hardy in your area, and plants that might come up early and be nipped by a late spring frost, such as fall-planted pansies or early emerging perennials. (Keep reading for ideas on what to do with the trunk.)

**Give it to the birds**
Move the tree in its stand outdoors for the winter, where it can provide food and shelter for wild birds. Even better, put the tree near a bird feeder or hang bird treats from the tree—like bags of suet (animal fat you can get at most grocery stores) or a small piece of wood or thick cardboard smeared with a mix of bird seed and peanut butter—and it will not only attract birds but feed them, too.

**Give it to the fish**
Sink your tree in a pond with permission, of course. In deep water, old trees become habitats for fish and aquatic insects. In shallow wetlands, trees can act as barriers to sand and soil erosion though currently only the State of Louisiana has a tree-based restoration project in place. For more information, go to [savelawetlands.org](http://savelawetlands.org).

**Compost or chip it**
Call your municipality's administrative office to find out if your town has a special day for picking up Christmas trees or a place where you can take them after the holidays where they will be ground into wood chips and/or composted. Often you can go to the municipal compost site in the spring and get free compost and/or wood chip mulch for your garden. Of course, you probably won’t recognize the chips/compost from your tree, but you can feel good knowing that it’s helping other gardeners have healthier landscapes and you have kept perfectly good organic matter from clogging a landfill.
DECEMBER GARDENING CHORES

**Rake** the last of the fall leaves from your lawn. If you leave a pile of wet, matted leaves now you'll have big dead spots next spring.

**Fertilize** pansies, snapdragons and ornamental kale and cabbage with a fertilizer that contains **nitrate nitrogen**, which helps your plants grow and bloom in cold soil.

**Keep** holiday plants in the coolest indoor spot possible. Otherwise the flowers and leaves will drop prematurely.

**Sprinkle** pine straw over bulb foliage that has emerged too soon. The green leaves won't be hurt by the cold but the straw will help hide them.

**Prune** your evergreen shrubbery and bring the cuttings indoors. Juniper, holly and magnolia foliage is quite decorative. Use holly and nandina berries for a red accent in table centerpieces.

**Poinsettias** do not need fertilizing now but they do need watering. Check the dryness of the soil daily to keep them looking their brilliant best.

**Prune** short stubs and dead limbs from trees now that all the leaves are gone.

**Ficus** plants that lose leaves are reacting to insufficient light or a drafty site. Can you move yours to a better place in your house?

**Poke** holes in the foil wrapping on pots of holiday plants and set them in individual saucers. Otherwise accumulated water will cause root rot.

**Bird** feeders bring lots of colorful activity to a yard in cold weather. Most bird experts recommend black oil sunflower seed for general feeding. Thistle seed and suet cakes attracts birds you might not have seen before.

**Rather** than a bottle of wine, bring a houseplant as a gift to holiday parties. Amaryllis, ornamental pepper, Christmas cactus or kalanchoe will be appreciated for weeks to come. Water trees and shrubs you planted this fall. Evergreen plants in particular need regular watering, even in cold weather. Apply 1 gallon per foot of height.

**Purchase** pots of paperwhite narcissus, African violet or gloxinia for your office and home to bring color and a touch of perfume to the air.

**Plant** woody vines like Carolina jessamine, wisteria and cross vine now. Make sure to place them next to a sturdy arbor and loosely tie the young vine to it with twine.

**Houseplants** don’t need many nutrients in the winter. Use houseplant fertilizer at half strength. Don’t water them unless the soil feels dry one inch deep.

**Pull** mulch at least six inches away from tree trunks. Some professional landscapers pile it high and don’t pull it back - setting a bad example for all of us.

**Remove** the faded blooms and bloom stalks from amaryllis but allow the leaves to remain. Water only when the soil feels dry.

**Fireplace** ashes can be scattered over your lawn. They will provide a bit of phosphorus and potassium plus counteract acidity. Spread no more than ten lb. per 1000 square feet per month.

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**Pot Unearthed on Menominee Reservation in Wisconsin**

*Where it had Laid Buried for the Past 800 Years*

http://theriflebird.com/nature/archaeologists-dig-up-an-800-year-old-pot-what-they-find-inside-changes-history/

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AAMGA: www.ugaextension.com/clarke/anr/aamga.html

GMGA: www.georgiamastergardeners.org
Cottingham: English ivy takes work and patience to remove

Our back yard is dominated by a majestic pecan with a 100-foot spread.

I am not sure how old it is, but it is beside a wooden shed about 70 years old. It is growing in the center of a 12-foot diameter raised bed created from mortared fieldstone. English ivy climbed far into the tree, covered the stone wall, traveled under the shed and covered its far wall. I managed to clear the English ivy from the wall. Bringing sunlight into the area by removing rampant Bandana helped. Charming double orange dailyness discovered under the ivy/nandina mass are now thriving.

The ivy attacking the tree was another story. To be honest, I turned the problem over to experts for a first assault there: two goats munched happily for a couple days to clear enough to let me survey the situation. This pecan tree must have been the place of choice for car repair by the previous owners, because step two was filling a trash bag with car parts and oil containers previously hidden in the foliage. Step three was cutting all the vines climbing the tree and pulling down what I could.

I cleaned up the area and after two years have it pretty much under control, killing English ivy whenever it pops up. I decided then I would let the ivy grow in that raised bed and just keep it in bounds. Now I want all of it gone.

English ivy was considered the perfect groundcover decades ago because it has glossy evergreen leaves, grows, is drought tolerant and thrives in dense shade. The problem is it doesn't know when to stop and will cover trees, choke out other plants, move into the house and eat mortar from between bricks. It not only grows quickly, but mature ivy (with a different leaf shape) reseeds. I have ivy popping up in other parts of the yard and pull it up as soon as I see it.

I asked Rick Hester, owner of Hester Landscape & Irrigation in Watkinsville, if he had success with killing English ivy. He explained a method that worked for him: Mow the area with a brush mower as low as possible, then come back with a big rake to remove all the ivy you can. Wait a couple weeks, then when new growth emerges, hit that with the weedkiller. To ensure you kill the vines climbing the trees, make sure you cut enough to see a six-inch ring of bark around the tree (do not cut the tree bark!).

When I cut the vines in the pecan, the ivy stayed green for weeks, making me wonder if there was some way it was living off the bark. It does take a long time for the ivy in the tree to turn brown, but it will and, eventually, the wind will bring much of the ivy down.

I have heard of a couple people who cut the ivy out like sod and rolled the roots away, but that sounds detrimental to tree roots and my back to me.

No matter what method you choose to remove English ivy, you need patience. Clearing ivy then planting shrubs immediately will leave you with a never-ending battle because ivy roots come back with renewed determination. I plan to physically clear the area this spring, add a layer of mulch, monitor it for months and then plant the area next spring. It took years for ivy to dominate the area; it will not give up easily.

Originally published in the Athens Banner-Herald in April, 2004. Written by AAMGA member Connie Cottingham. Sign up for her free weekly garden tips: Love Notes from the Garden at conniecottingham@gmail.com. Connie is a landscape architect, registered in Georgia, who lives and gardens in Athens.
Q: What do you call a baby sweet potato? A: A small fry!
Q: What do you say to an angry baked sweet potato? A: Anything, just butter him up.
Q: What does a British sweet potato say about a sunny day? A: It's mashing!
Q: Why did the sweet potato cross the road? A: He saw a fork up ahead.
Q: Why do sweet potatoes make good detectives? A: Because they keep their eyes peeled!
Q: What did the Sweet Potato say to the Potato? A: "I think, therefore I yam!"