

GRASS ROOTS

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

May 2007

Volume XV Issue V



Meet Your Volunteers—Lowe's, Wolf Bay, Foley Rose Trail

By Tany Waldron

March is definitely the month for Master Gardener Volunteers. Every weekend was busy. This is the month when MG's should take a multi vitamin twice a day because they need double the energy.

Master Gardener Volunteers were seen everywhere in Baldwin County and also seen working hard in Mobile as well. The projects were Lowe's Outreach in Malbis, our Plant Sale at Weeks Bay, Festival of Flowers at Providence Hospital in Mobile, Wolf Bay Plant Sale in Miflin, the City of Foley's Rose Trail Dedication Day, the Mobile Master Gardener Continuing Education Seminar, the plant sale at South Baldwin Center for Technology, the plant sale at the Daphne High School and the Board meeting at the Five Rivers Delta Center.

In between all of these volunteer opportunities, the usual Master Gardener events were held as well, the Thursday monthly meeting and the four weeks of Intern training classes. In case you did not have time to notice during the month of March, the Azaleas bloomed, the grass turned green and a great many weeds enjoyed sprouting in your lawn.



L-R: Barbara Carlson, Frieda Romanchuk, Selena Vaughn at Lowe's Outreach Booth with two customers

Lowe's Outreach Booth

The month started early with the Outreach Information Booth at the new Lowe's

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President's Corner

by Sam Andrews

May 16 is "graduation day" for our 27-28 member Intern class. These individuals, as they complete their volunteer hour commitments, will have earned their Master Gardener designation. They become one of us. Please welcome these new members and help them get involved in our Info-Line, Projects and Monthly Meetings. Be a "Buddy" make them welcome, offer them friendship... and a job! Oh, and see you at the May 16th Intern Lunch!

Recently, your Board had a special meeting to discuss:

- The Extension's first priority Info-Line mandate.
- Refocusing on our BCMG gardening purpose.
- Improving our volunteer effectiveness in

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Meeting Minutes

by Ronnie Zak (for Ann Pierce)

The BCMG monthly meeting, held at the Auburn Substation on Highway 104 in Fairhope, Alabama was called to order by our President, Sam Andrews, at 10:00 a.m.

Before our program began, Rosemary Hart announced that, as a member of the Montrose Garden Club, she wanted to tell us they were going to be doing another book "In Full Bloom". Please let her know if you have any plants in your garden that do well in Mobile and Baldwin counties and if you would be willing for someone from the club to visit you and take pictures for the new publication.

At 10:05 a.m., Rebecca Trosclair introduced our speaker, Sam Renfroe, and his program "A Year in the Rose Garden".

The general meeting resumed at 10:35 a.m. with our President announcing the new Busy Bee Awardee—Selena Vaughn. Congratulations, Selena!!!

Since our Treasurer, Jane Wright, was not in attendance, there was no Treasurer's Report, except that we had a closing balance at the end of March of \$27,462.04.

Sam announced that orders for Tee Shirts and Polo Shirts would be taken after today's meeting. Tee Shirts are \$15.00 and Polo Shirts are \$29.00, with the XXL and XXXL's being a few dollars more.

The current Intern class will graduate on May 16 with their presentations, followed by lunch. Please come and support this great new class!

The Mobile Master Gardeners are taking a trip to Petals from the Past on May 8, and they have room on their bus if any of our members are interested. The cost is \$15.00, which includes lunch at Petals. Call Irene Ellis at (251) 661-5146 by May 1, if you are interested.

Harry Anderson announced that we received six scholarship applications for the \$500.00 level and none for the \$1,000.00 level. The committee is in the process of making the selection – five of the six will receive a \$500.00 scholarship.

Mark your calendar for October 4—Pat Libby is working on a program for

that date at Faulkner.

Marilyn Mannhard reminded everyone to e-mail her an up-to-date report on your project. She is also planning to set up a binder with each project proposal for our library.

Harry Kohler needs volunteers for the Infoline. He has worked with several interns and is impressed by their knowledge and interest. He also needs "on-call" volunteers. The volunteer shortage is serious and may cause the Infoline to be shut down. Please consider volunteering.

Sarah Rankin had good news. She currently has two outstanding proposals in the works – Gulf Coast RC&D (Resource, Conservation & Development) has given us \$2,500.00 towards irrigation at Weeks Bay. \$700.00 was received from the AL Master Gardeners for the same project, \$500.00 from the BCMG, and \$500.00 from the Weeks Bay Volunteers. Maureen Nation is taking bids for this new irrigation system. When all this work is completed, a new arboretum will be started, with Alabama Power hopefully providing trees.

Sarah would be happy to write up any grant requests for projects in which we might wish to get involved.

Tanys Waldron announced that the Earth Fest on April 21 at 5 Rivers needs volunteers for the Delta tours, which will be scripted. There will be lots of speakers and activities for everyone. She also has a sign up sheet for Aprons at \$15-\$20.00

Crystal Oates with the Baldwin County Extension Office and the person in charge of the Environmental Education Program is recruiting volunteers for the 2007-2008 school program. Call the Extension Office for more information.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. There is 30 minutes of Continuing Education credit for today's speaker.

President's Corner

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pursuit of our goals.

- Reviewing project standards and relevance.
- Considering a process for approving new projects.

This was a complex agenda. However, the most important discussion was about our Extension-mandated Info-Line project.

The Extension Service goes to the considerable time and expense of turning each of us into Master Gardeners. This appellation next to our names is an honored and respected designation in the wider community -- even in these cynical times.

One reason why being a Master Gardener is such a "big deal" to our communities, friends and ourselves is because we give back so much knowledge and volunteerism to the gardening hungry public.

In 2007, people increasingly are disconnected from nature, from their "natural" selves. Few, commuting to work or living in cities, find the spiritual grounding and the connection to the natural way of life that our ancestors lived. Even though they too were not "natural", farming and herding gave even our grandparents fulfillment and less stressful lives.

The Info-Line is a big part of our gardening outreach efforts. It also supports the Extension's mission. This is the reason why we were made Master Gardeners in the first place.

Volunteer once a month, twice a year, or as a "back-up", but support your Extension's Gardening Outreach. It is important.

Too many of our long-time, always volunteering members, are carrying our organization in the Extension's mandatory telephone Outreach program. Keep our Info-Line effort staffed. Do not let the reliable few always do this job. Volunteer! You either go forward or go back. Keep earning your Master Gardener badge and repay the public and our Extension Service for the esteem in which you are held.



Projects Report

By Marilyn Mannhard

Bon Secour Refuge Project

Submitted by Harry Anderson

We are still recruiting volunteers for this project. We have planted a small bed at the entrance to the Jeff Friend Trail and will plant the large main bed as soon as the plants arrive. We will be planting mostly mature plants which are being purchased from the Greenhouse on Hwy 90 in Loxley. They are being obtained from Dodd and Dodd in Semmes. The manager of the Greenhouse will deliver the plants to the Refuge. All are native plants and will require regular watering until they are established. We are also moving plants from areas where they are no longer needed. Some plants are being donated by individuals as well. This is a joint project with BCMG, Bon Secour Wildlife Refuge Reserve, and Friends of the Reserve making up the group. We will maintain a presence at the Reserve until all plants are stabilized and replant as needed. Plants will require weeding and watering through the summer and into the fall.

Daphne's D'Olive Park Alligator Alley Butterfly Garden

Submitted by Frieda Romanchuk

This project is once again in high gear. By the May 6 Beautification Meeting we should have a conceptual drawing for the parking area to include an open fence, irrigation, trees, bushes, and plants (TBD), and a sidewalk from the southernmost part of the parking area to connect with the Eastern Shore Trailblazer's concrete walk to the entry of the AA boardwalk. Fencing will also be used along the walkway to offer protection from the drop-off between the parking area and the Trailblazer's trail. Above ground irrigation will run from U.S. 98 to at least I-10 at this time. Fred Nation is to meet with Selena Vaughn to note the trees and plants that exist as well as to plan for native plants to go under the loblolly pines on the hillside. Long leaf pines will be added to a bare, eroding area.

We hope to have a project for the Junior Master Gardeners as well in this area. There is a proposal by a Daphne Boy Scout, Robert Colville, to plan, implement, and irrigate a butterfly garden in the section between I-10 East and the Exit 35 ramp to Daphne and Fairhope; he is awaiting the approval of his Eagle Scout project by the Boy Scout Council. The butterfly plant seeds provided and planted by the state in early February in flat open areas near the interstate overpasses are a "wait-and-see" in progress. Translated: When Daphne Public Works had a reassignment of duties, no one told the new person cutting the grass in early April not to mow in those areas. Thus, we will wait and see if any butterfly attracting perennial flowers grow! The Trailblazers received a tree grant for the walkway area north of the interstate up to the end of the causeway; tentatively on April 28 pines will be planted in that area. Master Gardeners involved in this project through the Daphne Beautification Committee are Selena Vaughn, Frieda Romanchuk, and intern Toni James.

Lillian Recreational Park

Submitted by Jan Sanders

Along with the spring rains have come lots of weeds, so we've been busy with maintenance of all the gardens. Thanks to our volunteers, the park is looking better than ever. We can always use more volunteers, so give us a call at 961-1530 if you want to help out. The Bill and Mary Dodd Native Azalea Garden is still blooming--come on by and enjoy.

Junior Master Gardeners

Submitted by Amy Cockrell

We are about to come to a close for the school year for the Baldwin Buds Junior Master Gardener group. Our group is comprised of a broad age range of homeschooled kids from the Baldwin County area, and is a sub-group of the 5thH-4H group in the area. This year each of the families involved in the JMG

group made and are growing Square Foot Gardens. It has been a big success and several families involved have told me how much their kids have enjoyed and learned from the project. A few months ago we also started an email loop through Yahoogroups.com and Harry Anderson agreed to be our group mentor. If any of us has a question, we email it to the group and Harry shares his gardening expertise with us by responding back with the info that we need. Many thanks to Harry! I've had several families tell me how much they appreciate that help.

Marilyn's Comments

As you can tell, there is a lot going on this time of year. We are currently working on a new project proposal form and will get that to you as soon as it is finished. I would like to encourage everyone to stay involved with their projects and also consider volunteering to work outreach and Infoline. Both are critical to our continued existence as a viable master gardener group and we need to give them our full support. I worked the outreach booth at the dedication of the Foley Rose Trail, and it was a wonderful experience. Also, every time I work Infoline, I learn so much and enjoy that experience as well. I would like to congratulate the interns in this class for all the effort they have put in so far. They are doing an excellent job.

Intern Class Presentations, Graduation & Lunch

Our Intern Class Presentations, Graduation and Luncheon will be held on May 16, 2007.

Please make every effort to come and show your support for our new Master Gardeners!



Plant of the Month—Centipede Lawn Grass

By Tanys Waldron

“Folks who would rather golf than mow grass have centipede lawns.” This quote comes from the book entitled “Alabama Gardener’s Guide” written by Jennifer Greer. This very informative gardening book can be borrowed from the Master Gardener Library at the Robertsdale Information Line Office.

Centipede grass (*Eremochloa ophiuroides*) is known as a “lazy man’s grass” as it grows low and slow. Hence, it requires less mowing and little fertilizer. It is a medium green color, moderately textured turfgrass and grows in poor and highly acidic soils. Centipede is moderately drought resistant. It goes dormant in winter, turning straw-colored.

Centipede grass was introduced into the USA in 1919 from China and is sometimes referred to as “China grass” or “Chinese lawngrass”. Centipede grass is a slow-growing perennial turfgrass that spreads by stolons (above ground stems) that resemble centipedes, hence the name of centipede grass. The popularity of centipede grass as a home lawn turfgrass is due to its low maintenance requirements and its adaptation to either full sun or partial shade conditions.

Do not over-fertilize centipede grass. It needs only a single application of fertilizer each summer in late May or early June. If you have someone in your family (ex: my husband Jim) who loves to put fertilizer on the lawn because that is what makes him or her happy, then it is fine to do an application in May and the second application in late August or early September.

A good all-purpose fertilizer for centipede is 15-0-15. This type of fertilizer does not contain any phosphorus. This is very important because phosphorus may react with iron in the soil and render it unavailable. If your centipede suffers from iron deficiency it will turn yellow which is called iron chlorosis. Centipede grass responds well to supplemental applications of iron. Treat your lawn chlorosis using the chelated or ferrous sulfate iron.

Centipede likes the soil pH to be between 5.0 and 5.5. If your soil pH is high (greater than 6.5) your centipede grass may turn yellow. Correcting or lowering the soil pH can make more

iron available for the centipede grass to use. If controlling soil pH is not feasible or if the soil is naturally deficient in iron, it may be necessary to apply supplemental iron (chelated or ferrous sulfate iron).

Before you start treating your lawn’s health concerns, it makes sense to find out what the problem really is. Go to the lawn doctor—Dr. Soil Test. You need to know the levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium in your soil so you can diagnose your lawn’s health problems correctly. Soil Test kits (tests are \$8.00) will be available at the next monthly meeting on Thursday, May 10th at 10:00 am.

Most of the information in this Centipede article comes from the Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities publication ANR-73. This publication is no longer available as a printed handout, but you can get it online at the www.ACES.edu web site. Go to this web page and type in ANR-73 on the top right side where it says “Search our Site”. It is a four page article and gives excellent advice on Centipede grass. For information on St. Augustine, Zoysia and Bermuda grasses, the six page publication is ANR-262, which is no longer available as a printed handout. ACES is trying to keep their costs down. In the future there will be more publications online and fewer printed handouts.

Centipede grass endures drought conditions quite well. It may turn brown from lack of water, but it will green-up again quickly with rainfall or irrigation. It is recommended to water Centipede grass deeply rather than frequently. Now that your grass is green and healthy, make yourself a cool drink and sit down. Now you have time to watch your flowers grow.

General Schedule of Centipede Maintenance for South Alabama

By James D. Miles, Regional Extension Agent (2005)

February: Apply pre-emerge herbicide.

Watch for Brown Patch; may be contained with fungicides.

April: Aerify compacted soils.

Begin regular mowing.

Once every 5 days if clippings are left on lawn.

Once every 7 days if clippings are removed.

Generally, do not remove more than 1/3 of the grass blade per mowing.

Mow as low as possible without scalping (weekly irrigation is necessary)

Otherwise mow to 1.5 inches high (weekly irrigation may be omitted).

Begin weekly irrigation.

Wet the soil down to 4 to 6 inches.

Best time is between 2:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Continue irrigation if no rain occurs until grass is dormant for the winter.

Map Molecricet activity for future treatments.

May: Fertilize with 15-0-15 @ 6lbs. Per 1000 sq.ft or according to soil test results.

Watch for Spittle Bugs and Chinch Bugs and treat if needed.

June: Apply post-emerge herbicide.

Continue to watch for Spittle Bugs and Chinch Bugs and treat if needed.

July: Fertilize with 15-0-15 @ 6lbs. Per 1000 sq. ft or according to soil test results.

Treat for Molecricet in the areas mapped in April.

Continue to watch for Spittle Bugs and Chinch Bugs and treat if needed.

August: Continue to treat for Molecricet in the areas mapped in April.

September: Winterize weak turf with 5-5-25 @ 4lbs. Per 1000 sq.ft or 0-0-64 @ 4lbs. per 1000 sq. ft. or equivalent.

Watch for Brown Patch; contain with fungicide.

October: Apply pre-emerge herbicide.

Optional: over-seed with rye grass. Note: Not a recommended practice.

Do not use pre-emerge herbicide if over-seeding.

November: Soil test.

December: Lime according to soil test.

Meet Your Volunteers

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Hardware Store in Malbis on Saturday, March 3rd. This was a new Outreach project for Master Gardeners and it was very popular with the Lowe's customers. Selena Vaughn originated the idea and then made it happen. The Lowe's Outreach Information Booth was also held the first Saturday in April and the third time will be the first Saturday in May.

The team at the March Lowe's Booth consisted of coordinator, Selena Vaughn, and her team Sam Andrews, Barbara Carlson, Frieda Romanchuk and Tanys Waldron.

Wolf Bay Plant Sale

The Wolf Bay Plant Sale was held on Friday, March 30 and Saturday, March 31 at the Mifflin Community Center. The Wolf Bay Watershed Watch is a volunteer organization that uses the funds from their Plant Sale to help support the cost of taking samples for water quality reading and to check bacteria levels. On Monday, April 23, 2007 the Wolf Bay Watershed Watch was given by the State of Alabama its highest environmental status. The Alabama Environmental Management Commission granted a portion of Wolf Bay the state's "Outstanding Alabama Water" designation. This designation recognizes the water quality of the bay and its environmental importance as an estuary and sets higher protection standards for the area. This designation took seven years to achieve. Huge congratulations to everyone at the Wolf Bay Watershed for making this Award happen.

The Master Gardeners who volunteered for the Wolf Bay Outreach Information Booth were coordinators Tom Dukes and Tanys Waldron and their team: Cathy Blake, Deborah Calhoun, Margaret Comstock, Gordon Cooper, Carrie Dortch, Linda Florence, Julie Ford, Dawn Garcia, Myra Hannah, Pam Heilmeier, Ann Luscombe, Jessy Mahoney, John Meyer, Lana Silverthorn, Liz Tew, Carol Willis, Edwin Wirgowski and Amy Wright. This was a great group of volunteers



L-R: Marian Currie, Jodie Klugel, Caterina Kenworthy and Jeanette Catlow at Foley Rose Trail Dedication



L-R: Tanys Waldron, Cathy Blake, Tom Dukes, Carol Willis, Jessy Mahoney, and Julie Ford at Wolf Bay Plant Sale

and they easily handled multiple tasks at the Booth. They answered questions and gave out information at the Outreach Booth, helped customers buy the right plants for their type of garden conditions (ex: sun or shade), purchased lots of plants for their own gardens and hung on to our canopy each time it tried to blow away with the gusty winds. Our

two days at Wolf Bay went well and it was the most financially successful plant sale Wolf Bay has had.

Foley Rose Trail Dedication Day

The name for the all day event was "Spring in the Forward City" - Flower & Garden Extravaganza, and it was held at the Foley Heritage Park on the last day of the month, March 31st. The Master Gardeners and Interns who volunteered at the Outreach Booth were coordinators

Marilyn Mannhard and Tanys Waldron and their team: Jeanette Catlow, Marian Currie, Caterina Kenworthy, Jodie Klugel and June McCord. Our Outreach Booth was decorated with eight lovely large blooming azaleas. Many thanks to the Wolf Bay Plant Sale coordinators Tom Dukes and Stan Mahoney (Jessy's husband) for allowing us to borrow azaleas from the Wolf Bay plant sale so that our Foley Outreach Booth could look great. The Outreach Booth was extremely busy and at times there were people lined up to ask questions. Next year "Spring in the Forward City" will be a two day event.

The morning event was the Dedication of the Rose Trail in Heritage Park. The Rose Trail was planted by

Master Gardeners and they were honored in a special ceremony thanking them for all of their hard work. A star attraction on the Rose Trail is a peach colored shrub sized Old Fashion Garden rose hybridized

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Meet our New Crop of Interns

Again this year, we have asked our interns to submit an autobiography so that we can get to know them. Here are several autobiographies from members of this year's class.

~HELEN HOLLANSWORTH~

It was always my husband's life dream to go cruising. So, in 1993, we elected on an early retirement: Paul from GTE, and I was a loan officer with Boatmen's Bank, now Bank of America. We sold everything, including my Acura, the kids, the dog, and the snow shovel.

We left our hometown of Belleville, Illinois and jumped on our Island Packet sailboat at Kentucky Lake. We headed down the Tenn-Tom and cruised around Florida, the Keys and the Abacos in the Bahamas. After two years we purchased a condo in Gulf Shores for a "home base". But, unfortunately, the angels came for Capt. Paul after an 11 month battle with the Big "C". I am grateful he made a home here for me. I revamped my life, sold the sailboat and took up tennis.

After 10 years of condo living, I built a patio home in Foley. Struggling the first year of designing and cultivating my small backyard into 10 little perennial and wild flower gardens, I then discovered the Master Gardeners! I pestered them so much this last year in Robertsdale, they suggested I take this course.

So, I'm delighted to be here! The education is overwhelming! It makes me realize how much I don't know. I'm enjoying getting acquainted with my fellow interns and the expert Master Gardeners. I'm looking forward to gaining as much knowledge as possible to share with others. Thank you Master Gardeners for this wonderful experience!

~JOANN BODREE~

I was born in Pensacola, Florida and lived there, except for the years I attended Florida State University in Tallahassee. My love of flowers was encouraged and nurtured by my mother and grandmother. I remember my mother growing sweet peas on the fence every year. People passing by would stop and ask if she would sell them. She always cut a big bouquet to be taken

home, free of course. My grandmother lived on a farm in Mississippi. She had a vegetable garden every year with a large area set aside for flowers. We were always allowed to cut the flowers and take them inside to be arranged in centerpieces for the table or other special places in the house.

During high school and college, I worked part-time as a floral designer. After graduation from college, I taught school, married Charles Bodree and raised a family of two girls and one boy. I was always on the beautification committee, made May baskets for the May Day Celebrations and sponsored the 4th and 5th grade garden club.

We moved to Soldier Creek in 1977. I have since retired from teaching, but not from loving flowers. Many hours are spent working in my yard. I joined Master Gardeners because I want to continue to learn and share with others my love for flowers, plants, animals and the environment.

~DEBBIE CALHOUN~

I grew up the eldest of five children on a working farm in Western Kentucky where, in addition to a huge garden, we grew corn, wheat, tobacco, various grasses for hay and Hereford cattle. In this rural setting, church, school sports, 4-H and FHA were my social activities.

After graduation from college, I moved to Las Vegas and established the first community school. As a joint project between the school district and the recreation department, this school was utilized as a prototype for the community schools now operated throughout the city. Additionally, I taught high school physical education and English for five years and coached track, basketball and cross country.

To my delight, after J. Edgar Hoover's death, the FBI began accepting women as Special Agents. In August 2006, I retired after two marriages and almost 26 years as an FBI Special Agent. I was fortunate to serve in Las Vegas, Philadelphia and Mobile. During my FBI career, gardening became the great escape for me. With each transfer came a new set of gardening issues.

During the late 1980's, while

assigned to the Mobile FBI office, I discovered Fairhope. After retiring, I moved along with my two bichon frise puppies to Fairhope, where I plan to spend the rest of my life enjoying the people, weather and plants of South Alabama. This Master Gardening class marks the beginning of my journey.

~MARIAN M. CURRIE~

I feel very fortunate to have been born in Mobile and spending every summer in Baldwin County at Battles Wharf. In 1969, I moved to Birmingham where I met my husband, Jim, and we seemed to come to the Bay as often as possible during the summer. Once the bay air gets in your blood, it is hard to leave for good. In 1984, we moved to Bay Minette, and I worked for a Circuit Judge for 18-½ years before retiring in January of this year. In 1995, we moved to the Bay after having our summer home completely renovated. The house was built in the 1840's and was quite a project.

This home has a very large yard which takes so much of my time—which I love. I have never really had endless time to appreciate it, but now can.

My favorite flower is the daylily. I have quite a few, and last summer many contracted a fungus—so that is my project for this summer along with painting the fence. I love to take cuttings from friends and planting with seeds. I am also fond of all hydrangeas.

I have a small greenhouse which holds some of my projects, but mostly pine straw, potting soil, fertilizers, pesticides, and insecticides. It is very handy in the winter months.

I am truly enjoying the Master Gardener's course. It is something I have wanted to do for so long, and I feel fortunate to be a part of the class.

~JEANETTE J. CATLOW~

In June of 2001 my husband, Bill, and I retired from our careers in Michigan, sold the snow blower, cross country skis, snow shovels and snowmobile suits and moved to the great State of Alabama. Our newly constructed home was completed and ready for us to move into. We were very

(More Autobiographies on Page 7)

Meet Our New Crop of Interns *(Continued from page 6)*

excited about our new adventure.

Our learning experience started when we were introduced to sandy soil. We now have six years of on-the-job training for planting and landscaping.

In Michigan, I could grow anything, but it is always a challenge in Alabama. I have always been an avid gardener and my relaxation is working in my gardens.

I am very excited about the Master Gardener program, meeting new people and volunteering.

~DAWN GARCIA~

I moved to Baldwin County from Houston about a month before Ivan. I was still uncomfortable driving here when all the road signs were blown away by Ivan. I learned to get around with directions like "turn at the big barn". My fiancé was born and raised in Baldwin County, so I've learned all the back roads from him.

In another life, I was an ICU/ER RN. I "retired" from nursing in 1985. After that, I discovered computers and fell in love. I taught myself how to write programs well enough to become a Software Engineer for a major oilfield service company.

I met my fiancé on the Internet, and I was ready to leave Houston. We now have 3.4 acres outside of Loxley. I've got a little vegetable garden, some chickens, 3 cats and a dog. I've wanted to get involved with Master Gardeners for years so I'm very happy to be part of the group.



Busy Bees

-  Tanys Waldron — January
-  Ed Wirgowski — February
-  Joyce Mudrak — March
-  Selena Vaughn — April
-  May? — *Buzz, Buzz...*



Congratulations, Selena!



Fairhope Garden Club 5th Annual Garden Walk

By John Meyer, Fairhope Garden Club

The 5th Annual Garden Walk of the Fairhope Garden Club will be held on May 12th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Four wonderful gardens along with six gardening workshops at the Grand Hotel in Point Clear will be featured.

Tickets which are \$10.00 per person, may be purchased at Old Tyme Feed, Page and Palette, Preast's Nursery, Patina's on Section Street, and Southern Veranda Florists. For information call 928-1383.

Meet Your Volunteers

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by our very own Master Gardener Kazuko Russell of Foley. It's name is Kazuko's Rose.

To give credit where much credit is due, the June issue of *Grass Roots* will have a feature article with photos on the Master Gardeners who planted the Foley Rose Trail and the story of how the Rose Trail was developed.

Many thanks to all of the Month of March Volunteers from the Baldwin County Master Gardeners Membership for sharing your time and energy. Thank you everyone for being great Volunteers.



Program Notes

By Rosemarie Morgan
and Rebecca Trosclair

Thursday, May 10, 2007

9:30 A.M.—Social

10:00 A.M.—Meeting

10:30 A.M.—Program—

A short drive to Preast's
Petals & Pottery on Gayfer Ave.

Guest Speaker: James Preast

Let's car-pool to this pretty little nursery and chat with certified nurseryman James Preast about trees, flowering shrubs, tropicals, plant selection, cultural requirements, and your favorite subject.

Looking Ahead: On June 14, Elizabeth Mundine will do an illustrated presentation --- "Courtyards: The Joy of Endless Possibilities."



2007 BCMG Scholarship Awards

By Harry Anderson

The BCMG scholarship program had another banner year in 2007. We were able to award five \$500.00 scholarships this year. All of the recipients will be attending Faulkner State Community College and majoring in Horticultural programs. The winners this year are: Don Gatlin of Foley, Teddy Boyington of Bay Minette, Thomas Montgomery of Silverhill, Jeff Gay and Laurie Gay of Robertsdale.

The 2007 Scholarship Committee would like to thank: Kent Schwartz of Faulkner State, Allan Williams of North Baldwin Center for Technology, Lance Harbison of Daphne High School, and Jeff Kelly of South Baldwin Center for Technology. The help of all of these people is vital to getting the best students into our program. They are the ones who get our information in the hands of the students. The students then fill out their applications and submit them to us. The applications are reviewed by the scholarship committee, references are checked, and then the committee decides who are the most deserving.

Two of the winners this year are renewals from last year who are moving forward with their educational plans. Don Gatlin is receiving his third scholarship from us and Teddy Boyington is a second year winner. It is a great feeling when we get the renewals; as we then know that our hard earned money is helping them get their education.

The 2007 BCMG Scholarship Committee consisting of Mary Burns, Linda O'Rear, and Chairman Harry Anderson would like to thank all of the BCMG members who work so hard to help earn the money which allows us to award these scholarships each year. Serving on this committee is one of the most rewarding tasks that you can be involved in as a BCMG member.



Infoline "On Call" Volunteers

Thanks to the following who have agreed to be "on call" to step in and cover for someone who has an unforeseen circumstance arise that prevents them from working their scheduled Infoline hours:

- Thomas Schubert
- Frieda Romanchuk
- Pat Libby
- Ann Pierce
- Jane Jeffers
- Marylee Smith
- Sarrah Rankin
- Marilyn Mannhard
- Gene Sellier
- Michelle Patton
- Terry Butler
- Pat Smith
- Jack Ardrey
- Linda O'Rear



Infoline News

By Harry Kohler

At its recent meeting, the BCMG Board made the following minor changes to our InfoLine sign-up procedures:

1—The signup for the Info Line will be handled monthly rather than for 3 months at a time as it has been done in the past. It was felt that it was difficult for most folks to schedule their time 2-3 months in advance. The signup sheets will be available at each of our monthly meetings in hopes that we can get sufficient volunteers for the following month. Be sure to bring your personal scheduling calendars to every meeting. If you have already signed up for time slots in June and July, you're still good to go for those slots. As always, you can sign up at any time by sending me a quick e-mail.

2—The "On Call" signup sheet has been modified to allow volunteers to indicate their time slot preferences (if any). Let me know if you want to specify any preferences.

The May InfoLine schedule is listed below. Note there are still a few time slots open in May if you have the time to spare. How 'bout it you "On Call" folks???

<u>MONDAY</u>		<u>TUESDAY</u>		<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	
May 7	AM: Barbara Carlson AM Alice & Harry Kohler PM Sam Andrews PM Ed Wirgowski	May 1	AM: Thomas Schubert PM: Linda O'Rear	May 2	AM: Rod Chappelle PM: Tom Dukes
May 14	AM Jane Wright, AM Mary Gibson AM Barbara Carlson PM Sam Andrews PM Ed Wirgowski	May 8	AM: Thomas Schubert PM: Harry Anderson	May 9	AM: Pat Libby AM Frieda Romanchuk PM Tom Dukes
May 21	AM Marilyn Mannhard AM Barbara Carlson PM Sam Andrews PM Ed Wirgowski	May 15	AM Thomas Schubert PM Linda O'Rear	May 16	AM Rod Chappelle PM Tom Dukes PM Rod Chappelle
May 28	HOLIDAY	May 22	AM Thomas Schubert PM Harry Anderson	May 23	AM OPEN PM OPEN
		May 29	AM Thomas Schubert PM OPEN	May 30	AM Frieda Romanchuk PM OPEN



Alabama Master Gardener Convention Report

By Frieda Romanchuk

The following are highlights of the group networking and business meetings:

- **State Quarterly Newsletter:** The membership is being asked to receive the newsletter electronically when possible due to cost of mailing.
- **Volunteer Hours:** What counts and what doesn't? Guidelines are in the ALMG 2007 handbook on pages 27 and 28. Driving time counts as you are volunteering to get yourself there and back home. Your drive time and meeting time should be counted as volunteer time if there is not an educational speaker. If there is a speaker, then drive time goes as volunteer time, and the speaker is assigned whatever CEU's are determined by the Service Records coordinator or Extension Agent. Hours for MG approved projects or projects that fit the handbook guidelines for volunteer efforts count. Sometimes there are gray areas in that one region may count certain projects and other regions may not. Activities that relieve agents from handling home garden questions count. Ideally, volunteer hours should be achieved through a variety of activities--not just through 2000 hours at a botanical garden. Media contacts and the newsletter pose a "best guess" on how many people are reached. We also discussed that 20 hours of service is needed to be reactivated as a Master Gardener. No dues should be paid until the 20 hours is completed.
- **Project Funding:** Only one project grant in a 3 year period can be awarded to any state MG organization. Grant writing is a very important way to fund projects.
- **Agents:** Our local associations' biggest aid to their agent is handling the Infoline. A new statewide Infoline is being installed. 1 (800) ALA-GROW will transfer callers to the area of the state for which they have questions. There will be an automatic voice mail so callers don't get a busy signal. Commercial agents could publish a 'hot topics' list as they are often aware of developing problems facing the individual home gardener.
- **State Treasury** has an \$18,000 CD as a 'rainy day' fund and over \$40,000 before conference costs. The goal is to return to the member organizations as much as possible.
- **Project Funding Committee** made grants to the following types of projects this year: Irrigation system at Arboretum, Week's Bay Preserve; purchase and planting of trees for reforestation of area near Ft. Payne; renovation of portion of a State Park and city park; expanded a vegetable garden into demonstration garden for aging and homebound; landscaped an elementary school; planned and installed a garden at an Easter Seal Camp; and continued the restoration of Helen Keller's herb gardens.
- **Master Gardeners' retention rates** were discussed. Totals in 2006 were 1,745 with 370 new interns and 461 certified Master Gardeners not renewing. If interns or members venture away, they don't return. Mentoring was offered as a solution, and listing things that the interns can be involved with without leaving them to fend for themselves. We haven't been encouraging the interns.



Alabama Master Gardener Association Advisory Council Report

By Elizabeth Mundine

The Alabama Master Gardener Association Advisory Council met on April 10, 2007 in Clanton, Alabama. Sybil Phillips of Tuscaloosa, Council Chairman, presided at the meeting.

It was decided that each delegate would discuss money making projects and to what end the profits from these projects were used; any problems faced by the individual county associates with intern training classes and retention of interns as contributing Master Gardeners, as well as any problems unique to the individual groups. It was ironic that this would be the focus of the discussion, and this meeting was my first. However, I had come armed with the latest financial report that Jane Wright had prepared, and I was able to participate. The group was most impressed with the various projects of the Baldwin County Master Gardeners and especially with the fact that our money was used to grant college scholarships for interested students of our county.

A round-table discussion was used as the format to discuss volunteer efforts, and the statewide problems of Intern Master Gardener retention was something that needed to be addressed. As in so many volunteer organizations, time constraints and many requests for help of the participants seems to keep many overburdened in an effort to fulfill all the projects. However, no one came up with any answer to a universal problem.

The delegate from the Wiregrass (Dothan) told the group that they would host the 2008 State Meeting in Dothan. The next meeting of the Advisory Council will be held in Clanton in July.



Mark Your Calendar!

- May 2, 2007 — *NO INTERN CLASS*
- May 2-5, 2007 — *International Master Gardener Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas*
- May 5, 2007 — *Outreach Booth at Lowe's, 8:00 am–12:00 pm*
- May 8, 2007 — *Mobile Master Gardeners bus trip to Petals from the Past*
- May 9, 2007 — *Intern Class—Landscape Design, 9:00 am-3:00 pm*
- May 10, 2007 — *Monthly Meeting 9:30 am—Research Station Hwy. 104 then to Preast's Petals & Pottery, Gayfer Ave.*
- May 12, 2007 — *Fairhope Garden Club 5th Annual Garden Walk, 10:00 am-3:00 pm*
- May 16, 2007 — *Intern Class Presentations, Graduation and Luncheon, 9:00 am—12:00 Noon*
- June 14, 2007 — *Monthly Meeting 9:30 am—Research Station Hwy. 104*
- July 12, 2007 — *Awards Picnic, PZK Hall, Robertsdale*
- August 9, 2007 — *Monthly Meeting 9:30 am—Research Station Hwy. 104*
- Sept. 13, 2007 — *Monthly Meeting 9:30 am—Research Station Hwy. 104*
- October 4, 2007 — *Continuing Education Day at Faulkner—Fairhope*



Grass Roots

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Next Meeting: 9:30 A.M.—May 10, 2007
Visit to Preast's Petals & Pottery