



Meeting Items of Interest:

Our speaker this month was Richard Oliver of Wild Water Ponds in West Columbia. He gave an introduction to pond gardening presentation and told us about many different products that are used in ponds. There seemed to be a lot of interest in ponds from our group. Has anyone installed one?

The fall Master Gardener training schedule is in its final stages. Donie has been spending a lot of telephone time trying to schedule one last speaker, but of the speakers have been scheduled, and Donie said she dares any of them to change their minds! Ads for the training class have appeared in the Brazosport Facts, Angleton Times, Alvin Sun and Houston Chronicle. Barbara Burkhart and Pat Gerard have a list of people who inquired about Master Gardener training at different functions throughout the year, and they are busy trying to contact as many as possible. People will be needed to host the classes.

FALL PLANT SALE - The plant sale is September 21, and it's time to start digging. Take a walk through your yard for plants you can pot to sell at the plant sale. They can be taken to the greenhouse at any time. Just remember to label them! Please email or call Cindy Erndt with your plant information as soon as you can, so the brochure can be prepared. On August 21 a group went to Treeseach Farms to preview their plants. Treeseach said their gardens look great, so if you are out that way, stop and visit them.

Two craft workshops have already been held, but two more are still scheduled for September 5 and September 12 at 4:30 at the Extension office. We are painting stepping stones and pots and making mosaic pots. If you have an inexpensive craft project that you think would do well at the plant sale, contact Cindy. She will make sure the supplies are in stock for workshop days.

BRAZORIA COUNTY FAIR - The County Fair starts on October 5 and runs through October 12. There will be a Horticulture Booth at the fair this year, and Carol Farmer asks that each Master Gardener enter at least one plant at the fair. Plants will be accepted at the fairgrounds on October 3. The rules for entry will be distributed at the September meeting.

The booth times are as follows:

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| Saturday (10-5) Sunday (10-6) | 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. |
| Monday (10-7) | 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. |
| Tuesday (10-8), Senior's Day | 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday (10-9) Thursday (10-10) Friday (10-11) | 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. |
| Saturday (10-12) | 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. |

We will need volunteers to man the horticulture booth at the fair beginning Saturday, October 5, and going through Saturday, October 12. Volunteers work 2-hour shifts with two people at each shift. We will be signing up volunteers at the September meeting, so please check your calendar for dates when you will be available.

The Interagency Agreement is at the legal department at Texas A&M, and we are waiting for comments. After revisions are made it will go to the Brazoria County government. When the Agreement is finalized, the Board will be able to establish guidelines for the Master Gardeners to follow in order to install a new garden at the Demonstration Gardens. The guidelines will help everyone involved know what will be needed and who will provide it. All new gardens or planting must be approved by Ray Michalik, Greenhouse Director, and Ted Cooper, Assistant Greenhouse Director.

Amnesty letters to inactive Master Gardeners have been written and will go out shortly.

Carol Farmer is updating the roster. If you have a change in your address, phone number or email address, please let her know.

Planning Meeting Items:

We had a great turnout for the Planning Meeting that was held on August 1. Even though it lasted longer than Paula had anticipated, we still didn't cover everything, so we will have a continuation of the Planning Meeting at the September monthly meeting to finish up discussing the Demonstration Gardens.

Dates Set for 2003 - Many dates have already been set for 2003, all of which are on the calendar of events below. Some of them are new for this newsletter.

Seminars - Paula gave us a list of suggestions for seminars and workshops for 2003 were provided and asked for feedback on which ones we would be interested in or suggestions for others not listed. If you have not responded to her, please do so. Also if anyone is interested in giving a seminar or workshop you should let Paula know.

Community Projects - Information on these projects was presented to see if the Master Gardeners were interested in becoming involved. There was overwhelming agreement that we are interested in them.

Habitat for Humanity - Landscape planning consultants are needed from all areas of the county. There are 4-6 homes built per year which are in need of easy to grow and maintain yards. The next homes planned are in Angleton (this year - September), Lake Jackson (November), and Sweeny (early 2003). Barbara Ross, Donie Stowers, John Alcorn, Mark Snyder, Grace Hines, Carol Farmer and Carole Wenny have volunteered to consult on the Angleton house. If you are interested in consulting on any of the other houses at this time or in the future, please contact Paula.

Feeding Our Friends - This is a special Master Gardener class for 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teachers. Participants learn to link gardening to standards based curriculum. Along with the usual gardening education, participants receive training in health and nutrition from the garden. Volunteer service requires installation of a school garden and donation of 50% of the harvest to a local food bank, pantry or shelter. Students completing the curriculum become certified Junior Master Gardeners. Paula will check with school districts to assess whether there is interest in this program on their part. If so, she will organize the first training session, which includes the regular Master Gardener training class plus additional required classes. Our involvement in this project would basically be to provide the training to the teachers during the summer. Master Gardeners would be needed to host the classes and organize them in the future.

Other Events and Training - These are two events that are in the works:

Turf Care and Chemical Use for Little League Fields - The care of little league fields often falls to volunteer dads and moms. Training in pesticide use, sprayer calibration, fertilizer application and turf care would be provided. Environmental stewardship is always on TCE's list of priorities. The TCE would partner with Alvin Community College.

Wetland Event at Sea Center - A chance for Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, 4-H Youth, and Sea Center personnel to collaborate on an activity day for adults and children. This could be a spring or fall event (or both). Seminars in habitat gardens, wetlands plants, wildlife. Kid crafts and activities featuring dragonflies, snakes, frogs and lizards, birds, etc. We may even have the zoo-mobile! Volunteers needed to assist with youth activities, set-up, organization, lots of stuff. This is in the **EARLY** planning stages.

Demonstration Gardens - We touched briefly on the Demonstration Gardens. Master Gardeners are always needed regularly to do general maintenance. Before the next meeting please think of what you would like to see happen with the Demonstration Gardens. We will also discuss setting up tours and installing specialty gardens.

Garden Tours and Plant Swaps - If you are willing to share your yard or veggie garden and some seeds and cuttings, please let Paula know. In exchange for letting the Master Gardeners invade your property, we will bring food.

Master Gardener Business:

Website - The Brazoria County TCE website is now up and running. Check it out at <http://brazoria-co.tamu.edu>. You will find a BCMGA calendar of events and the schedule for the fall Master Gardener training. Hopefully soon we will have the newsletter on it. I'll keep you posted.

Recertification - Mark Snyder will have a current listing of everyone's hours that have been turned in at the September meeting. The recertification program was voted on and approved by the general membership at the July meeting. It requires six hours of advanced training and six hours of volunteer work per year. Our monthly meetings do count as volunteer hours. Attendance at speaker presentations at our monthly meetings counts as advanced training - as long as it is on a gardening-related topic. Of course, that doesn't mean you have to stop there. We need people to come out and work at the Demonstration Gardens ALL OF THE TIME. Other volunteer work includes: working the telephone hotline, hosting training classes, working at the plant sales and the county fair, working at the Courthouse rose garden, serving as an officer, delegate or chairperson ... And remember, the more advanced training we have, the more information we can share with each other, so go to as many seminars and workshops as you can.

Officers, Delegates and Chairs - If you are interested in serving as an elected officer, delegate or committee chairperson for 2003 please let the Nominating Committee know of your interest by filling out the form on the last page of the newsletter.

For those of us who don't have a copy of the Bylaws or can't find them (I include myself because I didn't have a copy), here are descriptions of what these positions entail:

Officers -

President - Presides at all meetings; appoints a chairperson or coordinator for each active standing and special committee; creates and dissolves committees as determined by the officers of BCMGA; is an ex-officio member of all committees, except Nominating Committee; works with the Treasurer on the budget; appoints a 3-member Audit Committee, consisting of non-officeholding members.

Vice President for Projects and Volunteers - Presides at meetings in absence of President; attends committee meetings at the request of President; acts as advisor to the coordinators for volunteer activities and fundraisers; works with the Treasurer to develop a long-range plan for additional funding for BCMGA.

Vice President for Programs and Education - Establishes a calendar of educational programs, garden tours and events for the monthly meetings, advisor to committees responsible for educational programs for the citizens of area communities, Chairperson of the Bylaws Committee.

Secretary - Responsible for maintaining accurate records of all official business for BCMGA; responsible for the safekeeping of all official documents of BCMGA; and responsible for the attendance records for all BCMGA meetings. Works with Treasurer to maintain a current list of members' names, addresses and telephone numbers to be produced and distributed at the May meeting and provides that list to the Texas Master Gardener Association with appropriate dues in May.

Treasurer - Shall establish procedures for receipt and disbursement of all funds; pay bills upon receipt of a written statement and proof of purchase; present a financial report at each monthly meeting; each January, present all fiscal records for the two most recent calendar years for review by the audit committee; work with the President and Vice Presidents to develop a budget to be approved by March; arrange for presentation of appropriate tax documents; and work with the Secretary to keep names, addresses and telephone numbers current.

State Delegates - Serve as duly elected representatives of BCMGA at all meetings of the Texas Master Gardener Association and report back all pertinent information and activities of the Texas Master Gardener Association.

Committee Chairpersons and Special Positions -

Special positions and committees shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the officers of the Association to address matters of special or emergency interest or concerns to the Association.

Volunteer Activity Coordinator - Works with the Vice-Presidents to provide staffing for events and activities; chairs and staffs a committee to contact members on volunteer opportunities; maintains the records of hours worked; works with the staff at the Extension office to identify volunteers to assist the County Agents in performance of their duties; establishes and maintains training procedures for volunteers.

Newsletter Editor - Creates and provides a newsletter quarterly to the individual members of BCGMA.

Historian/Librarian - Compiles photographs and articles of the activities of BCGMA for preservation; establishes a procedure for cataloguing all library holdings; responsible for maintaining and securing of all library holdings; establishes accountability procedures for use of library material off premises.

Audit Committee - A three (3) member committee appointed each January; members will be non-officers of BCGMA; and the Committee will perform an annual audit of all fiscal records for the most recent two calendar years.

Publicity Coordinator - Establishes and maintains a list of newspapers, radio and TV stations, and other media outlets to publicize all events and activities; establishes a procedure to take photographs for publication in the media and for historical records; responsible for the creative design and maintenance of the display for public events; prepares news releases for distribution to area media reporting the educational programs and activities sponsored by BCGMA.

Adult Education Coordinator - Develops educational programs to be presented quarterly at the County Extension Office or other designated sites for continuing adult education of the general public on horticulture and horticulture-related programs; responsible for coordination volunteer involvement for public events such as Earth Day, Arbor Day, etc.

Hospitality Coordinator - Establishes and maintains the necessary supplies for refreshments and meals at the monthly meetings.

Demonstration Gardens:

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| mark your calendars for these | September 3 | September 13 | September 24 |
| September work days: | September 6 | September 17 | September 27 |
| | September 10 | September 20 | |

Work Days - Tuesdays, Fridays, and 3rd Saturday. NOTE: The 1st Saturday workday has been dropped.

| <u>Mark Your Calendar:</u> | |
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| <i>*see below for details</i> | |
| 2002 Dates: | |
| September 5: | Craft Workshop - 4:30 p.m. |
| September 5: | Bird Friendly Plants seminar* |
| September 7: | Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza* |
| September 10: | September Meeting |
| September 11: | Master Naturalist Classes begin |
| September 12: | Craft Workshop - 4:30 p.m. |
| September 12: | Fall Master Gardener Training begins |
| September 18/19: | Firewise Landscaping Specialist Camp* |
| September 18: | Turf & Ornamentals Field Day* |
| September 21: | Fall Plant Sale |
| September 23-25: | Landscape Design Study Course* |
| October 5-12: | Brazoria County Fair |
| October 8: | October Meeting |
| November 12: | November Meeting |
| December 10: | December Meeting |
| 2003 Dates: | |
| February 11: | Spring Master Gardener Classes begin |
| April 5: | Pecan Grafting Field Day at Varner Hogg |
| April 19: | Spring Plant Sale |
| June 7: | Farmers Market |
| June 14: | Farmers Market |
| June 21: | Farmers Market |
| June 28: | Farmers Market |
| September 9: | Fall Master Gardener Classes begin |
| September 20: | Fall Plant Sale |
| October _-_: | Brazoria County Fair |
| November 18: | Brazoria County Pecan Show |

Bird Friendly Plants for Brazoria County - Thursday, September 5, at 9:30 a.m. Location: Freeport Library. Gil Livanec will give a presentation to the Founders Garden Club of Brazosport on colorful, wet and dry tolerant, bird friendly plants that survive in Brazoria County.

Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza - Saturday, September 7, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are on their annual fall migration and there is no place better to view this spectacle than the Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, where you will witness hundreds of hummers feeding and preparing for their long journey to the tropics. The GCBO is located on Hwy 332 West, between the Girl Scout headquarters and Lake Jackson Wilderness Park on Buffalo Camp Bayou. For more information call 979-480-0999.

Firewise Landscaping Specialist Camp - Wednesday and Thursday, September 18 and 19. Location: Bastrop State Park. Program will provide Master Gardeners with a basic understanding of fire behavior. The training camp will feature tours of neighborhoods in Bastrop County that have lowered their fire risk by creating survivable space around homes, as well as tours of high-risk areas that have not addressed the issue of wildfire. After completing the training, Master Gardeners will be asked to help spread the firewise landscaping message through the media, public speaking engagements, firewise demonstrations and working with individual homeowners. Space is limited to 2 Master Gardeners per county. Fee: \$75, covers Firewise Kit, 4 meals and park accommodations. Contact the TCE office for registration information.

Turf & Ornamentals Field Day - Wednesday, September 18, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Location: Texas A&M University. Tours and presentations. Featured speakers will present a broad range of information, including topics on turf selection and management, landscape management, new plant selection, and pest management. CEUs will be offered for both licensed irrigators and TDA pesticide applicators. Fee: \$20 pre-registration (by Sept. 9) or \$30 on-site registration. Registration forms are available at the TCE office.

Landscape Design Study Course - Monday-Wednesday, September 23-25. Location: Bryan/College Station area. Fee: \$75 plus \$40 for book. This is course 3 of a 4-course series. The courses may be taken in any order. This course covers many aspects of landscape design. For registration information contact the TCE office.

In The Garden:

SEED NICKERS

submitted by Ted Cooper

Some seeds grow much better if their seed coats have been "nicked" before planting. Nicking allows moisture in much more quickly than un-nicked seeds, which speeds up germination. Usually one must nick quite a pile of seeds when one is nicking seeds. Whether one uses a tri-corner file, or some other device, it is s-l-o-w! Here is a suggested way to quickly nick seeds. Try lining the inside of a standard quart canning jar with very coarse sand paper. Use a glue-stick to apply glue to the inside of the wide-mouth jar. Roll the sand paper into a tube and drop it in. It will unroll and practically stick itself to the jar. Drop in all your seeds and cap the jar. A couple of hefty shakes and all the seeds are scratched, nicked, scored, or gored, as the case may be.

Ted hasn't actually tried this. If anyone does try it, let us know if it works.

PREPARING BEDS IN FALL IS BEST

Gardener's Supply articles submitted by Donie Stowers

source: Gardener's Supply - www.gardeners.com

If you prepare your garden this fall, when spring comes you can just rake it smooth and plant. Not only will you have more time to do other chores, your soil will also be healthier.

Spading or tilling in the fall allows the freezing and thawing (*if it actually happens here*) of winter to break soil into crumbly particles. Because spring soil is often wet, cultivating it is difficult and even damaging to the soil. Tilling or spading wet soil causes clods to form which are tough to break up.

Fall tilling also allows you to add organic matter and soil amendments to your beds. Spread shredded leaves, grass clippings, or partially decomposed compost over your beds and spade it into your soil about six inches deep. Next spring, your soil will be filled with earthworms and other beneficial soil organisms.

PLANTING TINY SEEDS

source: Gardener's Supply - www.gardeners.com

When planting tiny seeds like lettuce, first lay down a strip of unscented toilet paper in the row and then sprinkle the seeds on top. This allows you to see how densely you are planting the seeds and keeps you from wasting seed. Simply cover the toilet paper and seeds with soil to the appropriate depth. The toilet paper will disintegrate in a short time.

CREATE TINY GREENHOUSES

source: Gardener's Supply - www.gardeners.com

Get an early start on your seed germination by using Ziploc bags as mini-greenhouses. Add soil starting mix to a Ziploc bag, moisten the soil, add seeds, blow into the bag to inflate it like a balloon, and then seal it up. The top of your refrigerator makes a great (warm) place to keep the bags.

HOW TO GROW A THREE SISTERS GARDEN

source: Gardener's Supply - www.gardeners.com

This Native American planting technique is the epitome of companion planting. The Three Sisters - corn, bean and squash - help each other in various ways. The corn provides support for the pole beans; the beans add nitrogen to the soil which helps the corn grow; and the squash covers the ground, keeping the soil moist and minimizing weed growth. And together, these three vegetables provide a nutritionally balanced meal!

Best of all, planting a Three Sisters Garden is simple:

- Create a mound of dirt about a foot high and 18-20 inches across. In the middle of each mound, sow 5 or 6 corn seeds in a circle. Sow the seeds about 1 inch deep and 6 inches apart.
- When the corn reaches 5 or 6 inches tall, plant 4 to 6 pole bean seeds around the corn. Next, plant 4 to 6 squash seeds about 12 inches from where you planted the beans.
- Water and fertilize the seeds when you plant them. As the beans begin to grow, train them to wrap around the corn.
- When harvest time comes...enjoy!

News to Know:

Did you know that the new official name of the extension service is now Texas Cooperative Extension (TCE)?

The new address for the Brazoria County TCE is: 21017 C.R. 171, Angleton, Texas 77515.

Note from the Editor:

I want to give special thanks to Donie for all her help this time around!

Here's how to reach me for newsletter contributions. The deadline for contributions is the Friday after our monthly meeting

Thanks - Anna Gawlik, Editor/Historian

Happy Gardening!!!

Paula Craig
CEA - Horticulture
Brazoria County