
BCMGA NEWS

February 2002

Volume 2, Issue 1

Spring Plant Sale (it's coming!!!):

A few words from Cindy -

Our spring plant sale is scheduled for Saturday, April 13, at the gazebo in Angleton. We will be ordering some plants from Treesearch for the sale, **BUT we really need your contributions to make the sale a success** (people power and plants). How you can help:

- ☼ Take a walk through your yard and see if there are any plants you can pot for the sale. These plants can be brought to the greenhouse. We need flowers, vegetables and herbs. Please make sure their pots are clean and the plants are labeled.
- ☼ If you have started seeds, we need to know what you are growing for the brochure to hand out at the sale. Whenever your plants pop up this spring, either email me, call me or give me a list at the next meeting in March as to what plants you will have for the sale.
- ☼ Please come to help on the day of the sale. We have to unload and display all of the plants prior to opening that day.
- ☼ If you are interested in helping prior to the day of the sale, send a note or call either me or Donie Stowers. With all the seeds started at the greenhouse, we will need to re-pot plants into larger containers as they grow. We will also need help unloading the plants from Treesearch.

Thanks,

Cindy Erndt
Plant Sale Chair

THANKS to our MG training class who went to the greenhouse on Tuesday to help plant seeds when their class was cancelled. We appreciate your help.

Demonstration Gardens:

Greenhouse - The repairs to the irrigation system have been completed, and it is now up and watering.

Rainbow Room - Ted Cooper made two new workbenches for us. Let's get out there and use them! Thanks, Ted.

CEMAP - Thanks to all of those who showed up at the CEMAP weeding workdays and battled the clover.

Vegetable Garden - We have a new vegetable garden on the east side of the Rainbow Room that's been bordered with railroad ties. I understand it's ready to go. Also, It will soon be time to start cleaning out the original vegetable garden for the spring planting. We are hoping to add railroad ties to this garden this year. We enjoyed some of the carrots from this garden as refreshments at this month's meeting. All Master Gardeners who want to put something in the spring veggie gardens are welcome to come out and plant. Just check with Ray Michalik (979-798-7404) to make sure the bed has been tilled beforehand! REMEMBER - all of the vegetables grown in our gardens are for the enjoyment of all master gardeners whether you planted or not.

Dues: Check to see if you've paid your dues for 2002. If not, please send them to Tommy.

Meeting Items of Interest:

February 2002

Our speaker for this month was Mike Watts of RainSorb who gave a great presentation on his company's product: environmental water crystals. (Believe it or not, at one point he actually had the entire room silent.) The crystals absorb and retain water and can be used either alone or mixed with soil to provide water to plants as they need it. They will last in the soil for five to ten years and when they break down turn into nitrogen, water and carbon dioxide. He told us that they can cut watering requirements in half. If you are interested in this product and would like more information, you can check out RainSorb's website at www.rainsorb.com; call Mike at 281-485-4865; or write to him at RainSorb, Inc., Attn: Information Dept., 7929 West Broadway, Pearland, TX 77581.

Ron King is going to run a RainSorb experiment with two tomato plants. One will get the crystals and one won't. We'll keep you posted on how they grow.

Kirby reminded us that anyone interested is welcome to attend the executive meeting which is held before the general meeting.



NOTE: The plan is for the Spring 2001 class to graduate in April. Everyone in that class needs to double check their volunteer hours to make sure they've completed their hours and have turned them all in.

We have two new committees: An Audit Committee has been formed consisting of John Alcorn and Ray Michalik with Carol Farmer serving as an ex officio member; and a Recertification Policy Committee to determine the requirements for reinstating inactive Master Gardeners. Committee members are Tommy Holt, Gil Livanec, Donie Stowers and Kirby Rapstein.

January 2002

The speaker for January was Roger Woolsey who gave a presentation on bees. Roger and his daughter brought their bees and honey to the meeting which made for a very different and unusual presentation.

We now have a Propagation Committee made up of John Alcorn, Tom Collins, James Smith, Linda Lerma and Ernie Jahnke. The Committee's goal is to track plants by time planted and find out what plants are available. They hope to eventually provide 80% of the plants to sell at our plant sales. The Committee needs help from all Master Gardeners for this project.

Anyone interested in attending any of the spring Master Gardener classes are encouraged to attend. It's a good way to meet our new Master Gardeners. The Master Gardener training classes are still held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mary Lou and Jim Christie need volunteers for refreshments. Thanks to Mary Lou and Jim for arranging refreshments for a number of years.

Mark Your Calendar:

March 2 Water Smart*
March 11: Our March meeting will be held on Monday instead of Tuesday, March 12
April 8: Our April meeting will be held on Monday instead of Tuesday, April 9
April 6: Pecan Grafting Field Day*
April 13: Spring Plant Sale

*see *Upcoming Events* section for more details

Future Speakers:

Waverly Jefferson - March 11

Gardening Tip:

I found out last year and read in a couple places again this year that crapemyrtle trees should not be topped like we're used to seeing. Trim the suckers, remove any dead branches and prune only to make a more pleasing shape. When left alone they turn into beautiful trees.

Upcoming Events:

Water Smart - Saturday, March 2, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at University of Houston Clear Lake. The fee is \$30 and includes lunch. Malcom Beck, Howard Garrett and Heidi Sheesley are some of the featured speakers and discussion will include organic fertilizers, water gardening and antique roses. For more information you can check out the website at www.watersmart.cc.

Pecan Grafting Field Day - Saturday, April 6. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m., and the program begins at 9:30. At 11:00 graft wood will be available for a small donation. Both fruit and pecan tree grafting will be discussed. Location: Varner Hogg State Park, 1527 FM 2852, West Columbia. **2 CEUs**.

News to Know:



CONGRATULATIONS PAULA!!! - Paula's babies were born on January 4, 2002. All three babies, Hannah Rose (3 lb., 8 oz.), Issac True (3 lb., 3 oz.) and Lillie Jaden (2 lb., 9 oz.), are now all at home. I understand Paula actually got 3 hours of sleep the other day!

Current Officers, Delegates and Chairs:

President - Kirby Rapstein
First VP and Activity Records Chair - Mark Snyder
Second VP and Program Chair - Sherrie Summers
Secretary - Pat Gerard
Treasurer - Tommy Holt
State Delegates - Pat Cayer, Gil Livanec,
Mary Katherine and Howard Pickle

Chair of MG Training Classes - Barbara Ross
Plant Sale Chair - Cindy Erndt
Propagation Chair - John Alcorn
Greenhouse Director- Ray Michalik
Assistant Greenhouse Director - Ted Cooper
Newsletter Chair/Historian - Anna Gawlik

Gardening Stuff:

Is there a Master Gardener who can answer questions on how to transplant an orchid? Please call or email me (see below). I desperately need help!

Note from the *Interim* Editor:

I volunteered to do the newsletter on an interim basis to see if I could actually accomplish it! I'm hoping I can do it because I think it's a great way to keep all of us in touch with what is going on. My goal is to get it out shortly after the monthly meeting to let those of us who didn't make it to the meeting know what is in the works.

If you have information to share with the rest of the Master Gardeners such as gardening tips, articles, plants to share, thank you's... please let me know.

Any suggestions for improvement to the newsletter are very welcome!

Oh yeah - if you like to fold, staple, stuff, label...I could use some help with this at the office when it's time to send this out. Just let me know if you want to help.

Thanks - Anna Gawlik, Interim Editor/Historian

The deadline for submissions to the newsletter is 6:00 p.m. on the Sunday after our monthly meeting.

Happy Gardening!!!