

BIRTHDAYS:

Volume 4, Issue 5..... May, 2018

May

Pat Briggs, 5/9
 Pat Taylor, 5/27
 Marsha Sasser, 5/28

June

Jorja Merrick, 6/6
 Paula Marshall, 6/29

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Newsletter Staff Needs Your Help!

If you like to write, or even if you don't, but have good ideas for articles and/or subjects for the newsletter please consider joining the newsletter staff. Contact Sandra Rosen or Paula Marshall for more information.

We welcome all of our Master Gardeners to forward articles or information for our newsletter to our Editor:
sandrarosen42@yahoo.com
 News Committee:
 Sandra Rosen Joan Driver
 Paula Marshall Anna Baker
 Susan Dahlman

Blackwell House Landscape Becoming Beautiful Again

by Paula Marshall

The 11 interns in the FSMG class of 2018 have been hard at work, bringing the Blackwell House grounds back to life. Tommy was approached last year by the Historical Society and asked if the FSMGs would take over the grounds for the Iris Garden Club which had been disbanded. His decision to give the project to the 2018 intern class was perfect timing and the 2018 class was the perfect group to take on the task.

Becky Hettinger, coordinator for the intern classes this year said, "This class gelled like jello from the very beginning. They all worked together and did the research to come up with a landscaping plan that would include plants that would be as true as possible to what may have been planted when the Blackwell House was built in 1886." Each intern chose a specific area to nurture and develop, marked their territory, and began working shortly after the first class in January.

After scouting out several area nurseries for old-time heirloom plants, the group came up with many ideas and plans of what to incorporate in the landscape, some of which were a cutting garden, an herb garden, and a future wildflower meadow. Some of the original plants in the gardens were kept, some were trimmed up and some were replaced. They learned recently that a rose which is still on the property today was brought here from Kentucky in the 1800's.

The objective of the class's project is to enhance the timeless beauty of the Blackwell House with a landscape that is reminiscent of the past, giving it the respect it deserves. This historical relic is one of pride in our community, and we are lucky to have this capable group has the new caretakers of this beautiful of property.

The interns will continue to work their project throughout 2018, keeping the third Wednesday of the month as their official workday, but many of them work additional times, accumulating -hours of volunteer time- so far this year.

The rest of the membership will be able to assist them as needed in 2019.

(Note: Shari Curran has kept a notebook that is kept at the Extension Office with before and after



2018 Interns at Blackwell House work day: (L to R) Kathy Brasuell, Becky Hettinger, Shari Curran



More Intern workers Pat and Don Taylor and April Trekell. Thanks to all gardeners who are working this property.

Intern Class of 2018

In case you haven't noticed, we have a great bunch of energetic, friendly, hard-working people in this year's intern class...here's a chance for you to get to know a few of them. Hopefully, we can learn about some others in next month's newsletter."

Kathy Brausel



I am an amateur, but love gardening, and have had a desire to become a master gardener ever since I heard about the program years ago. December of 2017 I retired and moved to Canton from Dallas, which presented my opportunity to attend the classes. I have enjoyed it, and learned a great deal. My primary interest is landscape design. I love creating beautiful spaces, both inside and outside.

I am certified as a yoga instructor, but not currently teaching. I've become actively involved at Crossroads Church in Canton, and love it there. Almost every weekend I compete in various shooting matches with pistol and/or rifle. I'm working towards eventually getting my 5 grandsons involved in the sport.

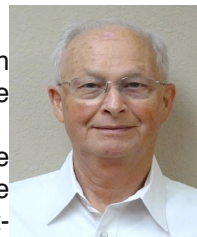
Shari Curran



I am very excited to be a part of Freestate Master Gardeners. I am married with two grown children and I moved to Canton about 7 years ago. We have shown and raised dogs for over 30 years both in conformation and obedience. We have two of the top Golden Retrievers in the country and our Pug, Lionel is currently 3rd in the country. I began and ran Therapet for over 25 years. It is a non-profit Animal Assisted Therapy program which served over 20 health care facilities. It allowed me to combine my training as an Occupational Therapist with my love for animals. My husband and I owned a Dog Training Facility for 20 years and still enjoy training and showing in that as well.

I am looking forward to expanding my knowledge of gardening and hopefully meeting some friends through the Master Gardener Program!

Fred Weidmann



I have been interested in growing fruit trees since the mid-1980's. Retirement offered the first opportunity to explore orcharding. I began planting our "craft orchard" in 2015 and have over 100 thriving trees, including stone fruit, pomes, and nuts.

Cheryl Weidmann



I have had the opportunity to explore residential gardening in a variety of urban climate conditions from sub-arctic to sub-tropic. My particular interest is in landscape design, which I intend to explore after graduation.

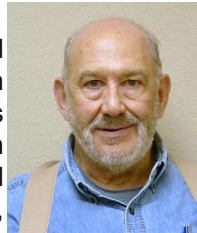
Our group chose to overhaul the circular garden at the rear of the Blackwell House. Operating within the constraints of what might have been in culinary use at the time of the home's construction, we have incorporated both existing and new features.



Pat Taylor

I have always enjoyed planting and growing all types of things. I grew up around my grandparents and they all had gardens. The vegetables and flowers were all part of my childhood. Canning and freezing the things made it a complete circle. My mother's father loved roses and sunflowers. I remember watching for the sunflowers to move during the day.

Don Taylor's background as a FFA member in high school and growing up as a young man on a ranch his parent's owned led him to learn about soils, grasses and of course the family's garden. His mother always had a very large garden. She canned and put in the freezer the bounty from the garden. He helped her prepare and maintain it. After we were married (almost 43 years now) I was able to help in the garden and learned much from her. My mother-in-law taught me about canning and freezing the bounty



canning and freezing the bounty from our garden. We both promised ourselves that we would have a garden when we retired. So here we are...retired and learning to be Master Gardeners.

We have known other Master Gardeners over the years and had an interest in becoming one when we retired. We retired and moved to Ben Wheeler almost three years ago. We saw the notice in the Canton paper and called about being in the classes. Learning from other Master Gardeners about different ways to grow has been so interesting and fun. We hope to use the knowledge to become better gardeners and to share this knowledge with others.

We have made many new friends among our classmates and hope to continue meeting together and continuing to care for the Blackwell house as a class.

Our part of the Blackwell house has been the north side of the house, the sign at the road and half of the beds under the Chinese Tallow Tree. We cleaned all the beds of grass/weeds and installed "weed guard cloth" to retard its growth in the future. We have replanted the north beds with Cast Iron Plants, Black Elephant Ears, Hostas and Japaneses Ferns. The sign now has a new bed under it with flowers and fountain grass. We thinned the Iris under the tree and planted a Drift Yellow Rose, Camellia and replanted some of the iris. The Iris are purple so we thought the yellow and white colors of the new plants would blend in well. We coordinated with another class couple to have a uniformed look to this bed under the tree.

We are using our new knowledge to plant using raised beds, learning to grow using a hot house and hydroponic growing. This class has been so much fun. We really appreciate the opportunity to take this class.



HUGELKULTUR- CENTURIES OLD OR NOT?

by Sandra Rosen

We assume, and it is correct, that hugelkultur has been around for hundreds of years. It is believed to have been first used in Germany and Eastern Europe. Farmers clearing fields and mounding the wood and plant rubbish into piles were probably the earliest beginnings. In many instances, burning the rubbish was not a good idea. Then, someone realized that these mounds seem to grow plants really well. It is interesting, however, there is not a real written history of hugelkultur, and its earliest mention is in 1962 when the word first appears in a German brochure by an avid gardener Herman Andra. Soon after that it became popular as a permaculture technique and has been used and gained popularity ever since.



A Free Hands-On Seminar



Sponsored by
Free State Master Gardeners
& Silver Spur Resort



Hugelkultur is a composting process employing raised planting beds constructed on top of decaying wood debris and other compostable biomass plant materials. The process helps to improve soil fertility, water retention, and soil warming, thus benefiting plants grown on or near such mounds.

A short presentation on this unique gardening method will be followed by a hands-on build. Bring your garden gloves, shovels and trowels and help construct and plant a Hugelkultur garden in the Barnyard at Silver Spur Resort.

Location: Silver Spur Resort, 13785 State Hwy 19 Canton TX

Date: May 2, 2018 at 9:00 am

Time: Registration at 8:30am, seminar beginning at 9:00am

RSVP to: Silver Spur Resort 903-420-1400 or
the AgriLife Extension office 903-567-4149

Wine Chime Class

Shari Curran is offering a class to learn how to make a Wine Chime for your garden. The class will be held Tuesday, May 8th from 1-3 pm and several spots are still available. If there is enough interest, another class will be scheduled. You are welcome to invite a friend for a fun, creative afternoon! The cost is \$20 to cover all materials. If you are interested in attending, please contact Shari at 903-526-9590.



President's Message



Greetings All Master Gardeners The weather is starting to shape up; my tomatoes are just starting to grow after sitting almost dormant in the ground for the past several weeks. Yes, very unusual weather this spring, but we had a good cold winter with plenty of "chilling hours" so my peach trees are doing great. So great that I have thinned out most of the trees and came away with three 5 gallon buckets full of walnut sized peaches. I really need to thin some more this week. Thinning helps ensure the peaches you leave on the tree grow to their full potential in size and flavor. The rest of my garden is doing OK, but my melon transplants are also still in a stage of dormancy. Hope all of yours are doing well! Of note, Canton's new Farmers Market is up and running. Last weekend I think there were three produce vendors, but variety and selection is still wanting. It is just so early yet. Looking forward to our Intern Graduation in a couple of weeks. We were unable to utilize the Blackwell House due to cost, but Louella Illif has graciously offered the use of her house and property outside of Canton. Let's pray for good weather. A reminder that May will be a busy month for us. Besides the graduation, we kick off our Library Series for the public on May 17th with Melisa presenting her preservation class. Following that we are holding our Spring Seminar for the public on the May 26th with Dotty Woodson, "Growing Fruit in East Texas". All MG's are encouraged to help and attend this seminar. We need people for many activities like setup, registration, etc. Let Mimi know if you can help.

Robert Williams
713-626-6936

May Gardening Chores

Tommy Phillips
County Extension Agent, Ag/NR

May is a great time to be a gardener as Mother Nature usually has her thermostat regulated and gardens and lawns begin to flourish.

ANNUAL AND PERENNIAL FLOWERS

Although pansies are still looking great, it's about time to pull them and plant summer flowering plants. There are too many to list here, but your choices are many, and nurseries are stocked with them. It's better to go ahead and dig out the pansies even though they may still be looking quite good. Once it gets hot, they'll go down fast. Annuals give you lots of color bang for your buck.

Transplant or sow seeds of angelonia, ageratum, sunflower, zinnia, morning glory, portulaca, marigold, cosmos (Cosmos bipinnatus with pastel colors and C. sulphureus with hot reds and yellows), periwinkles, gomphrena and gourds. Plant vinca (periwinkle), which prefers hot, sunny sites, later in May once the weather turns warmer.

For shady spots, grow these favorite plants: impatiens, coleus, caladium and begonias. Flowering tobacco (Nicotiana) is a great fragrant annual for partial shade.

Perennials for the sun include Shasta daisy, dusty miller, garden mums, coreopsis, mallow, salvia (many kinds), daylily and summer phlox. Shade loving perennials include hosta, columbine, phlox, ferns, violets, ajuga, and liriope. Achimenes, cannas, dahlias, caladiums and other summer bulbs can also be planted in May.

Some plants can be grown as either annuals or perennials. Lantana loves the summer heat and sun, blooming from late spring through first frost. Most years it will come back from the roots. Lantana comes in bush and trailing forms, and in many colors.

Firebush or Hamelia is another favorite summer bloomer with bright orange/red flowers that is a magnet for hummingbirds. It is usually slow to emerge after winter, and many folks simply replant it every year.

FLOWER BED MAINTENANCE

If you cut off old blossoms on early spring flowering annuals like pansies, snapdragons, stock and calendulas, you can prolong the flowering season a few more weeks.

Allow foliage of daffodils and other spring flowering bulbs to mature and yellow before removing. Do not hide or cover their leaves.

Pinch back growth of newly planted annual and perennial plants. This results in shorter, compact plants with more flowers.

TREES AND SHRUBS

There's still plenty of time to set out container shrubs and trees. While they will need regular watering this summer, be certain you are not pouring too much water on your new plants. Folks with sandy soil may have the tendency to apply lots of water, keeping the soil where there are currently no roots saturated with water. Roots do not grow well in wet, soggy soil. Regularly check both the surrounding soil and the original soil root ball with your finger to determine the need for supplemental water during the year.

Fertilize roses every four to six weeks with small amounts of a balanced fertilizer. Control black spot on roses with triforine (Funginex) or other labeled product.

LAWNS

The first application of fertilizer for centipede lawns should be made soon, and if you have not yet fertilized St. Augustine or Bermuda grass, it is certainly not too late. The best way to determine what type and how much fertilizer is needed is to have a soil test done; otherwise use a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 fertilizer ratio.

VEGETABLES

As soon as tomatoes and peppers first set fruit, lightly apply nitrogen fertilizer (called side dressing) about 12 to 14 inches from the base of the plants. This supplemental feeding keeps the plants vigorous and growing, allowing them to set and mature the maximum amount of fruit without stunting the growth of the plants.

Cool season vegetables, like lettuce and spinach, will begin bolting (flowering) and quickly go down in quality once it gets hot. Harvest them soon and replant empty spots with warm-season vegetables like okra, sweet potatoes, pumpkins or watermelons.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Don't take the description "evergreen" plants too literally, expecting leaves to persist forever. Plants like magnolias, live oak, gardenia, hollies and some azaleas lose some of their old leaves in late spring and early summer. The flush of new growth on many evergreens will cause older leaves to yellow and drop, sometimes all at once. It's nothing to be concerned about; just nature putting on a new spring coat of green and discarding the old.

(Continued on page 5)

Unfortunately, the month of May is not complete without a few pests messing things up. Here are a few of which you should be aware. If you know what might be showing up, you can periodically check your yard and take action before things get out of hand and more difficult to control.

Check azaleas for lace bugs. These small, slow moving, black insects with clear, lacy wings feed on the underside of the leaves. Damaged leaves look stippled or bleached and have small, shiny black specks on the undersides.

Leaf spot on Red Tip Photinia is a disease which can defoliate, weaken and potentially kill limbs. Indian Hawthorns can also get this disease which is characterized by dark, purple-colored spots on the leaves. Prevention is the best remedy to control Entomosporium leaf spot. First, rake up and remove all old, fallen leaves from underneath Photinias. The disease will be more severe if the leaves are frequently wetted, either by rainfall or by an irrigation system. If your sprinklers are hitting the plant's leaves, make adjustments to prevent this from occurring.

A preventative fungicide spray will help control Entomosporium leaf spot, particularly if the photinias were affected last year. Alternate trifenox (Funginex) or bayleton with chlorothalonil (Daconil, Bravo, Multi-Purpose Fungicide) during the rainy season. This disease can be difficult to control and new growth must be protected.

Aphids, or plant lice, can be found on tender, new growth of all types of plants. Aphids are small, soft-bodied insects that suck plant sap, often occurring in very large numbers. There are several naturally occurring enemies of aphids which can efficiently reduce a small infestation. Usually beneficial insects (lady beetles, lacewings, parasitic wasps) do a good job of keeping aphid populations under control.

Look closely to see if plants with aphids have any parasitized aphids. Parasitized aphids appear fat, motionless, and salmon-colored. Very tiny wasps lay eggs in the aphid bodies. The eggs hatch and develop into small larvae which eat the aphid's insides! A close inspection of parasitized aphids might even reveal a tiny exit hole where the new adult wasp emerged to continue the cycle of destroying more aphids. Obviously, there is no need to spray there if you find insect predators or parasites working over an aphid infestation.

Cabbage worms and loopers will be on all cole crops including broccoli, cabbage, collards, kale and cauliflower. The biological insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), sold under several brand names like Biological Worm Killer, Thuricide, Dipel, etc., is a specific and very safe product to use to control these and other moth and butterfly caterpillars on vegetables and other plants. Use Bt late in the day and thoroughly cover the leaves with the spray.

Not all "critters" are pests, nor are all spots diseases – be sure to get any unknown suspect or problem correctly identified before considering treating with a pesticide.



Wills Point Museum Garden

After Clean Up



May is a Busy Month for FSMG's!

Here is a calendar that may make it easier to keep track of all that is going on:

- | | | |
|--------|---|--------------------------------|
| May 1 | Executive Board Mtg at St. Therese's | 9:00 a.m. |
| May 10 | Intern Graduation at Louella's House
- Bring a covered dish | 5:30 social
6:00 dinner |
| May 15 | Van 2nd graders coming to Canton
- Trade Days Grounds | 8:00 a.m. |
| May 16 | Workday in the Gardens
- Contact Leads for Plans | 9:00 a.m. |
| May 17 | 1st Library Series Program
Preserving Produce, Melisa | 10:30 a.m. |
| May 26 | Seminar - Growing Fruit in East Texas
-Dr. Dotty Woodson
St. Therese's Hall, Canton | 9-12 a.m.
8:30 Registration |

2018 May						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Gardening Events – May, 2018

By Susan Dahlman

Thursday, May 3: Ellis Co. MG “**Put the Care Into Lawn Care**” at First United Methodist Church Banquet Hall, 505 W. Marvin St., Waxahachie. 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Free.

Saturday, May 5: Dallas Co. MG on **Easy Spring Lawn Care** at North Havens Gardens, 7700 Northhaven Rd., Dallas. 1 – 2 p.m. Free.

Saturday, May 5: McLennan Co MG **Plant Sale** at Westview Village Shopping Center, 551 N. Valley Mills Dr., Waco. 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Saturday, May 5: Hunt Co MG are having a **Spring Plant Swap** at Hunt Heritage Garden & Outdoor Learning Center, 2311 Washington St, Greenville. 9 a.m. rain or shine. 903-455-9885. Bring something to swap.

Tuesday, May 8 – Thursday, May 10: Longleaf Academy in Lufkin presents workshop consisting of both classroom lectures and field instruction in “all things longleaf.” Texas Forestry Association, 1903 Atkinson Dr., in Lufkin. Cost is \$150; includes materials, field trip and lunch each day. 334-427-1029 or Karen@longleafalliance.org.

Friday, May 11: Smith Co. MG at the Library on “**Sex in the Garden – All About Propagation.**”; speaker Debby Watkins at the Tyler Public Library, 201 S. College Ave., Tyler. 11:30 a.m. Free.

Thursday, May 17: **Free State MG of Van Zandt Co.** Gardening Class on “**Preserving this Year’s Produce**” by Melisa Rhodes at the Van Zandt Co. Library, 317 First Monday Ln., Canton. 10:30 a.m. Free.

Saturday, May 26: Dallas County MG on **Summer Lawn Care** at Calloway’s Nursery, 7410 Greenville, Dallas. 10:15 – 11:30 a.m. Free.

Saturday, June 2: Ellis Co. MG announces a **Private Garden Tour 2018** in Midlothian with 5 gardens open to the public. Tickets \$10 for adults, children under 16 free. You can purchase tickets at the gardens or locally. Contact Mattie Thompson at mattiethompson500@gmail.com.

Saturday, June 2: Hunt Co. MG **Garden Tour**. Cost \$5. Tickets available at Host homes. Call 903-455-9885.

Saturday, June 2: Smith Co. **Annual Garden Tour**. View 5 private gardens & landscapes ranging from a lake setting to a small intimate garden. 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
\$10 in advance; \$15 day of tour. Purchase in advance May 1-June 1 at Brookshire’s Rice Road, Potpourri House, Blue Moon Gardens, Anderson’s Gardens & Gifts, Flint; Extension Office.

Tues.-Wed., ????? FS Jr. Master Gardeners, volunteers

Northeast Texas Beekeepers Second Monday of each month. 6:30pm; Crossroads Church, 1930 Trade Days Blvd. Canton, TX

Intern Graduation Dinner - Change in Location from the Blackwell House

Louella Iliif has graciously offered to host the Intern Graduation Dinner at her house, **Thursday evening, May 10th**. There will be a social gathering at 5:30 and we will eat at 6.

Louella can accommodate our group outside if weather permits, or inside if it doesn't, and we sincerely thank her for inviting us to her home. It will be potluck and members are asked to bring a covered dish. Spouses of the interns are invited to attend. Louella's address is: **3083 State Highway 243 - 5.6 miles west on 243 from the Highway 19 and 243 intersection (CVS Drugstore). Her home will be on the left side of 243. If you need directions, her telephone number is 903-235-3253.**

Specialist Training Offerings in 2018

Rainwater Harvesting – April 30-May 2, hosted by Dallas County

Greenhouse Management – May 23-25, 2018, hosted by Hill County in Kerrville, TX

Texas Superstars – September 18-20, 2018, hosted by Smith County

Further Information and Registration is available for all these classes on the Texas Master Gardener Website - www.Txmg.org, then Specialist Training

Classified Ads

Free Advertising for members to sell or buy whatever.



3rd Wednesday Master Gardener Work Day

9:00 am
at
Extension Office
May 16, 2018

Free State Master Gardener Pat Brand

By Joan Driver



Pat Brand (MG Class of 2014) was delayed in her desire to become a Master Gardener because of her schedule, but her friend Martha Mitchell, who she credits as her gardening inspiration, told her about classes four years ago and recruited her. Lacking the family gardening background frequent among Master Gardeners, she has particularly enjoyed the training and the camaraderie among members. She is pleased with the growing awareness of the Master Gardener program as a result of projects in the county.

"As a child I was interested in growing seeds or anything, and now I am a creative gardener," she exclaims in celebration. "I learned so much about the proper way to maintain a successful soil and planting technique." She recommends building a compost pile and using it to maintain the soil.

Although she works hard at vegetable gardening, her greatest success has been with her flower beds, which "really look good this year," she says. When she bought a home needing restoration both inside and out several years ago in Van, she began slowly cleaning the property and choosing areas for improvement. One of her favorite projects was "a wonderful raised bed, waist high and so easy to work in, but weight of the soil caused it to cave in. I was upset but my son came to the rescue and tore it down and rebuilt it with concrete blocks." She dreams of creating a cottage garden, adding, "I even bought an old yellow chair with the paint chipping off. It will be cute!" She also enjoys succulents.

Garden Guru



Dear Garden Guru: I have some tomato plants that seem to wilt and die almost overnight.

What is happening and how can I prevent it?

When examining the stem just under the soil, you can see a brown rotted area covered with white cottony mold, the problem is southern blight. Southern blight is caused by a soil borne fungus, and its development is enhanced by wet soil, high humidity, and warm temperatures.

The control is by prevention and includes crop rotation, proper watering practices, and planting on raised beds for improved soil drainage. Plants exhibiting soil borne blight should be removed from the garden and discarded in the trash, not composted. After the plant has wilted and died, it is too late to try to revive the plant because the plant's nutritional path has been destroyed. Another plus for raised bed gardening.



Strawberry Pizza

by Paula Marshall

Sounds terrible, right? Wait 'til you taste it!

Crust:

2 C. flour
½ C. powdered sugar
2 sticks of butter-softened
Mix together and pat out on a large pizza pan*.
Bake for about 15 minutes at 350 and let cool.

Topping:

1 Can Borden's Eagle Brand Milk
1 8 oz. pkg of cream cheese (softened)
1/3 C. Real Lemon (or fresh lemon juice)
Mix together and spread on cooled crust.

Glaze:

1 C. sugar
3 ½ tbs. cornstarch
1 C. water
½ of a 3 oz. box of strawberry jello (1/4 cup)

Bring glaze mixture to a rolling boil and boil for 1 minute. Let cool part-way and stir in one quart of fresh or frozen strawberries* (cut in pieces). Spread on top of cream cheese layer and refrigerate until completely cool. Top with whipped cream or Cool Whip when serving.

*I use a cookie sheet that is 12x17 (or close to that size) and usually combine some blueberries with the strawberries. Serve with a piece of mint or kiwi on top of Cool Whip. This is better if made the day before and lasts for a couple of days in the refrigerator – if there's any left!