



January 2024
Volume XXXII Issue I



NEWSLETTER OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

www.baldwinmastergardeners.com

2024 BCMG Elected Board

- President:
Don Richerson
- Vice-President:
Ed Pickle
- Treasurer:
Cassandra Rabren
- Recording Secretary:
Pat Greer
- Corresponding Secretary:
Lydia Chan
- Members at Large:
Barb Comstock
Kay Heinrich
- Past President:
Mary Calvin

2024 Appointed Board Members:

- Monthly Program Co-Chairs:
Charlotte Hamm
Brenda Montgomery
- Intern Class Coordinator:
Anita O'Connor
- Outreach Coordinator:
Eileen Huisman
- Finance Committee Chair:
Gail Hand
- Projects Chair:
Elmer Vick

President's Notes by Don Richerson

Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken", has been the theme of my life. Ask my children. It's fitting that I begin the year with this wonderful piece of literature. I trust that you and your families had a very joyous and loving holiday season. If the December luncheon was any evidence, I know you ate well.

As we begin a New Year, changes are inevitable. I have misdated checks on an annual basis. I'm sure I will again this year. Most humans like regularity, routines, order, ordinary, and sameness, as long as things are going well. A New Year presents a problem. Suddenly we have something albeit minor, to change. It's a change that can be annoying to some and exhilarating to others.

In this New Year, we have several unique opportunities to make our BCMG better than ever. We will showcase our organization in April for the 2024 AMGA Conference - "Paradise Found". Our Steering Committee of Paula Pritchett, Sandy Stepan, Wanda Martin, and Terri Wallace have done an excellent job preparing us to display what we're all about. We have a new year to educate our public with reliable, relevant, and reachable information. We have a chance to change what needs to be changed and develop what is working.

We have turned the page on leadership, and we will move forward to new projects and programs. We will welcome a new class of interns who will continue to expand the horizons of BCMG. Your new leadership, listed at the column to the left, are

ready to begin and make a difference. We will deal with the good times and with the difficult times. But, right now, we need to get the date right.

The Road Not Taken
BY ROBERT FROST
Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



English Literature

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NOTE: January Meeting Time will be at 8:30 a.m. for Social and 9:00 a.m. for Meeting!!!





Alabama Gulf Coast Seed and Plant Swap by Eileen Huisman

The BCMG are joining the Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo in celebrating the National Seed and Plant Swap Day on January 27. It will be open from 9am- 2pm. You can receive a 10% off zoo admission for wildflower seeds donation.

We will have two master gardeners giving 20-25 min. Presentations:

- Charlotte Hamm will be speaking on *Key Landscaping Tips*.
- Wanda Martin will be talking about *Easy Care Gardening*.

There will be a volunteer sign up sheet at the January meeting.



BCMG Food Drive by Eileen Huisman

Donations of Canned Goods for the BCMG Food Drive will be collected at the January monthly meeting on January 10th.

Checks and/ or Cash will be welcomed also.

This donation will be divided and delivered to the two following organizations:

- Ecumenical Ministries in Foley
- Prodissee Pantry in Spanish Fort

Let's give an outstanding contribution to our loved ones in need.

January Birthdays



- 1-1 Linda Ennis
- 1-1 Becky Majors
- 1-3 Jim Greer
- 1-3 Peggy Loefstedt
- 1-3 Peggy Sheffield
- 1-5 Selena Vaughn
- 1-7 Paula Pritchett
- 1-10 Gary Wallace
- 1-13 Fran Posey-Eversole
- 1-17 Juanita Dodd
- 1-21 Bonnibel Byars
- 1-22 Michele Doyle
- 1-22 Jan Pryor
- 1-27 Barbara Comstock
- 1-27 Margaret Griffin
- 1-29 Sharon Smith
- 1-30 Deborah Marriott

Life...is all about the Journey.



New 2024 Extension Service Hours Reporting Format by Sam Andrews

The exhaustively revised Extension Service Hour Reporting System goes live as of January 1, 2024. The weblink <https://www.acesagmg.site/login.php> will remain the same, but much else will change. Once past the beginning screens, Baldwin will have reporting details unique to its anticipated plans for 2024. Leadership will provide a brief overview and announce major training dates at the January Monthly Meeting, so stay tuned. In the meantime, please remember:

- Write down any hours earned as of January 1, 2024 for later entry after you gain a better understanding of this major change in our reporting system.
- Plan on attending one of the necessary 2024 EMG 2024 Service Hour Reporting System Training sessions later in January or February at the Hwy. 104 Auditorium.
- Earning at least ten CEU hours will be mandatory this year. Hint: Earn CEUs with Service Hour Training.
- The Service Hours entry web link will not change.
- BUT the Hours Report page will look different, and the recording process is very different!



As always, questions are always welcome. However, be patient. This Alabama Extension change is a major one for all of us. We led the Alabama Extension in Total Service Hours for 2023 with a wide margin. With training and our organization’s great Extension Master Gardeners, we accomplish that feat again next year.

2024 AMGA State Conference Agenda

“Paradise Found”

April 22-24—Daphne Civic Center

Daphne, Alabama

Monday, April 22

10:30 am-5:00 pm Registration

11:00 am-7:00 pm Silent Auction and Vendors

Pre-Conference Tours Attendees must be pre-registered for all tours.
Tour times vary. Directions will be available at registration.

Guided Tours

Morning Birding at Village Point Park in Daphne

Two sessions: 7:00 am and 9:00 am

The Barn at Hope Farms “Farm to Table”

Three sessions: 12:00 pm, 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm

The Pavilion at The Nest

Three sessions: 12:00 pm, 1:30 pm and 3:00 pm

Weeks Bay Boat Tour

Two sessions: 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm



(Continued on page 4)

2024 AMGA State Conference Agenda (continued)

Graham Creek Pitcher Plant Bog

Two sessions: 12:00 pm and 3:00 pm

Home Garden Tours—tour at your leisure between 12:30 and 4:30 pm

Branch Home Garden Tour—The Giving Garden

Turner Home Garden Tour—Historic Home and Gardens

12:00 pm-Preconference Workshops—Session start times vary.

All workshops will be held at the Daphne Civic Center Complex. You must be pre-registered and pre-paid to attend.

Kokedama by Devonne Ellis and Judy Gobble

Literally means “moss ball” in English, you will discover and learn the Japanese art of Kokedama and create your very own arrangement.

Two sessions: 12:00 noon and 1:30 pm \$30

Build a Greenhouse Before Your Eyes

Our own BCMG team will show you how easy it is to build a small backyard greenhouse.

Two sessions: 1:00 pm and 2:30 pm \$25

DIY Drip Irrigation by Jack LeCroy

Jack is the Mobile County extension agent, and he will lead us through a hands-on activity to assemble drip irrigation for our own gardens.

Two sessions: 1:00 pm and 2:30 pm \$25

Build a Bee Box by Becky Estes

Attract non-aggressive solitary bees to your garden with this simple-build habitat.

Two sessions: 3:00 pm and 4:30 pm \$25

Native Alabama Milkweed Monarch Project and Migratory Gardens

by Baldwin County extension agent Carmen Flammini who leads on this research project and will discuss the project, milkweed propagation and culture as well as building a butterfly garden.

One session: 3:30 pm No charge

Monday Evening

5:30-7:00 pm

Welcome Social “Sunset in Paradise”

Cash Bar and Hors d’oeuvres

Tuesday, April 23

Breakfast

On your own

7:30 am-5:00 pm

Vendors and Silent Auction

8:00 am-5:00 pm

Registration and Concierge
“How may we help you?”

8:30 am

Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:00 am-10:00 am

Session 1 John Bowen “*The Lifelong Gardener*”

10:00 am-10:15 am

Break

(Continued on page 5)

2024 AMGA State Conference Agenda (continued)

10:15 am-11:15 am	Session 2 Breakout Sessions Concurrent: A. Jeremy Pickens - <i>Greenhouse Basics for Profitability</i> B. Yvette Gautreaux Cutrer - <i>Soil Polymers</i> C. Peggy Snipes - <i>Forest Finds to Floral Devine</i> D. Ann Luther & Terry Henry - <i>Vertical Gardening</i> E. Dr. John Bowen – <i>Adaptive Tools</i>
11:30 am-1:15 pm	Lunch and Business Meeting
1:30 pm-2:30 pm	Session 3 Breakout Sessions Concurrent: A. Chris Francis - <i>Gardening Under Trees</i> B. Catherine Arensburg - <i>The Outdoor Room</i> C. Peggy Snipes—Repeat - <i>Forest Finds to Floral Devine</i> D. Jenny Resmondo - <i>Oh! My Aching Back</i> E. Dr. John Bowen—Repeat - <i>Adaptive Tools</i>
2:30 pm-3:00 pm	Break
3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Session 4 Breakout Sessions Concurrent: A. Catherine Arensburg—Repeat - <i>The Outdoor Room</i> B. Jenny Resmondo—Repeat - <i>Oh! My Aching Back</i> C. Yvette Gautreaux Cutrer -Repeat- <i>Soil Polymers</i> D. Chris Francis—Repeat - <i>Gardening Under Trees</i> E. Ann Luther & Terry Henry—Repeat - <i>Vertical Gardening</i>
5:30 pm	Vendors close and bidding ends for Silent Auction
5:30 pm	“Paradise Found” Social and cash bar
6:00 pm	Dinner/Awards
	Session 5 Steven Chamblee <i>“Peace, Love and Milagros: Lessons from the Road”</i>
Wednesday, April 24	
Breakfast	On your own
9:00 am-10:00 am	Session 6 Dr. David Williams <i>“The Power of Plants: The Effect on Human Health and Well Being”</i>
10:00 am-11:00 am	BCMG Skit Wrap up and closing remarks
11:00 am -12:00 pm	Pay/Pick up Silent Auction Pick up door prizes



Christmas Awards Luncheon Pictures



Bronze Star—100 Hours

L-R: Keith Cardwell, Mickey Ezell, Ken Cooper, and Dolores Hammack



Silver Star—300 Hours

L-R: Sheryl Bly and Teri Shoemaker (not pictured) Kim Musson



Gold Badge—1000 Hours

L-R: Terri Wallace, Zetty Bauer, Fran Posey-Eversole, Elsie Reed and Don Richerson



Gold Star—500 Hours

L-R: Lydia Chan and Marilyn Renaudette



Amber Star—2,000 Hours

Sharon Smith (not pictured) Nancy Mason and Kay Smith



Sapphire Star—3,000 Hours

Joni Euler (not pictured) Mary Hamilton



Ruby Star—4,000 Hours

L-R: Mary Calvin and Loree Hadley

(Continued on page 7)



Christmas Awards Luncheon Pictures (continued)



Garnet Ribbon Award—20,000 Hours AND Advanced Master Gardener Certificate
Myra Lassere



Busy Bee Awards were presented by Mary Calvin to the outgoing Board— Eileen Huisman, Terri Wallace, Tansy Waldron, Cassandra Rabren, Joni Euler, Anita O'Connor, Charlotte Hamm, Gina Blakeman, Beth Robinson, Don Richerson, Elmer Vick, and Lydia Chan



Honorary Master Gardener Award
Jean Vick



Raffle Ticket Sales!
Marta Stauts and Sharon Smith



Thank You to our Kitchen Crew!
L-R: Maria Curow, Judi Smith, Gina Blakeman, Beth Robinson, and Zetty Bauer

(Continued on page 8)



Christmas Awards Luncheon Pictures (continued)



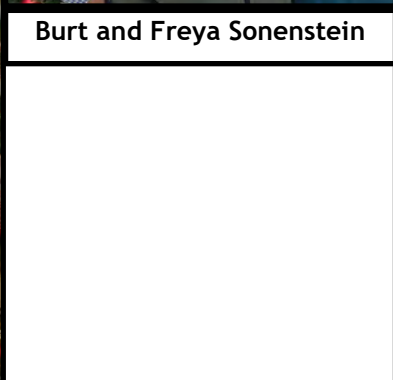
Carl and Gayle Floyd



Burt and Freya Sonenstein



Jim and Pat Greer



George and Phyllis Holman and Paula Pritchett with Shovel donated for silent auction



Loree Hadley



Loraine Delahanty and Joyce Hewitt



Judi Smith and Brenda Montgomery



Zetty Bauer, Wanda Martin and Linda Bizzell



Tanys Waldron and Mary Calvin



Christmas Awards Luncheon Pictures (continued)



Outgoing President, Mary Calvin was presented with a gift from the Board, Flowers, and a personal gift from new President, Don Richerson



Changing of the Guard – Your 2024 BCMG Board



2023 Wayne de la Rua Award



The 2023 Wayne de la Rua Award was presented to Judi Smith



(Continued on page 10)



2023 Wayne de la Rua Award (continued)



Suzanne de la Rua Cale, daughter of Wayne de la Rua, joined Sam Andrews in presenting the Wayne de la Rua Award to Judi Smith



Previous Wayne de la Rua Award Winners with Suzanne de la Rua Cale and this year's winner, Judi Smith



Mary Calvin, Suzanne de la Rua Cale, Norman Cale, and Moe Nation



Meeting Minutes by Terri Wallace

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 a.m. Seventy-seven members were present.

Mary welcomed all the MGs and guests, including Suzanne de la Rua Cale, and her husband, Norman, and the staff from ACES.

Minutes of the November 8, 2023 meeting were approved following a motion by Gina Blakeman, seconded by Wanda Martin.

Treasurer's report – Cassandra Rabren: Cassandra thanked everyone for a great year and said she has enjoyed working with everyone. The Regions account has a balance of \$26,806.00, and the CD of \$20,000.00 continues to accrue interest. With approximately \$1,500.00 designated as pre-paid 2024 dues, the total balance is \$45,337.15. Cassandra asked that everyone get their 2024 dues money turned in. If you cannot remember if you have paid, ask her and she will let you know.

Intern Class – Anita O'Connor: Anita said the 2024 interns and their mentors have been matched. She will know the exact number of interns by January. She will have a brief meeting with the mentors following today's luncheon.

AMGA 2024 Conference – Sandra Stepan: Sandy displayed a shovel donated for the Silent Auction by Frieda Romanchuk, a current BCMG member now living in Florida. Any member is welcome to donate an item for the Silent Auction. Sandy said that fundraising is now going well with \$15,000.00 being acquired and more being promised. Registration opens January 15, 2024 once everything is approved by AMGA. An email will be sent to the membership the first part of January with a sneak peek of classes and programs.

Wayne de la Rua Award – Sam Andrews: Sam explained the award and its history. Mr. de la Rua's daughter, Suzanne, was present to present the award. The winner was Judi Smith, who has been our Kitchen Coordinator for many years. Judi has been at classes, meetings, and anywhere else refreshments have been needed/requested. She also has a love of plants and specializes in trying to grow and share non-native plants. Judi thanked everyone for the award and said BCMG has been her family; she enjoys providing her services and will treasure the award. All previous award winners that were present were photographed with Suzanne.

A year in review video for 2023 was shown. Loree Hadley and Tanys Waldron did an amazing job!

Julian Walthall said the blessing, and the meal was enjoyed.

Mary thanked the luncheon committee for their hard work in setting up everything for today. Mary also recognized the 2023 intern class.

Awards - Sam Andrews: Sam explained that an Honorary MG award is given to those who provide invaluable assistance to the group. Once nominated, the Board of BCMG and ACES extension agent Carmen Flammini must approve the nomination. Baldwin County MGs are the only group in the state to have Honorary MGs. Jean Vick, wife of Elmer, was named an Honorary Master Gardener receiving a badge and apron. Jean has assisted Elmer and BCMG in many projects over the years. She is always cheerful and is a hands-on worker. Sam noted that Mike McQueen and Fred Nation are State Honorary Master Gardeners.

Sam asked that anyone receiving a new star please turn in their old one for reuse to keep expenses down. He is amazed and proud of the number of hours our group volunteers each year.

Carmen Flammini said she appreciates everything we do and is very proud of us.

Awards were given to:

Liz Cobb – Transfer from another MG group (not present).

(Continued on page 12)



Meeting Minutes by Terri Wallace (continued)

White badge and bronze star for 100 hours – Keith Cardwell, Ken Cooper, Mickey Ezell, Tiffany Griffin, Dolores Hammack, and Patty Redmond.

Silver star for 300 hours – Sheryl Bly, Kim Musson (not present) and Teri Shoemaker.

Gold star for 500 hours – Lydia Chan and Marilyn Renaudette.

Gold Badge for 1,000 hours – Zetty Bauer, Fran Posey-Eversole, Elsie Reed, Don Richerson, and Terri Wallace. The badges were not available and will be received at the January 2024 general meeting.

Amber Star for 2,000 hours – Nancy Mason (not present), Kay Smith (not present), and Sharon Smith.

Sapphire Star for 3,000 hours – Joni Euler and Mary Hamilton (not present).

Ruby Star for 4,000 hours – Mary Calvin and Loree Hadley.

Garnet Ribbon Award for 20,000 hours – Myra Lassere. In a separate honor, Myra earned her Advanced Master Gardener certificate after meeting the difficult Alabama Extension Service requirements.

Mary presented Busy Bee Awards to the outgoing board – Don Richerson, Joni Euler, Lydia Chan, Terri Wallace, Cassandra Rabren, Charlotte Hamm, Beth Robinson, Gina Blakeman, Anita O'Connor, Eileen Huisman, Tanys Waldron, and Elmer Vick.



The 2024 Board was then installed – Don Richerson, Ed Pickle (not present), Mary Calvin, Lydia Chan, Pat Greer, Cassandra Rabren, Barb Comstock, Kay Heinrich, Gail Hand, Anita O'Connor, Eileen Huisman, Charlotte Hamm, Brenda Montgomery, and Elmer Vick.

Mary presented the gavel to Don Richerson, incoming President. Don presented Mary with a gift from the board, flowers, and a personal gift from himself. Don thanked Mary for being a wonderful mentor. He said he looks forward to getting more cooperation between BCMG and MCMG. A joint meeting will be held after the AMGA 2024 conference so that we can share ideas and become better MGs. Don would also like to increase the fellowship with the ACES personnel. He thanked everyone who has volunteered to help him. His goal is for the organization to have fun and enjoy themselves.

A raffle was held, and centerpieces were given to the person in the lucky chair at each table.

After a motion by Terri Wallace, seconded by Paula Pritchett, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.



The January Meeting Time will be at 8:30 a.m. for Social and 9:00 a.m. for the Meeting and Speaker!!!





Mark Your Calendar

January 1, 2024	Begin New Hours System
January 10, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Elmer Vick, <i>How to Build a Greenhouse Demonstration</i> , 8:30 a.m. Social, 9:00 a.m. Meeting and Speaker
January 11, 2024	Intern/Mentor Breakfast, Research Station, Hwy. 104
January 18, 2024	Intern Class Begins
January 24-26, 2024	Gulf States Horticultural Expo, Mobile Convention Center. See link for details: https://www.gshe.org
January 27, 2024	National Seed Swap Day, Gulf Shores Zoo, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
January 29, 2024	Monthly Extension-MG Update Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Register at https://auburn.zoom.us/j/91788107456
February 6, 2024	TUESDAY BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
February 14, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Fred Bassett, <i>Hummingbirds</i>
February 26, 2024	Monthly Extension-MG Update Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Register at https://auburn.zoom.us/j/91788107456
March 5, 2024	Tuesdays with Master Gardeners, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cost: \$5.00
March 6, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
March 12, 2024	Tuesdays with Master Gardeners, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cost: \$5.00
March 13, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
March 19, 2024	Tuesdays with Master Gardeners, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cost: \$5.00
March 26, 2024	Tuesdays with Master Gardeners, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cost: \$5.00
March 27, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting (“April meeting”), Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
April 1-3, 2024	Spring Plant Sale Set-up Day, Weeks Bay Reserve, 9:00 a.m.
April 4-6, 2024	BCMG Spring Plant Sale, Weeks Bay Reserve, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
April 10, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Leslie Gahagan from Graham Creek Nature Preserve
April 22-24, 2024	AMGA State Conference, “Paradise Found”, Daphne Civic Center
May 1, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
May 8, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
June 5, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
June 12, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD

Grass Roots is compiled and edited by Lynn Andrews, assisted by Sam Andrews. Pictures courtesy of Loree Hadley, Lynn Andrews, and Norman Cale. The newsletter is available before the monthly general meeting on our website: www.baldwinmastergardeners.com.

Submission of articles, items of interest, photos of BCMG events, garden tips, garden jokes, etc. are greatly encouraged and appreciated. Articles should be submitted in Microsoft Word format, PDF or, if necessary, “rich text format” (*.rtf). **Pictures should be JPG’s at least 1 MB in size. Articles and pictures must be submitted by the 20th of the month.** Please attach, not “embed”, photos into your email. Send to grassrootsnews@gmail.com.

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Baldwin County Master Gardeners
c/o Baldwin County Extension Office
302-A Byrne Street
Bay Minette, AL 36506



Next meeting: WEDNESDAY, January 10, 2024
NOTE CHANGE OF TIME FOR JANUARY MEETING!!!

Speaker: Elmer Vick
Topic: “How to Build a Greenhouse Demonstration”

Social begins at **8:30 a.m.**
Meeting: **9:00 a.m.**

Reminder: Submissions for the newsletter are due by the 20th of the month.