

THE GALVESTON COUNTY Master Gardeners

Issue 186 - August/September 2013

American Beautyberry Makes Great Jelly

more edible plants - page 5



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"Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished."
— Lao Tzu



*By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008*

Time seems to be hurrying by—it's already August and September is nearer than I thought. I'm receiving catalogs and e-mails telling me about which fall vegetables I should have already planted in the ground. I've had very limited time for my gardens these last several months; I barely know if my spring crops produced anything. I do know it was a bad year (again) for tomatoes at my house—and every year I tell myself I'm never planting them again! I always seem to have an abundance of stink bugs (my major garden nemesis). I see them at night on the screen outside my kitchen window laying their egg chains and waving at me with that weird flat foot!

The old saying "Youth is wasted on the young" makes me remember the time when summers seemed endless with not much to worry about and each day was a blank canvas to be filled by whatever you could imagine. Now summer seems to be screaming by in a flash leaving a list of things I wonder if I'll ever get around to.

Here's hoping your life isn't too hectic and you'll have some free time to relax and enjoy the current newsletter. Your newsletter team continuously works to make each new edition surpass the last one by featuring more articles that are educational and topical along with providing links and videos we hope are relevant to the current gardening season. Please send us your feedback—both positive and constructive so we know what you've enjoyed and what we need to improve upon.

The Q&As in this issue offer insight into foraging for local food resources right from your own landscape (page 4) and how to use those wonderful Drift® roses in your garden (page 5). Have you been thinking about building your own greenhouse? See page 6 for tips on what to consider to make a greenhouse that's perfect for your needs. As Master Gardeners we need to do more to attract bees to our gardens and educate others on how to attract bees to their landscapes, see page 7 for some ideas. Donna Ward is skirmishing with squirrels this month and also offers a list of things to do in our gardens for September (page 8). Most people know what their gardens look like in daylight; page 9 lists several plants and ideas to make your evening garden as lovely. The Best Shots story this issue features edible plants along with recipes you might like to try (pages 10-11). Page 12 features the amazing yard of Master Gardener, Tabatha Holt. Read how she seamlessly incorporates vegetables and herbs among her perennials in a nominal residential garden space. Do you often think you spend too much money on your gardening hobby? Page 13 compiles the results of a recent survey of our Master Gardeners describing how they save money on their gardening compulsion. Many of you have had the pleasure of meeting Jessica Weizer, Entomologist and soon-to-be CEA for Horticulture at the Nueces Country AgriLife Extension Office. Jessica is interning with Dr. Johnson for a few weeks and has written an article about Pesky Salt Marsh Mosquitos featured on page 21. The Carbide Park update appears on page 16. Remember to check out the monthly gardening calendar video (page 14) and updates to our bulletin board for volunteer opportunities (page 20). Don't forget our plant sale! Details are on page 18, along with other Upcoming Events.



Photo by MG Ted Landry

Lantana

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Check out pages 10 & 11 to learn more about the edible plants

Front Cover Photo by MG Linda Steber



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ask a master gardener...



By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008

Q&A Hot Line Topics

non traditional edibles

Question: What can you tell me about foraging in my landscape?

Not too long after I completed my 2008 Galveston County MG Intern Course, I was volunteering at the MG phone helpline and received a call asking what information we had on foraging and if I could connect the caller to local foraging groups. Ummm—foraging? Local foraging groups? Laurel did not mention this in my phone training meeting—beekeepers YES—foraging NO! Of course I knew about traditional common edible plants like nasturtium, pansy, hibiscus, dandelion and prickly pear—things commonly used in garnishing salads or making teas and jellies, but what were these foraging groups searching for? Was foraging like geocaching, an outdoor treasure-hunting game you use like a GPS to hide and seek containers with other participants in the activity, but, in this case, to find edible foods?

I've since learned foraging is a major "movement" throughout the world. Foraging is the act of finding, gathering or harvesting wild or free foods. Thousands of people forage. Foraging ranges from groups who forage in the wilderness to gain survival skills to those who forage for fresh, close to home local-to-table food resources. It turns out that many of the weeds and other plants in our backyards are actually naturally growing food sources and they are more nutritious than some super foods such as spinach. According to Jo Robinson, author of *Eating*

on the Wild Side, purslane has 6 times more vitamin E than spinach and 14 times more omega-3 fatty acids. Wild dandelions have 8 times the antioxidants of spinach and twice as much calcium, 3 times as much vitamin A and 5 times as much vitamins K and E.

There are many categories of non-traditional edibles that come in the form of shoots, young foliage, flowers, fruits, nuts, roots and tubers. Knowing the rules of foraging is critical to your safety as some plants, parts of plants or the environment they grow in are toxic. If you'd like to learn more about edible weeds and plants and about the ethics and the very important safety measures regarding foraging, check out this excellent link to Merriwether's Guide to Edible Wild Plants of Texas and the Southwest <http://www.foragingtexas.com> or sign-up to attend one of his edible wild plant classes at the Houston Arboretum. If you'd like to try foraging in your own yard, here are some less common edibles about which you may not have thought:

Redbud tree: The flower buds are edible and should be harvested when tightly closed. Raw redbud buds can be used in green salads or potato, chicken or tuna salads. They have a tart taste. Cooked buds can be added to breads, muffins and vegetable stir-fries.

Rose of Sharon: Leaves and flowers are edible and can be used in salads, cold soups or gelatin molds. Young leaves are the most tender. Since flowers are large, they can be stuffed with a filling of your choice and served as hors d'oeuvres after removing the pistils and stamens.

Oak Acorns: Once shelled, the nuts should be leached in water to remove their bitter tannins, and then can be ground into flour and used in baking.

Canna: The rhizomes are edible and taste similar to potatoes.

Daylily: Shoots, flower buds, flower petals and tubers are edible. Petals can be used fresh in salads or dried and sprinkled over rice or pasta. Daylily buds can be sautéed in olive oil with salt and pepper. Shoots make a savory side dish when sautéed in olive oil or butter. Daylily tubers are like baby fingerling potatoes and can be roasted in your oven.

Magnolia: Flowers and buds are edible. Flower petals have a strong taste when added to salads. Buds can be grated to add a clove-like spice to dishes. Use sparingly, the taste is similar to its scent.

Pineapple Guava: Flowers and fruit are edible. Flower petals are spicy and are eaten fresh. Fruit ripens in the fall and has a fresh tangy taste that can be eaten raw or cooked in puddings, pastry fillings, pies or tarts.



Photos by MG Camille Goodwin

Canna



Magnolia



Oak Acorns

Disease Resistant, Winter Hardy, Very Low Maintenance repeat bloomers



By Pat Forke
MG 2010



By Loretta Osteen
MG 2010

Question: What are Drift® roses? How well do they perform in the Galveston County area?

Cultivars of the Drift® rose series were produced from crossing full-size ground-cover roses and miniature roses. These plants were developed by the Conard-Pyle Company, headquartered in West Grove, Pennsylvania since 1855. They have given us the well-known Knock Out® roses (released to the public in 2000) and Drift® roses (released to the public in 2008). Both families of roses are repeat-bloomers that are tough, disease resistant, winter hardy and very low maintenance.

The Drift® roses grow to two- to-three feet wide and approximately 18 inches in height. They are ideally suited for mass plantings, ground coverings, borders, in small empty spaces and in containers. Like other roses, Drift® roses need full sun and need to be pruned back in the spring. Deadheading, although not necessary, encourages re-blooming and helps maintain a tidy appearance. To see how these roses might work in your garden, [click here](#).

After choosing your location, plant the Drift® rose in a planting hole that is twice as wide as the container in which the rose was grown. Backfill the planting hole with the soil that was removed from the hole and water thoroughly. The base of the plant should

be level with the native soil line. Drift® roses do not tolerate poorly drainage soil.

Drift® roses are particularly attractive with glossy green foliage and colors such as apricot, coral, peach, pink, red and yellow. However, these roses do have thorns. Current varieties of Drift® roses include: Apricot Drift®, Coral Drift®, Peach Drift®, Pink Drift®, Red Drift®, Sweet Drift®, and Popcorn Drift®. To see all six, [click here](#).

In preparing your roses for winter, discontinue any fertilizing as the weather cools. Do not prune until the spring. Our northern gardening friends with cold winters should add mulch for winter protection of roots. Be sure to keep your roses watered properly throughout the year.

Drift® roses are versatile, very low maintenance, hardy and would certainly be a welcome addition to landscapes. Your second question was in regard to how well do they perform in the Galveston County area. Because Drift® roses are a recent release, there is limited information on local performance metrics.

However, Master Gardener Loretta Osteen sent me an e-mail and photos of Drift® roses she planted in May 2011 at her home on Tiki Island. (Galveston County Master Gardeners are an awesome resource!) Loretta's Drift® roses are planted close to the street and have survived heat

and exhaust fumes from autos as well as the record drought and record temperatures of 2011.

They bloom throughout the year in her landscape and provide color in the cooler months when most of her yard is dormant. She often gets compliments about them from people walking and biking along the street. She wanted something in the location that was tough and colorful as well a low spreading growth habit. Since planting her Drift® roses in 2011, they have been free of disease and easy to maintain. She does fertilize them with a slow release granular rose food.

One more note: While many pruning suggestions state pruning is best done in the spring (never in the fall nor in the winter), Loretta notes that she has never pruned her Drift® roses and she is pleased with their growth habit without any pruning.

Tom Thumb in Galveston reports that they carry the Drift® roses series and have for several years. They report that the roses actually perform better and are more disease-resistant than Knock-Out® roses. Tom Thumb has used them in landscaping projects and even planted them on beachfront properties. Maas Nursery in Seabrook also carries a large selection of Drift® roses and has for many years. They find that the roses do very well in our area and they highly recommend them. Jimbo's Nursery in Santa Fe carries a good selection of Drift® roses.



Photos by MG Loretta Osteen





By Cheryl Armstrong MG 2010
By Pat Forke MG 2010

things to consider

Do You Want a Greenhouse?

You have been scanning over the magazines and drooling over the pictures. You have done some online shopping and realize you don't really know where to start.

Here are some things to consider before purchasing/building a hobby greenhouse:

Purpose—Do you need a place to overwinter your tropicals or provide shade from the hot summer sun? Do you plan to propagate bedding plants? Do you just need a place to mix soils and pot plants that is protected from the elements? Do you want to create an 'outside' room?

Construction and Size—Based on the use, you can determine how much area you are going to need. A propagation situation needs a different set up than overwintering potted plants. Once you know what you plan to use your greenhouse for, you can determine how many benches you need and the size of the potting and storage areas. The lowest cost per square foot of growing space is generally available in a freestanding or even-span greenhouse that is 17 to 18 feet wide. It can house a central bench, two side benches, and two walkways. Set your limit to the size of your greenhouse based on the room available, the money available and the time available to care for it.

The length of your greenhouse is best determined by the number of plants you plan to grow. Usually two-thirds of a greenhouse is bench space and one-third walkways and aisles. Always make the greenhouse 25-50 percent larger than your original demands because most people keep adding plants to their collection.

The height of the greenhouse depends on the desired height to the eave. An eave height of five feet is satisfactory for side benches used for low-growing plants. If you want to grow tall plants, however, you will want an eave height of 6 to 7 feet.

Location and Orientation—Again, this will be determined by how you plan to use the greenhouse. In the winter months, a greenhouse will need plenty of sun. If you have a shaded backyard, are your trees deciduous? This may not be such a bad thing, as you will have plenty of sun in the winter and protection from the hot sun in the summer. If you are putting up a lean-to, choose the south or southeast side. Eastern exposure captures the most sunlight from November to February. Morning sun exposure is better than afternoon. Northern exposures are the least desirable. Research has shown that a greenhouse that lies lengthwise north-south has less shade and thus more light than one that lies east-west.

Don't forget proximity to electrical power and water. You will also want to consider the drainage pattern of your property. Before you decide where to put your greenhouse, it is good to consider the view from the neighbors, whether you have a fenced backyard or not. Also, you should definitely check with your Homeowners Association's rules about the construction of backyard structures.

Framing Materials—This is really a matter of preference and what shape you choose. You will need to consider: cost, load bearing requirements, rust, rot, appearance, and maintenance. Generally the framing materials fall into three categories: wood, galvanized steel, or

aluminum. Once you determine your shape, you can decide on your framing material.

Covering—Again, a result of preference, shape and framing material. Glass is beautiful but very expensive and hard to maintain. Polyethylene film lasts about three years and is the least expensive. Polycarbonate panels last eight to ten years. Fiberglass, shade cloth and aluminum should also be considered

Flooring—If you plan to use an inorganic flooring (cement, tiles, stones), you will need to install drains. Organic flooring (straw, mulch, wood) will decompose and need to be replaced. Cost, comfort, heat retention, traction, humidity, and style are all things to consider and again, can be influenced by how you choose to use the greenhouse. Permanent flooring is not recommended because it may stay wet and slippery from soil mix media. A concrete, gravel, or stone walkway 24 to 36 inches wide can be built for easy access to the plants. The rest of the floor could be covered by several inches of gravel for drainage of excess water. Water also can be sprayed on the gravel to produce humidity in the greenhouse.

Watering—Time desired in the greenhouse is very important. This will determine if you may want to water by hand using captured rain, or install misters on a timer. Use of the greenhouse will also determine how you will want to control the humidity levels. Misters are great time savers, great resource savers, and great at helping to maintain humidity levels. Drip systems are also effective.

Environmental Control—Overwintering plants and protecting exotics from hot summer sun will require less diligence in this area than the greenhouse where propagation and seedling management are occurring. Doors should be big enough to accommodate a wheel barrow. You will need a heat source if you are propagating and fans for air circulation.

Greenhouses can be beautiful additions to the garden and backyard or they can become an eyesore. Proper planning is critical.



Photo by MG Herman Auer



mysteriously disappearing

How to Attract Honeybees to Your Yard



by Linda Garren McKillip
MG 2003

Have you seen the movie “Vanishing of the Bees”? In short, “Honeybees have been mysteriously disappearing across the planet, literally vanishing from their hives. Known as Colony Collapse Disorder, this phenomenon has brought beekeepers to crisis in an industry responsible for producing apples, broccoli, watermelon, onions, cherries and a hundred other fruits and vegetables. Commercial honeybee operations pollinate crops that make up one out of every three bites of food on our tables.” The solution unfortunately isn’t clear. There are many smoking guns and scary scenarios. Bottom line, the movie suggests that there are things that each of us can do to improve the situation: Plant a Garden, Get a Beehive, Buy Organic (“By far the most powerful way we can help the honeybee is by voting with our forks”), and use organic pest control.

So what is so special about gardening for honeybees? Here’s a thought—embrace the weeds! Angela Chandler, who among many accomplishments was the Texas State Master Gardener of the Year in 2004, suggests that, “Bees simply love early spring weeds like clover and dandelions. They provide some badly needed, high quality, early forage at a time when honey stores will be low. Bees will be actively renewing the hive and heavy nectar supplies are required. The queen will be laying and a lot of food is needed by the developing larvae. If your garden seems a bit slow in breaking into bountiful spring bloom, try to wait a week or two to do your first mowing and let the bees have the weeds!” Try explaining that to your HOA!

Another essential item for bees is a water source. Keep in mind that bees don’t come with pontoons as part of their landing gear. Just like butterflies, bees need to land and take off safely. In a bird bath filled using a low volume irrigation drip head, I have a brick and several rocks as landing pads. As smart as a collective of bees is, an individual bee can drown in a depth of only 3/8”. Bees do not require a pristine water supply. Actually, bees seem to enjoy wet sand/ mud or damp potting soil.

As far as plants to choose, we need to know that our little winged girlfriends need both nectar and pollen. Angela says that, “Nectar is the bees’ source of carbohydrates and pollen is their source of protein.” Also bees need food all year round, so it is important to have a selection of plants whose blooming cycles overlap one after another. Native plants are bee-friendly. Avoid highly inbred plants as hybridization can reduce the quality of a plant’s nectar and pollen.

According to Robert Marshall, MG 2012, bees love herbs like basil (*Ocimum basilicum*), bee balm (*Monarda* spp.), lemon verbena (*Aloysia triphylla*), and oregano (*Origanum vulgare*). Something I’ve heard about but haven’t tried yet is growing borage (*Borago officinalis*). I am told it drives the girls crazy. Robert lets veggies go to seed. Bees will absolutely cover the end-of-the-season flowering of mustard and collard greens, broccoli and Brussels sprouts. And when the bees are done, we can collect our seeds for next spring. Now that’s team work. Angela loves to watch her honeybees work over the Catmints (*Calamintha* and *Nepeta* varieties). Even though the flowers are tiny, bees will make dozens of stops on one plant before they return to the hive. The same is true for the *Mentha spicata* varieties—the Spearmints. Angela says that bees also love fruits and veggies, and here is where our partnership with them comes into play. We need them, and they need us. You will have more success

in attracting bees to pollinate your fruits and veggies at the right time if you have a diverse garden full of blooming plants before and after their bloom season. Bees are creatures of habit and they will make your yard a ‘frequent fly zone’ long before the production garden season begins.

Fruit trees are excellent sources of nectar and pollen for bees and homeowners will see an increase in fruit production. Talk about a win-win! At our GCMGA fruit tree sale, bees arrived and covered the already-blooming Meyer lemon trees—just that quick!

One of the most important things we can do to entice those little pollinators into our yards is to practice prudent use of insecticides. Most of us already embrace that concept and most of us know that if a plant has a problem with pests, we need to first focus on the cultural and biological practices to control the situation. If all options are exhausted and you need to bring out the big guns, keep in mind that honeybees forage from just after sunrise to dusk and insecticides are easily carried on a breeze. Your target may be that nasty squash vine borer, but imprudent applications of pesticide could have collateral damage.

Watching “Vanishing of the Bees” may inspire you to ‘bee-come’ a beekeeper. Beekeeping is getting as popular as raising chickens and information abounds. To get started, you will need to consider a number of things, but we will have to cover that another day. So for now, ‘bee sweet.’ <http://www.vanishingbees.com/>

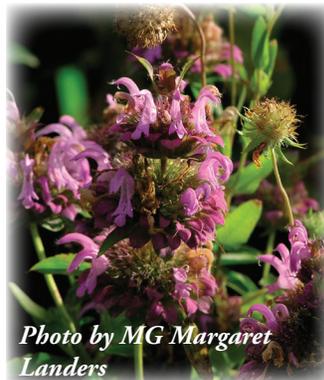


Photo by MG Margaret Landers

Bee Balm



Photo by MG Shan Revak

Mint

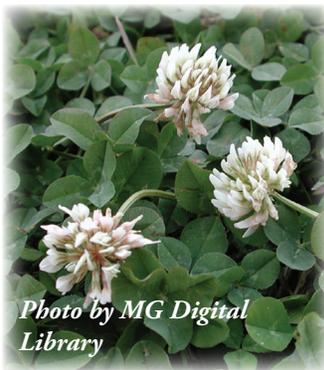


Photo by MG Digital Library

White Clover

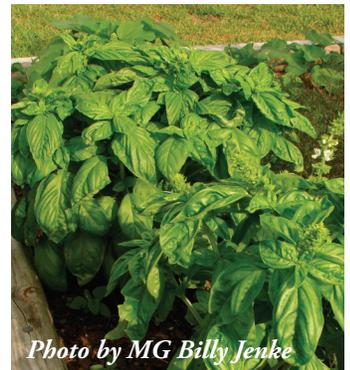


Photo by MG Billy Jenke

Basil



By Donna J. Ward
MG 1996

surviving damage from critters

TROWELS & TRIBULATIONS in a Suburban Garden

(Editor's Note: This is a reprint of Donna's article for La Ventana Del Lago, the City of El Lago's neighborhood newspaper.)

"Dredge each individual piece in flour seasoned with salt, pepper, and an optional pinch of cayenne. In skillet set over medium/high heat, bring 3 Tbs. vegetable oil to frying temperature. Fry each piece just until browned, and remove. Lower heat to medium/low and in same skillet, sauté 1 medium yellow onion diced, and 1 sliced rib of celery until translucent. Return meat to skillet. Add 1 can chicken broth, and 1 can diced tomatoes; bring to boil, and reduce heat to simmer. Cover and cook slowly for approx....."

Oh, excuse me—I was dreaming that I was making squirrel stew. These fuzzy-tailed critters turned my summer into the gardening 'Summer from Hell.' Actually it started in spring. For some reason they have been on digging overdrive. The first incident was when they completely dug from its pot, the orchid that had been awarded a 2nd place ribbon by the Houston Orchid Society at the Museum of Natural History in April. Digging it up wasn't enough; they then chewed out the tender center growth and bit off several leaves.

Then they discovered the Sweet One Million tomatoes and the little oval-shaped yellow tomatoes, the seeds of which were sent to me by Master Gardener friends in Georgia. The thieves had the audacity to sit right next to the orchids under the arbor and drop half eaten green tomatoes into the orchid pots. Did I mention that they cut the center growth out of the perfectly shaped Savannah holly in the birds/butterfly/bee garden? The Jatropha in the oriental bowl alongside the deck is struggling to live and trying to reestablish after being dug up daily for a week. A pot of shade-loving impatiens received the same treatment.

Stressed plants usually fall victim to diseases and pests and I'm pretty sure they are infected with downy mildew. Infected plants drop their leaves and flowers, and the stems collapse. Some folks think these bushy-tailed critters are cute—I'm obviously not a member of that group. For what it's worth, coming from Missouri, I have in the past made squirrel stew, and would gladly make it again given the opportunity.

Fall officially arrives in our neighborhood on September 22, so there may be respite (not much, but some) in sight from the heat and ever-present mosquitoes. In this regard I hesitate to express my sincere wishes for the Allen brothers in the hereafter, but keep reminding myself that January to April is usually pleasant. But let's make the most of September. It's still plenty hot, so be sure to keep the azaleas and camellias well watered and mulched.

You might want to check the mulch around the trees and be sure the lawn guys haven't vacuumed it up into the mower's catch-bag. If your roses are looking pretty scraggly (mine are), a light pruning will be visually beneficial. Water them in the morning to prevent mildew. Plants watered at night tend to develop fungal diseases, as they stay wet until morning. This also applies to your St. Augustine.

September's 'What-To-Do' list is long. Start thinking about planting perennials, especially natives. They'll need time to establish a healthy root system before the next Gulf Coast summer arrives. If your wisteria didn't bloom up to your expectations, it's time to

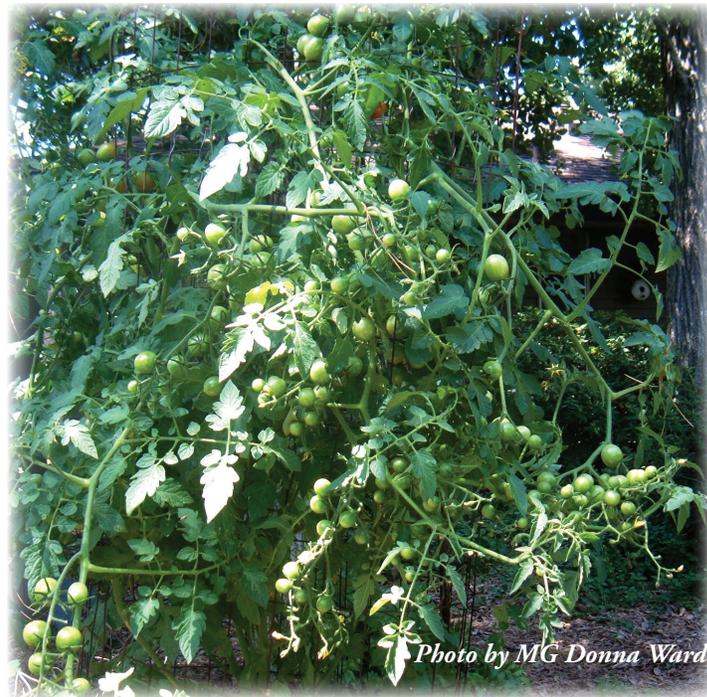
threaten it with bodily harm. Using a sharp-shooter, cut a five to six inch deep circle about eighteen to twenty-four inches out from the trunk. Since a wisteria's only ambition in life is to produce offspring, it thinks it's going to die and begins to bloom and later goes to seed.

Start cuttings of your favorite softwood plants such as impatiens and begonias. Start them in small pots of a good quality potting soil. You may use a root hormone if you feel like you need to, but I have a fair amount of success without it. Some folks prefer to start plants in water, but in my opinion roots that develop in water are very fragile and tend to break when they are transferred to a potting medium. This is the beginning of bulb planting time. Plant them in clumps among other perennials and shrubs. If you plant them in rows like little soldiers, Mother Nature will send the bulb police to your door. She has never planted in rows, and neither should you. Toss them by the handful, and plant where they fall - presenting a more natural display. Use a bulb food (superphosphate) instead of bone or blood meal, which attracts four-legged critters.

Don't forget to put in a few of the cool weather herbs such as parsley, cilantro and dill. I always have rosemary in the garden; it loves our climate as long as it doesn't get too much TLC (read that 'water').

For you wanna-be farmers—start planting now for winter harvest. September is the time to put in broccoli and cabbage transplants, and seeds of kohlrabi, lettuce, radish, spinach, beets, turnips (ugh), pumpkin, English and snap peas. Last chance for seeds of cucumbers and corn, and transplants of eggplant and tomatoes.

If you experience the same tomato problem with the bushy-tailed critters as I've been having, I'm more than willing to share my recipe.



Sweet One Million tomatoes

Photo by MG Donna Ward

THE ISLAND GARDEN

After Dark—Night Time Bloomers - The Night Shift

(Editor's Note: This is a reprint from Jan's article in "The Islander" magazine.)



By Jan Brick
MG 2001

“With the setting of the sun, the nocturnal garden awakens and the night shift takes over.”

There are many plants that bloom exclusively at night. There are many others that wait until evening to release their heady scent. White flowers and plants with variegated foliage glow softly as they reflect the moonlight—creating a peaceful refuge in the evening. Pollinators that work only after dark and can consume up to six hundred mosquitoes in an hour's time are attracted to these bright blooms with their heavenly scents and arrive to prey on insects!

Blooms for an Evening Garden:

Angel's Trumpet (*Brugmansia*): Large trumpets hang down from this fast growing tropical plant that is highly fragrant. Choose white, peach or yellow blooms and plant in morning sun and afternoon shade.

Angel's Trumpet (*Datura innoxia*): Huge six-inch white flowers appear from midsummer until frost, opening at night and remaining open well into the following day; a delicious fragrance, especially in the evening. It will grow three to four feet tall and wide with an abundance of blue-green foliage.

Four O'Clocks (*Mirabilis jalapa*): Sweetly fragrant and colorful trumpet-shaped flowers open in late afternoon releasing a jasmine-like perfume. Found in the gardens of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello, the bushy plants grow to two feet. This is an annual in our climate; full sun to partial shade.

Moonflower (*Ipomoea alba*): Large, white blooms on a vine with heart-shaped leaves; lightly perfumed. This annual blooms only at night. Best when planted in full sun.

Night Phlox (Phlox "Midnight Candy"): During the day, the flowers on these upright growing plants are tightly closed. As dusk approaches, they open releasing a honey/almond/vanilla fragrance.

Yucca (*Yucca filamentosa*): The flowers of this plant are open all day but at night the blossoms lift and release their soapy fragrance.

White Blooms and Reflective Foliage Plants

'Armour White' Verbena: An annual that prefers full to partial sun. This is an excellent spreading plant for beds, edging or containers.

'Alba' Foxglove: A perennial with tall clusters of tubular-white flowers.

Lamb's Ears: A perennial that is winter hardy and drought tolerant; forms a dense mat of silver-white leaves.

'Purity' Cosmos: This is an annual that does well in dry, infertile soil.

Silver Artemisia: A perennial that is drought tolerant, thrives in full sun and poor soil. This is a good xeriscape plant.

Silver Sage: A perennial with silver foliage and white blooms.

Variegated Cannas: An annual with silvery-white and green pin-striped leaves and yellow, orange, red or pink tropical blooms.

'White Christmas' Caladiums: Another annual that sports large white leaves.

The intension and purpose of a moonlight garden is to reflect the glow and stillness of the evening and night time...to create a special setting that offers its best qualities at night. Why not join the night shift and plan your garden around the time when you can most enjoy it?

'Night Blooming' Cereus: Known for its large, fragrant, night-blooming white flowers. Each flower opens only once, and closes before the sun comes up, never to be seen again. It is said that the enchanting fragrance has the power steal your soul.

'Night Blooming' Cereus: The Orchid Cactus is a bizarre and enchanting pass-along plant. This easy-to-grow plant loves filtered sunlight and dry conditions. The sword-shaped, flattened leaves have nasty thorns along the edges, and don't give much to look at; however, the mid-March burst of blooms makes up for this inconspicuous appearance. In the peak blooming time, some leaves can get up to 1-1/2 to 2 feet in length and completely covered with flowers, making it very showy. The beautiful open-faced, 7-inch blooms make the Orchid Cactus very appealing. Water thoroughly and allow the soil to dry out a little between watering.



Photo by MG Judy Poorman

Angel's Trumpet *Brugmansia*



Photo by MG Ted Landry

Angel's Trumpet *Datura innoxia*



Photo by MG Margie Jenke

Four O'Clocks



Photo by MG Herman Auer

Night Blooming *Cereus*

MG BEST SHOTS

Prickly Pear - Photo from MG Photo Library



American Beautyberry - Photo by MG Linda Steber



Rose Petals - Photo by MG John Jons



Chichimeca Jalapeno - Photo by MG Gene Speller



...and Narrative edible plants



By Sandra Devall
MG 1998



By Jan Brick
MG 2001



By Kaye Corey
MG 2002



By Wayne Elliott
MG 2004



By Pat Forke
MG 2010

This was a fun subject to research and it was easy to locate stories by Master Gardeners that use the plants that grow in this area in unique ways.

Right before I sat down to write this article, I had lunch with the crew that work in the Galveston County Master Gardener Demonstration and Educational Garden. The salad was a spectacular delicious delight! Terry Earl had tossed the salad with red rose pedals! Gardening is not an isolated hobby. Sit down and enjoy these local stories and be adventurous, try a few of these yourself.

An Edible Cactus—Prickly Pear - Jan Brick

Prickly pear cactus, a staple of the Mexican diet for thousands of years, has three edible sections: the pad (use as a vegetable), the flower petals (add to salads), and the pear (use for jelly).

Prickly pears have flat, rounded leaves or pads that are armed with two kinds of thorns, large fixed spines and small, hair-like prickles. Keeping in mind the 'armor' of this cactus, gathering the ingredients for the jelly is fairly easy as they are readily available in fields and along roadsides. No trespassing on private property please!

One research source suggests the following: Pick pears with reddish-orange or purple skin and deep purple interiors. Place five or six pears in a plastic colander under cold water. Swirl the pears around for three or four minutes to wash away the fine blond hairs so you can handle them prickly free. Slice off the thicker skin at both ends of the prickly pear getting into the seed-filled center. Cut lengthwise just through the skin and peel it off of the rest of the pear.

Prickly Pear Cactus Jelly

- 4 cups strained prickly pear tuna juice
- 6 cups granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 package pectin

Evenly cover chopped fruit with water and cook over medium heat for 20 minutes. Strain liquid using a cheesecloth and colander.

Cook the strained juice and the lemon juice over medium heat until boiling. Add sugar and pectin stirring constantly. Keep mixture at a rolling boil for two minutes, then remove pan from heat. If canning jelly, ladle into sterilized jars and water bath for 16 minutes. Prickly pear jelly may take up to two weeks to gel inside the jars.

American Beautyberry - Kaye Corey

This recipe came from sisters Allison and Emily who are Heritage Junior Master Gardeners in Friendswood. Lovers of this beautiful shrub will enjoy this vibrant colored jelly. It tastes good too.

Beautyberry Jelly

Harvest and clean six cups of beautyberries. Place in large pot on stove. Add four cups water and boil for 20 minutes. Allow to cool.

Place a cheesecloth-covered sieve over a bowl. Pour the boiled berries through the cheesecloth. Mash berries to get 3 cups juice.

Add water if necessary. Discard any particles that do not go through cheesecloth.

Pour the juice into a large pot through another sieve without cheesecloth. Add one package Sure-Jell pectin and ½ pat of butter (roughly a tablespoon of butter). Bring to a rolling boil. Stir in 4 ½ cups sugar and bring to a boil for 2 minutes.

Pour into 6 half-pint jars. Process the jars in boiling water for five minutes to sterilize and preserve.

Roses as an Edible Herb - Pat Forke

Choose blooms that are fragrant as the more fragrant, the more flavor. Be sure they have not been sprayed (or treated) with insecticides, fungicides or any other pesticide. Snip the petals off just above the stem. Rose water and syrup is a staple in many Eastern Europe, Mid-East and North Africa homes. The rose hips were used in England during World War II as a Vitamin C replacement when citrus was hard to come by.

Although of limited nutritional value, rose petals can be used in a salad with other fresh herbs, greens, dried fruits and cheeses. Petals can also be placed on sandwiches for additional flavor. Add a heaping tablespoon of rose petals to black tea for a savory cup of tea. Rose water and syrup can be added to pastries, ice creams, crepes, fudges and fruit drinks.

Recipe for Rose Water

Pour two cups of boiling water over one cup of firmly packed fresh rose petals. (Once again, be sure they have not been sprayed {or treated} with insecticides, fungicides or any other pesticide.) Cover and let steep until cool. Label and refrigerate and use as needed. This will keep for up to 2 weeks. This water can then be combined with one part sugar to two parts of rose water. Bring to a boil and cook until it is a syrupy consistency.

Jalapeno Wine - Wayne Elliott

This article does not include a recipe for Jalapeno wine because I treat all winemaking the same. I have been making wine most of my life from different accessible fruit in our area. Some of these come from my plants and some supplied by others. One of my favorite grape wines comes from a vine at my sister's home. Along with jalapeno, the list includes apples, Meyer lemon, Republic of Texas orange, jujubes, plus many different types of grapes.

All good wine starts with killing off all the wild yeast and bacteria. Then add a very good yeast that will produce a wonderfully rich aromatic wine of fruit character with elevated glycerol to enhance wine sweetness. I always purchase my yeast from a wine-making supply store. The taste of the wines and the conversations that follow are equally delightful.



don't make simple hard Talented Gardeners, Amazing Yards

by Cheryl Armstrong
MG 2010

This month I was particularly keen on visiting Tabatha Holt's suburban yard, where I had heard she grows corn in the front yard. As I pulled up, I could see that she does, indeed, grow corn in her front yard in a raised bed. Tabatha keeps her Homeowners Association happy by keeping her crop healthy and well groomed. As she pulled off a few ears for me, she picked off a worm, tossed it to the birds (I think I would have squished it), maintaining the natural order of things. Keeping things simple and natural is an important aspect of her philosophy to gardening.

Tabatha's yard is not only beautiful to look at, but is sustaining as well. Tabatha is an advocate of companion planting and volunteers her time at the Farmers Market teaching homeowners in the community to be successful at it. She operates a web site http://faithsgarden-shed.com/Home_Page.html to educate the public to be self-sustaining naturally. Tabatha's Facebook page, Faiths Garden Shed Naturally, details her plant

availability and organic gardening supplies for the self-sustaining natural gardener. Her yard is evidence of her experience in this area. As I walked around the beds, tucked in among the ornamentals, was Swiss Chard (*Beta vulgaris*) under the shade of a tree, Crimson Sweet Watermelon, LSU Purple Fig (*Ficus carica*); Tuscan Kale (*Brassica oleracea*), and Mexican Apple Banana (*Musa acuminata*). Herbs sprinkled here and there; a little of this and a little of that ensures a handful of snacks to keep a gardener going.

Enjoying her garden is a priority. While her front yard is practical, boasting huge blooming Lantana (*Lantana camara*), it needs little care. Her backyard is the focus of her time and attention, and it is there that you will find Texas Orchid (*Bauhinia lunarioides*), Artemisia (*Artemisia absinthium*), Purple Lochroma (*Lochroma cyaneum* "Purple Queen"), Blood Lily (*Haemanthus*), and Rosa x Belinda's Dream. Her Asian garden boasts bamboo, ginger (*Zingiber officinale*), Jerusalem Artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosis*),

and a beautiful Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*). Sitting in one of her outside living rooms, you might catch a glimpse of the unusual Brown Anole Lizard. Even though Tabatha's yard boasts several sitting areas, it is a working yard. The garden cart full of potted plants begging to go into the ground, racks of pots in various stages of growth and maturity, all beckon you to participate with her in the garden. The greenhouse sits behind her garage and is used for propagating and overwintering. Tabatha mixes her own soil mixture and captures rain water. Yes, she also composts, all in a suburban backyard.

My visit with Tabatha was so enjoyable. She grew up in the garden and it is a part of who she is. Tabatha captures the spirit of the Master Gardener program by being willing to share her knowledge to an eager public and by keeping it simple, makes it do-able for them. Thank you, Tabatha, for sharing your amazing yard.



Growing Corn in Raised Bed



One of Many Sitting Areas



Potted Plants



Brown Anole Lizard



The Asian Garden



The Greenhouse



Photos by MG Cheryl Armstrong

Cost Saving Tips for your Gardening Addiction

A survey conducted among Galveston County MGs



by Kaye Corey
MG 2002

Save your seeds. Collecting and using seeds from your plants is smart and cost saving. Allow herb and non-hybrid veggie plants to go to bloom. The blooms will attract bees ensuring good seeds. Put waning, brown bluebonnet plants into a large open garbage bag and let seeds completely dry and pop open. Broadcast the seeds in October in a well-drained garden spot for beautiful bluebonnets in the spring.

- Germinate your own seedlings. Sprinkle seeds on a damp paper towel and place in an unsealed plastic bag in a warm sunny location (but out of direct sunlight). Check for sprouting in 2 to 5 days. Plant the germinated seeds in good, firm, moist, potting soil in a warm, sunny location. Place a piece of clear plastic loosely on the top to prevent drying. Start hardening off after 2-3 leaves appear. Be sure to keep moist. After acclimation, plant seedlings outdoors and keep moist to prevent transplant shock.
- Create new plants by rooting cuttings. Use a recycled styrofoam cup and punch holes in the bottom. Fill the cup with wet vermiculite and dip the cutting in rooting powder. Insert the cutting in the vermiculite. Place the cup in a tray of water (just enough water to keep the vermiculite moist).
- Grow and divide. Plant perennials rather than annuals. Most bulbs will multiply and are easy to divide. This generates plants to share.
- Consider composting and vermiculture. The best natural, cost saving fertilizer is made from kitchen discards. Coffee grounds, tea bags, egg shells, veggie/fruit scraps can go in the compost bin or can go into your worm bin. This is known as vermiculture. Use the worm castings for an excellent fertilizer or making castings tea. Many gardeners practice vermiculture and are happy to share their worms or worms can be purchased through the Internet.
- Make your own compost bin for \$10-\$15. It is easy to build, set up, and take down. You will need a 10 by 3 foot piece of galvanized half-inch hardware cloth, one 6-inch by 6-foot untreated fence board, sturdy staples, and two sets of large latch hooks. Cut the fence board into two 3' pieces. Staple the ends of the hardware cloth to the board pieces. Wrap the mesh around the board edge and staple it down to both sides. Form the mesh into a circle and install the latch hooks on the upper and lower part of the boards so they hold the circle closed. Hook them. Just add your leaves, grass clippings and kitchen scraps. Also, four pallets tied together make a great, low-cost compost bin.
- Recycle, Reuse, Renew! Put coffee filters, polyfill or palm coco fiber in the bottom of flowerpots. Use cut up mini blinds as plant markers. Reuse mulch bags for trash bags. Use cat litter and pool chemical buckets with lids for bulk garden products and home-made soil storage. Make your 'yard art' from recycled items often found on 'heavy trash' days. Spray terra cotta flower pots with Krylon paint to make non-porous pots. Glue broken pots with E6000 glue or decorate old pots with mosaics, rope, bark, pebbles, shells and beads. Use wet newspaper in overlapping layers as a weed barrier under your mulch. Paper also creates a barrier to heat in the

summer and cold in the winter and it encourages the development of beneficial microorganisms in your soil as it composts. Save cottage cheese and yogurt containers to use for starting seedlings. Use "Rubbermaid" type storage bins purchased from the box stores instead of expensive plant containers for container gardening. Be sure to drill drainage holes in the bottom. Use old window panels or doors to make a cold frame.

- Conserve water. Check your irrigation system regularly. Check nozzle heads and adjust the controller monthly, and invest in a rain sensor. Collect rainwater in rain barrels attached to rain gutters. Add a water garden to retain rainwater on your property and reduce runoff.

- Be a swapper and a thrifty shopper. Stretch your garden budget and purchase smaller size plants, then watch them grow! Buy mulch and soil by the yard at a soil yard. Buy damaged bags of mulch and compost for a generous discount at a box store. One of the best cost savings concepts has always been swapping and sharing tested plants. Some of the best plants are gifts from fellow gardeners.

- Here are more cost cutting ideas. Use gumbo in the bottom of flower pots before adding soil and compost to help hold the plants moist longer. Use fish heads, coffee grounds and egg shells to help with nutrients in all plants. Cover soil with pine needles to help retain moisture. This also cuts down on weeding. Do not bag grass clippings. Shred leaves for faster breakdown for ground cover. Use American Beautyberry leaves rubbed on skin to keep mosquitoes away. Become a better gardener by attending free seminars at the Extension Office and at Rosenberg Library in Galveston. Check out the magazines and books at your local library.

CONTRIBUTORS - Thank you to our MG contributors:

Margaret Canavan, Jan Fountain, Linda Garren-McKillip, Carol Hebert, Sue Jeffco, Elayne Kouzounis, Ann Lyon, Robert Marshall, Julie Moncur, Deborah Repasz, Frank Resch, Alice Rodgers, Susan Roth, Ed Salisbury, Linda Steber, Ken Steblein & Anna Wyrzys



Bluebonnets with Seed Pods

August-September "Things To Do" Gardening Calendar Video



by Jenifer Leonpacher
MG 2010



by Gregory Werth
MG 2012



Click on the "Play Video" icon at top right to see what a "group effort" can do (by the aforementioned Master Gardeners) to prepare an exceptional "Things to Do" Calendar.



Thanks to All - Farewell

Jessica Weizer is completing a summer internship in horticulture and will soon be assuming the position of horticulturist with the Nueces County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

This past month has flown by so incredibly fast! I feel like I have learned more from the Master Gardeners (as well as Dr. Johnson, the other agents, and the administrative assistants) than I could have learned in an entire semester at Texas A&M. I have been touched by everyone's support and guidance as I begin my journey learning and preparing myself to fill my new position in Nueces County.

As most of you have probably heard me say, nothing can be achieved by just one individual—it really does take a team effort. The Master Gardener program here is just incredible and it's you, the volunteers, who make it so successful as well as welcoming. I have sincerely enjoyed this learning opportunity as well as the hospitality everyone has shown me.

Although my formal internship is coming to an end, I will keep in touch! I will be happy to come and visit the office from time to time and I will be attending the State Master Gardener Conference that will be held in McAllen in October. I hope to see many of you there!

If anyone is ever in Nueces County you are always welcome to give me a call or stop by the Nueces County AgriLife Extension Office! I am truly blessed to have had this opportunity and you wonderful people have made an impact, one that I will carry with me to Nueces County.

Take care,
Jessica



members request

Seasonal Bites

Bobbie Ivey's Green Tomato Bread was a big hit at the June MG Meeting and members requested the recipe—here it is!



By Bobbie Ivey
MG 2008

Green Tomato Bread

- 3 cups of all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups finely chopped green tomato (about 2 medium) I use a small food processor for this
- 1 1/2 cups chopped pecans



Combine first 6 ingredients in a large bowl; make a well in center of mixture. Combine eggs, oil, and vanilla; stir well. Add to dry ingredients, stirring just until moistened. Fold in tomato and pecans. Spoon batter into 2 greased and floured 8 1/2 by 4 1/2 inch loaf pans. Bake at 350 for 1 hour or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pans on a wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire rack. Yield: 2 loaves.



by John Jons
MG 2003

How to turn a flowering shrub into a flowering tree?

So here I am with a “I grow too much in my garden” dilemma—I have a small garden and two flowering shrubs that I really like but they are growing really big and about to take over my entire garden. So what can I do? I was

thinking through this dilemma while looking at a rose standard. A “standard plant has a single, non-branching stem, topped by a crown of branches, leaves and flowers.” In other words, you prune the plant (usually a woody plant) so that it’s shaped like a tree with a single trunk and all the foliage and flowers at the top. I thought, why not prune my flowering shrubs into standards.

The way I approached this effort was by looking for the straightest and strongest cane (limb) on the shrub and pruning off all the other canes, just leaving this single cane. As the shrub continues to grow, it will continue to grow more canes from the roots and you have to continually cut them off at ground level. The single remaining cane will also continue to grow branches and you will need to trim off these branches on (the trunk of) the cane and to shape the foliage. After a while, you will have the tree (lollipop) shape, with the foliage and flowers at the top and a single (clean trunk) cane below. This will free up the area at the base of the shrub that was previously covered with all the other shrub’s canes that grew from the base of the shrub. See the pictures that illustrate this idea.



Rose of Sharon (Athaea)
Hibicus Syiacus in the early stages of being turned into a standard.



Rose of Sharon (Athaea)
Hibicus Syiacus



Esperanza *Tecoma stans*

Project: Demonstration Gardens

Carbide Park



By Tom Fountain
MG 2008



Photos by MG Tom Fountain



Weather is always an important factor in gardening, but this has been a year of extremes. This summer's arrival at the garden was almost going overnight from 80 degree afternoons, to a stretch of 100 degrees days, and dry weather. The hot weather has made it hard to keep the garden, or the gardeners, hydrated and we had a few minor heat-related problems. This has been addressed by adding water stations and encouraging those working in the garden, to take breaks often, to cool down, and drink lots of water. Now, despite some spotty showers, it remains hot and humid, and the mosquitoes are back.

We have continued having a great group of gardeners working hard despite the weather. They have been doing all the garden things like weeding, trimming, mulching, and have started cleaning out beds to get ready for fall planting. Tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, peas, and corn were also harvested over the past month with much of this given to community centers around Galveston County.



Henry and Stewart are plugging right along with the bed renewal project, despite the heat. The greenhouse build out has been almost stalled, but should be ready by late fall. Robert has a large group that will be mulching the orchard area the next few weeks. If any of these sound interesting come join in.



The serenity and Earth-Kind gardens all look spectacular. If you haven't walked out to see them lately, you should. One of our many benefits of being a Master Gardener and working in the garden is you can have some hands-on opportunities to learn new skills. An example is when Henry was teaching Louise to use a skill saw, or Dr. Johnson teaching the soon-to-become Nueces County AgriLife Extension Horticulture Agent Jessica Weizer how to take a soil sample. Come to the garden. It is a good place to ask questions about gardening and learn solutions for gardening problems.

MINUTES

JUNE & JULY MG MEETINGS

The June meeting of the Galveston County Master Gardener Association took place on June 11, 2013, in the beautiful gardens of Mikey and Alan Isbell on Galveston Island. GCMGA President Jim Edwards welcomed everyone to the Graduation & Certification of the 2012 class. All 22 Interns in the Class of 2012 completed volunteer requirements for certification as Texas Master Gardeners...another 100% completion year! The 2012 Intern Class contributed 3,101 hours for the 2012 calendar year. Robert Marshall was recognized for providing the highest number of volunteer hours (393.5 hours) in the 2012 Class. The Class of 2013 Interns were then introduced and welcomed. Dr. Johnson congratulated everyone for a job well done! Dr. Don Wilkerson and Dr. Johnson recognized many MG's who were very active volunteers this past year with memorable tokens of appreciation. Luke Stripling provided a blessing of the meal before everyone enjoyed the delicious potluck dinner.



By Mary Lou Kelso
MG 2000



The July meeting of the GCMGA was held July 9, at the AgriLife Extension Office in Carbine Park. Dr. Johnson introduced Jessica Weizer who will be assuming the position of Extension Horticulturist with the Nueces County AgriLife Extension Office. Jessica will work with the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office for a month before assuming her position in August.

Dick Carter recently relocated to Missouri. Since he served as a member of the GCMA Board of Directors, the position is now vacant. GCMGA President Jim Edwards opened the floor up for nominations to fill the BOD position. Nominees from the floor were Tish Reustle and Dotti Krustchinsky. Dotti was elected to the Board of Directors.

Updates were provided on the 2013 MG State meeting to be held in October in McAllen, Texas. Jim Edwards informed everyone that the registration is now open online and is presently a \$160 fee. Additionally, the GCMGA has reserved a bus which requires a \$100 deposit per person. After September 1, Precinct 2 will have the opportunity to make reservations for any remaining seats. A block of 20 rooms was reserved at Meeting Headquarters at Springhill Suites. When reserving a room, you are asked to notify Jim Edwards or Laura so they can be aware of your attendance. After the meeting was adjourned, MG Greenhouse Specialists Cheryl Armstrong and Pat Forke provided a PowerPoint presentation on constructing various types of greenhouses and highlighted examples of how other MG Associations across the state are utilizing their greenhouses. A potluck dinner was held after the presentation.



UPCOMING CONFERENCES - HAVE YOU REGISTERED YET?

Texas Master Gardener Conference 2013!



"Blooms, Birds & Butterflies" The conference will be held October 17 - 19, 2013 in McAllen, TX. It is hosted by the Cameron and Hidalgo Counties Master Gardener Assoc. and will be held at the McAllen Conference Center. The Texas Master Gardener Association website has information including tour information, and speakers which includes our own GCMG Clyde Holt who will be speaking on Bonsai. Hotel Reservations and registration for conferences and tours can be accessed on the website. Registration costs \$160.00. Tours for MG's are \$45.00 and spouse tours are \$35.00. Workshop costs range from \$15.00 - \$40.00. The Conference Headquarter

Hotel is the Renaissance Casa de Palma Hotel by Marriott which is located 2.4 miles from the convention center. Phone # 956-631-1101. Room costs range from \$109.00 - \$119.00 per the website. advise you to check the TMGA website frequently for details. <http://2013tmgaconference.org/Home.aspx>

2013 International Master Gardener Conference

"Alaska; Flowers, Fjords, and Friends", on the Holland America Cruise Ship Westerdam. The conference will run from 9/7/2013 - 9/14/2013. The cruise ship will depart Seattle on the 7th and the ports of call will be Juneau; Glacier Bay; Sitka; Ketchikan; Victoria, British Columbia; and return to Seattle. The sponsor of the conference is the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Research and Extension. They have planned a full slate of keynote speakers and seminars (all to be given when the ship is at sea) on subjects ranging from ornamentals to vegetables, wildlife to conservation of water resources, native plants to herbs. It looks to be a fabulous conference and if you have never cruised before get ready for a beautiful and luxurious experience. Room costs range from \$899.00 - \$2749, 00 and are per person and based on double occupancy. Please see the website specific details <http://www.uaex.edu/imgc2013/>. If you have not signed up but would like to attend the conference, there is still space available. Contact Michelle at 253-509-0865.



Upcoming Events

Please be sure to register for the programs you want to attend. Accurate attendance counts are needed so that program materials may be on hand for attendees. The following AgriLife Extension Programs are free to the public..

Location: Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park

4102 Main Street (FM 519), La Marque Texas 77568

For course reservations, call 281-534-3413, ext. 12 or email GALV3@wt.net

Tuesday Night & Saturday Seminars

GARDENING BY THE SQUARE FOOT

Tuesday, August 20, 2013

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Presented by Galveston County Master Gardener John Jons. This program is an introduction to the gardening methodology of gardening by the square foot. Discover this unique way of planning the bed, selecting plants, building the bed, maintaining the bed and renewing the bed. This is an ideal program for anyone who would like to learn a simple, productive method of gardening that will enable them to teach children or adults with limitations how to learn and enjoy gardening.

SUCCESSFUL FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING

Saturday, August 24, 2013

9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Long time Galveston County Master Gardener Luke Stripling will present a program on growing fall and winter season vegetables in Galveston County. Topics will include soil preparation, drainage, the use of raised beds, the best seed planting dates, the best varieties, planting depth, fertilizer methods, water requirements, pest control and harvesting.

GREENHOUSES FOR THE HOME GARDENER

Saturday, September 7, 2013

Speaker: MG Bob McPherson

9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Greenhouse Specialist and Galveston County Master Gardener Bob McPherson will give a PowerPoint presentation on the set-up and management of hobby greenhouses. Topics covered include the various types of structures and the materials for building, as well as cooling, heating, water management, water injection of fertilizers, and sanitation.

GROWING ONIONS AND GARLIC

Saturday, September 14, 2013

9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

In our area fall is the best time to plant onions and garlic. Master Gardener Ken Steblein will present a program on how to successfully grow these root crops.

KITCHEN GARDENING

Saturday, September 14, 2013

1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Presented by Master Gardener Mary Demeny. Discussion on vegetable gardening in your own backyard. Gardening on a smaller scale and making use of vegetables interplanted in your flower beds and in pots will be emphasized.

GRAFTING WORKSHOP: T-BUDDING

Saturday, September 21, 2013

9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

A hands-on workshop focused on T-budding, the technique of grafting used on small citrus, peach, plum and other fruit trees.

Presented by Master Gardener, Propagation Specialist Herman Auer. Class size limited to 24.

You must pre-register in order to attend

THE FABULOUS FRAGRANT FRANGIPANI (Plumeria)

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Presented by Galveston County Master Gardener Loretta Osteen. The program will cover the history, culture, usage of the flowers, storage and winter protection. Subjects covered include propagation by seeds, cuttings and grafting.

PERENNIALS FOR THE GULF COAST -- PLANT SALE PREVIEW

Saturday, September 28, 2013

9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Heidi Sheesley of Tresearch Farms will give a presentation highlighting the plants that will be available at the October 12 Ornamental & Perennial Sale. Seminar will be held at the Wayne Johnson Community Center.

Save The Date! This year's Ornamental and Perennial Sale will be held on Saturday, October 12, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Please note that the 12th is the second Saturday of the month, not the first, as has been the case on other occasions. We look forward to seeing you there.

2013 MG Re-certification (Continuing Education) Hours Available Through the AgriLife Extension Office

Date	Event	Name of Program	Speaker	CEUs for MGs
1/5/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Growing Avocados	Jerry Hurlbert	2.5
1/5/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Homegrown Peppers	Gene Speller	2
1/10/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Stone Fruit Grafting Hands-On Demo/Workshop	Herman Auer	1.5
1/12/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Grow Great Tomatoes	Sam Scarcella	3
1/12/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Gardening by the Square Foot	John Jons	2
1/15/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Successfully Growing Peaches	Herman Auer	2
1/17/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Stone Fruit Grafting Hands-On Demo/Workshop	Herman Auer	1.5
1/17/2013	MG Monthly Meeting	Fruit & Citrus Trees for the Gulf Coast	Heidi Sheesley	2
1/22/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Growing Citrus in the Home Landscape	Herman Auer	2
1/24/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Grafting Hands-On Demonstration/Workshop	Herman Auer	1.5
1/26/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Spring Vegetable Gardening	Luke Stripling	2.5
1/26/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Anyone Can Grow Roses	John Jons	1.5
1/29/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Blueberries in the Backyard	David Cohen	1.5
2/7/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Tomato Planting Demo/Hands-On Workshop	Sam Scarcella	1
2/9/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Tomato Stress Management	Sam Scarcella	2.5
2/9/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Kitchen Gardening	Mary Demeny	2.5
2/12/2013	MG Monthly Meeting	Hummingbirds for MGs only	Elayne Kouzounis	1.5
2/14/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Fig Pruning for the Home Orchard	Terry Cuclis	1.5
2/14/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Grape Pruning Hands-On Demo/Workshop	Robert Marshall	2
2/16/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Hummingbirds - The Jewels of the Garden	Elayne Kouzounis	2
2/16/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Honey Bees Around the Garden	Stewart McAdoo	1.5
3/5/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	50 Ways to Live a Greener Life	Ken Steblein	1.5
3/12/2013	MG Monthly Meeting	Herbs for the Gulf Coast for MGs only	Cindy Croft	1
3/16/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Grafting Your Own Fruit Trees	Herman Auer	2.5
3/19/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Vermiculture - Worm Castings for Your Garden	Linda Brown	1.5
3/26/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Drip Irrigation - Easy & Efficient	Susan Roth	1
4/6/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Preserving the Harvest - Water Bath Canning	Marilyn Simmons	3
4/13/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	The Culture & Care of Palms	O. J. Miller	2.5
4/16/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	The Joy of Daylilies	Nell Shimek	1.5
4/19/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Pilot Program	Rainwater Harvesting (for MGs only)	Tim Jahnke	2
4/20/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	The ABCs of Composting	Ken Steblein	2
4/22/2013	Spring Pecan Field Day	Pecan tree grafting workshop/demonstration	Jim Hall	1.5
4/30/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Rainwater Harvesting	Tim Jahnke	1.5
5/4/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Herbs for the Gulf Coast	Cindy Croft	2.5
5/18/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Preserving the Harvest - Pressure Canning	Marilyn Simmons	3
6/4/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	The Fabulous Fragrant Frangipani	Loretta Osteen	1.5
6/6/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Peach & Plum Tree Pruning Demonstration (1)	Herman Auer	1.25
6/6/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Peach & Plum Tree Pruning Demonstration (2)	Herman Auer	1.25
6/13/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Peach & Plum Tree Pruning Demonstration	Herman Auer	1.25
6/14/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Pilot Program	Turning Dirt into Soil (for MGs only)	Jim Gilliam	1.75
6/15/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Program	Tomato Taste Test & Evaluation	Terry Cuclis	3
6/22/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Workshop	The Art of Bonsai	Clyde Holt	3
6/29/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Turning Dirt into Soil	Jim Gilliam	2.25
7/9/2013	MG Monthly Meeting	Greenhouse Uses in Master Gardener Programs	Cheryl Armstrong & Pat Forke	1
7/13/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Homeowner's Guide to Weed Control	Anna Wygryns	3.25
8/2/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Pilot Program	It's a Bugs Life	CEA Jessica Weizer	2
8/3/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Hidden Treasures - Bulbs, Corms & Rhizomes	Anna Wygryns	2.75
8/6/2013	Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar	Beneficial Insects in the Garden & Landscapes	CEA Jessica Weizer	1.25

Summary

2013 Recertification Hours for MGs	29 speakers = 48 Educational Programs	Total CEUs (Hours)	92.50
Last updated: 8 August 2013			

bulletin board

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

To volunteer for the **MG Phone Desk** contact Laura Bellmore by e-mail at galv3@wt.net or by calling the office at 281-534- 3413, ext 1.

Libbie's Place Adult Day Care has been designated as a Demonstration Garden for the Master Gardener Association. It is located at 5402 Avenue U in Galveston and is part of Moody Methodist Church outreach ministries (<http://www.moody.org/libbies-place-senior-day-program>). A crew is needed to maintain and upgrade the garden as needed with your time spent counting towards MG volunteer hours. MG Pam Gilbert is heading up the crew and will determine the day, time and frequency of the work days. If you are interested, or have any questions, please contact Pam at 409-771-5620 or by email at DrPGilbert@aol.com to let her know the day/times (AM/PM) that would work best for you. Thank you for your time and consideration in this great new endeavor for the Master Gardeners.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Tour Guides for "First-Thursday-in-a-Month" Public Access & Tour of our Demonstration Garden

Long-winded title but it says what we will be doing. Our Demonstration Garden will be open for touring by the general public on the first Thursday of each month from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. MGs are needed to serve as tour guides for our demonstration Garden. Contact MG Julie Cartmill at 281-932-8896 or email evergreentreesinc@gmail.com or MG Bobbie Ivey at 713-748-8564 or email at blivey@sbcglobal.net to volunteer.

Master Gardener Digital Photo Library Committee

Do not be alarmed/dissuaded with the name of "committee!" If you like to organize things—join our newest volunteer endeavor known as the Master Gardener Digital Photo Library Committee. The current weekly time schedule for this activity is every Thursday from 10 a.m.-12 noon. MG Sandra Devall will be providing leadership for this. Volunteers will be adding photographers' names to digital photos for cataloging/sorting, sorting photos, or looking up botanical names. If any of those tasks fit your interest—just show up and get with Sandra (281-534-3413, Ext. 17 or sandra.devall@co.galveston.tx.us)! The Photo Library has been the primary source for photos used in PowerPoint programs, website, publications, newsletters, etc.

Volunteers are needed to help with the Saturday programs and the Tuesday evening programs. If you can help please contact Christine Anastas (281) 468-3787 or Robert Marshall e-mail rbrtm01@att.net

AgriLife Extension Office Demonstration Garden needs volunteers! The gardens around the AgriLife Extension Office are maintained by Master Gardeners under the team leadership of MG Peggy Budny. This is an opportunity to make a good impression on the many visitors to the AgriLife Extension Office. Come out and have a good time while learning more about ornamentals. Please contact Peggy at 281-334-7997 or by email at fmbmab@verizon.net to find out the schedule and join her team.

The Fabulous Front Gate Garden—Have you ever noticed the landscape beds as you enter into the park from FM 519? That space is maintained by MG Solveig Cornille. She is in need of two committed volunteers to train and to assist her in the upkeep of this focal-point garden. Please contact Solveig at 281-534-7469 or sc726@comcast.net to volunteer.

SPECIALIST & OTHER MG RELATED TRAINING

Please see the Texas Master Gardeners Website for details. Please note that if you go to the website you can find up-to-date information on Specialist Programs that were added in between editions of the newsletter. <http://www.texasmastergardeners.com>. You may download the application forms from that website. Note that all applications for the Specialist Training courses must be approved and signed by Dr. William Johnson. Note that fees do not include lodging or food unless specified otherwise.

Landscape Design School Series XXIII, Course III

September 23-24, 2013

Sponsored by the Texas Garden Clubs, Incorporated and Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M University.

Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. and Dr. William C. Welch announce the third in the latest Landscape Design Study Course series (Landscape Design School) which is offered in four separate schools, approximately six months apart, each with 10 hours of instruction, in the Bryan-College Station area. These courses offer an opportunity to learn from professional landscape architects and horticulturists about how successful landscapes are designed. Specifics include color, scale, history, practicality, plant selection and hardscape choices. We believe that good landscapes reflect a "sense of place" and the application of good design principles. Participants may take the four courses in any sequence. Garden Club members, Master Gardeners, nurserymen and others who are interested in furthering their knowledge of landscape design are welcome to attend. Click the link for more information <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/LDSep13/LDIITentSch.pdf>

To All Interested MGs - Registration is now underway for two Fall 2013 Fruit Meetings. The meetings will be held September 30-October 2. Previous Galveston County MG that have attended say these are excellent programs.

The Texas Fruit Conference will be held Monday afternoon & Tuesday, September 30th & October 1, 2013. **The High Tunnel Conference** is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2. This year a balanced blend of topics will be offered for growers who are just starting a fruit orchard or who have been growing and selling fruits for many years. While this conference is intended to assist commercial fruit producers, the materials presented will also be helpful to homeowners and gardeners who simply want to grow fruits and nuts for home consumption and pleasure. You can register for one or both events on-line at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu>

Both Events To Be Held at the Best Western Atrea Hotel in Bryan, Texas. Conference Room Rate: \$93.00.

<http://book.bestwestern.com/bestwestern/US/TX/Bryan-hotels/BEST-WESTERN-PREMIER-Old-Town-Center/Hotel-Overview.do?propertyCode=44623>

VOLUNTEER HOURS LOGS

To report volunteer hours send your log sheets to mghours@wt.net

the last word . . .

PESKY SALT MARSH MOSQUITOES

Jessica Weizer is completing a summer internship in horticulture and will soon be assuming the position of horticulturist with the Nueces County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.



My name is Jessica Weizer and I am a 2013 graduate of Texas A&M University where I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Entomology (the study of insects). In August, I will be assuming the position of County Extension Agent-Horticulture at the Nueces County AgriLife Extension Office in Corpus Christi. In preparation for my new position, I have been serving as an intern under Dr. William Johnson at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in La Marque.

Dr. Johnson has put me through a relentless but quite enjoyable Real-life Horticulture Training 101 asking me “What is that plant?”, “What is wrong with this plant?”, “What is that plant disease?” “What is that insect pest?” This has been an excellent on-the-job learning experience. On my first day to the office a few weeks ago, I was greeted by an insect pest that I already knew way too much about.

Honestly there were hordes of salt marsh mosquitoes that seemed to waiting in line to greet me outside my car door and it quickly became clear this was not going to be a “let’s give a warm welcome to the newcomer to the office” gathering. Since I will have similar horticultural responsibilities in Nueces County that Dr. Johnson has here in Galveston County, he suggested that I write a guest column on our pesky adversaries.

This troublesome insect pest that we are facing right now is the black salt marsh mosquito, otherwise known as *Aedes taeniorhynchus* (also known as *Ochlerotatus sollicitans*). These pesky insects are especially troubling to those who enjoy gardening, grilling or just spending leisure time outdoors.

Salt marsh mosquitoes are relatively small in size, very dark grey or black in color and can sometimes be referred to as the “salt and pepper mosquito” because of the combination of the light and dark scales covering its body. They have five thin bands of white scales on each leg as well as on the uppermost surface of the abdominal segments, and one located in the center of the proboscis.

Due to the rise of the tides and recent rainfall salt marsh mosquitoes numbers have increased dramatically. This mosquito is most abundant along coastal plains spanning from Texas up to Massachusetts and predominately inhabit salt or brackish marshes.

After mating, the female mosquito is on a mission to find a host to utilize as a blood meal. These mosquitoes are particularly insistent biters and can be a problem to humans, dogs, cats and livestock. Although these mosquitoes can bite at any time of the day, they are most problematic at twilight. The female black salt marsh mosquitoes are the ones who take a blood meal; the male mosquitoes do not.

Once the blood meal has been acquired, the female mosquito will lay a batch of 100 to 200 eggs one at a time, and can lay up to six batches! The eggs are deposited on the surface of mud along receding tide pools in the spring or early summer. Here in our area, the breeding of this mosquito can happen year round. The eggs will then hatch when high tides and rains flood the marsh. In some instances if the conditions are ideal, the adults can emerge in as little as six days subsequent to the hatching of the eggs.

The black salt marsh mosquito is considered to be a public health nuisance because of it being an adamant and particularly aggressive biter. Precautions should be exercised to avoid bites.

Some of these precautions for avoiding bites from black salt marsh as well as species of mosquitoes include:

- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing or when practical, long sleeves and pants. Some mosquitoes are actually more attracted to dark colors and most can easily bite through tightly fitted clothing.
- Empty out containers that fill with water and change the water in bird baths at least once a week. Some mosquitoes don’t need very much water to lay eggs in; a single, small container in a landscape can serve as a breeding ground for hundreds of mosquitoes.
- Use a mosquito repellent. There are various types, applications and brands. Find one that works for you and be sure to follow and read all directions carefully that are listed on the container.

I will likely be able to use this information in a garden column again when I move to Nueces County—salt marsh mosquitoes are just as problematic there. I wonder if they will be planning another “let’s give a warm welcome to the newcomer to the office” gathering for me. I plan to wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing on my first day of work and will have my mosquito repellent ready.



Photo By MG Herman Auer

The milkweed assassin bug (pictured above) is a beneficial insect commonly found in Galveston County and often mistaken with the leaf footed bug which is a major insect pest. Jessica Weizer will provide a presentation about Beneficial Insects in the Garden and Landscape on Tuesday, August 6, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office.

MG Judy Anderson is asking for volunteers to host backyard meetings. You may contact Judy at jande10198@aol.com if you would like to volunteer.

2013 MGA MONTHLY MEETINGS

January 17, 2013

Heidi Sheesley - TreeSearch Farms
Pre-Fruit Tree Sale Presentation
1:30 pm - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

February 12, 2013

Elayne Kouzounis - Hummingbirds
6:30 pm - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

March 12, 2013

Cindy Croft - Herbs
6:30 pm - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

April 9, 2013

Karen & Morris - Backyard Meeting
5:30 pm - 2910 Bayshore
Bacliff

May 14, 2013

Barbara & Gary Hankins - Backyard Meeting
5:30 pm - 12030 Sportsman Road
Galveston Island

June 11, 2013

Graduation at Mikey and Allen Isbell's
7:00 pm - 1715 - 35th Street
Galveston Island

July 9 2013

Pat Forke & Cheryl Armstrong
7:00 pm Extension Office
Greenhouses
Carbide Park - La Marque

August 13, 2013

Moody Gardens
Galveston Island
Venues from 9:30 am, Meal @ 5:30 pm

September 28, 2013 - (Saturday)

Heidi Sheesley - Annual & Perennial Pre-Sale Meeting
9:00 - 11:30 am - Wayne Johnson Community Center
Carbide Park - La Marque

October 8, 2013

Rose Marie & Charlie Smith - Backyard Meeting
5:30 pm - 11 Lakeview Drive
Galveston Island

November 12, 2013

Annual Meeting, Election of GCMGA Officers
7:00 pm - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

December 10, 2013

Holiday Meeting - Mikey and Allen Isbell
6:30 pm - 1715 - 35th Street
Galveston Island



By Judy Anderson
MG 2012

GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

2013 Master Garden Monthly Meetings

August

A full day of activities has been made available at Moody Gardens by Mary Lou Kelso for the August Galveston County Master Gardener Meeting, Tuesday, August 13.

September

Heidi Sheesley will present a preview of the plants that will be available during the Galveston County Master Gardeners' Annual Ornamental and Perennial Plant Sale. Heidi's presentation will be from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., Saturday, September 28, at the Wayne Johnson Community Center in Carbide Park. This is your opportunity to hear about the special "treasures" Heidi has made available for the sale. Heidi's program will serve as our September MG Association meeting.

The Ornamental and Perennial Plant Sale will be held at the Wayne Johnson Community Center on Saturday, October 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

October

Rose Marie and Charlie Smith will host the October Meeting of the Master Gardener Association at their home in Galveston, 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 8. Rose Marie and Charlie have hosted the Master Gardeners in the past, but they have recently moved to a new home and wanted to welcome the Master Gardeners for another visit. The tropical gardens feature a variety of palm trees. Mark your calendar for a garden party in Galveston.

November

The Annual Meeting and Election of Officers will be held Tuesday, 6:00 p.m., November 12 at the AgriLife Extension Office. This will be a potluck dinner and we will recognize the service of retiring officers. The officers have been a steady guide through the many changes of the Galveston County Master Gardener Association during the past term. This is an opportunity to thank them for their commitment.

December

The Galveston County Master Gardener's Annual Holiday Party will be held at the home of Mikey and Allen Isbell, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., December 10. Save this date for an early holiday celebration.

