



What's Growin' On . . .

The BCMGA Newsletter

October 2004

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At the Meeting:

Speaker - Carol Jones, Education Manager for the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory gave a presentation on "Linking the Land, Birds, and People of the Gulf of Mexico."

Fall Plant Sale - We netted \$2,549 from the plant sale, which was an increase of \$927 more than last year. Sales were actually \$800 lower than last fall, but expenses were much lower thanks to all the hard work of everyone who propagated plants.

Dues Time - Ted Jagen is collecting dues for 2005: \$13. Make checks payable to BCMGA. You can bring your check to the meeting or you can mail it to Ted.

Intern Hours - Interns - you need to turn in your hours to determine where you stand in order to graduate.

Spring Plant Sale - Those plant sale people never stop. It's time to start propagating for spring. Any cuttings are welcome, even house plants. We are also looking for roses and ixoras. You are welcome to bring any cuttings to the greenhouse. Please label them, so everyone knows what the plant is. Also, it is best if you bring them on a Tuesday or Friday when someone is there, which allows for the best chance of survival.

Brazosport College Classes - Many thanks from Kathy Walton to the instructors for the classes. Kathy said there was a smaller group in attendance than the first time, but they were enthusiastic and gave great feedback. She's getting ready to go to print with the spring catalog, so if you are interested in instructing, let her know.

Nominating Committee - Kirby Rapstein and Greg Marsh are the members of the Nominating Committee. So far, the following people are nominated:

President - John Alcorn
Vice President-Project Volunteers - Gary Gardener
Vice President-Education - Kathy Walton
Treasurer - Ted Jagen
Secretary - Judy Wood

Fruit Orchard - John Alcorn is getting a bid on clearing the land.

Fruit Tree Sale - We are waiting for a date from Treesearch for the sale. We will need a lot of help from members for this sale to be successful. Since we will need class space for instruction on the care of the trees, we will probably hold it sale at the Extension Office.

Spring Training Classes - Classes are scheduled to begin on February 8. They will be held on Tuesday and Thursday with two classes each day. Pat Gerard is making all of the arrangements for speakers. She needs volunteers to be present at the classes in the event something is needed. This is an excellent opportunity to get some continuing education hours.

Hospitality Hostess - Cheryl Vining is resigning from her position, and we need someone to take her place. The duties include having people sign up to bring refreshments to the meetings and calling to remind them close to meeting time, as well as purchase supplies (plates, cups, napkins...) for the meetings and classes. We need someone to take over by January, so if you are able to help, let John know.

At the Demonstration Gardens:

News from the Greenhouse - Come out and work. There's always stuff to do.

News from the Demo Gardens

- The granite gravel has been spread in the tropical bed.
- We have a new sculpture you need to come and check out.
- We have had a few visits from tour groups, and they have been very complimentary.
- Next year we are planning another shade house that's even shadier than the one we have.

Herb-en Paradise - Lee Withers welcomes anyone who wants to help with the herb bed. She also needs a few items. Check out the list and see what you have that you may be able to donate:

Another upright rosemary	another avocado tree
A tea tree	lemon grass – 4 bunches
Mexican Mint Marigold -4 bunches	Calendula – Pot marigold – seeds or plants
Self heal – prunella vulgaris	Ginger – officinalis – a big clump
Winter and summer savory	an Apple tree – low chilling
Marjoram	a Gingko Tree
Passion vines – 4	strawberry plants – bunches
More garlic chives– gobs and gobs	onion chives – almost as much as garlic
Greek and Cuban oregano – 4 bunches Cuban – tons of Greek	

Broken chunks of concrete or stepping stones – unless someone has a bunch of flagstone they want to donate.

Old jewelry- bracelets, earrings, necklaces – gaudy is good.

Forks, knives and spoons, old plates – chipped ok.

Work Days - Tuesdays and Fridays from 7:30/8:00 a.m. until noon.

Mark your calendars for these November work days:	November 2	November 5	November 9
	November 12	November 16	November 19*
	November 23	November 26?	November 30

*Third Friday

News and Notes from the Coordinator:

Dear Master Gardeners,

I as I sit and reflect on the past year, it strikes me how quickly the time has flown and how much the BCMGA has accomplished. From banner plant sales to new gardens, to a growing speakers bureau (and of course, a newsletter and website that are awesome), it excites me to see how the organization has grown and evolved.

Congratulations to our new and old officers, all of whom I am sure will continue to provide the highest quality leadership possible. Congratulations also to our members who have recently completed their certifications as volunteer specialists. Pam Peltier has completed her training in entomology and Barbara Brown and Ray just finished their propagation training. I hope they will share their experiences with us in the near future.

Ann McLain and I have compiled your choices for advanced training and educational programs for 2005. The winning topics include: Gingers, Good Bugs Bad Bugs, Herbs, Water Wise Landscapes, Christmas Gifts from the Garden, Yard Art, and Bulbs. We will also co-host a program on Heritage Gardens with Varner Hogg Plantation.

In the next couple of months, please be thinking about those Master Gardeners that deserve special recognition. We will salute them at the annual awards meeting in February.

Happy Holidays!

Prayers for Ted Cooper and his wife Carol. We love you Grandpa Ted!

Calendar of Events:

*see below for details

new items in bold

2004 Dates:

- Nov 10: Lunch Bunch: Plant Now for a Beautiful Spring
Nov 14: Invasive Plants of Houston*
Nov 14: Herbal Cornucopia*
 Nov 16: Gardening Basics VI: Irrigation for Gardeners
 Nov 19: Third Friday
Nov 20: Planning of the Future - Planting in the Fall*
Nov 20: Mystical Swamp Tour*
Dec 3-4: Open House at The Vintage Rosery*
Dec 4: Backyard Orchard I: Growing And Eating Oranges, Grapefruits, Lemons and Other Citrus*
Dec 6: Introduction to Prescribed Burning*
Dec 11: Orchids for the Holidays*
 Dec 14: December Meeting
 Dec 17: Third Friday

2005 Dates:

- Jan 11: January Meeting
 Feb 8: February Meeting
 Mar 8: March Meeting
 Apr 12: April Meeting
 April 20: Spring Plant Sale
 May 5: State MG Conference
 May 10: May Meeting
 June 14: June Meeting
 July 12: July Meeting
 Aug 9: August Meeting
 Sept 13: September Meeting
 Oct 11: October Meeting
 Nov 8: November Meeting
 Dec 13: December Meeting

Invasive Plants of Houston - Date: November 14; Time: 2:00 p.m.; Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston; Phone: 713-681-8433. Presented by Linda Knowles, Native Plant Society. Learn about plants that are considered a nuisance in the Houston area. Learn how to recognize them, why they are a problem, and ways to control them in a yard. Find out about native plants that make great alternatives. Free.

Herbal Cornucopia - Date: November 14; Time: 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.; Location: Texas Discovery Gardens, 3601 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Dallas; Phone: 214-428-7176. It's harvest time in the herb garden! Learn how to harvest, dry and freeze herbs. Discover how easy it is to make herb concentrates. Make your own herb vinegar to take home. Master Gardener Marian Buchanan will conduct this hands-on workshop. Registration fee for non-members: \$7. Paid advance registration is required. Registration deadline is Friday, Nov. 12. Make your reservation today by calling 214-428-7476. Texas Discovery Gardens members admitted free.

Planning of the Future - Planting in the Fall - Date: November 20; Time: 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. & 2:00 p.m.-3:00p.m.; Location: Antique Rose Emporium, San Antonio Display Gardens; Contact: Robbi Will 210-651-4565. Join David Will for Two Great Seminars - in One Day! 1:00-2:00 - Beautiful, Bountiful Bulbs: Explore the possibilities of gardening with bulbs. For a very small investment, you will have years of repeating color in your garden. Learn which bulbs are best for naturalizing in Central and South Texas. 2:00-3:00 Tress - Branching Out in New Directions: Fall is the ideal time to plant trees and shrubs. David will discuss selection, planting and planning for growth. The program with a tree planting demonstration. Free seminars - no reservations required.

Mystical Swamp Tour - Date: November 20; Time: 10:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m.; Registration: For more information and class registration, call 409-880-8907 or email info@lulearn.net. Presented by Eli Tate in conjunction with Lamar University, Environmental Learning Center (Course ENVR50024). View different types of swamps from heavily wooded to open fields of flowers and what causes the swamps to differ. Meet inhabitants of the swamp (gators, eagles, wading birds, etc) up-close and personal. Cost: \$50.

Open House at The Vintage Rosery - Date: December 3-4; Time: 10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.; Location: The Vintage Rosery; 16630 Highway 36 (across from the Needville High School); Phone: 979-793-2888 . The roses are in all their fall glory, so plan on spending some time walking through the gardens and smelling the roses. Holiday treats provided. Free.

Backyard Orchard I: Growing And Eating Oranges, Grapefruits, Lemons and Other Citrus - Date: December 4; Time: 9:30a.m.-12:00 p.m.; Location: Urban Harvest, in the MECA building at 1900 Kane; Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). Oranges, grapefruits, lemons, tangerines, kumquats and many other types of citrus trees can easily be planted this winter and in a few years will produce large amounts of fruit in the fall in time for the holidays or even earlier. These will be many times better than what is in the stores. Citrus are evergreen in the winter and are beautiful, small trees that have fragrant flowers in the spring. They also attract North America's largest butterfly and are good bird habitat. But what should you grow? And how do you avoid mistakes? This class will let you taste at least three-dozen varieties including some of the most delicious and most hardy. Since the seeds will mostly produce the same fruit, you can also start an orchard. Basic ideas on the types of citrus, how to grow them, and where to get the best varieties will be discussed. Dr. Bob Randall grows a wide variety of citrus at his home and at the Urban Harvest demonstration garden. \$20, \$10 for members, free for community gardeners.

Introduction to Prescribed Burning - Date: December 6; Time: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Location: Bastrop State Park.; To register and for more information, contact Greg Creacy at 979-596-3709 / greg.creacy@tpwd.state.tx.us or Jeff Sparks at 903-566-5698 / jeff.sparks@tpwd.state.tx.us. Participants will be introduced to various topics including ecological effects of fire, fire equipment and safety, fire weather, fuels, ignition strategies, orienteering, and fire suppression techniques. The purpose of the course is to introduce staff with minimal or no prescribed burning experience to the basics of this valuable management tool so that they are better prepared to assist with burning activities and interpretation of this management tool within their area. Cost: \$10.00. Registration deadline is November 12, 2004.

Orchids for the Holidays - Date: December 11; Time: 11:00 a.m.; Location: Martha's Bloomers, 8101 Highway 6 Navasota; Phone: 936-870-4111. Presented by Dr. Rainer Fink, Orchid Specialist.

News to Know:

Logo Design Contest - Dorothy is looking forward to receiving design suggestions for the new BCMGA logo. The details again for those who missed it last month: This logo will be for a stitched design unique for the Brazoria County Master Gardeners and will be used for polo and denim shirts in the future. Logo size to plan on is about 3 inches with no lettering to be less than 1/4 inch in size. Your design should include the words "Brazoria County" and "Master Gardeners." If you have questions, contact Dorothy Babbington.

T-Shirt Orders -The silk-screened Master Gardener logo T-shirts and aprons are in and look great. If you have ordered one, were not able to attend the meeting, please call Dorothy Babbington to coordinate getting yours to you.

Reflections from the Garden Goddess:

from Lee Withers

Talking Tea Leaves – Cementing Friendships

If you haven't been out to the Demo gardens lately you might be in for a surprise. So much has happened in such a short time it is amazing that the few people we have had working since the plant sale have accomplished this much. Barbara Ross's (boss wrangler for those of you that don't know it) tropical garden is looking fantastic. An ENORMOUS load of decomposed granite was delivered, and one rare day when I couldn't be there it was spread by all the little elves that showed up that day – mostly Ted, Larry, Barbra Ross, Evelyn, Jesse and few others I can't remember at the moment (so if you weren't mentioned, don't bop me on the head – remember I wasn't there). It looks like all the plants are doing well and in particular, the Cassia is blooming like crazy.

While some have been out putting the final touches on the Tropical garden, others such as Ann, BB (another big boss), Carol – (another important person), Donie (yet another important person), Ellen (she's super important too), Louise, and a few others I don't remember (at this wee hour of the morning) are getting ready for next spring's plant sale. They are propagating to their hearts content. Pam and BB are working on helping everyone learn about being the best propagators since Linnaeus.

The herb bed is now in the final phase of construction. I know Ted Jagen will be happy since he told Barbara Ross that her tropical garden and my herb bed were money pits. Don't worry Ted it will take more than that to hurt my feelings. You and Bill Withers would enjoy talking a line or two. While several people have helped, without a

doubt the herb bed would not have been completed without the most excellent help of Larry and Ray. They have been my chief diggers and junior engineers. When I couldn't figure it out, my assistants willingly put in their two cents. It took them a while to figure out my "VISION" and I had to keep explaining it to them over and over. At times, it seemed as if we had the age-old communication problem – I guess it was one of those Mars and Venus things. Somehow, I managed to interpret female talk in to something more manly to get them to understand the lingo. I guess all those years of experience teaching 9-year-old boys paid off. Of course, most of our words were in jest but a few times someone that didn't understand Larry and my method of communication would come over and try to negotiate a peace settlement thinking we were having an argument. However, it was never like that at all. We were just verbalizing how tired we were and believe you me we were. All that is left to do it a bit more artsy stuff, plant a hole bunch of good smelling stuff, mulch and spread the walkways. This is nothing compared to all the holes and trenches dug, cement mixed and poured for posts, wire cut for landscape staples, hauling posts, wire cut for arches, landscape cloth cut and formed for walkways, beds lined out with boards, stakes hammered and hammered again, big holes dug for both ponds, stock panels cut for trellises, staples stapled, great ideas thunked and re-thunked, plans revised, steel stakes hammered and then moved and hammered again, grass killed(yeah), plans drawn and redrawn and then drawn again, research read, copies made, lots of travel and lots of good clean but dirty fun. When the Three Musketeers finished the last of the black cloth I was planning on whooping and hollering or maybe dancing a jig but I was too pooped. We drug our tired selves under the shade and celebrated with a glass of water. Wild ones aren't we.

So if you haven't been out to the Demonstration Gardens and Greenhouse lately, you will be shocked. It is unbelievable that so much has been accomplished in a summer's time - the tropical garden, the shade house, new vegetable gardens, and of course, my herb bed. I named it "Herb-en Paradise" until something even more profound hits me, probably about 2 a.m. in the morning. I guess it really doesn't shock me at what's been going on - when a few good people put their mind to doing good things, so much can be accomplished. Besides, it is just good clean fun (except in my case). Come out and work with us, and you will see what I mean.

Happy gardening – may all your flowers blooms and your vegetables fruit -

Give it a Grow - Save Seeds Now For Spring Planting:

from Suzanne Jerabeck

Gathering seeds in the fall from your favorite flowers is easy – and economical – especially if you want more of the same next spring. Plus, when packaged with a pretty pot and small bag of soil, your harvested seeds can be wonderful and welcome holiday gifts for your friends and family.

This year, I harvested seeds from a variety of annuals and perennials in my garden: rock rose, four o'clocks, yellow bells, salvia, swamp sunflower, zinnia, cat's whiskers, native bee balm, and a few native hibiscus. Toward the end of November, I'll also be collecting seed from my beautiful, fall-flowering candlestick cassia.

It's a simple process, really. Just let your flowers go through their own natural bloom cycle. Once the flower head has dried, it's time to collect the fruits of your labor.

There are two main types of flower seed heads – those that form pods with the seeds inside (impatiens, poppies, hosta, love-in-a-mist, etc.) and those that form tufts with the seeds joined at the base and the ends open to the air (clematis, marigolds, sweet william, carnations, sunflowers, etc.).

When seeds are ripe, pods that are dark or straw-colored will split or burst open. Pods come in all shapes and sizes -- some are round (hibiscus) and some are long and skinny (yellow bells). The trick is to check them regularly so that you can harvest them before the pods split completely open and spill the seed onto the ground. If your pod has already burst or is just about to, you may want to put the pod in a paper bag before cutting it from the stalk.

Tuft-type seeds from flowers like sunflowers are ready to harvest when the shells have formed and begin to loosen. Simply shake them into a container held under the flower head or remove the flower head and pick the seeds off one at a time. For flowers like marigolds, look for petals that have turned crispy brown or have fallen off completely. For flowers like clematis, wait till the seed head becomes feathery-looking before snipping off the head.

Once harvested, air-dry the seeds for a week or two in the cool shade of a dry and well-ventilated place. I like to lay them out on paper towels/plates or in a fine-mesh sieve. Some gardeners like to dry them on newspaper. Just remember that a seed is a shell case that holds a tiny potential plant. It carries on respiration by taking in oxygen and giving off carbon dioxide. And, in storage, a seed has the food it needs to survive until germination is off to a good start. Placing a seed in temperatures of 90+ degrees can kill it off.

Once the seeds are thoroughly dried, clean and separate the seeds from the chaff – the small remaining pieces of pods or coverings. During harvest, you may need to shake the seeds out of the pods, one capsule at a time.

The last step is to store your seeds in a cool, dark, dry location. I find that small (about 2" x 3"), clear zip lock bags (found in craft stores) are easiest to use. Label each bag of seeds with a black permanent marker and seal. Then, place them in an air-tight glass jar and store in your refrigerator at below 50 degrees. Storage in absolute darkness is best – insert a black piece of construction paper inside the jar before inserting the seed packets.

I start most of my seeds in flats in January so they are ready to go in the ground in March. But, in November and December, I research each plant so I can properly label seed packets for Christmas giving. The Internet is a fabulous source of information on every plant imaginable. Plus, it's a great place to download printed seed packets. Do a search using the words "seed packet template" or visit www.blossomswap.com/envelopes.html, www.angelfire.com/art2/flowox43055/template/angel1.jpg or www.pigs-etc.com/seedpacket1.html. Hewlett Packard also has a seed packet template at www.homeandoffice.hp.com/hho/cache/338-0-0-39/.

So, start seed saving today – for yourself, your friends, AND your garden!

In The Garden - Surprise:

from Ann McLain

One of the great things about moving every so often is finding many little surprises as you settle in to the new place. Sometimes these surprises are not so great, such as when the water heater rusts through in the first month after you move in. Or when you realize that although there are many kitchen cupboards, most of them open in ways that don't work for quick and/or frequent access.

But often there are worthwhile surprises in store in the garden and lawn. When we moved into our house the first surprise was that there seemed to be houseplants growing along the drive and next to the house, even though it was January. Where I've lived before, purple heart and airplane plant (or spider plant) definitely do not grow outdoors in January. Then there was the fat leaved plant that I had dismissed as some kind of sedum, which burst out in gorgeous red bloom in February. Up north, we buy Kalanchoe at the florist's, already forced; we don't ever find it getting along on its own outdoors. And it bloomed its head off for months.

Those were just the surprises of moving across the country. This fall I have been surprised by some plants for which surprise is a basic principle. In fact they are sometimes called surprise lilies. The first to appear was Lycorus, commonly called spider lily. One morning I noticed that a bed of ground cover was looking different somehow. Where there had been plain green the day before, now there was a flash of color. Closer inspection revealed tall spikes crowned with clusters of gorgeous dark red flowers. The petals were narrow and curved back, with long stamens sticking forward: very spider like. No foliage, but who cares with all that green monkey grass as backup. Those wonderful flowers lasted for weeks, but finally they crumpled, the stems disappeared, and there was no trace of the surprise. Then, a few weeks later, I noticed something red again. Another batch of spider lilies? When I checked it out I discovered dozens of red flowers, lower growing (just above the tops of the monkey grass in fact) and shaped like funnels. This time the surprises were Oxblood lilies (Rhodophiala). Again, the flowers were wonderful and red and have held up for weeks.

When I first read about these lilies last spring, I was not particularly interested. My mother grew something similar in her garden in Ohio, and I wasn't much impressed. The flowers were pale pink, and like the things in my yard, the flower stalk appeared without foliage. The big strappy leaves were there in spring, but died down long before the flowers came up. Long enough, at any rate, for the flowers to be a complete surprise. My mother kept a very neat flower garden, and her plants were well spaced out in weed-free dirt. No disheveled cottage garden look for my mom. So when those big flower stalks shot up in the no-man's land between the perennials, they had all the grace of a bunch of leftover plant stakes. I always thought they looked more like plastic flowers than like

something real. My genteel mother always called them Surprise Lilies. But some garden books call that pink species Naked Ladies, a name I preferred, because it spiced up their rather boring appearance.

However, the red Texas-style surprises in my yard have been quite a revelation. For one thing, it's apparent to me now that part of the problem I always had with Mom's Naked Ladies was how silly they looked standing there in the bare dirt. Springing forth from a bed of something green does make quite a difference. And the red color is gorgeous, particularly in this autumnal season. Especially since the trees aren't red. A surprise can definitely be a good thing.

So I will try to protect these lovely surprises from the tree guy and the dogs and other predators, and encourage them to multiply. Maybe I will even add to them. Both the spider lily and the oxblood lily are heritage bulbs in this region, and well adapted to our conditions. My surprises are growing at the bases of large trees, in more shade than not, and their beds were flooded periodically last winter. They certainly didn't have any human assistance during the past year, since I didn't know they were there. In *The Southern Heirloom Garden* (Welch and Grant) I read that the *Lycoris* bulbs we can buy these days are different genetically from the old-timey ones that grow around old houses, and the modern ones are not so tough and long-lived. So if you're looking for surprise lilies, it's probably best to get them passed-along from a friend. After all, that's the best source for a nice surprise.

JMG "Groovy Gardeners" News:

From Vicki Brushwood

Connie Marquez started the "Groovy Gardeners," our Junior Master Gardeners group two years ago. She works very hard with her children and in the community. I wanted to share a special event in her life with everyone. Below is a copy of an email I received from Ralph, Connie's husband.

Every year, Michael and Madison participate (in some way) in the annual Brazoria County Fair. Connie purchases the Fair book which outlines all the contests and rules. This year, the kids decided to enter their mom in the "Brazoria County Mom of the Year" contest. I obviously thought that was a great idea, so I encouraged them to do so. To nominate someone, the nominator(s) send in a 200 word essay on why their nominee should be considered for this honor. The kids got together (without Connie's knowledge) and wrote the attached essay and mailed it in.

A couple of weeks later, Connie was blown away when she received a letter from the Fair Commission informing her that Michael and Madison had nominated her for this honor.

There were 56 essays turned in. From those, the judges picked 5 finalists. There was a pageant of sorts in the auditorium of the fairgrounds this past Tuesday night. Pretty formal deal with several local dignitaries acting as judges and emcees and entertainment in the form of songs. One by one, all the nominees were called up on stage and the nominators were recognized as well.

The five finalists were announced (keep in mind, they were selected strictly from the essays turned in). We got really excited when Connie's name was announced. They brought forward on the stage all five finalists. Then, one at a time, the nominees stood up and the nominators were asked to go up on stage and read their essays (no, the kids did not know this would be required). Michael and Madison did an outstanding job of reading the essay. They were by far the youngest nominators to read their essay,s and I thought (and as many people later told us) they did the best job. It was a very touching moment and a testament to how well Connie has done in teaching them for the past five years.

After that, a judge from the panel asked each finalist a question. Connie did great on this as well. In the end, she was honored to take 2nd runner up in the contest. We however feel that she is and always has been "mom of the year".

Now, here is the essay that Michael and Madison submitted:

Why My Mom Should Be Brazoria County Fair Mom

We believe our mom deserves to be the Brazoria County Fair Mom because she does so many things for us in our family as well as those outside of our family. She is a very giving person and hardly ever complains considering she gives so much of her time to others. And she does all this with a cheerful heart.



In our house, our mom cleans, buys the groceries, cooks, does the laundry and helps with the yard-work. She also prepares lunch for our dad to take to work. She does all this while maintaining a very important job. That job is to provide us with an education. Our mom has been home-schooling us for the past five years and she is very good at it. Our grades prove that she is, and we enjoy having her as our teacher.

In addition, she finds the time to take Michael to baseball practice and Madison to piano and puppet practice. Our mom is very involved in our church. She is a director in the children's ministry called Awana and serves on a women's committee.

Our mom is also very involved in the community. Two years ago, she started the HAP program (Home-school Academic Program) which now has over 100 kids from all over the county participating. She also started the Junior Master Gardeners program which is associated with the Master Gardener program. She organizes several community service activities throughout the year including nursing home visits, plant sales for the Master Gardeners and clean ups in the area.

She does all this and more, but still finds time to love us and be our mommy. We are very proud of her and think that you will be too.

Connie always has a smile on her face and is willing to get her hands dirty. We are lucky to have her and the Groovy Gardeners! Congrats to Connie!

On the Herbal Side:

from DiAnna Munson

I have found some interesting research studies published recently. I hope they are interesting to you too.

Chicken soup has been scientifically shown to fight viral infections, and since many people do not take the time to make chicken soup from scratch, here are the store brands that were found to be most effective: Knorr's Chicken Flavor Noodle, Campbell's Healthy Request Chicken Noodle, Lipton's Cup-A-Soup Chicken Noodle, and Progresso Chicken Noodle.

The best way to prevent viral infections continues to be frequent hand washing and not touching mucous membranes. Also in the study, researchers found that people who do moderate exercise daily and get adequate rest are more resistant to viral infections than those who do not.

As our population ages, a disproportionate number of eye diseases are being reported. Poor diet is the main theme seen in many of the studies. The lack of "lutein" containing foods seem to lend credibility to their conclusions. Eye disorders studied consist of glaucoma, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, varicose veins, and hemorrhoids of the retina. The foods that provide the largest amount of lutein are: kale, spinach, mustard greens, yellow corn, broccoli, green peas, pumpkin, collard greens, squash (winter and summer), Brussels sprouts. The other foods that provide some but not the daily recommended amount are: green olives, plums, peaches, oranges, tangerines, avocados, kiwi, and rhubarb. I thought you might need some suggestions for planting a vegetable garden this year. This information helped me decide. The two herbs that also correct eye disorders, which contain lutein, are bilberry and eyebright.

Stem cell research has been in the news a lot, so I thought I would pass on the latest research I've received. Fetal Stem Cell research has shown to cause tumors throughout the body of those who received injections for the treatment of M.S. While there is some improvement in the nerve, the discovery of tumors throughout the body is not an acceptable alternative. The Biomedical Engineering Department of Indiana Center for Vascular Biology and Medicine published a report on the stem cells found in body fat. Dr. Keith L. March states, "one's own fat is very rich source of stem/progenitor cells can help provide new blood flow to areas of the body with reduced flow; and

also have exhibited clear evidence of differentiation along nerve cell lineages. Because fat is a resource that is immediately available to everyone as an autologous source of cells that will not be rejected by the immune system, the implications of such findings are very important from therapeutic/scientific, practical, and bioethical perspectives." So, pass me that chocolate bar, I may need more stem cells!

I hope you found this information as interesting as I have, and some of it useful.

Garden Checklist:

by Dr. William C. Welch, Landscape Horticulturist, Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A&M University

- ✿ Gourds on display for fall decorations will last longer if they are carefully cleaned, waxed and kept in a dry place. Inspect occasionally for signs of mold.
- ✿ Prolong the life of holiday-season gift plants by providing proper care. Check to see if the pot wrap has plugged up the bottom drainage. Don't over-water. Keep out of drafts from heating vents and open doorways. Fertilizer is seldom needed the first few months.
- ✿ Berrying plants, such as holly and yaupon, may be pruned now while they can be enjoyed as cut material inside the house.
- ✿ Place orders for seeds this month so you will have them available when you are ready to plant. By ordering early, you will be more certain of getting the varieties you want.
- ✿ Don't get in a hurry to prune woody plants. Late December through February is usually the best time to prune them.
- ✿ Drain gasoline from power tools and run the engine until fuel in the carburetor is used up.
- ✿ Drain and store garden hoses and watering equipment in a readily accessible location. The lawn and plants may need water during a prolonged dry spell.
- ✿ November through February is a good time to plant trees and shrubs. In the Panhandle, planting is often delayed until February or early March.
- ✿ Continue to set out cool-season bedding plants, such as pansies, violas, stock, snapdragons, and dianthus.
- ✿ Prepare beds and individual holes for rose planting in January and February. Use composted manure, pine bark, and similar materials mixed with existing soil.
- ✿ Plant those spring-flowering bulbs if you haven't already done so.
- ✿ Want to start cuttings of your favorite Christmas cactus? As soon as it has finished blooming, select a cutting with 4 or 5 joints, break or cut it off, and insert the basal end into a pot of moderately moist soil. Place it on a windowsill or other brightly lit area. The cuttings should be rooted within 3 to 4 weeks.

Source: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/newsletters/hortupdate/nov03/gdncklst.html>
Date: November 6, 2004

Uh Honors "Grande Dame of Roses" with Antique Rose Garden:

The late Margaret Sharpe, Houston's "Grande Dame" of roses, spearheaded plantings of her favorite flower, as well as other bloomers, across the City of Houston. To honor her, and her longtime campaign to encourage and educate Houston area gardeners, the University of Houston is installing the Margaret Sharpe Antique Rose Garden on Cullen Boulevard adjacent to the Rebecca and John J. Moore School of Music Building, across from the Athletic complex.

Margaret was a founder of both the Houston Rose Society and the Texas Rose Rustlers and active in too many other local, national and international gardening groups to mention. The garden will be created in stages

utilizing a variety of antique roses in several raised beds surrounded by a low brick wall with flagstone caps. Wide pathways between the beds will allow visitors to walk among, and appreciate, the roses. Numerous local organizations have pledged support, both in funding and by counseling, including the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs, Texas Garden Clubs, Inc., the Garden Club of Houston, the Houston Rose Society, the Texas Rose Rustlers, to name just a few. Special acknowledgements are given to Clayworks of Austin, Mike Shoup of the Antique Rose Emporium in Independence and Mary Herr of Herr Landscaping in Splendora, Texas.

Funding for the Margaret Sharpe Antique Rose Garden is being augmented by the sale of individually engraved bricks in various sizes. The pavers range in size from 4" x 8" (4 lines/14 characters/spaces per line) for \$100 up to 8" x 16" (4 lines/28 characters/spaces). It is hoped both groups and individuals will help us honor Margaret's memory through these permanent decorative pavers.

For additional information or a brochure, contact Elsa Glover, 713-743-8875 or email:
elglover@central.uh.edu.

Happy Birthday!

Happy November Birthday Wishes...

Viki Brushwood - November 20

Barbara Burkhardt - November 26

Frances Mount - November 19

Thanks - Anna Gawlik, Editor

Happy Gardening!!!

The Brazoria County Master Gardener Association shall not be affiliated with any commercial enterprise for the profit of an individual member or group of members. No member shall use their position with the Association to further the manufacture, distribution, promotion or sale of any material, product or service in which they have either a direct or indirect financial interest.



Paula Craig
CEA - Horticulture
Brazoria County