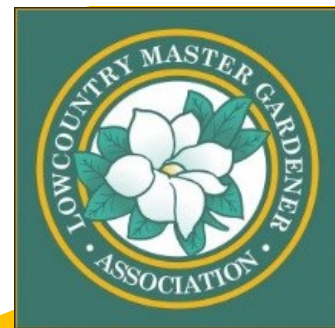


Diggin' Dirt

Lowcountry Master Gardener Association



Fall 2015

President's Corner

Welcome fall! Both we and our plants took a beating this summer. I for one am glad to have the cooler temperatures and am looking forward to my fall camellia display. The fall temperatures have also enticed homeowners to get out in their yards, and we've had numerous requests for Rent a Master Gardener visits. We'll finish these in November and take a break until after the holidays.

I'm happy to report that with the addition of Jenny Kingery as a Member at Large, we now have all Board positions filled. Vice President Betty Heath-Camp has done a terrific job arranging our programs for this year. Thank you, Betty! As we look ahead to 2016, I'm sure she'd welcome your ideas on subjects and speakers so that we can continue to provide informative programs and field trips to the membership. You can e-mail her with suggestions at heathb@vt.edu.

The Board recently approved three new projects for the LMGA: a vegetable garden at the Broad River Elementary School (working with kindergarteners); a

garden at the St. Helena branch library; and installing plants (twice a year) in Old Town Bluffton's decorative planters. These will give veteran Master Gardeners and our new interns additional opportunities to help the community and record volunteer hours. You'll be hearing more from the project leaders in the future.

Did you know the LMGA is ten years old this year? Plans are in the works to mark this milestone after the holidays. As we are not having the holiday luncheon this year, we'll use that occasion to recognize our active volunteers – so be sure to log in your volunteer hours on the Clemson website. If you're having difficulty doing so, Recording Secretary Debbie Miller (millerthymegirl@gmail.com) is happy to help. Stay tuned for more information on the birthday celebration.

Our final meeting for 2015 will be on Saturday, November 14, at 10:30 at Taylor's Landscaping off Rte. 170 in Bluffton (across from Sun City). Kathy Varn will give a presentation on palms. Details will follow in an e-mail blast.

I hope everyone has a Happy Thanksgiving with family and friends.

- Bette Warfield



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The Gallivanting Gardener

"Stop & Smell the Roses" is what the hand-written sign said. So Gallivanting Gardener GiGi and her friends turned into the driveway of Doug Amon's farmhouse in rural Delavan, Wisconsin. And, indeed, we were greeted with the scent of thousands of roses! On the day of our visit, Mr. Amon was outside tending to his roses. He explained that, upon the death of his wife, he needed something to keep him occupied. The result is 450 rose bushes in his back yard – hundreds of varieties, each meticulously labeled and cared for. And he was 70 years old when he started his rose garden!

The roses clearly thrive in Wisconsin's summer. The

bushes are covered in blooms of every color imaginable. Because of the climate, the rose bushes are kept in their pots, most of them placed in holes on raised platforms surrounding a gazebo and pond with a waterfall. The remaining bushes (he admits to being a "rose-aholic" and buys additional bushes each year) are arranged throughout his back yard. What a beautiful sight – not to mention the wonderful aroma! In the fall, the potted roses are moved to the barn/greenhouse where they are cut back each spring before returning them to the garden for the summer months for the enjoyment of thousands of visitors.

Mr. Amon enjoys having visitors, including garden clubs, stop to admire his labor of love and extended an invitation to members of the Lowcountry MGA to do so. It's a bit far for an LMGA field trip – but if you're in southern Wisconsin in the summer, be sure to stop and smell Mr. Amon's roses!

(More photos on p 3)

"Some people grumble that roses have thorns; I am grateful that thorns have roses."

— [Alphonse Karr](#)



The Gallivanting Gardener (continued)



Favorite Fall Blooms

Turks Cap

Malvaviscus arbo-reus var. *drummondii* is a South Carolina native that blooms in the fall. This spreading shrub, often as broad as high, grows 2-3 ft., sometimes reaching 9 ft. Bright-red, pendant, hibiscus-like flowers never fully open, their petals overlapping to form a loose tube with the staminal column protruding, said to resemble a Turkish turban, hence its most common name, Turks cap. Especially useful in shady situations.



Melampodium

Cheery melampodium has sunshine-yellow flowers on deeply green leaves. It's a mainstay for hot, sunny spots, where it will produce a profusion of yellow daisy-shape blooms all summer. While it likes heat and sun, it doesn't like dry conditions. It must be kept moist, or it will wither and likely not recover.

Melampodium is an excellent plant for containers or in the front of the border (especially in slightly soggy soil). Its tidy growth habit makes it a good pick for edging, too. Plant it outdoors after all danger of frost has passed. Melampodium is listed as an annual, but it returns in my garden each year.



Cigar Plant

Thank goodness horticultural amnesty has allowed this Mexican immigrant to remain in the US. *Cuphea micropetala* forms a stunning 3' tall x 3' wide deciduous clump, topped starting in early fall with small tubular flowers that line the upper 1' of each stem. The flowers open bright yellow, but as the flowers age, the base turns orange-red before the entire flower takes on that color. The results are bi-color flowers so beloved by the butterflies and hummingbirds we have to declare a temporary no-fly zone while we take cuttings.



Thanks to Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, BHG and Plant Delights for photos and info.

Book Review

DEEP ROOTED WISDOM

Augustus Jenkins "Jenks"
Farmer, Author

Timber Press

I bought the book because I had heard that there was a chapter in it about one of the gardens on the recent Garden a Day tours. Well, it wasn't exactly a chapter; more of a vignette; one of dozens in the book featuring various gardens and gardeners.

I was pleasantly surprised by this book because, frankly, I didn't expect much. Not only was it an enjoyable read, there is a fund of useful information throughout the entire book. For example, I have a

whole new outlook on pruning. Before I haul away or burn the trimmings, I cut several small twigs and stick them in the ground beside the shrub I've just pruned. Some may root and maybe none, but I have lost nothing and maybe I will have gained a new shrub!

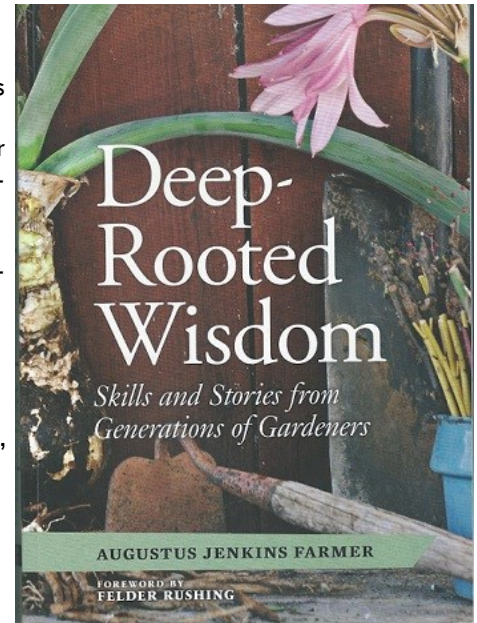
Jenks (I can call him that; everyone does) owns a Crinum nursery, along with his partner, Tom Hall, called "Lush Life". From the photographs of the nursery, it should be called "Working Like the Dickens Life". They are working towards becoming completely organic, eschewing the use of any chemicals or commercial fertilizers at all. Building a nourishing soil is

a lot harder than scattering some time release fertilizer around.

You will find familiar names in this book, and names of gardeners you will meet for the first time. All are interesting. You can open the book just about anywhere and find something interesting to read and it won't take long. Each vignette is only a few pages long. The little asides peppered throughout the book, called "Updates and Adaptations" are filled with great tips and useful information.

The entire book is dedicated to caring for the earth. And that's pretty worthwhile.

—Sandra Educate



PRSF Mulch Crew



Dave Frederick, Joanne Amendola, Sue Roderus, Pat Cooke and Jim Nangle. Not pictured is the "photographer" Vivian Day.



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