



July 2016

Volume XXIV Issue VII



NEWSLETTER OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

WWW.BALDWINCOUNTYMASTERGARDENERS.COM

2015 BCMG Elected Board

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John Fitzhugh

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Sharon Thoele

Finance Committee Chair:

Gordon Cooper

Intern Class Coordinator

Pam Tucker

Outreach Coordinator

Tany Waldron

Projects Chairperson

Gary Wallace

Merchandising Purchase Chair

Maura Daniell

President's Notes by John Fitzhugh

Congratulations to all of our 2016 Interns for successfully completing the Alabama Master Gardener Program and earning your badge. You are a very talented bunch with much to offer to the Baldwin County community. Each of you brings a unique set of skills, knowledge and experiences to our organization to help us continue the success we have achieved over the past 25 years in serving Baldwin County.

I hope that over the past several weeks during your internship, you have found areas of volunteer service that interest you and are personally rewarding. I would hazard a guess that if you are like most of the master gardeners in my intern class, you have found that you "like to work in the dirt." Of course, we always welcome volunteers who like to work in our green houses, plant sales and community garden projects, but we also have a critical need for new volunteers who are willing to take active leadership roles on the Board of Directors, and on committees such as the Fall Educational Seminar, Monthly Programs, Grassroots Newsletter, Finance, Helpline, and Hospitality. I urge all of our new master gardeners not to shy away from investigating these important jobs and activities. To get a feel for what goes on behind the scenes in running our organization, I would like to invite you to attend monthly board meetings, which are held the first Thursday of each month.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Awards Luncheon on July 14th at Barnwell Baptist Church. This is sure to be another fun event with good food and tons of awards to be made to interns and master gardeners who have contributed so much to the success of our organization.

As a parting word of encouragement to some of our senior gardeners, remember what Jack Benny once said.... *"Age is strictly mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."*

July Award Ceremony and Membership Luncheon**July 14, 2016**

Social time at 10:30, Meeting and lunch begins at 11 am.

Barnwell Baptist Church in Fairhope

Fried chicken will be provided, along with rolls, coffee and tea.

Please bring a dish to share.

General Membership Meeting Minutes

The general membership meeting was called to order by President, John Fitzhugh, on June 9, 2016, with comments.



Mike McQueen of the Alabama extension service announced state awards for 2015, 207 hours for 2015 for Myra Lassere. Lifetime Hours Award for 9062 hours since 2004 went to Tany Waldron. Tany will receive a lifetime membership.

Busy Bee of the month went to Pat Greer for the bios on the interns published in the Grass Roots, and to Le Cossette, Chairman of the Long Leaf Pine Project Committee, for his work on the Long Leaf Pine Project for weeding everything himself, and managing the irrigation.

Sam Andrews announced the winners of this years scholarship awards for 2016. Two awards were given. Alicia Gouci, Sophomore at Auburn majoring in Bioengineering. She won the award last year as well. A Fairhope graduate, Dylan Taylor will be a Freshman at Auburn. He will be in South America on a work study program so will not be here in July. Each will receive a \$2500 scholarship. The students are very appreciative of this amount of money. It enables two very worthy students, with a fiscal need, to go to school.

Tampa Sykora talked about the awards luncheon on July 14. We will gather at 10:00 and have lunch at 11:00. There are a lot of awards to give out this year, and several are close to receiving an award. Get those hours in soon. It will be a fun time and we will have fried chicken.

Marilyn Mannhard announced the social media workshop to be held Wednesday the 15th of June. 10:00 to 12:00 here at 104. Bring whatever devices that you have. They will help you to use Facebook and an app for talking to groups on social media. You will be able to connect to social media.

Sharon Thoele read a letter that she received from Angie Miles at 'Under His Wings'. They feel really good about what they have accomplished [on their garden] and have learned a lot. They also thanked us for patience and love. And [they] would love to do it again next year. A beautiful letter. Several girls also made comments on the letter. Sharon thanked everyone who has worked on the committee.

On the Baldwin County ARC project. Any volunteer will have to have a background check, TB test, drug screen and three hours of classes at their expense. It is certainly a worthwhile project that could benefit BCMG.

Shasta has asked John to announce that the Helpline door has been left unlocked several times. Please lock the door if your relief person does not show up. They can get Shasta to open the door for them.

[General Meeting Minutes for June continues on next page.]

Myra Lassere announced that our accounts were hacked for \$2674.00 and the FBI is now involved. If you receive emails it should say AMGA or BCMG. If you don't know the person sending [the email] or if it says "you need to see this" [the email should be] deleted. Most the vendors were paid before they left the meeting. It was advised to not send money online and don't send money anywhere without calling to verify.

Ron Hevereson, the first President of BGMC visited today.

Mike McQueen announced a bee project in Baldwin County that may need our help. They are looking for the kinds of bees in Baldwin County. They have kits for collecting samples of bees in people's yards. They have done extensive studies in California, but never done it in the deep south.

Diana Spillman announced an Informational and Fun Day on Aug. 20, [organized by] Belforest Fire Department. She would really like to see the Master Gardener's participate in this event, which is reaching out to all of those living in the Belforest Fire District.

Also Barbara Miles is a guest today from Tennessee.

Diane Alaman announced that Marietta Johnson School for Organic Education had a garden project to build raised beds for the school. The project ran from February through May of 2016. Diane Alaman lead the project. Theresa Sims sited the garden and gave the site orientation for the beds. Master gardeners and members of the 2016 Intern class taught classes and helped the students plant the beds with vegetables and strawberries. The classes included; making compost, growing earthworms, pesticides verses organic insect control, cleaning and sharpening garden tools, basic botany and the use of battery garden tools verses gas powered tools. The teacher was Laura Belkay and the class included children ages 7 years to 14 years. The school is located in Fairhope. Dooley Berry wrote a very nice article for the school in the newspaper. They have a beautiful raised bed garden with producing vegetables now. Gardening books were also donated to the school. Myra Lassere asked for pounds or values of the produce or estimates for sending into the state for our projects.

Sharon Thoele introduced her sister, Rosemarie, who has been visiting since April and has worked on the project at 'Under His Wings'.

Ed Pickle announced that members should go to the BCMG website to see the list of speakers and topics on the Speakers Bureau. There are three new speakers from the new graduating class and six new topics. Gulf Shores Garden Club wants an expert on roses to speak to their club.

Tanys and Myra received their awards and pictures were taken. Tanys thanked the club with a nice speech.

John Fitzhugh announced Ross and Urta Bollen's passing in May. He about the 15th and her about the 25th. Many members were surprised. They are fondly remembered by many who knew them well. They are buried locally.

Our speaker today is Curtis Spenser of Spenser Landscape Inc. on the topic of irrigation. He is an agricultural engineer. Started in this business with installing sprinkler systems and has now done 100's of sprinkler systems all over the county. A few years later he hired a man that got him into landscaping.

Mechanics of a Sprinkler System:

Pipe size

Darcy Weisbach Formula: Pressure lost is inversely proportional to the square of the pipe diameter

1 inch can handle 18-19 gallons per minute (GPM)

¾ inch can handle 12 GPM

Zoning

Plants with similar water requirements should be group together

All shrubs may be on one zone and sod areas on another.

Use more wire than the zones you have so that you can add zones. The pvc pipe lasts 20 years. For the price it is worth it because the thin stuff breaks easily. Spray heads are on different timers than routers.

[Continued on next page]

Types of systems

- Manual
 - Less expensive but requires more operation
- Electronic
 - Composed of digital controller and electric valves in the landscape
 - Controller can be set by homeowner for:
 - Time of operation
 - Amount of Water
 - Days of Week



You can zone your yards according to whatever you like but don't have them come on at the same time.

Example

To apply two inches of water per week:

Shrub areas set for 20 minutes, three times per week Summer (Mar 2 times a week, Winter 1 time per week)

Grass areas set for 30 minutes three times per week

A device called a rain check that can be wired into to controller and has a cup or leather disc to stop the controller. Cheaper to install when you are first putting in your system. (Site 1 up on 64 in Daphne usually has the Rainbird brand.) Stuff malfunctions. They have wireless ones.

Water Source:

Water meters

3/4 inch meter can provide 19-20 GPM Cost 570

1 inch meter can provide up to 30 GPM Cost \$1000

Sprinkler meters do not have a sewer charge (City must install second meter)

Water well

Cost of 1 horsepower (HP) \$2400 (with this type you only pay for electricity, you are not paying for water) You will need a filter if you have drip zones.

Drip systems - Composed of :

- Filter
- Pressure regulator (you can buy the filter and regulator together)
- Tubing
- Emitters (all different kinds of emitters, bubbler, actual spray)

New Technologies:

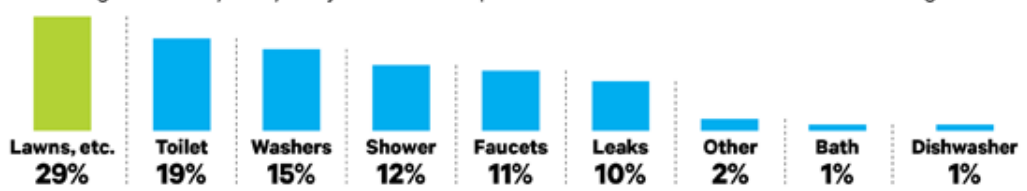
Fertigation—Fertilizer added through irrigation systems (mainly reserved for business)

WiFi controlled irrigation controllers—Based on weather day, plant water requirements, soil type, and sun or shade.

Motion made to adorn and passed.

Where Our Water Goes

The chart shows water usage in the average U.S. household, which taps about 255 gallons per day, according to an analysis by Benjamin D. Inskeep and Shahzeen Z. Attari in Environment Magazine.



Source: Environment Magazine, July-August 2014.

Watering and Nurturing

Some people think that having an irrigation system in our yard solves the problem of watering, but that's not so. It makes the grass happy and it makes Jim happy but it doesn't always make the flowers and Paula happy. Some people might also think, "Poor Paula, her children live so far away." But remember, I can find happiness anywhere.

Right now, I have several hundred of my children blooming in my yard. And, since I was born to nurture, I spend a lot of time carrying for my flower children. Every day there is something to do: pulling oak and Taiwan cherry trees, using the pump sprayer with my handy dandy Roundup/woody stem poison, crawling under bushes to find if there are more things to murder before they get big, actually weeding when necessary, planting, moving pots to a better spot, checking plants for disease and, in general, just patrolling the yard.

The other big job is watering. Not all plants are created equal. Some are big and strong and can handle anything. When I have a lot of one thing, I like to plant it in multiple places so it can tell me what is best for it. And there is the problem. Each little plant child, has its own special water needs. Newly planted flower children need extra water until they are happy living on our estate. The bed at the mailbox and the one just across the driveway from the mailbox and the flowerbed near the street on the north side of our driveway seem to need careful monitoring. Impatiens could be watered all day long.

Last spring, when Jim had his knee surgery, I got a wagon to help me with my work. I put tubs in my wagon and filled them with well water and dragged them all over the yard and used an ice cream bucket to water flowers. I was happy with it because I had seen my daddy water hundreds of hours using a five-gallon bucket. He had much more arm strength and everything else strength than I do. I enjoyed watering the old-fashioned way and spending time outside in the quiet, watering and thinking of things to write stories about. Of course, Jim wanted to help me and make some kind of motorized sprayer. But, I said "no" because that is what he says I always tell him until I think for five minutes or a year, whichever comes first. As you know, Jim isn't interested in quiet or the old-fashioned way of doing jobs!

We have a 15 gallon sprayer that is attached to the back of the four-wheeler. I drive the four-wheeler and Jim walks around and uses the wand to spray bushes with insecticide, horticultural oil or disease control spray. We have had two seasons to work on my four-wheeler driving skills. A few days ago, that would be a year later than Jim mentioned it; I told him I was ready to use the 15 gallon sprayer to water flowers. He thought it was a good idea.

Later that morning, he went to Lowe's to buy what must be only type saw he didn't already own. That was my clue to get busy and water flowers. Surprise! A small number of times, I can figure out things by myself in the quiet. Shortly after he left for Lowe's, I was riding and watering. I learned immediately that the cap needed to be on the sprayer before I drove off. I had taught previously that it is bad form to run over the very long hose of the sprayer. I learned that the nozzle tip we used for spraying was not adequate for watering. Good old Jim. When he got home from Lowe's he went to his shop and found another nozzle tip to put on the hose. He showed me how I could make it tighter on looser to control the spray but to *never, never* make it so loose that the water pressure could force it to come off.

I happily used not one, but two tanks of spray that first morning. It was so much fun I decided to do it again yesterday. But, alas, midway into my first tank of water that damn blasted tip of the sprayer disappeared into thin air. As my mother taught me, don't confess unless you have to. I needed a new tip so I confessed. Jim was a rude but went into his shop and found a tip that he didn't know he had. When he found it, he apologized for making a mean face at me. He said he hadn't realized he had another one. I thought he meant another mean face. He meant he hadn't realized he had another tip. See how things really get confused at our house. Next, we will add water soluble fertilizer so I can have even more fun.

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Watering and Nurturing

[Continued...]

Nurturing - It is important that I continue practicing my nurturing skills. Lately, Amy's cup has been running over with the cute things Michael does. Last week, she brought him home from kindergarten and while she headed into the house he dashed back into the garage for something. They ate lunch and then played with Legos on the floor. Later, she realized that he had been playing with a key at the time. Apparently, he put a padlock on one of the spindles of their new staircase. And now, you know what he ran back into the garage to grab. Little Precious has no idea where he put the key. John told Amy that Michael playing with a key should be an alert to her brain since Michael doesn't have anything to lock. Have no fear; John didn't hurt Amy's feelings because she knows that when John was growing up he was the champion of "doing things that he shouldn't." Anyway, still no key. I told Amy that when she OD's on cuteness, Michael can come live with me. This is between me and Amy. She knows I didn't check with Grumpy.

Paula Pritchett

May 25, 2016

Back Saving Tips for Gardeners

Paraphrased from an article on www.DavesGarden.com, <http://davesgarden.com/guides/articles/printstory.php?rid=0&bn=%2Farticles%2F10-back-saving-tips-for-gardeners>

Gardening isn't easy on your back. Here are some back saving gardening tips to help you stay limber and strong.

1. Core Strength

The best way to protect your back is a strong core. A daily abdominal workout routine goes a long way towards a healthy back. Your workout doesn't have to be intense, and there are hundreds of free workout routines on the internet to choose from. A strong core also comes with other benefits, including better posture and more endurance for gardening tasks.

2. Body Mechanics

As tired as I am of hearing the phrase, "always bend and lift with your legs," it is good advice. Proper body mechanics while gardening prevents back injuries and strain. It does require thinking about your actions. Take a moment to consider a strenuous task and determine the best way to accomplish it instead of jumping straight in.

3. Leverage

A lot can be accomplished with the right amount of leverage. Adding length to a tool handle like a wrench makes it easy to loosen a stubborn bolt. All you need is a sturdy piece of piping to slip over the handle, and, of course, WD-40.

4. Attainable Goals

Set attainable goals for yourself. The only thing worse than being limited by back pain is hurting yourself further, taking you out of the garden for days or even weeks. If you have a serious back injury or suffer from chronic back pain, your garden goals are going to need to accommodate that. Instead of planting a 1/4 acre of potatoes by hand, consider cutting back or try growing your potatoes in barrels.

5. Stretch Breaks

I can easily spend a few hours on my knees transplanting or weeding without giving a thought to my body, something I regret the minute I stand up. Stretch breaks are important no matter what your hobby, but they are especially crucial for gardeners. Take a moment to stretch out your back and legs. This limbers you up, preventing and soothing muscle and back pain and increasing your efficiency. Plus it feels really good!

6. Ergonomic Set-Up

Since new backs weren't available at the hardware store, I had to alter my routine to accommodate my back. Despite my attachment to my farm's set-up, I forced myself to examine my garden and figure out where I could make things easier on my back.

Where possible, I switched to raised beds for my vegetables and containers for my herbs, limiting the distance I had to bend down to work from. I switched to using long-handled tools, especially for weeding, and tried to keep up on the weeds so that I didn't need to bend down to pull out stubborn dandelions. I made sure my tools were the appropriate weight and length for both me and the job, and when they weren't, I broke down and bought a more appropriate tool.

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The most important change I made was to storage. I downsized my storage bins and put weight limits on them for myself. While I previously prided myself on my ability to tote 50 pound of root vegetables around, now I limited the bins to 35 pounds. I also no longer stack heavy bins higher than my waist. While this took up more space, I don't regret it for a minute.

7. Stack the Deck

I like to do my own lifting even with a bad back. The secret to my success is simple - stacking. If I am storing vegetables or rearranging a cooler, I stack bins so that I only have to lift things a short distance at a time.

The flip side of this is slightly more costly. Purchasing large, bulk items is cheaper. Buying smaller bags of fertilizer or potting soil costs more. They are also lighter and easier to transport. Sometimes you have to swallow the cost or accept help.

8. Listen To Your Body

You are the best judge of your own strength. When your body starts to twinge, take a break to stretch or call it a day. Pushing through back pain is not like pushing through the burn of a workout. There is nothing to gain, only pain. Rest when your body demands it and pace yourself.

9. Ask For Help

This was the hardest thing for me to learn. It took throwing my back out a few more times before I understood that there is no shame in asking for help. What was shameful was confessing that I had knowingly pushed myself past my limits and lost valuable time in my garden.

McMillan Bluff Summer Haircut

Several MGS and Daphne volunteers have been working at the McMillan Bluff Bay Access in Daphne to prepare this small public park to survive the summer heat. Small groups have been working over several weeks to do some light pruning, removing invasive plants, weeding and re-mulching the native plants in in this 30' wide by 150'deep bay access. Many Eastern Shore residents use this popular bay access and are very appreciative that Master Gardeners along with local volunteers keep this area up. If any MG would be interested in helping with this hands-on MG project, Please let Julian Walthall, project coordinator, know.



Front row (from left) Reba Cunningham, "C" Fogarty, Back row (from left) Julian Walthall, Charlie Parris, Mike White, Mark Lammon, Carolyn Walthall

'Go Wild, Go Native'

Fall Seminar

October 27, 2016

Fairhope Civic Center

It isn't too early to be thinking about our fall seminar. The planning team is headed by Sharon Thoele with Paula Pritchett as the co-chair. A recent planning meeting included attendance by Bernie Fogarty, Tanys Waldron, Laurel Fleming, Joyce Price, and Terri Withee.

The speakers are Mark Ballard and Ben Raines.

This year we are enlisting the help of individual years' intern classes to make garden baskets for raffles, I am sure the competition between different graduate years will be hot and heavy.

The fall seminar is an important public outreach and educational opportunity. We should all do our part to reach out to neighbors, friends, members of garden clubs or those with environmental interests to encourage their attendance.

please volunteer when asked to contribute your skills, time, experience, etc., toward making the fall seminar a success,

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

We have many Baldwin County Master Gardener projects: Please check with Project Chair persons to volunteer where needed.

Fall Seminar, October 27th. Coordinators Sharon Thoele and Paula Pritchett

Fall Seminar kitchen, Check with Tanys Waldron for volunteer opportunities.

Fall Native Plant Sale: Check with Fred or Maureen Nation for ways you can help.

Check with Diana Alaman for volunteering to help advise on the planting of the fall garden at the Marietta Johnson School for Organic Education.

July Award Ceremony Luncheon

July 14, 2016

Social time at 10:30, Meeting and lunch begins at 11 am.

Barnwell Baptist Church in Fairhope

Fried chicken will be provided, along with rolls, coffee and tea.

Please bring a dish to share.



This issue of **Grass Roots** is compiled and edited by Barb Comstock. Future issues will be compiled and edited by Lynn Andrews. 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: July 14,
2016

Location: Barnwell Baptist
Church in Fairhope.
Award Ceremony and
Membership Luncheon.

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changes, please contact
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