



March 2024
Volume XXXII Issue III



NEWSLETTER OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

www.baldwinmastergardeners.com

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President's Notes by Don Richerson

I think we all have fond memories of Spring, and I bet they are all different. I was relaxing at home last week while it was cold and raining outside. A daydream took me to Miss Teeny Smith's home in Stockton, Alabama. It was mid-March in 1963. The world was so much simpler then.

As Daddy's pickup lurched and chugged down her lane, the dried muddy clumps of dirt on the bumper were being jarred off their spots and to us kids in the late afternoon, it seemed as if we were running a bombing run down the Smith Lane as the clods hit the roadway and burst into dust clouds. We giggled and couldn't wait to see Jerry.

Jerry Smith was a giant of a man at age 34, who's mind was stuck in his preteen years. Jerry had Down's Syndrome. He was fun to play with and could throw the football a mile. On this day, Miss Teeny told us, "He's down in the pump house by the pond." So off we went.

Jerry was never grumpy or abusive, just bigger than us. Today, he was in the pump house, "Lookin' for snakes." Sounded like fun, but we couldn't all get in the small building. I stayed out to walk around the pond while the others

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud
By William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

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President's Notes by Don Richerson (continued)

piled into the 10 X 10 building. I had hardly begun my walk when all heck broke loose in there. It was either an anaconda, a boa constrictor or a rattlesnake, I was told. So, I knew it couldn't have been the Water snake I saw slither into the pond. Of course, Jerry hit his head coming out of the pump house and it was bleeding a little. No problem.

As we slowly made our way around the pond to the creek that filled the pond, I was struck by the daffodils surrounding us. Thousands of blooms and combined with wisteria, an olfactory and visual tour de force. Combine that with the rabbits scampering about, the symphony of the birds and me on the lookout for more anacondas, I acutely remember thinking, "I love Spring!"

And so, it has always been this way. I love Spring. The sun makes my SAD happy. The warmth makes my plants happy and nature is reborn for another season. And for our BCMG, almost countless opportunities for volunteering are available this month and next. This month, *Tuesdays with Master Gardeners*, showcases our brilliant membership and offers many chances for CEUs. Plus, we have slots open for volunteering for the Festival of Flowers at Cathedral Square in mid-March. The Intern Class are getting their sea legs, and we are all working to make our Spring Plant Sale and our AMGA Conference smashing successes. Yes, I miss Jerry, but I still have Spring to remind me of him and all the fond memories of Springs past.

Marion Deane Drummond 2024 Lecture Series by Eileen Huisman

Mobile Botanical Gardens presented the inaugural Marion Deane Drummond 2024 Lecture Series on February 17, 2024. Seven Baldwin County Master Gardeners attended the lecture. This first Presentation was by Mary Palmer Dargan: *Couture Garden Design—May Your Landscape Fit Your Lifestyle Like a Glove*.

We all enjoyed a wonderful box lunch in the Botanical Center, visited with friends, and walked the grounds.

Kathryn Aalto will be the #2 Presenter on March 20th, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Morning and afternoon presentations by Kathryn about her Best Selling Books: *The Natural World of Winnie-The-Pooh: A Walk Through the Forest That Inspired The 100 Acre Wood*, and *Writing Wild: Women Poets, Ramblers, and Mavericks Who Shape How We See the Natural World*.



L-R: Pam Schultz, Eileen Huisman, Joyce Hewitt, Barb Comstock, Julie Cox, Liz Young, and Lydia Chan

2024 AMGA Conference Volunteer Information by Marilyn Mannhard

Many thanks to everyone who has signed up to volunteer for the 2024 Alabama Master Gardener Conference which will be held at the Daphne Civic Center April 22-24. It is going to be the best conference ever, but we will need all hands on deck to make it work. There are still quite a few conference events and times that need to be filled. The names and times of those members and interns who already volunteered have been put into a spreadsheet which will be posted on our website when it is complete. Once that is done, you will be able to see which slots are open and choose accordingly.



Please be aware that if you are not registered for the conference you will not be able to be a volunteer in the rooms where the speakers and workshops are. This restriction also includes the tours, except for the volunteers on the dock for the boat tour. The on-boat volunteer slots are already filled.

When the spreadsheet is posted on the website, we will send out an email with specific directions for signing up. For those unfamiliar, the website is www.baldwinmastergardeners.com. Once on the website, look at the menu and choose **Members Information**. The conference information will be in that section. There is general information about the conference there now, but the spreadsheet is not on there yet because it is still in progress. Hopefully, by the time you read this, it will be on there.

This is going to be a fantastic conference. Paula Pritchett, who is the chairperson for the conference (huge job), the steering committee, and committee chairs have been working on this for three years. We need you to help make it the best state conference ever.

Snack Needs for 2024 AMGA State Conference by Deborah Marriott

Hospitality Committee for Master Gardener Conference—April 22, 23, 24

Judi Smith, Hospitality Committee, Snacks/Refreshments
Deborah Marriott, Hospitality Committee

As you are aware, we are gearing up to host the AMGA State Conference on April 22-24 in Daphne. In order to provide attendees with snacks and refreshments during the meetings, we could use your assistance. One way you might assist is to donate snack items from the list provided below. Please bring your donation to one of the next three monthly meetings—February, March, and/or April. We will have a storage tub clearly labeled for you to place your snack donation.

PREPACKAGED BULK SNACK ITEMS

****Be sure to check the expiration dates****

- Cheese Crackers
- Peanut Butter Crackers
- Single Serving Chips
- Granola/Breakfast Bars
- Fruit Bars/Dried Fruit
- Single Serving Nuts
- Single Serving Cookies
- Single Serving Trail Mix



The April meeting items could include refrigerated cheese/string cheese sticks. Thank you in advance for helping provide snacks and refreshments.



Meet Your 2024 Interns

LYNN BARNES

Karen Rhea White, Mentor

Lynn Barnes, while born in Georgia, has called Fairhope her home for 18 years. Lynn retired from a life of teaching in special education. She now enjoys working at Fairhope Kitchen Store (located in Provisions). Her interests include traveling, reading, knitting, painting, and volunteering at Fairhope United Methodist Church. While on a cruise, she met Anita O'Connor (MG class coordinator). The idea of becoming a Master Gardener was planted. Lynn and her husband, Alan, have been married for almost 50 years. They have two children and two grandchildren. Lynn's favorite plant is the red Zinnia, because as she says, "Bright flowers bring cheer!"



SUE ANN BARNWELL

Julie Cox, Mentor



Sue Barnwell moved to Foley last year with her husband, Gene. Sue says "he cooks like a champ." They have three adult children living in AR, TN and NC. Their grandchildren range in age from 11 to 26. Their oldest grandchild married last year.

Sue previously lived in Nashville, TN where she was a teacher for over 30 years. During her career she has taught in New York, Louisiana, and Tennessee. Her primary area of teaching was elementary and middle school. She eventually became curriculum director of a private school. Sue attends the Foley YMCA and likes to read historical fiction. She is hoping to gain knowledge on growing plants in this area. Her favorite flower is the pansy.

EDWARD BRADSHAW

Mickey Ezell, Mentor

Edward Bradshaw has been interested in biology and botany since grade school. He is looking forward to getting back to those interests in the MG program. After earning a BS in biology from UAH, he was drafted into the Alabama National Guard at the end of the Vietnam war. There he served as a SF medic. After leaving the military, he entered a surgical PA program in Birmingham. Edward had a 41-year career in the field, retiring two years ago. Edward and his wife, Brenda, have been married since 1980. They have two grown sons. They moved to Spanish Cove in Lillian with their RV two years ago. They also have a place in Munda Park, AZ. Edward enjoys the beach, traveling, and local music venues.



JIM FAULKNER

Julian Walthall, Mentor



Jim Faulkner is a lifelong resident of Baldwin County. He has two sons, both of whom proudly serve our country in the military: one is in the US Air Force; the other is full time in the Alabama National Guard. He is a commercial and industrial real estate appraiser for Courtney and Morris Real Estate and works out of their Daphne office. He looks forward to the additional knowledge that he will gain as well as the fellowship that results in volunteer service through being a participant in BCMG. In addition to gardening, Jim's other hobby is sporting clays, and he is an avid reader of history. Jim has a great interest in growing ornamental plants. His favorites are oakleaf hydrangeas and camellias. This interest has led him to want to become a Master Gardener.

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Meet Your 2024 Interns (continued)

TOM FORTNER

Burt Sonnenstein, Mentor

Tom Fortner is originally from Texas. He worked in the newspaper business for five years and later shifted to public relations for university based medical centers in NC, FL and MS. When he retired in 2021, Tom and his wife, Laurilyn, moved to Fairhope from Jackson, MS. Tom and his wife have been married and gardening together for almost 36 years. Tom says that Laurilyn designs, and he does the heavy labor. Last year Tom designed and built a butterfly garden. Tom is interested in eco-friendly, sustainable gardening and wants to learn more in that area. In addition to gardening, Tom is interested in reading, movies, travel, golf, college basketball, pro football, and national politics.



VICKY FRANKS

Terry Delker, Mentor



Vicky Franks is a native of Michigan. Vicky and her physician husband have lived across the country, from Seattle to Tennessee. In 2008, they moved to Theodore, AL. Vicky retired from a career teaching Philosophy at several universities, including University of Colorado and East Tennessee. Vicky has a son and daughter and two grandchildren. Vicky's love of gardening began at an early age when she visited her cousins' farms in Iowa and Minnesota. Vicky has gardened in five different hardiness zones, from 4b to now 9a. She wants to gain more knowledge about vegetable gardening successfully in our zone. Vicky also enjoys music and hopes one day to get back to piano lessons. One of her favorite flowers is the Lilac.

MARGIE GRACE

Marilyn Mannhard, Mentor

Margie Grace moved from Colorado to Gulf Shores with her husband and his parents. In 2007 they bought a house in Gulf Shores. Five years ago, they built a house on the river in Magnolia Springs. They still live in Colorado part time. Margie has been married to Jack for 32 years. She has two sons and twin 8-year-old grandkids. Margie was a money manager with Wells Capital Management; CFA, Fixed Income Portfolio Manager, Managing Director, Wells Capital Management; and Senior Vice President, Director Short Term Account Management, Wells Fargo. Margie enjoys reading, hiking, running, tennis, cooking, and gardening. Margie volunteers at the Magnolia Springs Library and is very active in the Magnolia Springs Garden Club where she serves as treasurer. Margie lives on four acres on the river, and has two decimated acres that she hopes to bring back to its former beauty. Margie's favorite flowers are Daffodils because they remind her of a childhood costume.



ANN LEMIS

Patty Rowland, Mentor



Ann Lemis completed the Master Gardener course in 2008 when she lived in Florida. She entered the Baldwin County MG program for what she calls "a refresh".

Ann and her husband have moved 14 times due to her husband being a hotel executive. They moved to Fairhope in 2017 to be close to their daughter who was moving there. Ann's background is in interior design. She has been involved in 11 mission trips to the country of Georgia. Ann has also headed up a successful rooftop gardening program. In Fairhope, she volunteers with Hope Community Project and Fairhope Cat Coalition.

(Continued on page 6)



Meet Your 2024 Interns (continued)

DEBORAH (DEB) MALLON

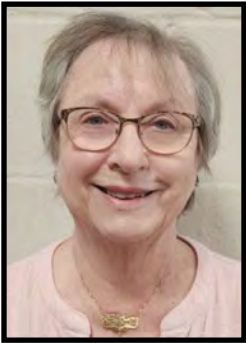
Sharon Smith, Mentor

Deborah Mallon lives in Gulf Shores. She was born in California, and moved to Gulf Shores in 2019 after she retired. Deb is married to Bryan and has 3 children, all guys. She has 5 grandchildren, 2 in Washington state and 3 in Austin, Texas. Deb was a hairdresser for 30 years and retired in 1990. She then worked as office manager for her church. Deb loves gardening and being in the outdoors. She loves playing in the dirt, organic gardening, and growing fruit trees. Deb also loves ministry and is the State Coordinator for Healing Hearts International and a health coach. Deb's favorite plant is the Bougainvillea because of the incredible impact and colors.



MARY MEYER

Barb Comstock, Mentor



Mary was born in Poplarville, MS. She just retired in October after 20 years as Faculty for the USA College of Nursing. Her husband, Tom, is a recently retired Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. Mary grew up helping her mother tend gardens for both food and esthetics. She wishes she had paid more attention to gardening back then. Mary with her husband and son, Josh, has traveled to five continents. Mary has many wonderful memories of the vast array of plants in other countries. When she is caring for her hanging bougainvillea, her mind flashes back to old farm buildings in Kenya covered in bougainvillea like kudzu. Mary has a passion for gardening and put her passion in action by taming a steep lot in Lake Forest with container plants. It won her "Yard of the Year."

BETH MURRAY

Zetty Bauer, Mentor

Beth Murray's friends introduced her and her family to the area 30 years ago, and when their children left the nest, they moved to Gulf Shores. Beth has worked in nursing for 40 years. She is married to Rod, who is a brewer at the Big Beach Brewery in Gulf Shores. She has three children. Lorna, the oldest, lives in Arkansas. Her son, Ian, lives in Gulf Shores, and Brenna lives in South Korea. She has one grandson, Jack, who is 15. Beth enjoys reading, cooking, hiking, and working with the sea turtle program. Her love of gardening and wanting to learn how to garden in this environment are what led her to become a Master Gardener. Her favorite flowers are Zinnias because they are easy to grow.



ROBIN NEWELL

Linda Bizzell, Mentor



Robin Newell and her husband, Dennis, retired to Lillian in 2022. They are originally from Kansas and had visited the gulf coast on vacation for years. Robin was a Library Administrator, and Dennis was a Math and Science teacher. They have a large blended family which includes 5 children and 6 grandchildren. Robin has deep roots in farming, and gardening passions passed down from both of her grandmothers. She is very involved in community service activities including Spanish Cove Garden, Rotary Club, Optimist Club, and Plant and Food Rescue. She has a wide range of knowledge and a desire to share it with others. Robin loves flowers with a long bloom season as well as natives that grow well in our area. She is very excited to begin her next adventure into Master Gardeners.

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Meet Your 2024 Interns

TIFFANY RAMEY

Liz Wojtaszek, Mentor

Tiffany Ramey grew up in Alexandria, AL on an Exotic Animal Farm. She moved to Foley in 1999 and is a graduate of Gulf Shores High School. Tiffany lives with her 15 year old daughter and two dogs. Her daughter attends Gulf Shores High School. Tiffany's mother and sister also reside in Foley. Tiffany currently works in the food and beverage industry at the Tides Hotel in Orange Beach. She teaches hydroponics to children at schools in the area. She is interested in cooking, catering, kayaking, paddleboarding, camping; and she loves the mountains. Tiffany was inspired to become a Master Gardener to increase her knowledge of growing edible plants; fruits and vegetables. She loves gardening and growing food and would like to deepen her knowledge and learn the science behind growing. Her favorite plant is the Staghorn Fern—because she cannot get them to grow—it's a challenge for her!



DIANA RODGERS

Connie Gillespie, Mentor



Diana Rodgers and her husband, Jim, sold their horse farm and moved to Daphne from Bibb County, Georgia in March, 2022. She and her husband had visited this area and really liked it. She has been in education for 29 years as a teacher, principal, and eventually Assistant Superintendent of the Bibb County School System. Diana has an artistic bend enjoying fabric art painting and carpentry. She also enjoys reading, genealogy, and playing with her new dog, Finn. She has a daughter and 2 grandsons in Denver, Colorado. She has wanted to take this class for 45 to 50 years, with a history of growing vegetables in Georgia. She loves red maples, Gerber daisies, and **most any cut flower.**

SHANNON RUSSELL

Karon Pennington, Mentor

Shannon Russell grew up in Dothan, AL and often visits her mother there. Her mother is 87 years old and still gardening. Shannon and her husband moved to Old Daphne near McMillan Bluff three years ago from Bethesda, MD. She has been actively involved in environmental advocacy and conservation for many years. Her introduction to Master Gardeners was through working with Julian Walthall on the restoration of McMillan Bluff.

Shannon also works on landscaping projects at her church. In addition to gardening, Shannon enjoys cycling, kayaking, and walking. Her favorite flower is Ansonia Blue Star.



KIM SCASNY

Eileen Huisman, Mentor



Kim Scasny and her husband moved to Gulf Shores to be closer to her mother. They then moved to her mother's house in Foley. Kim served in the U.S. Air Force as a meteorologist. After the Air Force, she worked for the National Weather Service as a meteorologist/hydrologist. Kim also worked as a science educator for grades from K-8 and college level. Kim is married to Kevin, who is retired from the Air Force. He is also a meteorologist and does all of the hardscaping in their yard. She has a son, Michael, and a daughter, Anna. Kim enjoys walking on the beach, traveling, and quilting. She volunteers with Save The Beach. Kim was a Master Gardener in Pennsylvania and Georgia. Her father was a Master Gardener in Baldwin County, and she hopes to honor his devotion to the community. Kim's favorite flowers are native azaleas which remind her of spring, and daffodils which remind her of her father who taught her to garden.

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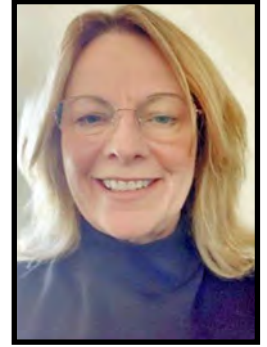


Meet Your 2024 Interns (continued)

NANCY SCHLACK

Mentor: Joyce Hewitt

Nancy Schlack and her husband retired and moved to Foley in 2022. They have been married for 35 years and previously lived near Chicago, Illinois and later Michigan. Nancy is from a family of farmers and has always had an interest in gardening, but due to her demanding job as an account manager in the audio-visual industry, she did not have the time to pursue it. Nancy and her husband are avid fishers and love being active. She does a lot of walking, hiking, cooking, and caring for her two dogs. Her favorite plant is a saucer magnolia. She has already planted one in her new home.



SARA SEMMES

Susan Mattingly, Mentor

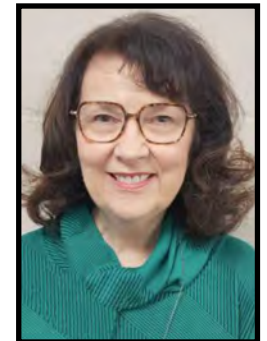


Sara Semmes lives in Fairhope, Alabama. Sara is an Army brat that grew up mainly in the Anniston, Alabama area. Sara and her husband, Tom, moved to this area after they retired. Sara started her career as an accountant, but switched to law. She was in practice with her husband in Anniston. Sara has two children. Her son has a local law firm, and her daughter lives in Colorado. She has 2 grandsons and 2 granddaughters. Sara is very busy in the community. She loves sewing, knitting, beading, theater, and walking. Both her parents were raised on farms, and Sara was inspired to take the Master Gardener course by her father who loved to backyard garden. She learned a lot from him while helping in the yard. She also worked as her grandmother's garden helper. Roses are her favorite flowers because they are vivid in her life memories and celebrations.

GILDA UNDERWOOD

Charlotte Hamm, Mentor

Gilda Underwood is my neighbor and friend. She is also one of those rare folks who grew up in Baldwin County. She attended Robertsdale High School, and married a local boy. Gilda and Kyle have no grandchildren, but have one unmarried son who lives in Arkansas. Their career years have taken them all over the country, but they came here from Arkansas two years ago to retire. At 17, her teacher recommended her for a job with Schmieding Produce, and Gilda has spent her entire career with the company. She started out making money for them, and now she still works part-time for the Schmieding Foundation giving away their money. She enjoys reading and learning new things. She once took a class on horses and healing, because the foundation was making a donation to that cause, and she was fascinated how children could be healed with horse therapy. That learning of new things was something she wanted to do in retirement. Having lived in other parts of the country, she came to BCMG to learn to grow here. Gilda has no one favorite flower—she plans to learn about them all!





2024 March Spring Workshops “Tuesdays with Master Gardeners”

\$5.00 per evening

Cash/Checks only,
payable at the door

Proceeds Benefit
BCMG Scholarship
Fund

**Master Gardener
Plant Sale**

**April 4,5,6
Thur. Fri. Sat.
9 am - 4 pm**

**Weeks Bay
Reserve**

Hwy 98

**GARDENING
QUESTIONS?**

Call our Helpline

1-877-252-4769

or

www.aces.edu

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------|--|-----------------|
| March 5 | 6:00 pm | <i>Growing “John Kitch” Tomatoes</i> | Elmer Vick |
| | 6:30 pm | <i>Composting 101</i> | Carmen Flammini |
| | 7:15 pm | <i>Easy Care Gardening</i> | Wanda Martin |

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|--|---------------|
| March 12 | 6:00 pm | <i>Growing Vegetables</i> | James Miles |
| | 7:00 pm | <i>Soil Tests & Amendments for Lawns & Gardens</i> | Barb Comstock |

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|---|------------|
| March 19 | 6:00 pm | <i>The Importance of Using Native Plants in Your Garden</i> | Gena Todia |
| | 7:00 pm | <i>Growing Citrus & Blueberries in South Alabama</i> | Jack Bush |

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|---|-----------------|
| March 26 | 6:00 pm | <i>Growing African Violets</i> | Carolyn Lippold |
| | 7:00 pm | <i>Container Gardening with Flowers & Herbs</i> | Sharon Smith |
| | 7:30 pm | <i>Plant Picks for your Garden</i> | Dolores Hammack |

Time: 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Place: Gulf Coast Research & Extension Center
8300 Highway 104, Fairhope, AL 36532
(1/2 mile east of Hwy 98)

For More Information: (251) 550-6464

*** Light refreshments will be served ***

www.baldwinmastergardeners.com

Facebook: Baldwin County Master Gardeners



National Seed Swap Day by Eileen Huisman

The Master Gardeners enjoyed once again helping out with the community Seed Swap Day at the zoo.

The day started out rainy and cold. We had two Master Gardeners with presentations, and one intern with her fantastic noodle making demonstration. She made homemade noodles all day!!!

The day ended with a little sunshine and the birds demanding attention from another Master Gardener as she was flying by to catch up with the departing group. She approached us in tears as to what to do? The Sun was out and they needed her. I convinced her to “just follow me home and have a lemon drop martini”, she could let the birds enjoy the limited sunshine that was left. She dried her tears and said OK. I didn’t tell her that I needed a recipe and a couple of glasses. The Sun was Shining , the Birds were happy, and the tears were gone. Barbara Comstock was a happy Master Gardener. She didn’t even use her GPS to keep up!!! Im not sure she even liked the martini. But she wasn’t crying!!!!



Robin Newell making homemade noodles.



Wanda Martin—presentation on “The Right Plant in the Right Place” and Charlotte Hamm on “Great Landscaping Techniques”



**First Row: Marta Stauts, Robin Newell, Sheryl Bly, Susan Mattingly
Standing: Beth Murray, Karon Pennington, Eileen Huisman, Charlotte Hamm, Sharon Smith, Terri Shoemaker, Mary Calvin, and Ed Bradshaw**



FAME Landscaping Project by Maureen Krison

Spring is the time for new growth, and the perfect time for Master Gardeners to partner with the AU Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center located on Highway 104 in Fairhope for a landscaping “makeover”! Our vision is to enhance our meeting and seminar space in ways that are Functional, Appealing, Maintainable, and Educational (i.e. Project FAME).

We plan to positively impact the entrances to the front and side doors of the building via bed design, micro irrigation, native plant selections, a demonstration table/potting bench and stadium steps installation, and a rain garden.

We can accomplish this goal with a budget of \$4,000.00 (still to be funded, but with a generous, anonymous contribution to help us begin this work).

All ideas, input, contributions, and labor are welcome! We will soon be announcing a MG work day to implement this landscaping. Please contact Maureen Krison, Dolores Hammack, or Carmen Flammini to be a part of this exciting spring initiative!



Build A Greenhouse by Charlotte Hamm

Be sure to join us for the March general membership meeting on March 13, for a sneak preview of *“Build a Greenhouse Before Your Eyes”*. Our own Elmer Vick and team of fellow Master Gardeners, Sheryl Bly, Fran Posey-Eversole, Mickey Ezell, Kay Heinrich, Terri Wallace, and Gary Wallace, will be presenting this demonstration as one of the pre-conference workshops here in Daphne, April 22-24, for the AMGA Conference *“Paradise Found.”*

Long-time Baldwin County Master Gardeners know Elmer for his faithful service to the organization in so many ways. He currently serves on the Board as project coordinator interfacing with those groups seeking Master Gardener assistance with specific gardening projects. He coordinates and oversees our own greenhouse repair and enhancement projects. When there is a need, Elmer jumps right in to lend a hand.

A lifelong resident of Baldwin County, he is retired from a career as an AC/Refrigeration instructor with South Baldwin Center for Technology and also retired from owning his own AC/Refrigeration business. As a 2015 MG intern he developed a close relationship with his mentor, John Kitch. When John died of cancer, Elmer chose to honor his mentor by saving the seed and growing the climate-adapted tomato that John had perfected. And, of course, he needed a greenhouse. A rather impulsive buy from a roadside vendor allowed Elmer to expand his tomato growing. It is an endeavor that continues to expand as he now offers John Kitch tomatoes for sale to both BCMG, and to the public, at our Spring Workshops. All proceeds go to the cancer center in memory of John Kitch.



BCMGs Marta Stauts, Wanda Martin, Charlotte Hamm, and Sharon Smith attended the Pensacola Federation of Garden Clubs 2024 Educational Series Seminar *“For the Love of Gardening”* in Pensacola on February 13, 2024.

March Birthdays



3-1	Mike White
3-3	Terri Wallace
3-4	Joyce Wheeler
3-11	Burt Sonenstein
3-11	Verna Thwaites
3-12	Jack LeCroy
3-13	Kay Smith
3-19	Freya Sonenstein
3-21	Gerry Lester
3-27	Julian Walthall

Life...is all about the Journey.



Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer

Don Richerson called the meeting to order at 10 AM. There were 91 attendees at the meeting today. Four of these attendees were guests – Ann McLaurin, Frank Fogerty, Tom Bellinger, and Paul and DJ Vana Moreno.

Don then asked if the Past Presidents and Past WDLR Awards Members would stand. Past Presidents attending today are Mary Calvin, Julian Walthall, Tanys Waldron, Paula Pritchett, and Gordon Cooper. Wayne de la Rua Award members today are Pat Greer, Judi Smith, Moe Nation, Loree Hadley, Lynn Andrews, Julian Walthall, Paula Pritchett, and Tanys Waldron.

Brenda Montgomery then introduced our speaker for today. Fred Bassett will be talking to us on Southeastern Hummingbirds. Fred is a Certified Bird Bander and has been working with birds for 25 years in Alabama and Florida. He has banded over 30,000 Hummingbirds from Miami to Alaska. Hummingbirds are his first love. He considers himself the “son” of Bob Sargent whose life was also focused on Hummingbirds. He is a part of the Banding Coalition of America, along with Emma Rhodes. You can look for more information on his website—hummingbirdresearch.net. Fred then showed various feeders for hummingbirds and gave us the formula of four parts water to one part sugar as the recipe for your hummingbird feeders. Use water right from the tap, and white sugar only. Hummingbirds use this sugar water for energy to go after bugs, which are their primary diet. Please change the sugar water in your feeders every 2-3 days, or one time per week when temperatures are below 80 degrees. Clean your feeders by soaking them for 15-20 minutes in bleach water.



Brenda Montgomery, Fred Bassett, and Charlotte Hamm

Fred then showed us the difference in the male and female ruby throat hummingbird, and explained their color changes throughout the seasons. Most hummingbirds go to the tropics for the winter. The few that we can see in the winter in our area have mostly come from the North, i.e. the Yankee birds want to stay in Alabama. Hummingbirds will again be in our area in early March and generally stay through May. Hummingbird nests are

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Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer (continued)

made of moss or lichen with spider webs and are about the size of a quarter. There are usually only 2 eggs in a nest at a time, with some hummingbirds raising as many as three sets per season. She sits on her eggs 14-17 days before the eggs hatch, and the baby hummingbirds fledge in 17-21 days. Hummingbirds are capable of traveling thousands of miles, and routinely fly long migration routes.

Fred encourages us to leave our feeders up all winter for those birds who come from the northwest to our area rather than travel to the tropics. We can see Rufus, Black Chinned, Buff Bellied, Anna's, Costa's, Magnificent, White Eared, Mexican White Eared, and Green breasted Mango Hummingbirds coming through in winter. Every bird that is banded is in a data base.

After a 15-minute break, the meeting resumed at 11:20 AM.

Gail Hand made a motion to approve the minutes as published in *Grass Roots* with a second by Gina Blakeman. Minutes of the January 2024 Meeting were approved as published.

Cassandra Rabren gave the Treasurers Report. We have \$27,543.11 in checking and a \$20,495.34 CD. Membership dues total \$3,650 for 177 Active Members. Loree Hadley had sent an all-member email asking for address corrections and gave a reminder to pay your dues. Please be assured this email was not just for YOU. The 2024 -Pictorial Directories are on the back table for members.

Anita O'Connor reported that everything is fabulous with the new Intern Class. She is sure they will make an impact on the club.

Carmen Flammini, our Regional Extension Agent, reminded us that it is very, very important for us all to look at her email regarding our need to sign the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) report. These are due by February 29th, and are needed before you can enter hours on the new hours form. She will give an overview of the new reporting system at the end of the meeting today. Carmen also reported that on the 2nd Saturday of each month, we are welcome to come to the Foley Farmers Market to help acquaint their customers in identifying, cooking, and using their products they are selling. There is a sign-up sheet in the back for this Saturday's event from 8 AM until noon.

Eileen Huisman went over the Arbor Day events. Her sign-up sheets are on the back table. There will also be a Plant Swap in the Bay Minette Library on May 2nd that will need our help. Tuesday night and Plant Sale flyers are on the back table.

Dolores Hammack reported that plants for the Plant Sale to be held on April 4, 5 & 6 are doing well. She needs volunteers to begin working the Sunday before the sale. There will be more to be reported at the March meeting.

Tanys Waldron reported that the Tuesday Nights with Master Gardeners dates are on the bottom of the Plant Sale flyer. She will email a list of speakers. Our first speaker will again be Elmer Vick who will also have some tomato plants for sale. The last speaker will be Dolores Hammack who will have Plant Sale information and some plants for our review.



Robin Newell handing out directories to Kay Heinrich.

(Continued on page 14)



Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer (continued)

Paula Pritchett reported that there are already 275 people signed up for the AMGA Conference. They have already taken in enough funds to cover their budget; however, Ed Pickle reminded us it is still important to keep our expenses down. There is still a need for snacks and volunteers. We need all hands-on deck for volunteers. You can work in some areas without registering. Some volunteer activities are working the registration desk, helping with the Silent Auction, Unloading and Set Up, and clearing tables. Julian Walthall asked if anyone knows a certified bartender that we could use at the conference. Let him know. We need a professional for our Liquor license.

Gail Hand made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second by Julian Walthall. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

Carmen Flammini stayed to give a report on the new hours system. Go onto the Baldwin County Master Gardeners Web Site and log into the volunteer hours report page. Sign-up is the same as previous years. On this page, first choose My Page and shows the MOU sign-up sheet, if you still need to sign this. She will do a recount by February 26th and send out a second email to those still needing to sign the MOU.

She then went to the volunteer site. At the top are the pages for both 2023 and 2024 hours. 2023 hours can still be entered—until February 29th. The 2024 page shows major entries. CEUs is on another icon from volunteer hours. She went over several areas on each subject within this form. She will send an email to all members with the questions asked today.

Carmen's report ended at 12:45 PM.



Quilt Donation for AMGA Conference by Barb Comstock

For my birthday in January, I received a long box from Iowa City. It was from my much loved older sister, Pamela Ehrhardt, otherwise known to our family as the “Queen Bee”. She has spun, woven, and sewn textiles since her high school days.

As a student at the University of Minnesota, she created a joint studies program which is now a full major for Physiology. She served as a nurse and later a hospice nurse. Her husband, Jim, was instrumental in designing and building the first MRI machines in Berkeley, California. He and their two sons supported her many creative endeavors, but in particular, quilting. Pamela tried her hand at many creative arts, finally developing a company designing and marketing quilt kits with heavy Japanese influence sold in the U.S. and Japan. Pamela has created, displayed, and won awards for her many creative, unique quilts.

When I opened the birthday package, I found a large, colorful quilt, approximately 3' x 4'. I immediately called her, thanking her and praising her for its beauty and uniqueness, then asked, “What am I supposed to do with this?”

Pamela said she knew how much being a Master Gardener meant to me. She wanted me to offer the quilt in my name for the silent auction at the State Conference. I was overwhelmed by her generosity. Once you see the quilt in person you will understand how awesome this gift is!



Barb Comstock and Carmen Flammini holding quilt donated to the State Conference by Pamela Ehrhardt

Baldwin County Master Gardeners

**2024 Spring Plant
Sale**

**April 4, 5, & 6
Thurs-Fri-Sat 9-4**



**Master
Gardener Series**

FEATURING
MARILYN MANNHARD

"PLANTING YOUR SPRING/SUMMER
GARDEN"

March 28, 2024
11:00AM-12:00PM
Giddens Conference Center

Radish Jean





Mark Your Calendar

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 9, 2024	Arbor Day, Daphne Civic Center Complex, 8:00 a.m.– Volunteers: 7:30 a.m., Coord. Gary Wallace
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, Elmer Vick, <u><i>How to Build A Greenhouse Demonstration</i></u>
March 15-16, 2024	Mobile Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale, <u><i>Plantasia!</i></u> , 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
March 19, 2024	Tuesdays with Master Gardeners, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cost: \$5.00
March 20, 2024	Marion Deane Drummond Lecture Series, Mobile Botanical Garden, Kathryn Aalto, <u><i>The Natural World of Winnie The Pooh and Writing Wild</i></u> , 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
March 25, 2024	Monthly Extension MG Update Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Mallory Kelley and Dr. Jim Jacobi, <u><i>Helpline Questions</i></u> . Register at https://auburn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qduvoqzwoEtdKk7yjuUNvZ4e4WCmulfA
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.
March 28, 2024	Master Gardener Series, Giddens Conference Room, Fairhope Library, Marilyn Mannhard, <u><i>Planting Your Spring/Summer Garden</i></u> , 11:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon
April 1-3, 2024	BCMG Spring Plant Sale Set-up Days, 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, <u><i>Paradise Found</i></u> , Daphne Civic Center
April 29, 2024	Monthly Extension MG Update Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Mallory Kelley and Lunch & Learn Programs in Central Alabama, (presenters TBD), Register at https://auburn.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0qduvoqzwoEtdKk7yjuUNvZ4e4WCmulfA
May 1, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
May 2, 2024	Plant Swap, Bay Minette Library
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

Grass Roots is compiled and edited by Lynn Andrews, assisted by Sam Andrews. Pictures courtesy of Loree Hadley, Eileen Huisman, and Sharon Smith. 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, March 13, 2024

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

Social begins at **9:30 a.m.**
Meeting: **10:00 a.m.**

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