



May 2024  
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[www.baldwinmastergardeners.com](http://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*

All weeks are not the same. As I sit on the deck slowly sipping my tea, having enjoyed a full night of sleep, the reality of the 2024 AMGA Conference being over is almost exhilarating. In fact, the BCMG has had an exhilarating and exhausting week of hard work, wonderful fellowship, and learning. And so much more! Sort of makes a stack of "Busy Bee" ribbons look so very inadequate.

First, the 2024 Intern Class not only completed their classroom work, but they treated all attending to an exciting educational morning of presentations, all of which were stellar. Many thanks to all the members who worked diligently to get these fine people to this point. From our Intern Coordinator, Anita O'Connor, to the Mentors, to the Kitchen Committee, led by Judi Smith, and many others who helped with the class, the collective BCMG membership thanks you for your hard work and dedication to our organization. And, what a great lunch to boot!

The volunteer efforts from scores of our members at the AMGA Conference from the crack of dawn Monday to Wednesday afternoon were awe-inspiring. The Steering Committee and the various committee chairs are to be congratulated for producing a conference which has clearly set the bar for excellence. The 2024 AMGA Conference will be the conference against which all others are measured. It is a privilege to be associated with all of you. The term Grand Slam keeps echoing in my brain this morning. I just hope we got enough pictures.

But, I would be remiss if I didn't inform you all of the actions of one particular member at the conference. Tuesday morning, before the first speaker, an attendee from Jackson County in north Alabama, fell and hurt her left knee and right shoulder. It was decided to take her to an ER where she was accompanied by Mary Calvin. When I



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**SPECIAL NOTICE—LOCATION CHANGE—  
The May Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, May 8,  
will be held at the Spanish Fort Presbyterian  
Church, 6620 Spanish Fort Blvd., Spanish Fort, AL**

## *President's Notes by Don Richerson (continued)*

learned of the situation, I drove to Malbis and found Mary and the patient quietly conversing in a room. It turns out that they were both Past Presidents of their respective Master Gardener organizations. We talked for awhile as we awaited the X-ray results. All were negative. When they returned to the conference, Mary even went to the pharmacy to fill the pain medicine prescription for this very nice lady. So, the stack of "Busy Bee" ribbons belong to Mary Calvin. Now you see how inadequate a ribbon seems when compared to such kind, thoughtful and caring actions. Thank you Mary from all of us.



## *Weeks Bay Reserve Project by Mickey Ezell*

Over a year ago, the idea of updating the native plant garden at Weeks Bay Reserve came from Mickey Ezell (Master Gardener) and Angela Underwood (Manager of Weeks Bay Reserve). This would become the project of the Baldwin County Master Gardeners and Weeks Bay Reserve. Other important members of the team included Maureen (Moe) Nation, Master Gardener and Native plant extraordinaire; Carmen Flammini (Baldwin County Extension Agent); and Eric Brennan of Weeks Bay Reserve. After months of preparation, a plan was developed and implemented that included planting over 160 native plants. The preparation work and planting were done by other Master Gardeners and Weeks Bay volunteers.

Thanks to all who participated with this project. This is an example of how community partnerships can improve and beautify our environment.





# Paradise Found by Paula Pritchett

The AMGA Conference is in our rear view mirror. BCMG did an amazing job of hosting the 2024 AMGA Conference! Our organization is involved in a wide array of projects each year. Members continued to support local projects as well as being involved with the conference. We all juggled our BCMG schedules in order to support the conference. As I have been telling you for years, we all have different talents in life! During conference preparation, many of us found talents we didn't even know we had. Thanks to you and your families for their support in this endeavor.



Thank you for all the wonderful snack donations and hard work at the conference.  
I appreciate all your help.  
—Deborah Marriott



Ann Hutchison, Elsie Reed, Eileen Huisman, and Loree Hadley



Linda Bizzell, Ed Pickle, and Loree Hadley

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# 2024 AMGA Conference Pictures



Our Wonderful Volunteers!



Mary Hamilton, Barb Comstock,  
Ed Pickle, and Gail Hand



Paula Pritchett and  
Sheryl Bly

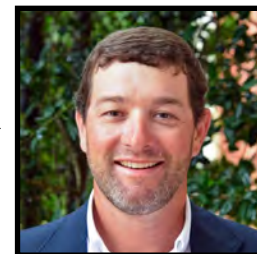


Terri and Gary Wallace



## Speaker for May Membership Meeting by Brenda Montgomery

Come and meet Mr. Jarrod Jones at Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church (6620 Spanish Fort Blvd.) at our monthly membership meeting, beginning at 9:30 on May 8. His position is Regional Director of the southern region experiment stations, including Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center and Ornamental Horticulture Research Center. Recently, I posed just a few questions to him so that we might learn more about him and be eager for a very informative meeting.



- 1. What inspired you to work in your field?** “I was born into agriculture. At an early age, I was always fascinated with tractors and farm machinery. My great grandparents were farmers. Both sets of my grandparents had small farm operations outside of Bay Minette. My father was directly involved in agriculture until I was 12 years old. When my father began working outside of agriculture, I lost some passion for agriculture and put all of my passion into sports until my junior/senior year of high school. During those last two years of high school, I continued to play sports, but became involved in FFA and high school rodeo. The fire for agriculture was beginning to be rekindled. My senior year I began working at a local feed store and would work part time on the weekends for the Corte's farming operations. In the spring following my senior year of high school, I began working full time for the Corte's while attending classes at Faulkner State Community College. Working on the Corte's Farm lit a fire in me to pursue a career in agriculture, and I haven't looked back. Agriculture has been great to me, and I hope that I can make a difference for farmers and all citizens of Alabama in my current role.”
- 2. If you hadn't pursued your current career, what other path would you have considered?** “As a young teenager, I thought that my career would be as a baseball player. Once I realized that wasn't going to come true, I wanted to be a forester. After conversations with people who actually worked in the forest industry about their snake encounters, I quickly realized that wasn't for me because of my fear of snakes.”
- 3. When not working, what type of hobbies/pastimes do you enjoy?** “I enjoy all types of hunting, especially in the western United States. I enjoy boating and offshore fishing with my family. I am extremely passionate about watching and coaching my kids in softball and baseball. Lastly, I enjoy playing my guitar, although I'm not very good.”
- 4. If you could have dinner with one person-past or present-who would it be? Please tell us why.** “George Washington Carver. He single-handedly improved the lives of thousands of poor southern farmers by providing information and suggesting that they grow alternative crops to cotton. He is best known for research into and promoting crop rotations of peanuts and sweet potatoes in place of cotton. Dr. Carver was a progressive agricultural thinker and encouraged farmers to submit soil samples for analysis to determine their causes of poor yields. The practices that George Washington Carver taught are still being utilized today. He was a great agricultural educator, researcher, and humanitarian with a lifetime of achievements in agriculture.”
- 5. From your bio, it looks like most of your life has been in Baldwin County. What are the changes you are most satisfied with? Are there any major changes you find potentially challenging for our communities?** “Agriculturally speaking, farms have adopted conservation practices that are more environmentally friendly and reduce the adverse effects from soil erosion, runoff, fertility loss, and pesticide use. Development and population increases have/will continue to put pressure on agriculture and our infrastructure. Unfortunately, we have lost some very productive farmland in our area that we will never get back into production. It's happening all across the southeast because the profit margins in farming are so tight, and it's easier to take the money from a developer and start with a new clean slate. It's sad, but I get that it's a simple matter of economics.”
- 6. We always ask our new interns what their favorite flower/plant is. What is yours and why?** “My favorite plant is the cotton plant. It is the first crop that I tended and harvested early in my career in agriculture. There are only four species in the world. We grow the species *hirsutum* in the United States. I find cotton interesting because it is a perennial tropical shrub that we grow as an annual. Therefore, the management of a cotton plant is quite challenging and very rewarding when grown successfully.”

**SPECIAL NOTE—LOCATION CHANGE—  
The May Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, May 8, will be held at the Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church, 6620 Spanish Fort Blvd., Spanish Fort, AL. This will be a joint meeting with Mobile County Master Gardeners.**

*Please come and join us and welcome our next guest speaker!*



## Fairhope Earth Day by Tanys Waldron

Earth Day Mobile Bay had great weather and a great location at the Fairhope Park Pier. We had lots of interested people stop and ask gardening questions. Gave out lots of Soil Test kits. We had a steady stream of both kids and adults playing the Pollinator bingo game. This game makes education fun and enjoyable. Some of the kids came back 3 or 4 times to play again.

Thanks to the Volunteers: Outreach Coordinator: Eileen Huisman. Volunteers: Mary Calvin, Terry Delker, Judi Smith, Fran Eversole, Tanys Waldron.



## May Birthdays



- 5-12 Karen Rhea White
- 5-20 Marta Stauts
- 5-25 Liz Wojtaszek
- 5-28 Maria Logan-Montgomery

*Life...is all about the Journey.*



## Intern Presentation Day



On April 18, 2024, our interns made their presentations and received their certificates for completing the class. The following is a list of the topics covered by each intern:

- Tom Fortner *Pollinator Garden*
- Kim Scasny *Biomimicry and Seed Dispersal*
- Mary Meyer *E. O. Wilson*
- Sueann Barnwell *Growing Future Master Gardeners*
- Margie Grace *My Life with Lubbers, How I Licked Them, I Hope*
- Jim Faulkner *Oakleaf Hydrangea*
- Sara Semmes *Topography's Effects on Landscape Design*
- Robin Newell *Building Community through Plant Rescue*
- Vicky Franks *Benefits of Growing Sweet Potatoes in a Community Garden*
- Shannon Russell *How to Mount & Care for Staghorn Ferns and other Epiphytes*
- Tiffany Ramey *Seed Collecting*
- Lynn Barnes *Mason Bees and Bee Hotels*
- Gilda Underwood *Nematodes*
- Beth Murray *Mama's Little Compost Bin*
- Diana Rodgers *Grass to Gardens*
- Deb Mallon *History of Soil Blocking*
- Ann Lemis *Yakisugi/Shou-Shugi Ban*
- Ed Bradshaw *DIY Hydroponics Tower on a Budget*





## *Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer*

Don Richerson called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. We were then all asked to stand and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance.

Don then asked if there were any guests. C. Fogerty brought her husband, Frank, to join us today. The Past Presidents and Wayne de la Rua recipients were then asked to rise. Sixty people were on the sign-up sheet today.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKER:** Charlotte Hamm introduced Leslie Gahagan, Sustainable and Natural Resource Manager of Graham Creek Preserve. There is FREE entrance into this preserve. Leslie Gahagan explained that they started with no plans for this land and found they needed to do a water quality analysis before moving on. She said that in the early days of the preserve that Don Canon, a previous Mayor, got a grant for the purchase. It had previously been farmland for pastures and crop sharing. Graham Creek has used the original trails in this farmland for the trails now used within the area. After the water quality was determined to be good, there was a controlled burn. After this first controlled burn, they found a large pitcher plant bog. Leslie then showed photos of other plants that had shown up, such as swamp orchids, other carnivorous plants, rose begonias, white tipped sedge, pine wood lilies, yellow jasmine, salvia, and lots of others. Leslie then showed a photo of the trail system. There are cross country trails, walking trails, and hiking trails. Summer day camps are very popular with school children. They have workshops on a weekly basis for teaching purposes. The area is also good for Birthday parties. And, there is a small butterfly garden. Popular activities include disc golf which are in all four corners of the preserve; there is an archery park, places for dog walking and exercising, and an international mud day. All Free.

Fund raisers for the Graham Creek Preserve include a Mud Run and Creek Crawl in May, a Haunted Forest in October, a Christmas lighted trail in December, and Easter Egg Hunt and find the rabbit day. The biggest fund raiser is the Archery Tournament in February with over 1,800 participants from all 50 states plus DC and 4 countries. Future plans for park expansion include a new pavilion and a Butterfly Conservatory. A second facility in the works is on Wolf Creek. The Preserve purchased a tract of land on Wolf Creek that has a long frontage on Wolf Bay. Emphasis for this Preserve section will be on beautification of Wolf Bay. Questions: (1) Is there a plant book? Yes, call or email Leslie and she will send one out. (2) How do you manage parking with all of the wonderful activities you offer? They used the open fields for parking and have had no real issues with this since activities do not last very long.

### Contact Information:

Leslie Gahagan  
Sustainable & Natural Resource Director  
Location: 2303 Wolf Bay Drive, Foley AL 36535  
Phone: 251-923-4267  
[lgahagan@cityoffoley.org](mailto:lgahagan@cityoffoley.org)  
[gcnp@cityoffoley.org](mailto:gcnp@cityoffoley.org)  
[GrahamCreekPreserve.org](http://GrahamCreekPreserve.org)

Don Richerson called for a 17-minute break. There is a birthday cake for George Holman, however, he is not in attendance today.

**CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS/APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 2024.** The Plant Sale list was sent out March 31<sup>st</sup> instead of the 21<sup>st</sup> as printed in the March Minutes. Joni asked that the minutes be approved as corrected with a second by Kim Musson. The motion passed.

**PRESIDENT REMARKS:** Don Richerson stated the workshop at the 104 building is cancelled due to rain today. Maureen Krison is still looking for a truck to be loaned for picking up rocks and delivering them to this site.

In November 2023, Mary Calvin went to the 104 Agent Office and asked them to save the first and second Wednesdays of each month for our use. On January 3, 2024, at 11:35 AM, Don went to the 104 office and confirmed the building was booked for our use. Later Don got a phone call indicating NO, we were not booked for

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## *Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer (continued)*

this month's second Wednesday. Carmen checked the entire year's scheduling and is doing her best to secure our needed time for the 104-meeting building. Don was able to secure this meeting room today from the Mayor of the City of Fairhope for today. Don is now asking us all, especially his committee of Anita O'Connor and Maurine Krison, to look for alternate meeting venues if for any reason the 104 Meeting room is de-booked. Our May meeting will be held in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall of the Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church. Again, no food or drink is allowed in the Sanctuary. The general meeting will be a joint meeting with the Mobile Master Gardeners.

Don asked us all to read or skim over *Grass Roots* since there is a lot still going on. He also wanted to give a big hand to all who worked at the Plant Sale last week.

Eileen Huisman reported that Earth Day is next Saturday, the 20<sup>th</sup>. Also, on April 27<sup>th</sup>, the following Saturday, Delta Woods and Waters is being held at Five Rivers. She has a sign-up sheet today for workers at our MG tables.

**TREASURERS REPORT:** Cassandra Rabren, reported we have \$54,194.22 in our checking account and \$20,745.66 in our CD. The Plant Sale revenue is \$50,118.25; however, she still has some lingering invoices out. The nursery plants were purchased at a cost of just over \$16,000.00, and food was \$877.99. She thanked Dolores Hammack, Linda Bizzell, Maria Logan-Montgomery, Karon Pennington, Paula Pritchett, Sally DeMott, Marilyn Mannhard, Don Richerson, Terri Wallace, Tanys Waldron, Mary Calvin and all those who helped, including those who jumped in at the last minute. "They were amazing!" Cassandra now needs everyone to turn in their reimbursement requests ASAP. Also, Cassandra has Pictorial Directories for anyone who has not yet obtained theirs.

**ACES REPORT:** Carmen Flammini will be meeting with the 104 office tomorrow to figure out some solutions to our meeting times. She also has a table at the Foley Market on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month, and she would like to see us with our smiling faces show up and help. So far, this is a good partnership. She has several workshops coming and will send an email advising of those dates. In September she will host a Volunteer Fair and will talk to the Board of Directors concerning all projects we have and will have coming up.

**INTERN CLASS UPDATE:** Anita O'Connor reported that tomorrow, April 11, 2024, is the last day for the Intern classes. On April 18, the Interns will be doing their presentations. Please come and bring a salad and dessert to honor this amazing class. Concerning next year, we are asked to have all interested parties call Cathy Banning at the Bay Minette office as soon as possible.

**AMGA CONFERENCE:** Wanda Martin reported that all is falling in place and on track for the best conference ever. They still need each one of us, and there are sign-up sheets at a table in the foyer. Barbara Comstock will help with MG parking. Three Hundred Fifty-five people are registered; and registration is now closed. She asked us to be there, be flexible, and be in a good mood.

On Monday, there are specific workshops, and on other days you can pick whichever workshop you want. But remember, we are the hosts. So look behind you and see if there is someone who needs this more than you. Also, please pick up your conference bags as you leave the building today; Zetty will have them in her car.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** At this time, Mickey Ezell wants to thank all who helped with the Weeks Bay Landscaping Project. He found it a pleasure to work with all the Master Gardeners who helped with this project. He would not have been able to prepare this wonderful garden without the support of Angela Underwood at Weeks Bay and Carmen Flammini.

Lydia Chan reminded there is a calendar on our website that is the most accurate. It is here that you can find out all that is going on.

Carmen Flammini reminded us to sign the Memorandum of Understanding, which is on the back table.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Kay Smith offered a motion to adjourn the meeting with Elmer Vick giving the second to this motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 AM.



## Mark Your Calendar

May 2, 2024	Plant Swap, Bay Minette Library, 8:00 a.m.
May 4, 2024	Marion Drummond Lecture Series, Carol Reese, " <i>Native Plants: Facts, Fabrications and Foibles</i> ", Mobile Botanical Gardens, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., \$35.00
May 6, 2024	Weeks Bay Watershed CoCoRaHS Volunteer Training, 10:00 a.m., Weeks Bay Reserve, Tonsmeire Resource Center
May 8, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church, 6620 Spanish Fort Blvd., Spanish Fort, AL, Joint meeting with Mobile County MGs, Jarrod Jones, Regional Director of the Southern Region Experiment Stations, including Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center and Ornamental Horticulture Research Center
June 5, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
June 10, 2024	Deadline to record Volunteer Service and CEU hours for July Awards Luncheon
June 12, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
June 22, 2024	Marion Drummond Lecture Series, Marianne Willburn, " <i>Keep Calm and Garden On; Gardening in the Midst of Climate Change</i> ", Mobile Botanical Gardens, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., \$35.00
July 3, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
July 10, 2024	BCMG Awards Luncheon, Foley Civic Center
August 7, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
August 14, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
Sept. 4, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Sept. 11, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
October 2, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
October 9, 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 Carmen Flammini, Loree Hadley, and Tany Waldron. The newsletter is available before the monthly general meeting on our website: [www.baldwinmastergardeners.com](http://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](mailto:grassrootsnews@gmail.com). PLEASE DO NOT SEND PICTURES BY TEXT.

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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, May 8, 2024

Speaker: Jarrod Jones, Regional Director of the Southern Region Experiment Stations, including Gulf Coast Research and Extension Center and Ornamental Horticulture Research Center

Social begins at **9:30 a.m.**

Meeting: **10:00 a.m.**

### NOTICE—LOCATION CHANGE:

Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church, 6620 Spanish Fort Blvd., Spanish Fort, Alabama

This will be a joint meeting with Mobile County Master Gardeners.



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