



November 2024  
Volume XXXII Issue XI



[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:**

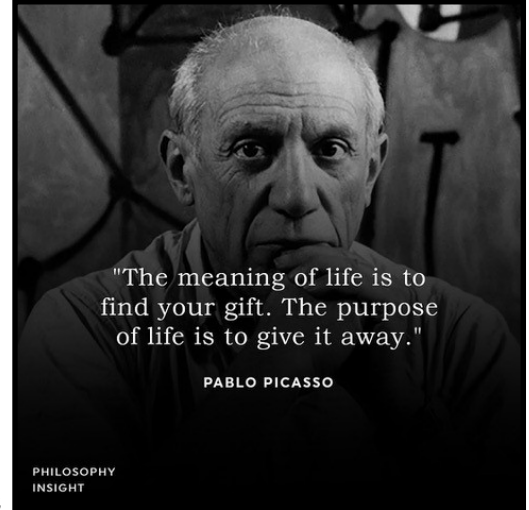
- Monthly Program Co-Chairs:  
Charlotte Hamm  
Brenda Montgomery
- Intern Class Coordinator:  
Anita O'Connor
- Outreach Coordinator:  
Eileen Huisman
- Finance Committee Chair:  
Gail Hand
- Projects Chair:  
Elmer Vick

*President's Notes by Don Richerson*

As we enter the last two months of the year, I am so very grateful for all of you. Your hard work and positive attitudes enabled the BCMG to host a record breaking annual conference, a record Spring plant sale and a successful Autumn sale in 2024. You are making our organization fun to experience and it seems that we are not done yet! I have been doubly blessed this year.

As some of you may know, my son and his little family moved in with us a couple of months ago while their home is being significantly remodeled. Complete with a kitten and a Hungarian Vizsla, this wonderful opportunity for my family has not been lost on me. Along with two granddaughters, our routines have been quickly altered.

My wife and I go to bed earlier these days. There are early risers in our family now, who need their rest. We have worked out a cooking schedule with the other Richerson family and our diet has drastically improved. And most importantly, we don't eat in the den watching TV any longer. We actually sit at our long abandoned dining table and spend the time talking and enjoying one another. I highly recommend it!



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

My wife and I are also amazed at the work of parenting these days. Both our son and his wife are a whirlwind of motion accommodating the needs of their daughters. Their love has been obvious since I got a phone call very late one evening in the Spring of 2006.

"Dad, I've just met the girl I'm going to marry", he told me. "Where are you?" "I'm in a bar in Buckhead." Skeptical, I asked, "How do you know?" "She's perfect." And she was and is. We are blessed to know her.

What does all this have to do with Master Gardeners you ask? We need more down time together to get acquainted on a different level. I noticed several conversations at the recent plant sale among seasoned members and new members. We need more social events where we concentrate on getting to know one another better. We need to sit around the proverbial dinner table and concentrate on one another.

Stay tuned for what is to come. Happy Thanksgiving to you all!



## *November Birthdays*



- 11-3 Wanda Martin
- 11-5 Joyce Hewitt
- 11-6 Carma Gronback
- 11-6 Susan Mattingly
- 11-6 Marilyn Renaudette
- 11-8 Pat Greer
- 11-9 Dolores Hammack
- 11-10 Pam Schultz
- 11-15 Liz Cobb
- 11-20 Harry Kohler
- 11-20 Sandy Stepan
- 11-21 Shirley Stephens
- 11-25 Myra Hannah
- 11-25 Mike Healy (Honorary)
- 11-27 Lisa Vinson
- 11-28 "C" Fogarty
- 11-29 Mickey Ezell

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



## *It is Time to Vote for WDLR by Sam Andrews*

In September, you nominated four peers from among your active ranks to consider for our unique, prestigious award, the Wayne de la Rua (or “WDLR”). Now, from November 1st to the November 13th Monthly Meeting, it is time for the vote!

1. Each Active Baldwin County Master Gardener may vote... once.
2. The deadline for WDLR voting is the end of the November 13, 2024 monthly meeting (12 NOON). Special meeting paper ballots will be available to those who choose to vote at that time.
3. Please review again the [WDLR nominations](#), which appeared in the October 2024 *Grass Roots*. Nominees are **Mary Calvin, Mary Hamilton, Deborah Marriott, and Elmer Vick**.
4. Please VOTE for your chosen candidate using one of the following two means available to you. **PLEASE send your vote only to this special email address [WDLRaward@gmail.com](mailto:WDLRaward@gmail.com).**
  - Click on the email address [WDLRaward@gmail.com](mailto:WDLRaward@gmail.com), which opens a fresh email with the correct address in the TO: box. Please write “WDLR” in the Subject line. Then, type the full name of your Candidate together with your name in the body of the message.
  - Or last minute: Please get one of the pre-printed ballots available at the November 13th Monthly Meeting. Once voted, place it in the ballot box or hand back to an Extension employee. **DO NOT FORGET TO place your name on the ballot!**

Thank you for your cooperation. The announcement of this “*peer-nominated; peer-selected; once-in-a-lifetime*” award takes place at our December 2024 Luncheon at the Foley Civic Center.



### NANCY GAINES

We are saddened to share that our dear friend and fellow member, Nancy Gaines, passed away on October 20, 2024. Our thoughts are with her husband, fellow BCMG, Jim Gaines, family, and friends during this difficult time. Nancy, along with Jim, were Wayne de la Rua winners in 2013. Nancy had also served as Finance Committee Chair. Her obituary can be seen at [Nancy Gaines Obituary \(12/31/1945 - 10/20/2024\) - Huntsville, AL - AL.com \(Huntsville\)](#)

The family requests memorials be made to the Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuary, Inc., P. O. Box 1295, Dauphin Island, Alabama 36528



## *November General Membership Program by Brenda Montgomery*

Do you wish to live a longer, healthier life reaching past 80, 90 or even 100 years old? If so, please come join us at the next membership meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup> to learn from Dr. Mark Hammond how certain groups of people have successfully achieved this in different locations worldwide. He will discuss concepts from [The Blue Zones](#), a book written by Dan Buettner, highlighting some of the commonalities of these very long-lived communities.



What traits do the people from such diverse areas of Sardinia, Italy; Okinawa, Japan; Nicoya, Costa Rica; and Loma Linda, California from within our own borders share? Predominately a plant-based diet, regular exercise (gardening counts!), a sense of purpose or “Plan de vida” in addition to a tight knit community are all influential factors.

It seems genetics plays a limited role in our longevity but with small, consistent behavioral tweaks, we can successfully reduce the odds of chronic diseases and live a healthy and happy life, hopefully dancing at our 100<sup>th</sup> birthday!



## *Fall Seminar and FAME Landscaping Project by Maureen Krison*

Another Master Gardener project partnering success: The weather for our Fall Seminar could not have been more beautiful, and the 104 building looked so welcoming! Fully blooming flower beds greeted our attendees and enhanced the grounds for our speakers’ outdoor presentations. (Note that even the butane tank got a bath!)

We are still a work in progress: A solution to holding open the heavy front doors (without the use of cinder blocks) is more complicated than we had hoped. Also, a long-term, maintenance-free design for attractive stadium style “steps” to hold plant swaps is still underway. And, Carmen has plans for us to build rain garden areas around the three down spouts.

Once we finally get rain and the weather cools off, we need to plan a two-three hour work day in November to help with bed maintenance around our meeting area, as well as in front of the Help Line building. We have invested in a lightweight weed-eater, and Julian has given us expert instruction, demonstration and guidance on how to safely edge the beds.

Thanks for everyone’s helping hands and for the anonymous donation of more rock to enhance the beds.





# Fall Plant Sale by Kay Heinrich

The BCMG Fall Plant Sale was held Friday, October 18 and Saturday, October 19 at Weeks Bay, with special sale hours for our members on Thursday. By all accounts, the sale was very successful! We enjoyed two days of glorious weather to present many hundreds of native and non native trees, shrubs, and ornamentals to an eager public. With Dolores Hammack, our plant sale coordinator, she was able to secure over 150 lovely camellias, which included a special collection from Bobby Green. Beautiful potted plants of assorted Fall flowers and greenery greeted patrons at the sale entrance. These didn't last long! For educational offerings, many thanks to Barb Comstock who discussed "Plants for the Hot Sun" and Mary Calvin for her "Native Plants" presentation.

We had a great time assisting the community to find the perfect plants for their needs. Couldn't have done it without our dedicated and ever present volunteer staff. From our "Food and Hydration" crew to the "Plant Hydration" team, everyone who pitched in is greatly appreciated. Thanks for your help and support!



Gordon Cooper



Plant Sale Cashiers – Gail Hand, Cassandra Rabren, Brenda Montgomery, and Mary Calvin



Becky Estes



Karon Pennington



## Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer

Don Richerson called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. He then asked us all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those having Birthdays in October, Guests, Past Presidents, and WDLR Winners were all asked to stand. We had one guest today—Thomas Bellinger. Don notified us that Master Gardener Brenda Myers passed away on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Books from her estate are on the table at the back. There were 76 attendees at this meeting.

Charlotte Hamm then introduced our speaker for the day. Carmen Flammini was our speaker in August on the subject of Soil and Plant Fertility. Today she will expand on that talk. She explained that before we start our propagation, we need to know a lot about soil. The 7 environmental factors that have the greatest effect on plants include water, nutrition, media, temperature, light, humidity, and what insects and diseases to look out for. One of the functions of soil is to help us with food and fiber. This is why we, as Master Gardeners, care so much about soil tests. We can check our yards to see how water moves through the ground. Soil is alive with water. Good soil is composed of 25% water and 25% air, plus 45% mineral particles and just 5% organic matter, such as roots and humus. This organic matter stabilizes the structure of the soil, making it easier to manage. This could be coffee grounds, leaves, and compost. Organic matter also increases the amount of water a section of soil can hold, is a major source of plant nutrients, and maintains food and energy for other soil organisms. Once you have your soil prepared, you can transplant your garden plants in 2-3 weeks. Once you have harvested your garden plants, whether in the ground or in raised beds, do not leave these areas empty. It is best to plant a cover crop. This could be legumes such as clover, grasses such as oats or rye, or red clover. Also, practice crop rotation to add nutrients and biomass to the original soil. A cover crop could also reduce reliance on fertilizers and pesticides. To improve your soil health, adopt practices that enhance soil structure, increase organic matter, and promote biodiversity. This measure includes enhancing soil and organic matter and improving drainage and preventing compaction. Good soil structure allows for air circulation, water infiltration, and root growth, supporting healthy plant development.

Carmen reminded us that most purchased soil is “soilless”. If you purchase this, make sure you add organic materials. Encourage soil diversity as it leads to healthier soil which is more efficient with nutrient coupling and pest and disease control.

There was a question on how to rid your garden of mushrooms. Carmen said if there is anyone growing mushrooms in their garden or yard, they can send her a photo and she will let you know what kind it is.

Don Richerson then called for a small break time. We were reminded that a list of plants available at the Fall Plant Sale can be found on our website.

When Don called the meeting back to order, he asked if there were any corrections or additions to last month’s minutes as published in *Grass Roots*. There being none, Gail Hand seconded a motion to file the minutes as approved.

Don then advised we had two tickets from last week’s Birdfest for a sunset cruise from Weeks Bay. From the roster, attendee #55 was chosen as the winner of these tickets—Elsie Reed.

Don then asked for all Veterans who are present today to come to the front where he presented them with poppies he had obtained from the American Legion. Those Veterans were Jim Greer, Gail Hand, Mac McCawley, and Charles French. Don remarked that the American Legion was established in 1920 and was selling poppies by 1924. He feels an



L-R: Mac McCawley, Jim Greer, Charles French, Gail Hand, and Don Richerson

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

initiative for our Master Gardener Group next year could be to see poppies at our Fall Plant Sale. Cassandra Rabren made a motion that we begin this initiative with a second by Gail Hand.

Nominating Committee Report: Mary Calvin offered thanks to those on the nominating committee—Ed Pickle, Julian Walthall, Lynn Barnes, and herself. The BCMG 2025 Slate by the Nominating Committee is:

- President: Don Richerson, class of 2021
- Vice President: Fran Posey Eversole, class of 2019
- Recording Secretary: Gilda Underwood, class of 2024
- Corresponding Secretary: Kim Scasny, class of 2024
- Treasurer: Cassandra Rabren, class of 2022
- At Large: Tom Fortner, class of 2024; and Julie Cox, class of 2023
- Past President: Mary Calvin, class of 2018

An additional nomination from the floor was offered by Kay Smith, who would like to nominate Lynn Barnes for the Vice President position. Lynn is from the 2024 class. Elections will be held at the November 13<sup>th</sup> general meeting, with installation of officers at the December 11<sup>th</sup> Holiday Luncheon.

Don Richerson will appoint the other five board positions, those being Finance, Interns, Projects, Outreach, and Monthly Programs.

ACES Report: Carmen Flammini commented that new name tags will be ready by April 2025. She would like to have these earlier, however, the State gives out new badges only once per year, in April.

Carmen is looking for more people to keep the Help Line going. Baldwin County's time on the Help Line is Tuesday mornings from 9 AM until Noon.

There will be a Milkweed Propagation workshop on November 8<sup>th</sup> here at 104 from 10 AM until Noon at a cost of \$10.00. On November 20<sup>th</sup>, there will be a 5-hour workshop on Hydroponic gardening from 9 AM until 2 PM at a cost of \$40.00. Lunch will be provided.

Carmen also commented that the Rotary Club is looking for volunteers to help build eight raised beds. This will be held in Fairhope on Young Street and is a Jr. Master Gardener project.

On February 12, Carmen will hold a volunteer fair, which could be a great opportunity to see what you would like to do.

Carmen would like to know of any programs or projects anyone is involved in; and Cassandra commented that if funds are needed, the request is due before the end of this month.

Treasurer's Report: Cassandra Rabren reported we have \$56,666.78 in our checking account and \$21,077.42 in our CD, for a total income of \$77,704.20. This does not include Fall Plant Sale expenses or revenue, nor the costs of Computers, Laptops, I-Pads or dues. Dues are \$25 per year until December. At this time, Paula Pritchett and Sherly Bly are helping Cassandra. Cassandra reported she is still looking for help at her cashier tables at the upcoming Plant Sale. For Trash and Treasures, that table will open on Friday. If you donate something super nice, you are welcome to put a price on it yourself. During the Plant Sale, Cassandra is looking for help with tagging and pricing. Cassandra is also looking for someone to help her in her general Treasurer's position. You could simply assist her, and/or she will be willing to train you to take over this position.

Budget Report: Gail Hand has 36 committees and still has only received 8 budget requests from this group. She

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Meeting Minutes by Pat Greer (continued)

is closing out the budget at the end of this week, October 11<sup>th</sup>. Ed Pickle asked that, as a courtesy, anyone who is working on a project that does not require funds, let Gail know this.

Autumn Plant Sale Update: Maria Logan-Montgomery reminded those who offered to take a stack of Plant Sale flyers for businesses, please come to the front and pick them up. There is a color copy of this flyer on our MG Website.

Dolores Hammack advised there is some construction going on at the Weeks Bay property, and we are not to be alarmed by this. Plants will begin to come in on Monday morning. On Tuesday, Dolores will need a lot of help picking up plants at the Daphne Greenhouse. And Wednesday, "Field and Bloom" will be delivering plants. Volunteers are needed on all these days. This will be a big sale, and Dolores asks us to share the sale information with everyone we can. Lunch and snacks will be available every day, except on Thursday when we are asked to bring a potluck item. Lunch on Thursday will begin at 11:30, and Master Gardeners will all be able to purchase plants starting at 12:15 PM.

Dolores will bring a variety of plants to this Saturday's seminar. It will be only cash or checks for this event. At the Fall Plant Sale, there will be flyers at the Outreach table for the Spring 2025 Plant Sale. Porta-potties will be at the Plant Sale location from Monday morning through the weekend.

WDLR Award Nominees: Don Richerson reported that all nominees for the Wayne de la Rua award are excellent. They are listed in the *Grass Roots* and are Mary Calvin, Mary Hamilton, Deborah Marriott, and Elmer Vick. Voting begins on November 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on November 13<sup>th</sup>, our meeting day. Cast your online vote at [WDLRAward@gmail.com](mailto:WDLRAward@gmail.com) or pick up a form at the November meeting at the 104 location.

Old Business/New Business:

- On the back table there is information on our Speakers' Bureau.
- Deborah Marriott, President of the Magnolia Springs Master Gardeners, reported there will be a fund raiser on October 27<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon at the Arboretum with music, wine and cheese.
- Don Richerson commented he has seen the community garden in Fairhope, and of 31 cities in Baldwin County, there are only 7 that have community gardens. Marilyn Mannhard feels there are lots of community gardens that could use help.
- Maureen Krison is looking for someone who can help with some construction for the 104 garden plot.

Julian Walthall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 PM with a second from Gail Hand. All those who agree, please stand.







With Regional Extension Agent Carmen Flammini

ACES.EDU



BALDWIN COUNTY

# PROPAGATING ALABAMA NATIVE MILKWEED

## Hands On Workshop

### November 8

### 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Gulf Coast Research & Extension Center  
8300 Hwy 104, Fairhope, AL 36532

- Learn critical techniques for propagating Alabama native milkweed and the steps for successful planting in South Alabama this spring.
- Attendees will gain practical seed preparation experience and leave with their own set of prepared seeds, ready for planting in spring.

REGISTRATION COST: \$10



**REGISTRATION REQUIRED!**

<https://www.aces.edu/go/AlabamaMilkweed>

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator, employer, and provider. If you need a reasonable accommodation or language access services, contact Carmen Flammini at czf0054@auburn.edu by Oct. 20.

# Hydroponic Workshop

for Homeowners and Schools  
November 20 - 9am-2pm

Gulf Coast Research & Extension Center  
8300 Hwy 104, Fairhope

This workshop is for anyone interested in learning how to start their own hydroponic system at home or school. Participants will have the opportunity to build and take home their own hydroponic system.



Registration Cost: \$40

Online Registration at:  
<https://www.aces.edu/go/4582>

*Carmen Flammini*  
Regional Extension Agent  
[czf0054@aces.edu](mailto:czf0054@aces.edu)



The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator, employer, and provider. If you need a reasonable accommodation or language access services, contact Carmen Flammini at [czf0054@aces.edu](mailto:czf0054@aces.edu) or 251-395-0249 before Nov. 5, 2024.





# Mark Your Calendar

Nov. 6, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Nov. 8, 2024	Propagating Ala. Native Milkweed Workshop, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon, \$10.00
Nov. 13, 2024	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, <u>"How to Live a Longer, Healthier Life"</u> , Dr. Mark Hammond
Nov. 13, 2024	Election of Officers and Board of Directors
Nov. 13, 2024	Wayne de la Rua Voting closes at the end of the General Meeting
Nov. 13, 2024	*Urban Green Back 2 Basics Webinar, 10:00 a.m., <u>"Safe and Secure Homes: Landscape Edition"</u> , Marcus Garner, Madison Co. Urban Regional Extension Agent
Nov. 15, 2024	Deadline for reporting Service Hours for Awards at December 11 Awards Luncheon, <b>12:00 Midnight</b>
Nov. 20, 2024	Hydroponic Workshop, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Lunch provided - \$40.00
Dec. 4, 2024	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Dec. 11, 2024	BCMG Awards Membership Luncheon, Foley Civic Center, 10:30 a.m.
Jan. 7, 2025	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104
Jan. 8, 2025	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
Feb. 5, 2025	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Feb. 12, 2025	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
Feb. 12, 2025	Volunteer Fair
March 5, 2025	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
March 12, 2025	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
April 2, 2025	BCMG Board Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
April 3-5, 2025	AMGA Conference, First Baptist Church, Prattville, AL, <u>"Fountains of Knowledge"</u>
April 9, 2025	BCMG Monthly Meeting, Research Station, Hwy. 104, Speaker TBD
April 10-12, 2025	BCMG Spring Plant Sale

\*Visit [www.aces.edu/go/Back2Basics](http://www.aces.edu/go/Back2Basics) to register. This webinar will also be available through Facebook Live: [www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionAAMU](https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionAAMU)

**Grass Roots** is compiled and edited by Lynn Andrews, assisted by Sam Andrews. Pictures courtesy of Brenda Montgomery, Kay Heinrich, Maureen Krison, and Loree Hadley. 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



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

**Next meeting: WEDNESDAY, November 13, 2024**

Location: Research Station, Hwy. 104

Speaker: Dr. Mark Hammond

Topic: "How to Live a Longer, Healthier Life"

Social begins at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting 10:00 a.m.