



June 2016

Volume XXIV Issue VI



NEWSLETTER OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

WWW.BALDWINCOUNTYMASTERGARDENERS.COM
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President's Notes by John Fitzhugh

Dr. Seuss once said, "How did it get so late so soon." I think the Doctor must have been referring to the month of June.

We know through experience that time has a way of flying by when we are actively engaged in productive work and having fun. It is not surprising then for us Master Gardeners to look up and suddenly realize that the year has almost reached the halfway point. We should take great pride in the many successes we Master Gardeners have achieved through hard work during the first five months of 2016.

There is a natural tendency for an organization such as ours to pause and relax and to enjoy the rewards of success after a period of hard work and high activity. As tempting as a summer pause might sound, we cannot afford to ignore requests for help from our community and delay planning for important events such as the Fall Seminar.

As Gary Wallace reported at our May meeting, we need volunteers to participate in a very worthwhile project to help Baldwin County ARC. The agency has collaborated with Flowerwood Nursery to start a greenhouse and plant production facility to train its clients for work in the horticultural industry. Master Gardeners are needed to help provide gardening expertise and assist the ARC staff with client training. Please contact Gary if you are able to help.

We also are in urgent need of volunteers to serve on the Fall Seminar Committee chaired by Sharon Thoele. The date for the seminar has not been set but we expect it to take place the last week of October. The Seminar satisfies our mission to inform and educate the community, and produces money for our scholarship program. We had to cancel the 2015 Fall Seminar due to a lack of volunteer support. Let's not allow this to happen again this year.

June is obviously the beginning of a very promising time of the year for most gardeners. Our gardens and lawns are at their peak growing season and we should take time to enjoy the fruits of our labor.

While I wish everyone a very safe and fun-filled summer, I also want to remind you that BCMG needs your continued support. Please find time this summer to help our organization continue the momentum we have going for a very successful year.

On the next 2 1/2 pages are interviews of our new 2016 graduated interns. The interviews were conducted, very kindly, by **Pat Greer**.

A huge **"THANKS!"** go to Pat for her persistence and interest in providing these interviews (plus *more interviews to come* in the next Grass Roots newsletter.)





Front row: John Fitzhugh, Pam Tucker, Mike McQueen, Tampa Sykora, Steve Urbanek, Second Row: Barbara Phillips, Terri Withee, Bonnibel Byars, Joni Euler, Donna Burnham, Rebecca Luck. Third Row: Diana Spillman, Sallie Grass, Michele Doyle, Michelle Johns. :Last row: Le Cossette, Charlotte Melton, Harry Hopkins, Ann Brun, and Elmer Vick.

Bonnibel Byars

Bonnibel grew up in Mississippi and received her Master's in Home Ec at "W" – Mississippi State College for Women. She lived in Wayzata Minnesota for 25 years where she taught Middle School and where she did a lot of volunteer work including President of the PTA. She was also President of Lake Minnetonka Garden Club which is a member of GCA, i.e. Garden Club of America. She and her husband had a second home in New Orleans, but decided to move to Baldwin County when they retired. Bonnibel's mother grew up in Andalusia AL. She loves yard work and heard about the Master Gardener Program in Minnesota, but did not time to take the classes there. She has 3 children and 2 grandchildren. Her hobbies are cooking and caring for her herb garden, butterfly garden, and fairy garden.

Barbara Philips

Barbara is from Cedartown, GA and came to the Gulf Coast in 1978. She attended Berry College in GA and got her degree in Home Economics. She was a teacher and big in 4-H. She has done a lot of RV-ing and was full time for several years. She became a Master Gardener while at Clemson University in South Carolina. She is now auditing the Intern class and finds that it is marvelous; much better than the class she took at Clemson. She feels the classes are well organized and top notch with wonderful speakers. Her Mentor is Dooley Berry. She has catered for many years along with being a Florist. She is now doing this freelance. She has two children and three grandchildren. The hobbies include cooking and gardening. Barbara blessed to have a husband who is every woman's dream. He is smart and very supportive.

Terri Withee

Terri is originally from Ohio. She spent 20 years in the US Navy as a Supply Officer and another 24 years with the Government as a Housing Director in Pensacola, Whiting Field, Eglin Air Force Base, and along all the Gulf Coast. She then lived in Lillian for 15 years before moving to Fairhope. While walking her dog in the neighborhood with Sharon Thoele, Terri learned about the Master Gardeners. She really loves the Intern classes which opens up a whole new world to her. She compares this with learning about birds as she is a member of the Mobile Audubon Society and goes on the birding trips with them every other week, in season. She is now sharing what she learns in the Intern class with her neighbors and her children. Terri has two children and six grandchildren. Some of her volunteer time so far has been with the women and children at Under His Wings home where she and others have put in a vegetable garden. She has also worked at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education. Her hobbies include bird watching, gardening, group exercise, traveling and walking. She is fortunate that her husband of 44 years supports all the things she is doing.

Ann Brun

Ann was born and raised in Mobile and moved to Baldwin County in 2005. She did her undergraduate work at Montebello University and received her Masters from Florida State in Health and Physical Education. She taught school for many years. Ann finds the intern class stimulating. She enjoys learning from all the Master Gardeners who she has met through her volunteer time at Arbor Day, Festival of Flowers, the Tuesday night classes, and the Spring Plant Sale. Her hobbies include golf, working and playing in the yard, and will start traveling more in the near future. She has already traveled to Europe and Canada. Having lived in Goose Bay, Canada for one year. While in Goose Bay, she worked for the Department of Defense.

Diana Spillman

Diana comes to us from Ohio. She is a Registered Dietitian and was the Director of Emergency Medicine in Cincinnati, Ohio. She has presented information at the United Nations on health issues of athletes, and women and children. Diana is a professional speaker, and even talks to her plants, especially encouraging her tomatoes and peppers to produce. She loves all plants and her Siamese cats, who talk back to her. She and her cats love to bird watch. She loves to laugh and make people laugh. Her father now lives with her. He is a WWII vet. Her parents had a commercial range of chrysanthemum greenhouses. She collects stamps and went to the Falkland Islands to find one of the rarest of stamps. While there, she shared a pier with a walrus. Diana loves to travel. She finds the Master Gardeners the nicest people she has ever associated with; can they cook! She loves the caring and sharing knowledge. She is close to those in her intern class and hopes they will forgive her jokes and fun making.

Michelle Johns

A South Alabama graduate, was born and raised in Baldwin County, but has also lived in Birmingham and Tampa. She met her husband at work and she worked in outside sales and management for 20 years. She now has her own business, Corner Copie Gardens. This is her "color" business working with flower beds and containers, mostly for commercial entities with some residential business. She loves gardening and has wanted to become a Master Gardener for many years. Right now her time is more flexible. She has jumped right in and was an integral help with this year's Festival of Flowers. She has five children and one grand child. Her hobbies include gardening, propagation, and cooking.

Michele Doyle

Michele was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama. She received her Bachelor of Interior Design from Auburn University where she met her husband, a native of Mobile. Michele and her family have lived around the South but came back to Fairhope in 1991. She has four children and three grandchildren, most of whom live in the area.

Michele was encouraged to join the Master Gardener program by many friends in the Mobile area. Her mentor is Linda Bender. Michele lives on a 6 acre farm which came with many fruit trees and a wetland area. She is excited about all she is learning in the program to help her care for the farm.

Her other interests are painting, cooking, woodworking and sewing.

LeRoy (Le) Cossette

Le is originally from Fargo, N. D., and received his degree from the University of North Dakota School of Agriculture in Medical Records Science. He spent 6 years in the Marines, 3 years in the Army, and 32 years with the Department of Veterans Affairs, during which time he served as Director of Administration at various VA hospitals nationwide. The last 15 years of his time with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Le served as the Director of Policy and Operations. Finally, as Director of Health Administration for Veterans Affairs. He worked with Congress and the White House on developing and implementing Healthcare laws and regulations. Le and his wife, Lynn, moved to the Fort Morgan Peninsula in 2014. Le worked for several years as Captain with the Fort Morgan Fire Department as both a licensed and certified medic and firefighter. Le is also a nationally certified martial arts instructor, including in non-lethal self-defense techniques. Le has actually lived in 11 different states and feels as though he has been on a lifelong vacation. Le joined the Master Gardeners Intern class because he has a love of outdoors, yards, gardens, plants, and learning. Le has five children and five grand children. He is an extreme do-it-yourselfer on projects, and is now adding a two story addition to his and Lynn's home.

Rebecca Luck

Rebecca comes to us from Laguna, California, having practiced law for 30+ years in both private practice and for the government in the Department of Mental Health. She graduated from the University of Tennessee, and considers herself to be a "Tennessee" person. She has two children and one great grand daughter. Rebecca lives next door to her mentor, Diana Alaman and also close to Cathy Tiblier, a Master Gardener from the 2013 class. Rebecca and her daughter love to eat out of their yard. She has curly kale, chard, blueberries, and strawberries, plus butternut squash and eggplant; all organic. This year she is working with Sharon Thoele at 'Under His Wings' with their organic garden and with Diane Alaman at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education putting in a garden, weeding, mulching, and generally taking care of the garden. Rebecca also loves coming to the Tuesday night education sessions. Her hobbies include reading history novels, soap making, painting and quilting.

Harry Hopkins

Harry graduated from Tulane University Law School and went on to practice law in Birmingham for 43 years plus being a professor at University of Alabama for 13 years. He moved to Fairhope on July 1st of 2014. He saw an article on Julian Walthall in the local Courier, which mentioned that Julian – among other wonderful things – was a member of the Baldwin County Master Gardeners. This is what prompted him to make a trip to our Bay Minette office and apply for the 2016 Intern class. He feels the Intern classes are great, they keep him busy, and he is learning a lot of good things. John Meyer is his Mentor. Harry enjoys staying active and has volunteered so far at Arbor Day events, the Festival of Flowers, the Help Line, at the Tuesday night education sessions, and at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education. He has 2 Children and 3 Grand Children. His hobbies include restoring antique furniture and gardening.

Charlotte Melton

Charlotte has been living in Loxley for the past three years. She comes to us from St. Louis, MO, where she attended Mermac Community College and received her degree in Child Development. She worked as a Realtor for 20 years in St. Louis and came down as a “snow bird” to Ft. Morgan for 16 years before becoming an Alabama citizen. Charlotte really loves the Intern class and appreciates all the help she has received from the volunteers that make the class happen. Her mentor is Freya Sonenstein. She has spent her volunteer hours so far at Arbor Day, the Help Line, Delta Woods, the Plant Sale and at the Marietta Johnson School for Organic Gardening. She easily went over 100 volunteer hours by graduation day. She has two children and one grandchild, all of whom are living in St. Louis. Her hobbies include nature, gardening and exercising. Her beloved Yorkie, Sammy, just passed away recently after 16 years.

New Sculpture at the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve headquarters.

Created by the sculptor, Carl Floyd. The idea for this project came to the very talented Carl Floyd as a way to contribute to Weeks Bay and to education. It took about 3 months to complete because of a delay due to a tractor incident. This sculpture is different from anything Carl has done before. The basic sculpture was designed to represent the bigger picture. Not only representative of the specifically anatomically correct Monarch Butterfly, the emphasis is on the struggle the monarch is experiencing due to human destruction of its natural habitat, including shelter and food throughout its migratory route. The base could be thought of as the severe constraints humans put on the environment, and the butterfly freeing itself from these constraints.



**BCMG General Meeting May 12, 2016 **

The meeting was opened by President, John Fitzhugh, Gordon will close the meeting for us today. Beau Brodbeck is our speaker today. A visitor today is Theresa Valentine, a new resident of Baldwin County and formerly a Master Gardner in Nebraska.

The minutes of last meeting were moved and approved.

John asked everyone to stand up who participated in all the Master Gardener activities that we have had so far this year. Almost all in the room stood up.

Marilyn Mannhard, Joni Euler, and Laurel Fleming are the administrators which will be approving anything we try to put on the Facebook website. Marilyn and Joanie are at the meeting today to show our new Facebook page. Pull it up and get on it at home. We will be able to get information to you much faster with Facebook.

On June 15 from 10:00 to 12:00, there will be a class at 104 on how to start your own Facebook page.

Barbara Comstock has requested to step down as the Grass Roots Newsletter Editor. She has done a great job and is burned out by the process. We need more people active in producing the newsletter. We need to schedule articles and subjects on an annual basis. The editor's job is to put it together not to be the writer on every subject. John wants to invite others to volunteer to be part of the process. We have a laptop and templates for Microsoft Publisher on it. The newsletter attracts over 500 hits a month on the website. Barbara will stay with it until we can find a replacement and, she will help to train the new staff.

Pam Tucker reported that we started and ended with 17 interns. Last week was the last meeting of the interns and they gave their presentations. Twelve have completed their requirements for their badge, and hopefully the rest will by July. Seven have their 100 hours and may have more by July. They were a wonderful class. Pam sent the survey to the interns yesterday so that they could take it as well. Pam has already started compiling a list of people for next year's class.

We have been approached by the Baldwin County ARC for a project. Gary Wallace and Sam Andrew are heading up this project. ARC works with disabled people and they have about 180 people countywide in the program. They have a van to pick up these people. They would like to have our help with a project. They have a plant production facility, and in association with Flowerwood Nursery, they are going to produce plants. They want us to give their people some basic instruction about plants, and the growing and nurturing of plants. They are interested in doing a partnership with us. We don't have a native plant source. It is possible that we could be an outlet for what they sell. For example, they have 400 Crepe Myrtles. The project for us would entail two days a week, morning and afternoon. We would not supervise. They will hire a full time person to manage the place. There would be a staff member with them. The project is funded and they need expertise. The location is on the west side of 59 behind Burris Farmer's Market. Darrel Hasque is the head of the project.

Gene the treasures report through the end of April revenues just under \$34,000 and \$22,000 expenses. We made almost \$15,000 off our plant sale. He thanked the cashiers for their excellent work, as well as Selena and her crew.

Paula Pritchett, reported on the Earth Day at Graham Creek Nature Preserve and Fairhope Earth Day Celebration. Many people came by in Fairhope.

We are busy planning the Fall Seminar and working very hard on the date, place and speaker. John and a committee will meet soon with Sharon Thoele who is chairing the event.

Julie Ford thanked those who helped with the Haven yard sale. The Cat Coalition yard sale will be this Saturday.

For Clay pots see George Holman after the meeting.

Minutes from May General Meeting continued:

'Pruning 101' by Dr. Beau Brodbeck from the Cooperative Extension

Dr. Brodbeck was born and raised in Guatemala on a coffee plantation. The Tree Inventory Project in partnership with Mississippi State and Auburn University is a movement to quantify trees to put into the Forest Service model. Several Master Gardeners helped with the project.

Structural Pruning and guiding young trees to become the functional tree in our landscape: Why prune? Pruning promotes health, encourages the intended purpose of the trees in the landscape, improves their appearance, protects people and property from storm damage and increases a tree's storm resilience. Trees are not repairable. Great landscape trees are guided or 'built'. Success is extremely dependent on starting while the trees are young and being consistent with your pruning. Great city and landscape trees are guided or built and there are some A300 pruning standards.

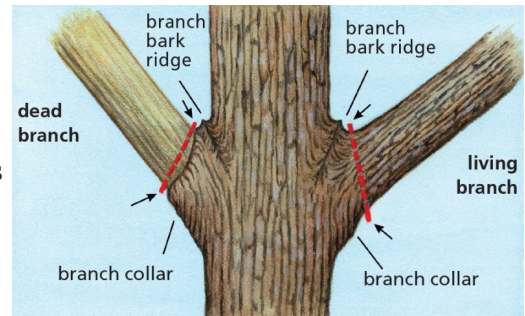
Preventive pruning: Good form; principles of strong structure, one dominant trunk, strong branch unions and balanced canopy. Ideal branches are at positions of about 10 and 2 o'clock.

Objective of pruning: Reduce structural issues that can cause problems.

Bark ridge is a good indicator of a good branch attachment.

A branch collar is another good indicator.

You don't want to see co-dominant stems. So why are co-dominant stems bad? The tree is weakened. A perfect example of a tree susceptible to co-dominant stems is the Bradford Pear. They have steep branches that peel off. If one side peels out the tree is done. Take it out. A weak union that is 'v' shaped.



Don't allow large branches low in the canopy. Remove low branches for clearance. Why are large low limbs a problem? Big cuts can result in decay and cracks. The tree diverts energy to close off the cut. The tree only has so much energy. It takes it away from root growth. Low and big cuts can be avoided with pruning early. Temporary branches can be easily removed when trees are young. Objectives: prune to promote strong structure.

Structural Pruning Strategies:

1. Develop or maintain a dominant leader.
2. Prevent branches below the permanent canopy from growing too large.
3. Keep all branches less than $\frac{1}{2}$ the trunk diameter.
4. Suppress growth on branches with included bark.

Pruning dose: the amount of live tissue removed at one pruning.

The pruning dose depends on size, age and health of the tree.

A low pruning dose ($< 20\%$) is used with mature or recently planted trees, cooler climates with short growing season, or decay prone species.

Higher pruning doses ($> 20\%$) are used on young establish trees, warm climate trees where trees have a longer growing season, and trees that are good compartmentalizers.

Branch size: Proportion relative to trunk, actual diameter of stem. With less than $\frac{1}{2}$ trunk diameter there are fewer consequences. Reduce all branches greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ trunk diameter.

Topping trees is not a good idea. The tree responds to topping or heading cuts. Dormant buds flush out. We get rot in the hard wood, and the little branches will peel out.



Tools to keep for pruning: by-pass pruners to cut diameters $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 inch.

Loppers for cutting 1 to 2 inches.

Double serrated saw.

Value your trees; don't use chain saws to prune.

Two types of cuts:

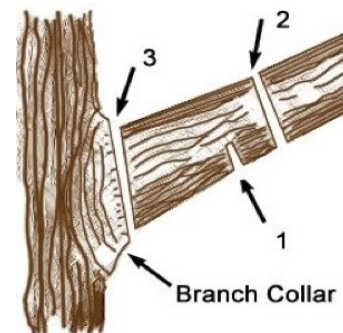
A Reduction Cut shortens the length of the stem by pruning back to a smaller limb. Select a good leader. Reduce and/or remove all branches or stems competing with the one selected to be the leader. Identify the stem that will reduce growth rate of low aggressive branches. Reduce wind loading by shortening problem branches. Pick a branch at least 1/3 the diameter of branch removed. You can guide a tree to have branching higher in the tree.

A Removal Cut prunes back to the trunk. 'Swollen knuckle' is where you cut. Perpendicular to the bark ridge is where to make the cut. You can see who has been well trained by how well it seals. A flush cut is a bad cut. They will be oval and takes more time to grow back. Entire branch removal removes too much canopy. It will leave large open wounds. Use the technique when buying trees. Anything that has weight to it, you will need to do a 'three point cut'. This cut is used when removing an entire limb. The first cut in the 'three cut method' is under the branch, second cut is above the branch and third cut is at the point you want the tree to be cut off. Young trees are fairly forgiving.

Structural pruning is a three step process;

- Have a pruning plan for the first five years.
- Most branches are temporary
- Do not remove more than 35% of live foliage at a pruning visit.

Always look up before you plant a tree. The only time not to prune is spring because the sap will be rising. Prune during the dormant season before the spring leaves come out. The tree needs the energy to put out new leaves. Pruning paints cause more trouble than the good they might do.



Gordon Cooper closed the meeting for John, who had to leave early. The winner of the door prize was Danny Powell. Gayle Floyd motioned for adjournment and Don Ouellette seconded and the meeting was adjourned.

Place your contributed article here....

It is time for your star to shine!

2016 July Award Luncheon—July 14

Social time begins at 10:30, and lunch will begin promptly at 11, with the program to follow.

The church is just off the corner of Greeno Road and scenic Highway 98, south of Fairhope. Fried chicken will be served. Please bring your side dish or dessert to share. If you have questions, contact Tampa Sykora at 421-8055. See ya there!



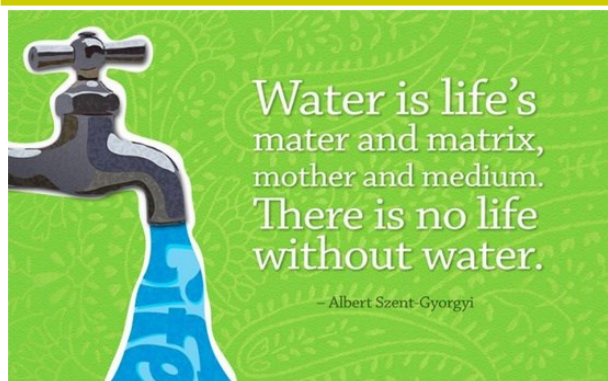
The speaker for June is Curtis Spencer of Curtis' Landscaping and irrigation. He will talk about whether to irrigate or not and what to expect from your landscape.

There will be a **Facebook Workshop** on June 15 at the auditorium at 104, dealing with social networking. We now have a Baldwin County Master Gardeners Facebook page which will share updates and useful information. If you are already on Facebook and have not yet 'like-d' the page, please do so. If you are not on Facebook or if you feel you need more expertise in using it please come to the workshop. It will be from 10-noon Wednesday, June 15. Please bring whichever device you use to access the internet. If you only use a desktop, come anyway and sit with someone who has a tablet or laptop.

We will deal with setting up a Facebook account, dealing with privacy and security issues, and using Facebook. In addition, we will explain a useful group messaging app for smartphones that will allow you to receive important BCMG notices.

The workshop will be presented by Laurel Fleming, Joni Euler, and Marilyn Mannhard.

Hope to see lots of you there.



It is with great sorrow that I report we have lost two of our longtime members (since 1995) within the last month. Harold 'Ross' Bollen died in May, closely followed by his wife, Urte Erika Bollen. I am sure there is a special place in heaven for these two warm, gracious people, that were always ready to volunteer. They will be missed...

Grass Roots is compiled and edited by Barb Mühl Comstock. The publisher is Sandra Walton at the Baldwin County ACES office in Bay Minette. The newsletter is available before the monthly general meeting on our website: www.baldwincountymastergardeners.com.

Submission of articles, items of interest, photos of BCMG events, garden tips, garden jokes, etc. are greatly encouraged and appreciated. Send to grassrootsnews@gmail.com



Baldwin County Master Gardeners
% Baldwin County Extension Office
302-A Byrne Street
Bay Minette, AL 36506
Attn: Sandra Walton

Next meeting: June 9

Location: 104

Curtis Landscaping on Irrigation.

If your contact information changes, please contact BCMG
bcmginfo12@gmail.com