**Wildflower Bunch Meeting of April 3, 2019 (rescheduled for April 17, 2019)**

-Due to noisy construction at the Big Canoe Clubhouse, this meeting was rescheduled for April 17, 2019, and was held at the Big Canoe Chapel

**Opening of Meeting**:

Margie Halls, President of WFB, opened the meeting with many thanks to the Big Canoe Chapel for allowing WFB to hold this meeting at the Chapel – a beautiful location for a great presentation. She also thanked everyone involved that helped to notify members of the last minute cancellation of the original meeting scheduled at the Clubhouse on April 3.

Earth Day is April 22, and this will be the 49th Earth Day celebration. Barb Kelly from the Earth Day Committee announced that Dawson County will be holding its first “Earth Day” celebration this Saturday (April 20) at the Dawson County Library from 10-2. Fifteen (15) tables will be set up with representatives from organizations such as Sierra Club and Georgia Forest Watch, and kids’ activities will be available. She encourages everyone to come out for a fun afternoon and to hear what these organizations have to say.

**Feature Presentation**: “Landscaping of Augusta National Golf Club”

* Presented by Lydell Mack, Big Canoe Golf Course Superintendent.

In addition to having over 20 years of golf course management experience and having worked over 2 years as an employee at Augusta National, Lydell has volunteered at 17 Masters Golf Tournaments, including the most recent tournament that just ended a few days ago. What fun to see photos of this iconic course and to hear Lydell share the little-known facts he has learned about this beautiful golf course.

**Some presentation highlights:**

*Early History of Augusta National*:

* The golf course is built on property that was previously an ornamental plant nursery - Fruitland Nursery - which was started in 1857 when Baron Louis Mathieu Edouard Berckmans of Belgium purchased the Redmon indigo plantation.
* His son, Prosper Julius Alphonse Berckmans, a horticulturalist, imported ornamental plantings from around the world for the nursery.
* The nursery closed in 1910; and in 1930, Bobby Jones and Clifford Roberts purchased the property with the intent to build a private golf course where they could play without their hundreds of fans trailing behind, following their every stroke.
* The golf course was originally designed by Alister MacKenzie, the famous British golf course architect, and his design was inspired by the world-famous course of St. Andrews.
* The original landscape architect was Louis A. Berckmans, son of one of the prior owners of the nursery. He used plants from the property and it was his idea to use a unique ornamental species at each hole.

*About the Course*:

* The course is located in the center of an urban area, limiting its ability to expand. But deer are rare or even non-existent.
* Plantings are used as screens to enhance a view (to screen the view of a roadway or maintenance building) and to protect golfers and spectators from golfers playing at another hole.
* All holes on the course are named after a unique ornamental plant species.
* Each hole uses a distinctive plant or a plant with a unique color that lines up with the pin as an “aiming point” for the hole. This is necessary due to the undulating landscape, making it impossible to see the hole from various locations. It’s an idea that is used at other golf courses today, but Augusta National was one of the first to use this strategy.
* There is a single palm tree at Augusta National Golf Course. It’s at hole #4 and is apparently an homage to the original nursery on the site that grew palm trees. (as Lydell says…you are now prepared to answer a trivia question on this topic if it ever comes up).
* Hole #7 is the only hole that has Pampas Grass.
* Hole #13 with the iconic mounds of azaleas has over 5,000 individual azalea shrubs.
* The only annual plants at Augusta National are located in the flowerbed in the Founders Circle at the end of Magnolia Lane. The flowerbed is in the shape of the Masters logo. They use chrysanthemums in the winter, and pansies in the spring.

*Landscaping Lessons Learned*:

Lydell ended his presentation with the lessons he has learned from his experience at Augusta National, providing tips we can use in our own landscaping:

* Showcase what you already have.
* Enhance the golf experience, not take from it.
* Open views are as dramatic as blooms.
* You don’t need annuals – perennials provide plenty of color.
* Be patient, it takes time for a landscape to mature.
* Erosion control is important in the hills.
* *Best tip of the day*: Build on an existing ornamental nursery!

[See also the recent article about this presentation in the March 2019 edition of the *Smoke Signals* publication (Sports & Living section, page 9D).](https://bigcanoenews.com/images/stories/smoke_signals_digital_editions/2019_03/2019SS3SportsDigital.pdf)

**Closing the Meeting:**

Betina Shearer, WFB Vice President of Programs, closed the meeting by giving a quick demonstration of how to navigate through the new WFB website. Included was a demonstration of how to sign up for the upcoming picnic that will follow the next general WFB meeting on May 1. (Hint: go to the WFB website at <https://wildflowerbunch.com> and then click on the picnic basket in order to register).

Betina reminded us that the May 1 meeting will take place at the Wildcat Pavilion and features Dalia Lavender and Claudia Kinder, the “Gardening Divas”, presenting *Container Gardening Made Easy.*

**Door Prize Winner:**

Jennie Sheffield was the winner of the door prize, which was a native azalea plant.