

# The Crosby Arboretum

Mississippi State University Extension Service

Quarterly News Journal

Winter 2020-21

35.1

## THE GUM POND EXHIBIT: MIRROR PERCH BRIDGE COMPLETED

Completed in November 2020, the Mirror Perch bridge spanning the headwaters inlet of the Arboretum's gum pond is already garnering honors, having recently received the annual AIAMS Sambo Mockbee, *Spirit of Place Award*. This award is conferred upon only one project per year by the voting membership of the Mississippi Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In addition, the design jury granted this project the Design Honor Award, one of only four honor awards granted in 2020, and the highest award that is bestowed by the organization.

The design for this unique pedestrian bridge which completes the pond's loop trail was developed by Professor Hans Herrmann, Mississippi State University School of Architecture, with assistance from his architecture students, who participated in the planning, design, and installation of the bridge along with other MSU faculty and students. Prof. Herrmann said, "Our team is honored and humbled to have received these special recognitions and we thank the AIAMS and all those who helped make this effort so successful. The Mirror Perch Bridge project represents the kind of projects and practice that the MSU School of Architecture, and its graduates, are known for. The locally influenced, place-based work leverages resources and expertise to collaboratively generate a meaningful and culturally relevant design. Working with the community of students, local professionals, the arboretum staff and administration, the team found resourceful and effective solutions to the complex issues of construction while creating a design that poetically celebrates the Gum Pond exhibit and the arboretum master plan."

Discussion and planning toward a design for a pedestrian bridge that would cross the narrow "panhandle" of the gum pond



began once the excavation was completed in the fall of 2010. Both the pond and the bridge project have been the subject of multiple MSU architecture, landscape architecture, and landscape construction courses. The Mirror Perch bridge was the final design concept and its construction completes the final planned component for this educational exhibit.

After architecture students explored various bridge designs, in spring of 2018, MSU professor of architecture Hans Herrmann, and Tim Schauwecker, associate professor of landscape architecture, led seven third-year students of architecture and fourteen landscape contracting students to prepare construction documents and cost estimates for the pedestrian bridge. The bridge was "designed and constructed in manner befitting the high standards of design and construction which has made the Crosby Arboretum a nationally recognized touchstone for innovative landscape architecture and architecture alike."

Sixteen construction grade piles, similar to telephone poles, were used for two important reasons: First, for the aesthetic value, as the 35' piles are intended to mimic the appearance of the fallen pine trees which litter the forest floor, and secondly for structural support and durability in the harsh swampy environment.

*(Con't on pg. 5)*

For more information on the AIA MS Awards, see the "2020 AIA MS MCA Virtual Awards Ceremony" on YouTube (Mirror Perch Bridge ~ 31:30) or on the AIA Mississippi Facebook page, scroll down to the Oct. 30 post on the four projects receiving Honor Awards at the Mississippi Celebrates Architecture Awards Ceremony.



## The Crosby Arboretum Mississippi State University

A regional arboretum representing the native flora of the Pearl River Drainage Basin in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Picayune, Mississippi, USA

### Director's Notebook:

Despite the current pandemic, it has been a very busy fall at the Arboretum. We started programs again in late August, beginning with a botany and photography field walk led by Diana Thornton and myself. State botanist Heather Sullivan joined us and filmed the walk for a MS Native Plant Society webinar. The walk and other webinars may be viewed at <https://www.mississippinativeplantsociety.org/> by selecting "2020 Webinar Series". Join us for a ramble, learn some useful photography tips, and see butterflies cavorting among the pitcher plant bog's *Liatris* stalks in peak bloom. A modified BugFest event in September featured Extension entomologist Dr. John Guyton "beamed down" from campus. With Covid-19 precautions in place, we also conducted a successful Fall Native Plant Sale. Thanks to Nickie Smith, our social media presence and support by local business and community members continues to grow. This year's annual member appeal seeks funding for a 6-seater golf cart to provide cart tours and transport persons to our more remote areas. Donations of any size are sincerely appreciated. We're also excited about Forge Day, coming the last Saturday in January!

- *Patricia Drackett, Director*  
*The Crosby Arboretum, MSU Extension Service*



*Social distancing in action! A successful Fall Native Plant Sale featuring perennials grown by the Pearl River County Master Gardeners on the Arboretum's Green Team shown below helping Grounds Superintendent Terry Johnson replant the construction access path to the Gum Pond, as the bridge project is completed.*



**The Pearl River County Master Gardeners recently received the 2020 Wildflower Trails of Mississippi Award** for the maintenance and continued development of the Arboretum's Pollinator Garden. The award recognizes an entity that has helped to broaden the reach of the wildflower pollinator program and is one of the annual honors recognizing state achievements given by the Keep Mississippi Beautiful Program.

### EVENTS & MARKETING UPDATE

Now that our programs and events are up and running, fall and winter will be packed with activities for the entire family. We are creating a schedule that will have a program most weekends, and sometimes multiple ones! Children's crafts, Yoga on the Pavilion, native plant field walks, propagation seminars, and more! We're also planning on bringing back the 5K run during the winter of 2021. We are still practicing social distancing and masks are required for all programs for safety. Programs and events will be limited to a certain number, so you'll want to sign up early. The Pinecote Pavilion is now available for events during business hours at a discounted rate from evening rental rates. It's a great venue for luncheons, birthday parties, club meetings, showers...basically any gathering you're planning. Caterers are welcome and we have tables, chairs, and linens available for rent. Members will receive a 10% discount off the entire rental price!

In closing, I'd like to hear about programs that you would like to see happen at The Crosby Arboretum. We are open to suggestions and are always looking for fresh ideas. One way to get involved is to become a member and right now, annual memberships are half price. If you're already a member, encourage your family and friends to join. It's a great place to visit together, exploring the natural beauty of Mississippi.

- *Nickie Smith, Event & Marketing Coordinator*  
*The Crosby Arboretum, MSU Extension Service*



## The Crosby Arboretum Mississippi State University

A regional arboretum representing the native flora of the Pearl River Drainage Basin in Mississippi and Louisiana.

Picayune, Mississippi, USA

### Mirror Perch Bridge Completed *(Con't from pg. 1)*

Two sets of 35' piles were placed end to end, forming a 70' long continuous cantilevered structure, allowing the bridge to hang above the 31' span of water and supporting both an extremely horizontal design aesthetic while at the same time keeping materials of any type from disturbing the waters below. The herculean effort of turning a vision to reality would not have been possible without the funding support of Arboretum members from two annual appeals and a generous donation from the family of the Crosby Arboretum Foundation board president Ruth Cook.



Photos: Terry Johnson and Pat Drackett



### The Rosen Memorial Pavilion

The **Rosen Memorial Pavilion**, a gift to the Arboretum from the family of Yvette Rosen, was also completed in November. The pavilion is accessed by a crisscrossing boardwalk that extends from the bulkhead of a new pond overlook built by Terry Johnson with assistance from Arboretum volunteers. Located on the gum pond's eastern shore, the structure was designed by Robert Poore of Native Habitats, Inc. Take a rest on one of the pavilion's benches and enjoy the stunning view of the new bridge spanning the pond's panhandle. Both the Rosen Pavilion and Mirror Perch Bridge will give you a new reason to plan a visit to the Gum Pond Educational Exhibit. From the Arrival Journey, turn north into the Swamp Forest Educational Exhibit. The central trail parallels an intermittent stream channel. Continue your meander to the gum pond and stroll down the loop trail, which now makes a complete journey around the pond.





**Groundsel Bush** (*Baccharis halimifolia*)

Perhaps you have recently noticed tall, rounded, white-blooming shrubs in the patchwork of vegetation growing in open fields. Most likely you are seeing groundsel bush, a fast growing, drought- and salt-tolerant deciduous shrub that is a member of the Aster family, also known as the sunflower or daisy family. Groundsel bush is the only woody eastern Aster species that grows tree-size, from 6 to 12 feet. The plant produces abundant nectar and is useful to fall migrating monarchs and other butterflies, who will also use the shrub for roosting at night, as well as other pollinating insects.

*Baccharis* grows best in full sun and moist soil but tolerates a wide variety of soil types. It is easily propagated by seed.

Members, please **check in at the office when you visit.**

For your safety, we need to know you are on the site.

Also, our daily visitor statistics are vital in justifying the continued funding for our outstanding public garden.

### Membership Application

All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed. For more information call: (601) 799-2311 or print form online.

_____	Student (send copy of student I.D.)	\$ 20.00
_____	Individual	35.00
_____	Individual - Senior	30.00
_____	Family	45.00
_____	Donor	100.00
_____	Patron	250.00
_____	Benefactor	1,000.00
_____	Business:	
_____	Sweetgum	100.00
_____	Sassafras	250.00
_____	Live Oak	500.00
_____	Bigleaf Magnolia	1,000.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Renewing?  Memberships are for one year.

### PLANTS WITH WINTER INTEREST:

**Big Bluestem** (*Andropogon gerardii*)

**Bushy Bluestem** (*Andropogon glomeratus*)

**American Beech** (*Fagus grandifolia*)

**Witch Hazel** (*Hamamelis virginiana*)

**Florida Anise** (*Illicium floridanum*)

**American Holly** (*Ilex opaca*)

**Goldenclub** (*Orontium aquaticum*)

**Longleaf Pine** (*Pinus palustris*)

**Southern Smilax** (*Smilax smallii*)

**Elliot's Blueberry** (*Vaccinium elliotii*)

**Farkleberry** (*Vaccinium arboreum*)

**Netted chainfern** (*Woodwardia areolata*)

*For details, see the Native Plant Database on our website.*

### Crosby Arboretum MEMBERSHIPS and GIFT CERTIFICATES Make Great Holiday Gifts!

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

The Crosby Arboretum

Mississippi State University

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# Crosby Arboretum Program Schedule

December 2020 – January 2021



## RINGING IN THE HOLIDAYS!

*Julie Hunger Johnson puts the finishing touch on her yaupon holly topiary, adapted from Dr. Jim DelPrince's "Boxwood Topiary Design" (Publication # 3047) available for download on the MSU Extension website: <http://extension.msstate.edu/>*



*December's Family Holiday Crafts Workshop with Sherri Lowe focused on making tree cookie ornaments. Cat cookie by Abby Livengood, and polar bears by Sam Fabacher and Pat Drackett.*

## YOGA ON THE PAVILION

**Saturday, January 9, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

Bring your yoga mat and a friend and have fun while you get fit and enjoy the natural beauty surrounding the Pinecote Pavilion. Cost is \$2 for members and \$5 for non-members. Weather permitting. Reservations required. Bring your mat!

**Propagation workshops** will be held on Jan. 15 and 16, "Starting the New Year by Starting New Plants: A Full Day of Plant Propagation", with John C. Manion (not an Arboretum program) and are now full. If you would like to be placed on a wait list or are interested in John's next area workshop, visit his "Manion's Nature" page on Facebook or email: [manionsnature@gmail.com](mailto:manionsnature@gmail.com).

## PRESCRIBED BURN DEMONSTRATIONS

**Thursdays & Fridays in January and February**

Assist with or observe fire management techniques during prescribed burning of the Arboretum's Savanna Exhibit with Certified Burn Manager **Terry Johnson**. Call the office by 9:00 a.m. to confirm a burn will proceed. It will occur only if weather conditions are favorable. Wear old clothes/boots and bring a lunch. Free admission. Persons under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.



*The Fall Native Plant Sale in October was very well received!*



## FORGE DAY

**Blacksmithing & Metalworking Demonstrations**

**Sat. January 30**

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Join us for this exciting day of demonstrations by area metalworkers and craftsmen and learn how you can get started in metalworking. (If you are invited to try your hand at the forge, a signed waiver is required.) Wares available for purchase. Registration required. Members and non-members, entry is \$5 for adults, \$2 for children.

Please call 601-799-2311 to pre-register for programs and guarantee your space. Address: 370 Ridge Road, Picayune. Hours of Operation: Wed-Sun; 9 am to 5 pm.

[www.crosbyarboretum.msstate.edu](http://www.crosbyarboretum.msstate.edu)



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# Crosby Arboretum Gum Pond Educational Exhibit

## Summer 2020 MSU Student Interns

Six Mississippi State University student interns worked hard despite the summer heat and humidity to help complete the final phase of construction for the Mirror Perch Bridge in the Gum Pond Educational Exhibit. The crews were led by our talented building and grounds manager **Terry Johnson** with the skilled assistance of Arboretum volunteer **Frank Jackson**.

The first group of architecture interns arrived in May (right photo) and included **Danielle Leclerq** from Picayune, and **Brandon Burton, Spurgeon Sanders, and John Spraberry**. These four students were profiled in our summer news journal. **Spencer Cummings** (in photo below left, to left of **Terry Johnson** (in center) and **Ben Gunter** (to Terry's right) arrived in July 2020 and are profiled below.



*The first crew: John, Spurgeon, Danielle, and Brandon (L to R).*



### Spencer Cummings

Spencer is from Franklin, Tennessee and is now a fourth-year student in the Mississippi State University School of Architecture. Spencer was drawn to the profession of architecture after taking a drafting class in high school. He is a member of Alpha Ro Chi, the only national co-ed professional fraternity for architecture and the allied arts, and part of a social club for board gamers, The Game Club. This was Spencer's first time to visit The Crosby Arboretum. He was impressed with the natural surroundings. When Spencer is not in school, he enjoys painting objects to give them a fresh look, and photography.

While working on the Mirror Perch Bridge project, Spencer noted that their team had gained a valuable real-life experience by working through the challenges they encountered in interpreting the construction documents, which required a number of field adjustments to be made. The team's approach of assessing and discussing a situation and arriving at the best solution often got them thinking "outside the box", preparing them for the future projects they will be experiencing.



### Ben Gunter

Ben was the second member of our "round two" interns and is currently a fourth-year student in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Mississippi State University. He is from Opelika, Alabama and chose landscape architecture as a career path because he likes being outside and noticing the uniqueness of nature. He also likes the idea of helping entire communities with their aesthetics. Outside of school, Ben likes to hike, run, play tennis, and go on road trips. He is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, where he will be the incoming president, and a member of the Reformed University Fellowship, a campus ministry.

As with Spencer, Ben rose to the challenges his team encountered during the final stage of bridge construction. Even though they at times faced difficulties that could be frustrating, they worked through them. He considers his time here overall a tremendous learning experience.