

Gulf Coast Gardening

WRITTEN BY GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS IN COOPERATION
WITH THE GALVESTON COUNTY OFFICE OF TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

spectacular colorful foliage

Issue 200 - May /June 2016

Purple Shield (*Strobilanthes dyeranus*)

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I say if your knees aren't green by the end of the day, you ought to seriously reexamine your life. ~ Bill Watterson, Calvin & Hobbes

My green thumb came only as a result of the mistakes I made while learning to see things from the plant's point of view. ~ H. Fred Dale

There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone at their work, you would find them smiling. ~ Mirabel Osler

Gardening is a matter of your enthusiasm holding up until your back gets used to it.

~ Unknown

In gardens, beauty is a by-product. The main business is sex and death. ~ Sam Llewelyn



*By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008*

Several, still fitting, old gardening quotes to welcome summer 2016. Summer, my favorite part of the year. Our Gulf Coast humidity is kicking in to help keep our wrinkles down! Recently, I've talked with several Master Gardeners who have been working to get their landscapes in shape for summer. Currently, beautiful perennials and other plants are blooming abundantly. I still have mystery weeds showing up in my yard which no one can identify along with several snakes that my cat, KC, has introduced himself to. I wish I could catch it on camera, I'm not sure who jumps higher; the cat, the snake or me viewing this commotion through the sunroom window!

As always, some new challenge is constantly occurring in the horticulture field to keep us on our toes. Last week I read that citrus canker (bacterial disease) has been confirmed in South Texas 70 years after it was eradicated. Additionally, there is now a disease (rose rosette) affecting Knock Out and other roses and is so serious their continued existence could be in question. Laurel Stine alerts us on page 5. Did you know you could get cellulitis from gardening? The Q&A on page 4 describes this bacterial infection and how to prevent it. I think it would be both fun and educational for our MG Demonstration Garden to have a *human sundial* as a focal point display. Perhaps a few 2016 Interns or anyone interested in a unique garden project could look into constructing one in our garden. It's not hard and there are several on-line calculators to help develop and refine it. See how it's done along with a layout in my article on pages 6-7 where I used our MG Demonstration Garden's GPS and other parameters required for the calculation. On page 15, Donna Ward provides some actions we should be doing now in our gardens in spite of dastardly squirrels. Jan Brick takes a keener look at herbs on page 14. Our Best Shots article this month (pages 12-13) features what's currently blooming in some of our yards. One of our 2016 Interns, Nancy Schwertz solves an insect I.D. mystery for us on page 8. Please enjoy meeting a remarkable Master Gardener, Henry Harrison, on page 17. MG Rod Mize has some useful guidelines about using Chemicals in our Homes and Gardens, page 9. John Jons instructs us on the intricacies, rewards and his resilience in hybridizing roses on page 10. Our Tool of the Month series appears on page 18 where this month you'll learn about hoes. Checkout the current happenings and accomplishments at the MG Demonstration Garden in the Carbide Park update article on page 20. Kaye Corey provides an interesting look at some of our area's diverse and active local garden clubs (page 19). Seasonal Bites offers up some easy recipes this month (page 21). Dr. Johnson tells us about flower color influencing human mood in the Last Word (page 25).

Don't forget to checkout the updated Monthly Calendar Video (page 18), Upcoming Events (page 23) and the Bulletin Board (page 24).

Bring on Summer – I wasn't made for winter, I want my flip flops; Sunshine is my favorite accessory (Authors Unknown)

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Cover: Spectacular Colorful Foliage
Photo by Elayne Kouzounis



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By Pam Jahnke
2015 MG Intern

ask a master gardener

Q&A

Hot Line Topic - Healthy Gardening

Question: Recently a friend of mine contracted cellulitis just from a scratch at a friend's ranch and almost died from complications. Gardeners receive many scratches, scrapes and cuts and usually just let them heal. How can we prevent serious consequences?

Many studies show that gardening can promote health and wellness through increased exercise, access to fresh, nutritious fruits and veggies, through a sense of connection with the earth and interactions with other gardeners. Although there may be health risks associated with gardening as well, we can avoid most serious injuries by taking simple preventive measures.

According to MedlinePlus, website of the National Library of Medicine, cellulitis is simply a bacterial infection of the skin affecting the skin's middle layer, the dermis, or deeper tissues. The most common bacteria causing cellulitis are staphylococcus ("staph") and streptococcus ("strep") that are commonly found on our skin. When there is a break in the skin, bacteria can enter and may cause an infection.

Common symptoms include a skin sore or rash that develops suddenly and grows rapidly; warmth and increasing redness and pain at the site of the infection; taut, shiny skin at the site; and fever. There may be a raised bump with or without drainage. Many people mistake the infection for a spider bite.

It is important to quickly seek medical attention for skin infections with these symptoms. Most cases can be treated effectively with antibiotics from your family physician, but occasionally cellulitis can become more serious and must be treated in the hospital. Untreated, this could progress to sepsis, a generalized infection of the blood stream, or other life-threatening complications.

Some people may be at a higher risk of developing cellulitis, such as those with a weakened immune system, diabetes, a history of peripheral vascular disease, and those with cracking skin, abscesses, surgical wounds or other breaks in the skin.



Cellulitis of the leg (Image from Wikipedia)

Many such infections can be prevented by simple measures. Tips for gardeners include:

- Keep skin moist with lotions to prevent cracking
- Wear well fitting, closed-toe shoes in the garden
- Wear gloves that are appropriate for your task, the right material and right length to prevent cuts or scratches
- Use insect repellent with DEET to avoid bites
- Exercise caution around power tools and sharp gardening implements
- If you receive a scratch or cut, wash it well with soap, apply antibiotic ointment and cover with a Band-Aid; watch for signs of infection and seek medical attention if symptoms are present.

Remember, the benefits of gardening are many but use caution to prevent injury. Healthy, happy gardening!



By Laurel Stine
MG 2002

what is happening to my Knock Out roses

Who among us remembers the Disease Triangle, taught to us when we took our Master Gardener classes? You may recall the instructor comparing it to a milk stool, where all three legs (or factors) had to be present for a disease to thrive (or for the stool to stand). These factors included a host, a pathogen, and a conducive environment.

However, there was one canny instructor who included another factor off to the side, as a disease's able assistant: people. How right he was. Rose Rosette Disease (RRD) is one of a roster of many diseases which has had its spread accelerated by human activities; Citrus Greening and Oak Wilt are among some of the others.

Rose Rosette is a member of the virus genus *Emaravirus*, along with another well-known virus, Fig Mosaic virus. These viruses are transmitted by the eriophyid mite *Phyllocoptes fructiphilus*, or by grafting. These mites are microscopic in size.

While eriophyid mites are wingless, they will crawl short distances on plants. They can also travel great distances on air currents, as well as on equipment and clothing. Using leaf blowers around roses is another way to assist mite movement and should therefore be avoided.

Most eriophyid mites make their home on the surface of leaves where their feeding can cause bronzing or reddening but some are also responsible for creating galls on leaves or witches'-broom on stems and flower buds. Damage by eriophyid mites may be easily confused with damage caused by scorch, air pollution, herbicides, and in some cases, fungi or insects.

The A&M Plant Pathology Lab has a good publication with photos of symptoms: <http://plantclinic.tamu.edu/files/2014/07/RRV-symptom-guide.pdf>

A website by Gaye Hammond for the Houston Rose Society does a good job of pointing out different symptoms and their causes: <http://www.houstonrose.org/rcompar.pdf>

It would be nice to have some symptoms which definitely point to RRD as a cause; but because there are numerous symptoms that can be attributed to other things only a molecular test called the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) can absolutely confirm it. Multiple samples may need to be tested on the same plant.

The popular multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) is a common source of inoculum (Knock Out roses, anyone?) Wild multiflora roses, such as the McCartney rose, are also.

Cultivated roses planted downwind of infected wild multiflora roses are especially at risk because the mite travels on wind currents from infected to healthy plants. Some growers have observed symptoms on previously healthy plants within four weeks of being planted

downwind of diseased multiflora roses.

Because the mites can crawl short distances, it is important to maintain roses so that they do not touch.

Scout and remove wild roses in the area.

Horticultural oil, insecticidal soap and pyrethrum can provide some control of these mites.

Texas A&M recommends abamectin, bifenthrin, carbaryl and endosulfan as effective miticides; however, it also notes that long-term control of these mites is not really practical. Perhaps the best use of sprays are as temporary protection for plants growing close to an infected plant that you have dug out.

The most effective method of eradication is to completely remove the infected plant. The causal agent of rose rosette disease is not soil-borne, so it is possible to successfully plant healthy roses in beds where diseased plants have been removed. However, because the pathogen is systemic in infected plants, the virus may persist in RRD-infected root pieces that remain in the soil. If plants regrow from these old root pieces, as multiflora rose is apt to do, they can serve as an inoculum source for healthy plants. Therefore, it is important to thoroughly remove symptomatic plants and ensure that infected plants are not allowed to regrow from old, infected root pieces.

To find out whether pruning practices might transmit the disease, leaf sap and juice, made by grinding infected plant parts, were rubbed on the leaves of healthy plants. This did not result in rose rosette symptoms (Allington et al, 1968).

Other experiments using contaminated razor blades to wound healthy plants also did not result in rose rosette symptoms. Stab inoculation, using a contaminated needle to wound healthy plants, resulted in rose rosette symptoms in two out of 120 tries (Epstein and Hill, 1995), showing that mechanical transmission is possible but highly unlikely.

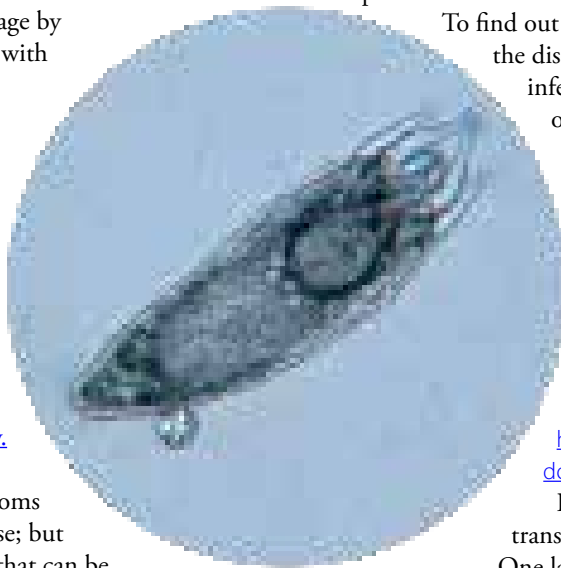
<https://www.agrilifebookstore.org/v/vspfiles/downloadables/EPLP-010.pdf>

Research has shown that it is unlikely to be transmitted with pruning tools.

One last remark from John Jons, our Master Gardener rose expert: at this time, there have not been a lot of confirmed cases of RRD in our area, so be sure to look closely at some of the other causes of the symptoms first. Hopefully for you, it will be another "bad guy".

Eriophyid mite source: IFAS

Phyllocoptes fructiphilus Keifer is a tiny eriophyid mite and cannot be seen without magnification. Like all eriophyid mites, it has only two pairs of legs at the anterior of its worm-like body. (Photograph by USDA, Agricultural Research Service)





By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008

most are found in museums, parks and as decorative pieces in gardens

Building a Human Sundial (Analemmatic Sundial)

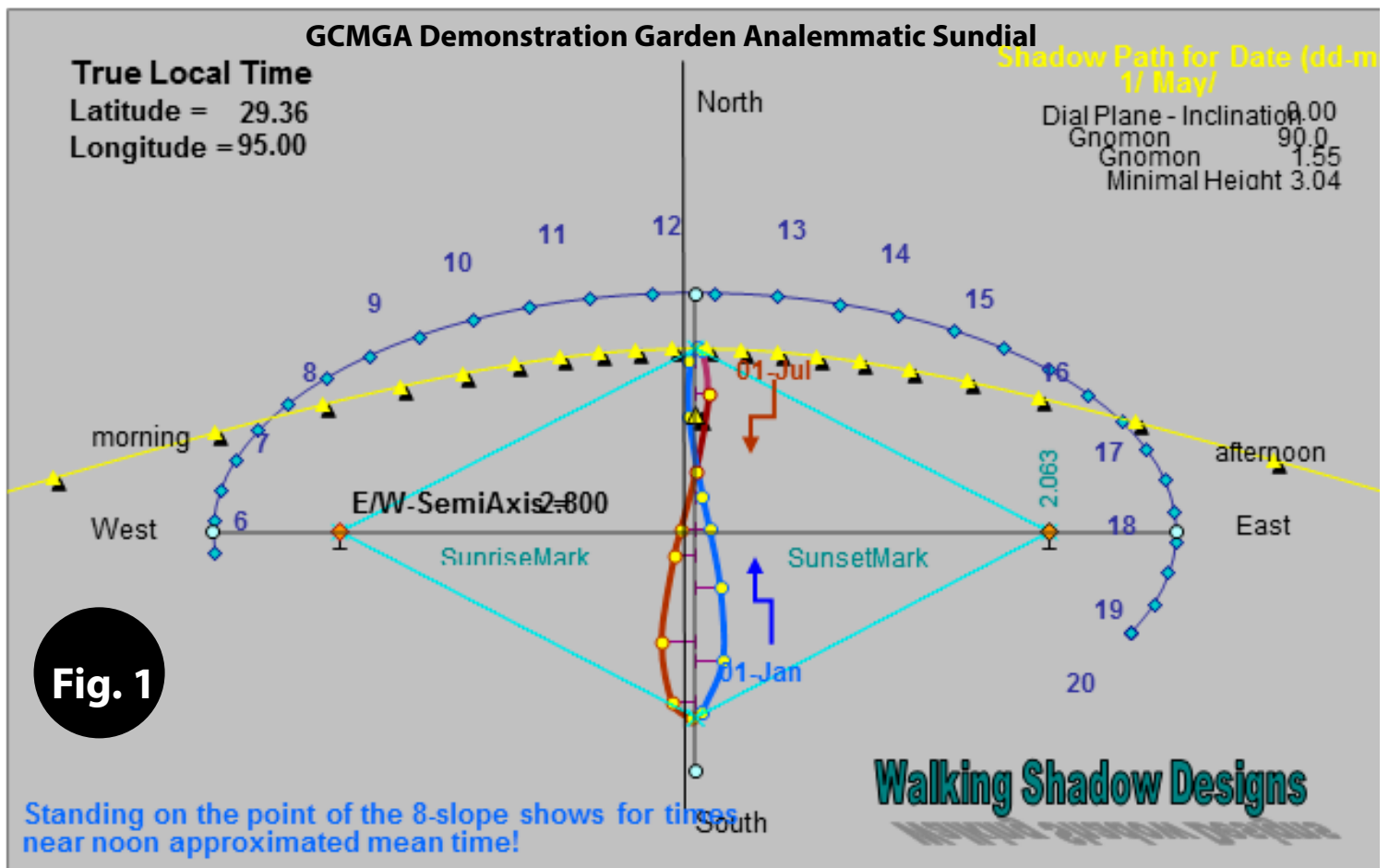
I've always had a fascination with one of the most ancient and oldest of scientific instruments—the sundial. Although sundials have been in constant use throughout centuries, the increasing accuracy of mechanical timepieces, the adoption of Standard Time and today's technological advances have caused a decline in their regular use. Most are now found in museums, parks and as decorative pieces in gardens and landscapes. There are different forms of sundials. The traditional more common sundial found in parks and gardens is one where the shadow is cast by a triangular shaped wedge. An analemmatic sundial is a horizontal sundial where the shadow-casting object, known as a gnomon, is vertical and is moved depending on the date, or to be more accurate, depending on the declination of the sun on a given day. Analemmatic sundials are often designed with a human as the gnomon. If the dial/ellipse on the ground is large enough the shadow can be cast by a person. The analemma effect measures how the sun's apparent location and the shadows change over the course of the year. Since the gnomon is not fixed and must change position daily to accurately indicate time of day, there are no hour lines on the dial and the time of day is read only on the ellipse. As with most sundials, analemmatic sundials mark solar time rather than clock time. An analemmatic sundial is completely defined by

- The size of its ellipse (chosen by the designer).
- The latitude of its location (determines the location of the hour markers on the ellipse).
- The declination of the sun (determines the daily gnomon position).

Analemmatic dials are dials with horizontal dial plates and vertical gnomons. The analemmatic sundial consists of a dial and a scale of dates. The shape of the dial is an ellipse, where the short axis is aligned North-South and the long axis is aligned East-West and depends on geographical coordinates. The noon hour line points true North (not compass North), whereas the hour lines for 6 am and 6 pm point due West and East. The hours are arranged in an elliptical shape and the gnomons are moveable so the time can be read accurately throughout the year.

Setting up the human sundial requires knowing your exact latitude and longitude, if you are North or South of the equator and East or West of the prime meridian, your time zone (how many hours plus or minus Greenwich mean time) and whether you're currently on daylight savings time. It's important that the location of your sundial is level. Then you need to find true North. Use solar time (solar noon) to pinpoint true north. Don't use North on a compass—it points to magnetic north which is not the same as true north.

continued on page 7



Once you have a true North/South line set up, you can begin setting up the sundial. There are lots of resources on the internet to help you get the measurements correct for the layout design. The math required to calculate setting up this sundial is complicated, so I used the spreadsheet at this website which does all the work after you plug in the required data. For this example, I used our Galveston County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden coordinates, and used May 1, 2016 for the shadow path date (although any date can work) <http://web.utanet.at/sondereh/analem22.zip> Once you plug in the required data the spreadsheet creates a “layout” and it’s shown on the “layout” page of the excel workbook. See Figure 1 on previous page to see what it looks like for our demonstration garden.



Terry Hershey Park, Houston, TX

This sundial is formed by a set of stone slabs set into the ground, each slab representing an hour of the day. Facing this semi-circle is a central paving slab aligned North to South, on which the months of the year are marked.



The sundial on the left is formed by a set of stone slabs set into the ground, each slab representing an hour of the day. Facing this semi-circle is a central paving slab aligned North to South, on which the months of the year are marked. The sundial on the right is the Circle of Peach Earth clock in Vermont where they are using a plywood version of the clock to test it before granite is set in place for the operational dial. The gnomon is raising her arms to better show her shadow.

Special thanks to Mr. Nick Mitchell, Middle School Associate Principal of the American School of Doha, who allowed me to use his spreadsheet to develop the GCMG Analemmatic Sundial and publish the results in our newsletter.

References:

<https://plus.maths.org/content/analemmatic-sundials-how-build-one-and-why-they-work>

http://www.mysundial.ca/tsp/analemmatic_sundial.html

<http://analemmatic.sourceforge.net/cgi-bin/sundial.pl>



By Nancy Schwartz
MG Intern (Class of 2016)

a MG intern's experience

Problem Solving 101

Well, there I was at the Galveston County Extension Office in Carbine Park doing my Master Gardener Intern office orientation in mid-April, when along came Dr. Johnson holding a branch from a recently pruned crape myrtle. He challenged my partners and me to identify a “growth” on the branch itself. Although I tried to hide behind everyone else, I was forced to give an answer which turned out to be, of course, incorrect. As everyone else had prior obligations, I eventually found myself on my own, wishing I had somewhere else to be. I felt fairly confident, however, since I believed that I could find an answer to anything, given enough time. I was WRONG. I floundered around on Google trying to find out what this “pest” could possibly be. Dr. Johnson finally took mercy on me and told me that it was an egg case (technically known as an ootheca) laid by a female praying mantis.

So, what’s the moral (or morals) of this story?

1. **Expand your mind to ponder everything you’ve learned in class when you are looking for an answer.** I assumed that this “thing” was a pest. My thought processes were so narrow; I never even considered beneficial insects, even though Dr. Johnson had recently given a talk on beneficials. I would probably still be sitting in front of that computer trying to find an answer to the wrong question.
2. **Don’t depend on the Internet to solve all your problems.** As Dr. Johnson stated: “you can’t find everything on Google.” I was in the MG Library among a variety of the best information I could possibly have access to, yet I was sitting in front of the computer without ever getting up and expanding my search to all the office materials around me.
3. **When you’re absolutely stumped, don’t hesitate to ask a fellow Master Gardener for help, and listen carefully to his or her answer.** A few veteran MG’s gave me some hints, but I was too dense to catch on to what they were trying to say.
4. **Always remember the proper response taught to us over and over in the Master Gardener Training Course we just completed:** When you do not know the correct answer, do not BS the customer; just tell them upfront that you “are not sure what the answer is but [you] will do [your] best to find out the right answer and get back with [them]!” I now know that Dr. Johnson would have let me off the hook for the time being but would still expect a follow up answer!
5. **Set aside some time to carefully read the information already available on the Galveston County Master Gardener website** developed by County Masters for home gardeners. There is the webpage titled “Problem Solver Guides for Gardeners” as well as a webpage titled “Beneficials in the Garden & Landscape.”

The following information was obtained from the “Beneficials in the Garden & Landscape” webpage on the praying mantis (<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/beneficials/index.htm>).



Nancy Schwartz (background) inspecting praying mantis egg case

A praying mantis begins its life in an egg case of up to 300 eggs. The Carolina mantis (*Stagmomantis carolina*) commonly occurs in Texas. Carolina mantis females encase their eggs in a frothy secretion that hardens into a foam-like substance. Color varies from tan to white on top with darker sides. Look for them on twigs, vines and even under eaves of buildings.

The life cycle of a praying mantis involves simple metamorphosis whereas each egg hatches into a nymph (a wingless immature insect that resembles its parents). Nymphs immediately begin to hunt and eat small prey. An immature individual may go through as many as twelve instars before it reaches adulthood.

While they consume pests such as flies, crickets, moths and mosquitoes, they also devour other beneficial insects, including each other.

Even though the praying mantis may not be the perfect garden angel its reputation implies, it is one of the tools nature uses to maintain that ecological balance required for responsible, successful gardening.

I have to say that on my MG Intern Office Orientation Day in April, I learned so much more than what a praying mantis egg case looks like. I will now analyze gardening problems presented by home gardeners with a more discerning approach! (Definition of discerning: having or showing deep understanding and intelligent application of knowledge.) Lesson learned!



Using Pesticides in the Garden and Landscape



By Rod Mize
MG 2012

By Susan Meads-Leahy
MG 2014

MG Herman Auer, GCMGA Vice President for Educational programs, asked me to develop a PowerPoint presentation on Chemicals for a Master Gardener Program. In a moment of weakness, I agreed. After my 2012 Master Gardener Graduation I started working in the orchard area of the MG Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park and saw the need for weed control. Since then I have committed myself to trying to provide for weed control for the entire garden area; I have been using Roundup or similar herbicides with glyphosate as the active ingredient to do the job. Perhaps seeing me work with herbicides gave Herman the idea that I knew something about them.

My presentation is based on the chemicals used by the general public in and around their home and garden. There is nothing more boring than CHEMICALS to talk about unless one is a chemist. So I elected to touch on the wide variety of products that are in the market place—not discussing the best or the worst products; but letting the public know some of the products that are available.

Pesticides, including herbicides, fungicides and miticides, were the general topics of discussion. I wanted to emphasize the importance of reading, understanding and following the directions provided on the label of every pesticide.

I have extensive experience in use of similar chemicals in large-scale agriculture and ranching. I discussed many of my experiences at length. These relate to personal and environmental safety. I also discussed when why and how some of these products came about for use to the general public.

If you choose to use a pesticide in or around your home, you are responsible for its proper use. This includes being familiar with safe handling and application procedures, the precautions described on the label, and how to dispose of pesticides properly.

By their nature, pesticides are hazardous and demand cautious handling. When they are used properly, however, pesticides improve the quality of our food supply, protect our health and increase our comfort with little risk to the environment and non-target living things. The most important consideration for the safe, effective use of pesticides is to follow all label directions and safety precautions.

When was the last time you actually read the label of an herbicide, insecticide or other pesticide you commonly use around the garden? You should carefully review the label to ensure you are in compliance with the directions.

Most of us as Galveston County Master Gardeners attended the class on Urban Use of Pesticides presented by Dr. Don Rennie as part of our training. You will recall Dr. Rennie's emphasis on safety. The following are a few important general safety precautions to follow when using any pesticide:

- Always read the label carefully. You must follow all safety precautions described on the product label to protect your health, the health of others and the environment.
- Generally, pesticide application should only be done when there are no children, pregnant women, elderly persons, pets or animals present.
- Never mix or combine different pesticides together unless the label instructions say to do so.
- Use a pesticide only for its intended purpose. For example, never use a pesticide indoors when it is intended for outdoor use.
- Do not apply pesticides directly to people, clothing or bedding, except when directed to do so on the label (such as when using personal insect repellents like mosquito sprays or creams).
- Children and pets should not be allowed to enter a pesticide-treated area until the applied

product is dry (or for a longer period if as specifically directed on the label).

- When using a pesticide for the control of home garden pests, be sure to wait until the specified amount of time has passed from the day of application to the day of harvest (known as days-to-harvest period) for each garden crop before harvesting. For example, the days-to-harvest period for applying malathion can vary from 3 days to 14 days depending on the type of vegetable treated). Again, be sure to read and follow the instructions on the label!

- Never smoke or eat while mixing or applying pesticides. You could easily carry traces of the pesticide from your hands to your mouth. Also, some pesticide products are flammable.

- Use only the amount directed, at the time and under the conditions specified.

- Always mix or dilute the pesticide outdoors or in a well-ventilated area. Only use the amount listed on the label. Twice the amount will NOT do twice the job. You could harm yourself, others, or the plant/area/pet you are trying to protect.

- Measure the pesticide carefully. Never use the same measuring cups or spoons that you use in the kitchen. This has happened.

- Keep children, pets (including birds and fish), and toys (including pet toys) away from areas where you mix and apply pesticides for at least the length of time required on the label. If no time is listed on the label, wait until the

pesticide has dried before reentering the area.

- Indoors or outdoors, never put bait for insects or rats, mice, and other rodents where small children or pets can reach it. Pesticides that are formulated as baits (containing a feed attractant) are still pesticides.

- Consider selective (as opposed to broad-spectrum) insecticides, with a limited range of target pests, to avoid harm to non-target organisms.

- Never put pesticides into food containers, such as empty soft drink or milk bottles. There are reported instances of children being poisoned from drinking containers that appear to be a soda bottle but contained stored pesticide. Keep pesticides in their original containers—ones that clearly identify the contents. Refasten all child-proof caps tightly.

- If a spill occurs, clean it up promptly. Don't wash it away. Instead, sprinkle the spill with sawdust, vermiculite, or kitty litter. Sweep it into a plastic garbage bag, and dispose of it as directed on the pesticide product label. Cleanup materials that are contaminated with a pesticide must be handled as pesticide.

- Drift is the movement of pesticides away from the target area or plants. You should always follow all label directions for both the pesticide and application equipment to prevent drift. Never apply pesticides outdoors on a windy day.

- Dispose of Containers Properly. Follow the direction for proper disposal as provided on the pesticide label.





Just do it!

Rose Hybridization

by John Jons
MG 2003

I have been trying to grow roses for some time and I have a preference for show quality hybrid tea roses and miniatures with the hybrid tea form. Like many rose enthusiasts, I had or I really should say that I have, too many roses that seemed to require too much care. This made me realize about ten years ago that to simplify my time-consuming rose habit, I need to just grow hybrid tea roses that are hardy, minimal-to-no care, highly-to-totally disease resistant, Earth-Kind™, and show quality. Unfortunately, there were no such hybrid tea roses that met these criteria which would grow in my part of the country—in the deep, hot, humid Southeast Texas region between Houston and Galveston.

So about ten years ago, I decided to give rose hybridization a try to see if I could breed a hardy show quality hybrid tea rose. I joined the RHA (Rose Hybridizers Association), purchased the hybridization booklets from the RHA, attended a couple of rose convention hybridizing meetings and seminars, read everything I could on hybridizing roses, re-learned genetics, familiarized myself with rose chromosome ploidy, considered cell totipotency and even read the biographies of some of the great rose hybridizers. I was also very fortunate to have some fellow local rosarians, members of the HRS (Houston Rose Society), who had successfully hybridized roses, freely share their experiences on the hybridization process. Plus, there was Jack Walters, of Kimbrew-Walters Roses, who encouraged me and shared with me his experiences and thoughts on rose hybridization.

First, I established my hybridization objective: to breed a hardy, show quality hybrid tea. My definition of a “hardy, show quality hybrid tea” was a rose that was continuously blooming with multiple petals, had a high degree of disease resistance and required minimal care, a rose that could easily qualify for the Earth-Kind™ rose designation, and even win the Queen, King or Emperor of Show. I then purchased additional (for which I had no room left in my garden) proven, easy to grow and reportedly somewhat disease resistant, and highly rated show quality hybrid teas; some (more) Earth-Kind™ roses; and a few other roses that appeared to be highly disease resistant. All these roses also had to be proven quite fertile, as judged by my observing the rose hips on the particular variety. My rose hybridizing “strategy” was to just simply crossbreed show quality hybrid teas with the easy to grow, minimal care and disease resistant roses, then plant the seeds and let nature select those seedlings that would survive. I would only water and lightly fertilize the seedlings and not spray them with any fungicide or insecticide. Hopefully, in a short period of time, possibly within the year or maybe two, I would end up with hardy, show quality hybrid teas.

I then proceeded to “just do it.” Starting in early February (as I live in South Texas), I began to prune my selected breeding roses in a logically timed sequence, so that I would get blooms produced at a variety of times in order to facilitate my well-thought-out plans for rose hybridizing. I think I did my first pollination in early March and continued until around June. Every day, before and after work, I prudently identified roses ready to breed and roses with pollen ready to pollinate. I used to pollinate with another bloom method in which I took one bloom and “painted” its pollen on another bloom. All my pollinations were well-documented and individually identified with numbered plastic tags. In hindsight, I realized how much time and effort this activity took! By June (I was tired of doing this) and for the next four months my rose bushes looked like decorated Christmas trees with all the plastic breeding identification tags hanging from them. As the hips ripened, just before they fell off the bush or after they fell off the bush, I harvested them and carefully stored them in the refrigerator. I also noted that the garden elves stole a number of my best hips with the most potential. In October, I spent all of one day delicately removing the seeds from the hips. I then soaked them for 24 hours in a fungicide and spent all the next day planting them in a



HOW TO DO IT - Take one bloom.

Continued on Page 11

Rose Hybridization continued



..... and paint its pollen on another bloom.

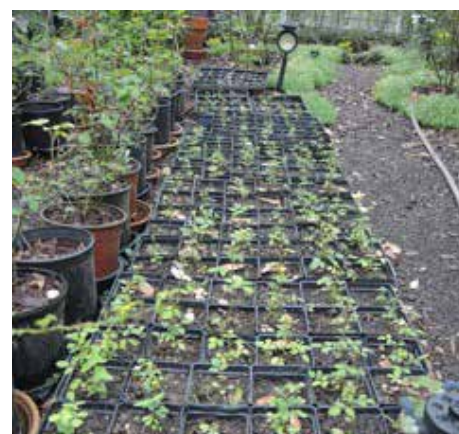
balanced, sterilized potting soil and sharp sand mix. I think I planted over 600 seeds. I then put the trays with the planted seeds in a shady area in my backyard and waited patiently (well, not that patiently) for my seeds to germinate and produce my hardy show quality hybrid teas. Over the next three months, seedlings emerged from the soil at a random rate. When the temperature started continuously getting about 50° F. or above (in late February), all germination appeared to stop and the weeds took over the seedling flats. I then discovered the fact that rose seed germination is a low percentage effort. At this point in time in hybridizing experience, I was starting to wonder if all the time and effort spent meticulously hybridizing before and after work and on weekends, learning details of rose hybridizing, documenting all the crossings and the extra effort required for maintaining the health of the breeding roses was really worth it? But from a gardener's and, in particular, a rosarian's perspective, to see the little seedlings grow in their own unique way and produce their first blooms and then to watch the seedlings and the blooms mature is well worth it. Plus, as I observed the emerging and growing seedlings, I noticed some weird stuff, like seedlings with strange leaves, foliage colors, bloom sizes and variations and colors, growth patterns and nature using some creative ways to cull the weaker plants. I found all this very interesting.

Somewhat disappointed that I had not achieved my objective of producing a hardy, show quality hybrid tea rose in my first year of hybridizing, I decided that in the future I would not put all the (perceived too much extra) time and effort into hybridizing roses. The following year, in early spring and upon seeing the first bloom of the season, I could not resist again "just doing it" (hybridizing).

After many efforts and for several years, I finally was able to propagate some of my roses. I got a bit more ambitious and planted some of my roses in the Galveston County Master Gardener rose garden demonstration beds in Carbide Park in La Marque, Texas, and observed them for a couple of years to see if their no-care hardiness would persist, and it did. I then contemplated submitting some of my roses for trial in the ARS Trial Grounds in Shreveport, LA, and again decided to "just do it." It took a couple of years, but I managed to propagate four to six plants of each of some of my no-care rose varieties and deliver them to Shreveport, LA. After about a year, I received a much-appreciated objective ARS evaluation of my seedlings. Just as important, I was happy that my roses were still alive and capable of receiving a credible evaluation.

It's hard to describe the personal satisfaction you get as a gardener or a rosarian when you see your little rose seedlings produce their first flowers and when you see a rose that you have hybridized successfully survive years of neglect and still produce blooms that others admire, even though it's not a hardy, show quality hybrid tea and probably will not win Queen, King or President of Show. There's another kind of personal satisfaction that I experienced: I can't remember how many rose seedlings I have given away to people who have subsequently named those roses after loved ones, maybe grandchildren, and they continue to provide me with updates on the rose as though it was a family member and thank me for these roses.

Just this past weekend, I was talking about roses with a fellow rosarian who has a long list of show winning credentials. He shared with me his excitement about four seedlings he had growing from a hip that he had just randomly picked and then planted the seeds. He was thinking of starting to try rose hybridizing. Our discussion then instantly and naturally took a laser sharp focus upon rose hybridizing. Our conversation dug deeply into all the rose hybridization technicalities, from genetics to fertility issues and rose hybridization techniques, from stratification to chemical amendments, and after seeing the confused and panic look on his face, I suggested to him "just do it!"



This year's rose seedlings taking care of themselves.

MG Best Shots



Pineapple Guava (*Feijoa sellowiana*)



Abutilon Chinese Lantern



Purple Shield (*Strobilanthes dyeranus*)



Shrimp Plant (*Justicia bradegeana*)



Photos by Elayne Kouzounis

Esperanza or Yellow Bells (*Tecoma stans* var. *angustata*)



Lion's Tail (*Leonotis leonurus*)

...and Narrative

See What Is Blooming in My Garden!

You can look for these plants to be blooming in your garden in the months of May and June, and some even until frost and beyond: *Tecoma Stans* (Gold Star) (*Esperanza* or Yellow Bells), Chinese Lantern (*Abutilon*) (*Physalis alkekengi*) (*franchetii*), Pineapple Guava (*Feijoa sellowiana*), Persian Shield (*Strobilanthes dyeranus*), Lions Tail, and Shrimp Plant (*Justicia brandegeana*). Here is the point you should never miss.

Though April showers may come your way, They BRING the FLOWERS that bloom in MAY.

So if it's raining, have no regrets, Because it isn't raining rain, you know. It's raining violets.

Pineapple Guava (*Feijoa sellowiana*) is a tender shrub for the lower South and a wonderfully easy shrub for the Gulf Coast area. Its greyish decorative leaves and white/pink/red flowers are complemented by bright, fleshy, edible fruit and interesting rough gray to salmon-colored bark. The small delicious fruit makes a nice jam. If you prune all but the main stem in young plants they will grow tree-like to 15-18 feet. Left to itself it forms a broad shrub about 8 feet tall.

You will find the Pineapple Guava in my garden on the north side of our home. It is in an area that gets full sun and gets excellent surface-water drainage. The air circulation completely encircles the shrub. The very first bloom opened the end of April and will continue blooming well into June, that is, unless the birds arrive. The flower is magnificent, striking, and most unusual; it is white/pink with bright red stamens. I enjoy floating the flowers and adding them into my salads and fruit dishes. Since I enjoy attracting hummingbirds to my garden, this plant does attract them and is a must have, in my opinion. There have been no insect or disease problems in the 30 plus years we have enjoyed this shrub. We have not fertilized it on a regular basis and have never given any protection to it in the winter. After it blooms, I do trim it to manage its height. If this shrub is container-grown, it can be planted anytime of the year and should be readily available for you in the nurseries.

Chinese Lantern (*Physalis alkekengi*) is such an amazing plant and very special to me as I received it from one of my very close friends when she hosted a luncheon for her mother. In the arrangements were the Chinese lantern plants, and, when I was asked if there was a way it could be rooted, my answer was YES, with my fingers crossed. I brought it home and put it in a clear glass jelly jar and in three months it started to root, which was so exciting to me. It is different; it swings as it hangs, and I love it as an espalier on my patio wall that is protected on three sides and faces north. To make the plant follow my plan I pinch out the terminal buds that would take the plant in the direction I do not want. That was nine years ago. The blooming season is usually April through June although mine has bloomed throughout the winter, possibly from the fact that it is protected on three sides. The plant needs six to eight hours of sunlight and is in the Mallow family. It is a partially evergreen shrub and can grow up to six feet tall. I do fertilize with MicroLife Liquid Organics.

Purple Shield (*Strobilanthes dyeranus*) This is one of the most spectacular colorful foliage plants we can use. Mine is in the shade hidden behind my Bay Laurel Bush and peaks out from both sides of the Bay Laurel with its beautiful vivid purple foliage. It has done well even through the winter in my garden as it is up against a brick wall that gives off heat and helps to protect the plant in colder weather. It is on the northeast side of our home and the sun shines on it most of the day. This is a relatively new plant in my garden and one I am at this time trying to propagate. I am so glad it seems happy. In the month of May it bloomed for the very first time. Even though the blooms are non-descriptive, tiny violet purple and cone-shaped, I was a happy gardener, seeing this for the first time. This plant loves heat, humidity, and SHADE. The eight-ten inch long leaves are intense purple with silver markings. The colors fade when night temperatures drop below 50 degrees. It needs organic, well-drained soil.

Shrimp Plant (*Justicia brandegeana*) is a perennial plant, sometimes evergreen with protection. Leaves are bright green and somewhat oval. It usually grows to a maximum of three feet, but is normally two feet tall or less. The flowers are white with dark spots and generally not attractive. The colorful nature of this plant comes from the bronze-colored bracts that surround the flowers, causing a drooping appearance somewhat resembling a shrimp's profile from which comes the common name. The blooms last for months. This plant needs full sun to partial shade in a well-drained soil, which should be kept evenly moist. While small, the plants should be tip-pruned frequently to induce side branching and fuller plants. Do keep the old flowers removed. Occasionally infestations of whiteflies and mealybugs may occur but are not usually a problem. You can fertilize as often as necessary to keep the foliage color and growth rate good. I have my Shrimp Plant in the background, and in the forefront I have the obedient plant growing. The Shrimp Plant will do well in containers and in hanging baskets. The variety 'Chartreuse' has yellowish green bracts. My Shrimp Plant is in a protected corner of my patio where easterly sun shines on it most of the day. You can be sure if your Shrimp Plant has poor light and worn out soil it will produce a leggy weak growing plant. You can propagate it by stem cuttings.

Esperanza or Yellow Bells (*Tecoma stans* var. *angustata*) is a beautiful native shrub. The flowers are golden yellow, trumpet-shaped clusters and provide nectar for our bees. The shiny, green foliage has toothed edges. My Esperanza is up against my patio north wall and it has never had any frost bite. It bears flowers from May through the fall. I water deeply once a week in the middle of the hot summer and sparingly the rest of the year and always in well-draining soil. The height is three-six feet and the same for the width. Yes, I do trim after the threat of freezing is over. The plant attracts hummingbirds and has seed pods that are quite long; you can remove the seed pods with no harm to your plant. I personally leave them alone. My plant gets the afternoon sun and is always happy. It will also do well in containers with careful water monitoring in the summer months. I do not feed it regularly, but fertilize it in the spring with ammonium sulfate.

Leonotis leonurus (Lion's Tail) is an eye catching, native plant. The bright orange flowers appear in late spring through the fall. The foliage is dark green about four inches long and narrow. The plant needs full sun and is drought tolerant. I prune it in early spring after the last frost and either trim almost to the ground or 1/3 to 1/2 as I do not want it to become very tall. It grows in a container on the west side of the house and I only water it when the leaves droop. This plant attracts bees and butterflies. When the flowers fade and dry, I remove the flowers and collect the seeds.



By Elayne Kouzounis
MG 1998



THE ISLAND GARDEN

Herbs—A Closer Look

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

By Jan Brick
MG 2001

Herb or spice? Herbs are the fresh and dried leaves of plants and are usually green in color. Spices are the flowers, fruit, bark, and roots of mostly tropical plants with more flavorful taste. They are generally brown to red to black in color. Some plants are used as both an herb and as a spice. An example of this is *Coriandrum sativum*—the leaves are the herb cilantro while the seed is the spice coriander.

Herbs are mentioned throughout the Bible and the study of herbs is well documented with the confirmation of herb gardens in the Middle Ages. Through time, herbs have been used to enhance the flavor of foods, for relief of illness and injury, and as a ward against evils and misfortune. On occasion, herbs have been used as a symbolic amendment in modifying behavior—for example borage was offered to those who needed courage while rosemary might be provided for memory loss.

There was a time when herbs were primarily available only in the warm months of the year and dried herbs were used at other times. However, producing herbs for consumption has become one of the fastest growing industries in agriculture and the United States alone produces about two hundred billion pounds of herbs a year. Growing herbs has become a favorite pastime among home gardeners as transplants are readily available at plant nurseries in the spring. Once started, clever gardeners can enjoy their own herbs throughout the year.

Most home gardeners are interested in culinary herbs so let's address those in this essay. Culinary herbs are used as flavoring; milder herbs impart a delicate flavor while the spicier herbs lend zest. The leaves and stems are used in small amounts so generally you will only need a few plants. The choices are endless so perhaps beginning with some of the most popular herbs already available at your local plant nurseries is the best bet.

If you know what you want or the intended uses, then you are ahead of the game. If this is your first time with an herb garden then select those that are known producers such as basil, cilantro, dill, mint, parsley and rosemary. Herbs prefer sun so find a sunny spot that gets at least six hours of sun a day (as the weather gets warmer some protection may be needed in the hottest part of the afternoon). Plant in a rich well-draining soil and remember that by and large herbs do not like to have wet feet. One suggestion might be to group them by water preference; rosemary, thyme and sage can tolerate drier conditions while basil, chives and parsley prefer to be kept moist.

Recently at the Moody Gardens Herb Fair, a number of lesser known herbs were offered for purchase and perhaps as a challenge for the more adventurous herb gardener. They included Bronze Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare* 'Rubrum') which is similar to common fennel but with bronzy-purple color stalks that may grow to six feet in height and breadth with yellow flower clusters and a sweet licorice flavor. The stalks and leaves are an excellent ad-

"The Skinny Gourmet" website suggests ways to ensure a successful herb garden by avoiding a few common mistakes:

- Grow seedlings rather than seed
- Start with basil (the perfect trainer herb)
- Water herbs a moderate amount often rather than once a week and provide a drain in pot
- Cut herbs early and often to assure a sturdy plant and a continued harvest
- Cut before flowers appear so plant will focus on growing leaves
- Fertilize using coffee grounds, egg shells or Miracle Gro

dition to salads and fish dishes—use the harvested seeds to flavor tomatoes, cucumbers, breads and Italian sausage. "Try combining the leaves of bronze fennel with French tarragon for an extra kick. French tarragon has a spicy taste that fennel does not but both have the licorice flavor." A tasty fennel tea can be made with the leaves and seeds; milk steeped with bronze fennel can be used to make ice cream or added to baked goods. Do not plant fennel near dill plants as they will crossbreed and the resulting plant will have a strange flavor—do not fertilize bronze fennel as it will lose the fragrant oil taste and licorice flavor.

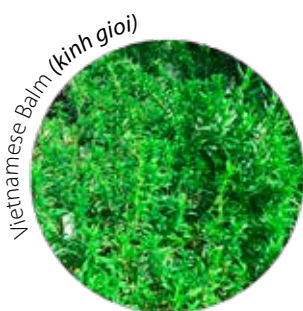
Another interesting offering was Vietnamese Balm (*kinh gioi*), an herb with brilliant green leaves that feature serrated edges. *Kinh gioi* hails from South East Asia; it has a lemon scented flavor with a suggestion of mint. Eat raw in soup and meat dishes—nice as a tea—grown from seed or cuttings of mature stems in water or soil.

Also on sale were the herbs, borage and savory. Borage (*Borago officinalis*) grows to three feet in full sun or part shade, has gray-green leaves and showcases star shaped blue blooms. The borage leaves lend a cucumber taste to salads and the blooms can be candied for use in iced drinks. Borage is utilized extensively in medicine and in the manufacture of skin care products.

The flavor of savory (*Satureja hortensis*) can be described as salty, spicy or piquant. Savory "imparts a delicious taste to almost any dish" and is enjoyed primarily in soups and stews or with meats and vegetables. Often referred to as the "bean herb," as it is especially delightful added to string beans, lima beans, navy beans and all types of broad beans. Savory can also be employed as an agreeable substitute for salt in low sodium diets.

On occasion, you may discover that pests have visited your herb garden in the form of aphids, mites, thrips or others. Herbs can tolerate a few callers but with proper care and maintenance you should not encounter a major disaster. Cut your herbs often and keep the area around them free from fallen or rotting foliage.

You also may come across various types of larvae helping themselves to your harvest. Almost all butterflies enjoy herbs—particularly dill and fennel, both as a nectar source and as a host plant. Let your thyme produce blossoms to create another treat for the swallowtail butterflies and honeybees. Several varieties of butterflies relish mint as a nectar source—the western tiger swallowtail, the anise swallowtail and the pale swallowtail. Mints are also a favorite of painted ladies, red admirals and gray hairstreak butterflies. Plant herbs for the butterflies—Double your pleasure!



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* newspaper.)



By Donna J. Ward
MG 1996

Darn it—where did I put that recipe for squirrel stew? I had it about this time last year, and the critters are at it again. In the last 4 days we have lost 16 cherry tomatoes from the one lonely “Husky” tomato plant. How do I know it's been 16? Because the thieves take one bite and drop the rest on the deck or on the picnic table. I wouldn't get so angry if they ate the whole thing, but their wastefulness makes me furious. Every year I say the same thing —“I give up on tomatoes”—but every year I try all over again. Oh well, hope springs eternal.

But the wax beans are ‘beaning’ as fast as we can keep up with them, and soon the poblano peppers will be big enough to stuff with a zesty beef and rice mixture. I prefer to stuff a spicy poblano rather than a wimpy green bell. I might even get ambitious and make chili rellenos. The tomato, beans and peppers are planted in large terra cotta pots on the sunny deck, and watered from a hose practically every day unless Mother Nature does it for us. Remember that nutrients leach out of a pot-planted garden, but time-release fertilizers are a ‘pot’ farmer's best friend.

Don't forget that you fertilized the azaleas the end of March and the end of April—so do it again the end of May. Don't fertilize past the 1st of June. If you neglected to prune them right after they bloomed—nevermind—leave well enough alone. Good chance that pruning now could remove any bloom wood that's forming, and the curtain won't go up on next spring's performance. But it's never too late to mulch and acidify the azalea bed.

The soil is warm enough for a few caladium bulbs. They like a loamy, rich soil that's been amended with a little peat moss. Did you know that you can encourage them to produce larger leaves? If you take a sharp paring knife and remove the smaller ‘eyes’ from the bulb and leave just a few larger ones, those leaves will increase dramatically in size. If you've ever removed the eyes from a potato—you're ahead of the game— it's the same procedure. Timing is right to put in other bulbs such as gladiolus, lycoris, dahlia, zephyranthes (rain lilies) and maybe a few rhizomes of iris and cannas.

My grandma never had an aphid on her roses. She regularly dumped her dishwater over the bushes. Our kitchen chores have modernized considerably since then, and a hard spray from the water hose will remove aphids; they're too dumb to climb back up. If you miss a few, not to worry as they are a favorite meal of lady bugs. Speaking of roses, prune your climbers as they finish blooming.

Many of us, especially in the older areas of our city have some shady spots in our gardens. One of my favorites to lend some color to those places—impatiens. They just keep on blooming without much attention other than watering and don't need to be dead-headed. Ferns, begonias, wood violets and torenia enjoy a shady setting along side those impatiens. But if you have a sunny spot—lantana, celosia, purslane and copper plants are pretty heat-tolerant. If you keep the copper plants pinched back they will bush out and make a great backdrop for the shorter bloomers. Coral vine is ideal for a sun-baked fence, and requires very little attention from the gardener-in-charge.

Just because squirrels are chowing down on the tomatoes, doesn't mean that veggie gardening has to come to a halt. Plant some okra; it loves the warm weather and the seeds won't even germinate until the soil has warmed sufficiently. I may have to buy canned tomatoes if I want to make that pot of shrimp and okra gumbo. Can't help but wonder how many stolen tomatoes I didn't find? . . .



The wax beans are ‘beaning’ as fast as we can keep up with them



Photos by Donna Ward

Add some color to your shady areas with impatiens.



a tribute to Ken Steblein

Earth Day Celebration

By Mary Lou Kelso
MG 2000

Recently we lost one of our favorite Master Gardeners, Ken Steblein. We will miss his wisdom, his smiles and friendship, and his telling us to have a "Spectacular" day! We will also remember what he taught us. In honor and in memory of Ken let us take responsibility to continue to take care of our earth.

UTMB Earth Day Celebration was held Friday, April 22 in the plaza in front of the Moody Medical Library Building on the UTMB campus. It is always a fun day to have so many UTMB employees stop at the Master Gardener table with questions and also just wanting to pick up our nice repertoire of handouts!

I have known Ken Steblein since 1993 with our taking the first (and only) Master Composter class that was offered in Galveston. Actually, Dr. Johnson was also a participant with us. It was many years after that, I found Ken was instrumental in getting the class funded with securing a grant. Prior to Earth Day each year, Ken would get in touch with me and assign something special he wanted me to help him with on event day. I have continued the tradition for so many years with my deceased husband, Horace, being at UTMB for over 34 years!

Most recently at noon, employees and guests are treated to a City dignitary reading a proclamation honoring UTMB Earth Day and then it leads into a "fashion show" with employees modeling outfits they made totally from recycled items relative to working at UTMB. While that all took place again this year, there was a very moving presentation from Ken's supervisor, Neal Cooper, expressing his sadness with Ken's passing last week.

Ken's wife Colleen and sons Mark and Andrew were present. The Department also put in place a beautiful throw commemorating all the "happy" times with Ken and UTMB Earth Day in years past. After the presentation Colleen and her sons came with me to visit our Master Gardener booth before they departed.

Presentation by Neal Cooper

24 years ago, a man had a dream to cultivate Sustainable Thinking and initiatives on our campus. Under this man's vision and fueled by his passion, UTMB's Earth Day celebration began with only a couple of tables in the main hall way of the John Sealy Towers, and presented the opportunity to give away free plants, to promote the recycling program on campus, and to encourage the concepts of responsible, ecological living. By 1995 UTMB held the first outside event here in the Moody Library Plaza area called "Campus Pride," which encouraged employees to pick up litter as they walk across campus. By the late 90's UTMB added "Energy Conservation" to the Green Initiatives and adopted our first slogan: "Saving Energy Makes Cents." In 2000, UTMB reached out to the local schools and community to further promote education of conservation principles by sponsoring the first official Earth Day poster contest with the theme "Healthy People Healthy Planet." In 2005 UTMB won the Governors Environmental Excellence Award for our Resource Conservation Initiatives. Following Hurricane Ike in 2008, volunteers from UTMB under Ken's direction, planted trees on campus as part of the Earth Day activities. By 2010, the Recycle Style Show had become a regular—a VERY popular feature at UTMB's Earth Day festivities. Today, we continue the celebration which began 24 years ago through one man's vision: Ken Steblein. Today, we are reaching further and doing more to promote Sustainable Living principles throughout the area. Because of Ken's vision, each year, more and more suppliers, an Earth Day leadership committee of people from across the Institution, corporate contributors, and a host of volunteers throughout the campus come together to increase awareness of one single thought: Together we really can work wonders for our environment and for future generations. This year marks the 24th anniversary of Ken's vision and greatest joy—UTMB's Earth Day celebration. In recent years Ken has fought a valiant fight against cancer. Unfortunately, last week, Ken lost that battle. His widow Colleen, and two of their sons Andrew and Mark have joined us today as we take a moment to express our sincerest appreciation to the man who started it all. His passion for the environment and Sustainable Living is unmatched. Ken, on behalf of UTMB and the Sustainability Department, thank you for your hard work, your dedication, your dream, and the commitment necessary to making all of this a reality for generations to come.



L to R, Daniel Marsh, Sr. Safety Specialist at UTMB, Colleen Steblein, Mary Lou Kelso and in the back, sons Andrew and Mark Steblein



Commemorative Throw



The Recycle Style Show



By Susan Meads-Leahy
MG 2014

sharing his insight and wisdom

Meet a Master Gardener Henry Harrison

"Gardening is adjunct to life. Find your place and how you fit into the whole of life. Bring your 'A' game. Be a good steward, understand and fulfill your commitments. Speak with a true voice."

— Henry Harrison

One recent spring afternoon, Henry joined me in my backyard garden, sharing the insight and wisdom he has gained since becoming a Master Gardener. Henry's philosophy is simple but powerful; everyone accepted into the Master Gardener Program is rich in life experience, smart, and everyone has something to offer. For Henry, the title of Master Gardener meant embracing a new chapter in his life, and he believes no matter where or who you have been in the past, it is imperative to let go of labels such as "attorney," "CEO of a company," etc. As Master Gardeners, we need to embrace new roles and challenges we face in our journey to be successful.

Henry was instrumental in the rebuilding of a local church after Hurricane Ike and noticed the church had a vacant lot. While in conversation with the pastor they discussed the fate of the vacant lot, and an idea was born. The church granted permission and, with Henry's assistance, the lot ultimately went from having the grass mowed twice a month to a community garden.

Growing up in an urban setting, Henry really had little interest in gardening and had no idea how or where to get started. Henry decided the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office would be a resource to help him get started. While there he picked up several informational flyers and met Laura Bellmore who told him about the Master Gardener Program. Henry decided the program could be the right fit for him, so he filled out the application. Once accepted, Henry started doing a lot of "homework" to prepare for the classes.

Once completing class hours, Henry knew he would also need to complete the requisite volunteer hours to graduate. Willie David soon started calling Henry to encourage him to start fulfilling his volunteer hours at the Demonstration Garden but Henry was hesitant. Willie began calling him weekly encouraging Henry to join him at the garden if for no other reason than to work a little so he could enjoy the fabulous noon meal put on by our Kitchen Crew! That being the motivation that Henry needed, he decided the next week on Thursday would be his start day.

On Henry's first day at the Gardens, he was walking around, not really sure what to do when Julie Cartmill asked him if he could assist in the building of additional raised beds. Henry said his first reaction was that he didn't join this group to come and do what he had been doing all his life; however, with Julie's encouragement and much appreciated guidance he came to understand that his purpose was to help build the things needed in the demonstration gardens so he could enjoy gardening at his leisure.

With the knowledge Henry obtained through the course of becoming a Master Gardener, he was able to help other Master Gardeners transform the vision into an even more beautiful Demonstration Garden. This transformation opened Henry's eyes to the importance of gardening. He felt it opened a window for him and feels as though gardening can be a magnet for people. Backgrounds have no precedence in the garden as everyone has to eat and they will all work for good food!

Commitment is another very important part of being a Master Gardener. Soon after finding his "place" in the garden he realized how important it was to be present and accounted for when joining a team effort for a project. Having watched others take on a leadership role while getting projects off the ground, it didn't take him long to understand once you have an established group committed, a project can take the natural progression of a leader being able to step back, if necessary, and know his team will keep the ball rolling without having to worry.

The old adage "Gardening is good for the soul" applies to Henry as he feels gardening is therapeutic for him. Henry also believes he has learned patience, the importance of every leaf and every grain of soil, how to be a good steward, how things fit together. He believes we are all different and should strive NOT to fit into a stereotypical "mold."

Henry was ambivalent with his first impression of Dr. Johnson, but after observing him over the class course, he concluded that he was extremely knowledgeable, wise, and could see the overall picture and its many facets of the Master Gardener and other programs. This vast amount of knowledge is something we cannot begin to comprehend; therefore, old as well as new Master Gardeners should never come into the garden thinking they have a better philosophy or know more than Dr. Johnson, our President or any other Master Gardener. We should all approach our volunteer efforts by encouraging communication with one another and realize we are all an integral part to achieving the goals of the many.

My time with Henry Harrison was one of joy and education. This gentleman is wise beyond his years, and his message can teach us many things if we are willing to listen. Don't pass up the opportunity to have a chat with Henry; I'll never forget it-



Photos by Tom Fountain

Henry at work at the Demo Garden





By Barbra Markey
MG 2013



By Henry Harrison
MG 2011

the language of garden tools

Tool Primer

"A hoe is an ancient and versatile agricultural tool used to control weeds, clear soil, and harvest root crops."

The hoe could be one of the most underutilized implements in a gardener's tool shed. Some think the hoe is used only for weed removal—and, in fact, it is used to remove those pesky spring weeds we all experience. Hoes also eliminate the need to sit on the ground or bend over a flower bed or vegetable garden to remove weeds. In fact, hoes are very versatile and can be used for a variety of tasks. The instruments are basically used to work the top of soil to remove small weeds, but you also use them to prepare for planting and cultivation as well. The best garden hoe for you is the correct tool for the job; choose effectively and work efficiently. Before starting any job, be sure your tools are clean, sharp and in a good working order.

The regular or paddle hoe has a straight edge and is made from stamped steel. It does not sharpen well and almost immediately loses the edge because it is not formulated from tempered steel. Several are available at a big box store near you.

A weed hoe, sometimes called a scuffle or stirrup hoe, is likened to a saddle stirrup—hence the name. It is quickly becoming a desired tool as it moves quickly and efficiently down a garden row, thus giving one a feeling of accomplishment and task completed, and who doesn't want to check that box?

A grub hoe, also known as a grab hoe, has a heavy, broad blade, with a straight edge. The blade is set at a right angle to the handle and is used for digging through hard soil, sod and roots; it can be a great tool for trenching as well. The heads vary from 4"-6", and the blade shape allows you to "hoe" with a minimum of effort. This tool is a favorite among gardeners and is reasonably priced. Investigate carefully when choosing your grub hoe, and search for one that contains joints welded to the shaft with a 3/16" weld. Look for a hoe with a blade constructed from castoff agriculture disks used by big tractors. Not only are they considered "earth friendly", but are a terrific example of recycling.

Triangular hoes or pointed hoes are great for working in tight spots and easily getting under established plants. They sculpt the soil beautifully in your garden beds, make perfect rows, and provide a proficient way to create furrows for planting seeds.

Can't find what you want locally? The internet provides a plethora of gardening sites for your perusal.

Spring is here! There will never be a better time to take your new hoe for a spin in the garden.

"Behold, my friends, the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love." Sitting Bull.



May-June "Things To Do" Gardening Calendar Video



by Jenifer Leonpacher
MG 2010



by Gregory Werth
MG 2012



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



By Kaye Corey
MG 2001

Garden Clubs of the Bay Area

Texas Garden Clubs promotes the love of gardening, floral design, horticulture, civic responsibilities, landscaping, environmental concerns and garden therapy and encourages participation and support in educational programs for both the very young and advanced students. It is the purpose of this organization to preserve, protect and conserve the natural resources of this country and to maintain and enhance the beauty of our lands.

It has been my pleasure to visit with the very dedicated leaders of Garden Clubs in the Bay Area for this focus on garden clubs. I think the President of Nassau Bay Garden Club, Nancee Lynn's definition of the purposes of Garden Clubs was on target; to encourage interest in all phases of home gardening and to promote better horticulture and conservation practices while creating beauty for the enjoyment of all. Many of our Master Gardeners are members of these Garden Clubs and if this article sparks an interest in belonging to a local club, you will be enthusiastically welcomed.

These Garden Clubs are Federated, meaning they belong to the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. They are members of the Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. and the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Guidelines are set out for them by these organizations. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs meets on the second Friday of each month, September through May at White Oak Conference Center. There are 52 member clubs that come together to enjoy educational programs, workshops and share gardening interests. They can attend flower show schools in both design and horticulture or become Landscape Consultants through a partnership with Texas AgriLife. These clubs present Flower Shows in design and horticulture that should never be missed.

Dig 'N Design Garden Club, Seabrook, meets the second Thursday, 9:30 at the El Lago City Hall.

President Jane Copeland leads this very active 37-member club. They learn and work together conducting plant sales and garage sales to enable them to help support wildlife rehab, arbor day, the Galveston Bay Foundation, and Ronald McDonald House. Visit this friendly club to enjoy gardening programs and their social activities, jane.m.copeland@gmail.com

Frey Garden Club is a 13-member club meeting in member's homes on the second Wednesday at 10:00. President Christa Kaiser, kkaiser@sprynet.com, extends a welcome to their club located in the Sagemont area. This club maintains flower and meditation gardens at St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church.

Galveston Garden Club is not a federated club but is the foundation of Galveston historic gardening. Established in 1867, this 149-year-old club meets monthly at the Powhattan House.

Gardeners by the Bay, is a large 97-member garden club meeting in the Clear Lake Methodist Church on the first Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. The club's focus is teaching proven gardening practices and horticultural education to the general public by sponsoring community and school gardens. To fund their activities the Gardeners sponsor a large annual plant sale the first Wednesday in April. Contact President, Mary Smith at mls302@gmail.com.

Heritage Gardeners, Friendswood, is celebrating their 50th Anniversary with a recent open house and their annual Through the Garden Gate garden tour. This 52-member club meets the first Thursday at 9:30 for a social hour, business meeting and educational gardening programs at their Garden Center, 112 W. Spreading Oaks. President Lydia Abuisi leads this busy club through their annual Christmas Tour of Homes, maintenance of their Briscoe Public Gardens, at the Garden Center, the Postoffice and Park flowerbeds and volunteers with Keep Friendswood Beautiful projects. Heritage gives a college scholarship each year in horticultural related studies, and sponsors the Heritage Jr. Master Gardeners, youth garden club. Visit their website at Heritagegardener.org

League City Garden Club is a community oriented 50-member club meeting at the Hometown Heroes Park, 2105 Dickinson Rd on the second Wednesday at 9:30. Established in 1949, they are led by President Kimerly Nitzschke. This club supports education and beautification projects within the city which includes their roadside wildflowers project. Many in the bay area enjoy their Fall Garden Walk fundraiser. They sponsor the Business Landscape Award each month. For more information about this outstanding club contact leaguecitygardenclub@gmail.com.

Meadowbrook Garden Club, was organized 81 years ago having 18 members that meet in their homes on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. President Connie Alameda, coalamed@yahoo.com, reports they enjoy their meeting garden programs and conduct fundraisers to support the Mercy Ship and Sims Bayou projects.

Nassau Bay Garden Club's 62 members meet the second Tuesday at the Nassau Bay City Hall, 9:30. This club has a semiannual Style Show, Auction and Luncheon at Lakewood Yacht Club to fund their Scholarship program, memorial gardens and sponsorship of the Jr. Master Gardener programs at Kipp Primary School in Galveston and Bay Elementary in Seabrook. President, Nancee Lynn, welcomes everyone interested in learning and promoting not only landscape gardening but home vegetable gardening. Contact Nancee at JL1430@aol.com.

Texas City Garden Club meets at the Nessler Center on the second Wednesday at 9:30. This club is 45 years old and has 16 members. Their main fundraiser is the annual Holiday Gift Shop, a Christmas bazaar, held the first Saturday in December at the Nessler Center. Their focus is sponsoring scholarships in environmental studies, the girl scouts and Candlelighters.

Contact President Nancy Heard, hea345nancy@comcast.net.

We hope to spotlight some of these clubs in future articles as they continue to promote gardening in the Bay Area. Join a club, experience a fun, learning adventure in gardening.

Project: Demonstration Gardens

Carbide Park



*By Tom Fountain
MG 2008*



We have had a wet spring across much of Texas so far. Our local rainfall was more than 5 inches above normal, while north and west of us rainfall amounts was more than a foot above normal which caused some major flooding. At the garden we had some ponding due to heavy rainfall. Temperatures have also been a little warmer than normal and this along with the rains provide excellent conditions for growing mosquitoes. So get ready with your mosquito spray, as they may become real pesky for a while. (Pictured is the ponding near the greenhouse.)



As most of you know we have continued to be quite busy around the garden. We had a greenhouse sale that cleared out most of the left over plants from the spring sale. We received a large quantity of fill dirt that the county provided to us which will be used to fill in the garden low areas and expand the parking area. The hoop house was given a floor of gravel and crushed granite. The greenhouse crew has really gotten into experimenting with growing different types plants in the greenhouse. Plus, there have been several workshops conducted at the garden, like Herman Auer and Sue Jeffco's grafting and pruning, and a series on vegetable education which has also been well attended.



Pictured above, left to right, are Alice and Ginger during the greenhouse plants sale. Stewart, Glenn, Betty and Julie are discussing greenhouse operations. Herman and Sue are conducting a pruning workshop. And Barbara is leading a vegetable education workshop. Below Tish, Wendy, and Barbara were visiting after cleaning and mulching the Serenity Garden. Alice is conducting a tour of the garden.



Photos by Tom Fountain



by Sandra Gervais
MG 2011

easy recipes

Seasonal Bites

Someone mentioned that they really like easy recipes. Don't we all! Something that is slightly different from what we usually cook but that doesn't mean spending all day in the kitchen is my kind of recipe. Here are a couple in that mold.

Chicken Parmesan Pasta Toss (Serves 4)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1/2 pound fettuccine | 1/4-1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder |
| 1 tablespoon oil | 1 can (14.5 oz.) diced tomatoes, not drained |
| 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into strips & seasoned | 1/2 cup water |
| 3 tablespoons tomato paste (not sauce) | 1/4 cup zesty Italian salad dressing |
| | 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese (or Parmesan-Reggiano) |

1. Cook pasta according to directions.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in large, nonstick skillet on medium.
Add chicken strips. Cook and stir 8 minutes or until done.
3. Add in tomato paste and garlic powder.
Stir and cook on medium-high for 1-2 minutes
4. Add canned tomatoes, water and salad dressing.
Cook 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Drain pasta. Add to sauce mixture in skillet and toss.
6. Sprinkle with cheese. Serve.

Notes: this is a simple recipe so don't be afraid to get creative. I like to add mushrooms after adding the tomato paste. Or even black olives. And don't forget to add more herbs—dried or fresh—and more seasoning. I like to add a dash of dried oregano here and then chopped fresh basil to serve.

Here's another recipe, one that my daughter loves. It's also easy and she makes it herself.

Gourmet Cheese Potatoes (Serves 6-8)

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 6 medium potatoes (about 1.5 pounds), peeled. | 1/3 cup melted butter or margarine |
| 1 quart water | 1/3 cup minced onion |
| 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Muenster cheese | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 cup sour cream (can use light) | 1/4 teaspoon pepper |
| | Paprika |

1. In 3 quart pot, bring potatoes and water to boil on high heat.
Boil about 10 minutes on high, then reduce heat to medium.
Cook potatoes about 20 minutes until fork tender.
Shred or finely chop into bowl.
2. In another bowl, combine cheese, sour cream, melted butter, onion, salt and pepper.
3. Fold in potatoes.
4. Pour mixture into lightly greases 2 quart casserole.
5. Sprinkle with paprika to taste.
6. Bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes or until golden.

Note:

You may want to experiment with other cheeses besides Muenster.
Also, how about using smoked or Hungarian paprika to add just a bit of zing.
Or even bacon or green onions????



MONTHLY MG MEETINGS

The March 8, 2016 meeting of the GCMGA met at the Extension Office at Carbide Park. It was not really a “dark and stormy night,” but the weather forecast to the north of the Extension Office predicted bad weather was headed that way. Consequently, there were about 17 in attendance for the potluck dinner and presentation by Charriss York about the Ghirardi Family Watersmart Park in League City.

After attending so many MG meetings since 2000, I have to say as a co-secretary, this meeting was quite unique. Unfortunately, Ira Gervais, our MG President was ill and so Dr. Johnson thanked those in attendance for coming out. As you might gather, with those attending and mostly couples, the “potluck” was somewhat slim. It was more like the “loaves and fishes story.” Actually, everyone in attendance at the onset (about 14) had a very nice dinner. Along came midway with another MG coming late and having an appetizer to share. It was more than humorous that the last two MG’s to arrive had dessert. It was like everyone wanted to “cheer!” While this is not relevant to the minutes, it does allow everyone to know how very special the potluck was and what a grand time everyone had!

The meeting proceeded with a great presentation about the Ghirardi Family Watersmart Park at 1810 Louisiana Avenue in League City. Charriss York (Storm Water Project Coordinator TCWP) discussed the very unique park and its history in League City. It has beautiful rain gardens and a swale to collect and filter rainwater that runs off the land and parking lot. It also has a WaterSmart gardens with the use of native and adapted plants to conserve water quality and provide habitat for local wildlife. These plants thrive without chemical fertilizers and pesticides and when established, require less water. Incidentally, this is the 10th anniversary for the WaterSmart program. Lastly this park uses a green or living roof which is specially designed with water proofing to protect the roof surface and added support to carry the weight of plants, soil and water.



By Mary Lou Kelso
MG 2000



Charriss York, our guest speaker

This and That



Canning Class for MG's



Canning Class for MG's: (pressure canner/green beans)
This was a first—productive, educational and fun. Program was provided for MG's only. The class was held on May 5, 2016 at the Demonstration Kitchen in the AgriLife Extension Office. Discussion of food selection in canning, jar preparation, pressuring process, and visual of canned product. Herman Auer presented safety and technical information on operating a cooking canner.
Photo by Roger Allison

Upcoming Events

2016 Galveston County Master Gardener Educational Programs for Interested Gardeners

The following Master Gardener Programs are free to the public.

Location: Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park

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

GPS location: [29.359705, -95.003591](https://www.google.com/maps/place/4102+Main+Street,+La+Marque,+TX+77568/@29.359705,-95.003591,15z)

For course reservations, call 281-534-3413, ext. 1, and then press option 2, or email GALV3@wt.net

Website: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html>

BAMBOO USES IN THE LANDSCAPE

Tuesday, May 31, 2016

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Presented by Galveston County Master Gardener Tish Reustle, the program will include suggestions for using, growing, and propagating bamboo. She will "uncover the truth" about growing it in the landscape.

PEACH TREE PRUNING FOR THE HOME ORCHARD (a hands-on demonstration)

Thursday, June 2, 2016

Session 1: 9:00 - 9:45 a.m.

Session 2: 10:00- 10:45 a.m.

Master Gardeners Herman Auer and Sue Jeffco will give a hands-on demonstration of how to prune your peach trees and other stone fruit trees to create a good scaffold and to prepare for next year's fruit production. This program will be held in the Demonstration Garden/ Orchard inside Carbide Park.

DRIP IRRIGATION - EASY & EFFICIENT

Tuesday, June 7, 2016

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Susan Roth will teach you how to design, install, and maintain a drip irrigation system. Drip irrigation is not only highly efficient but is also inexpensive and an easy project for do-it-yourself individuals.

T-BUD GRAFTING (a hands-on demonstration)

Saturday, June 11, 2016

9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Interested in grafting your home fruit trees? The "t-Bud" grafting method is used on small citrus, peach, plum and other fruit trees. Master Gardener Sue Jeffco will provide a detailed presentation and hands-on demonstration to discuss the when, how, why's, and step-by-step procedure for "t-bud" grafting. Grafting specialists will be on hand to provide one-on-one assistance. ***NOTE: Class is limited to 24 persons participating. You must pre-register in order to attend. Other persons may attend for observation only.***

PLANNING FOR YOUR SUCCESSFUL FRUIT TREE ORCHARD

Saturday, June 11, 2016

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Herman Auer will discuss laying out a plan for your fruit trees to thrive and be successful. In back yard orchards, many trees are being lost and replaced year after year. This is your chance to learn how to save money and produce a successful orchard of one tree or more.

DESIGN PRINCIPALS FOR LANDSCAPES

Saturday, June 18, 2016

9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Karen Lehr, who holds a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture, will present information about design and how to apply it to create a beautiful landscape by avoiding some common pitfalls and adding a new look.

GROWING CUCURBITS - SUMMER & WINTER SQUASH, CUCUMBERS & CANTALOUPE

Tuesday, June 21, 2016

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Herman Auer will discuss the local cultivation of cucurbits. Issues & solutions many home gardeners run into when growing these vegetables will also be covered.

**(For Galveston County residents needing help on horticultural issues - Call the help line
@ 281-534-3413 ext.1 and press option 1 to ask a Master Gardener.)**



bulletin board



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

To volunteer for the **MG Phone Desk** contact Ginger Benson by e-mail at galv3@wt.net or by calling the office at 281-309-5065.

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 Windus 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.

Tideway is a program of the Transitional Learning Center

Dr. Johnson has approved Tideway Transitional Learning Center (644 Central City Blvd., Galveston, Texas 77551) as a location where Master Gardener service hours may be earned. Plans to prepare the gardens at Tideway for spring planting are ready and volunteers are needed. Volunteers can contact Brack Collier at bcollier@tlc-galveston.org. The focus is on the long-term needs of individuals with an acquired brain injury. The program offers accessible horticultural experiences, through which individuals with a brain injury can improve sensory awareness, motor skills, range of motion, endurance and flexibility as well as regain confidence, and learn new skills. This provides the opportunity for our residents to develop the necessary skills to gain and maintain a productive lifestyle whether it is on site or volunteering in the community. The residents at Tideway are very much "hands on" in building the different garden beds, in fact some of the residents came up with the designs. And they have chickens.

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://txmg.org>. 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 M. Johnson. Note that fees do not include lodging or food unless specified otherwise.

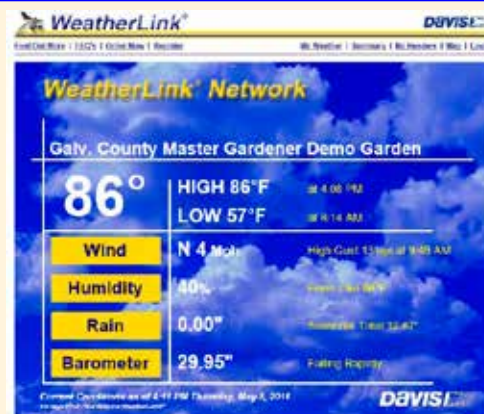
For more information on the Specialist Training on Propagation on the following programs, check out the details at <http://txmg.org>

Composter - June 22-24, 2016, hosted by Bexar County, to be held in San Antonio, TX

Earth-Kind® - August 3-5, 2016, hosted by Fort Bend County, to be held in Rosenberg, TX

Texas Superstar® - September 20-22, 2016, hosted by Bexar County, to be held in San Antonio, TX

Vegetables - November 9-11, hosted by Bexar County, to be held in San Antonio, TX



Don't forget to put the link for our weather station on your smart phone and computer: <http://www.weatherlink.com/user/gcmga>

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 Robert Marshall at 281-993-5595 or e-mail at rbrtm01@att.net or MG Bobbie Ivey at 713-748-8564 or email at blivey@sbcglobal.net to volunteer.

Volunteers are needed to help with the Saturday programs and the Tuesday evening programs. If you can help please contact Herman Auer (409) 655-5362, e-mail hermanauer@comcast.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.



Here is a great way to support our GCMGA

Amazon will donate 0.5% of our personal purchases to Galveston County Master Gardener Association.

All you have to do is:

Go to smile.amazon.com - Choose Galveston County Master Gardener Association as your charity. Save smile. amazon.com to your favorites. - Always start from this site to do your amazon shopping. - You should see your chosen charity in the top bar on amazon's website. - If you have any problems, search smile on amazon's website

the last word . . .

FLOWER COLOR INFLUENCES HUMAN MOOD

(Editor's Note: This article is a reprint of Dr. Johnson's Weekly Gardening Column in The Galveston County Daily News)



*By Dr. William M. Johnson
CEA-HORT & MG
Program Coordinator*

I have had opportunities to visit many delightful gardens. While I was interested in the landscape plants, I was particularly interested in observing how other visitors were drawn to certain color beds.

I later remembered reading a study conducted by Dr. Roger Ulrich, a professor of landscape architecture at Texas A&M University. His research was the first to scientifically document the stress-reducing and health-related benefits for hospital patients of viewing nature. Ulrich's studies showed that when flowers were visible to hospital patients, their need for pain medication decreased, their stress levels dropped and their stay in the hospital was marked with increased optimism.

While my professional training is in the plant sciences, I find it intriguing how different colors and textures of flowers and plants also can influence the human mood and perception. Most people like a bright, colorful landscape, but did you know that you can use the colors of flowers and plants to create a mood, shorten or lengthen the look of a garden or really call attention to a special feature? It's possible because of the way we perceive colors.

Hey Look Me Over!

Red and yellow are two colors that immediately capture our attention. Behavioral scientists tell us we actually see these two colors faster than others. Our eyes are drawn to displays of red or yellow, so they are excellent choices to put around a fountain or to plant in a key area that you want people to see.

Likewise, if you have something in your garden you don't want people to look at, plant bright yellow flowers opposite that area to draw attention away from it. Ideally, they will look at the yellow flowers and turn their backs on whatever eyesore it is you want to hide.

If you have steps leading to your garden or in your garden, consider planting a border of yellow flowers next to them. The yellow will catch people's eyes and alert them in an attractive way that there are steps, and they should be careful.

Is your garden area long and narrow, and would you like to square it off a little with minimal effort? Plant lots of bright red flowers at the far end, and this will visually pull that end in closer and it won't seem so long and narrow. This can be done with anything you want to bring closer, because red "advances" visually.

Masses of red or yellow are guaranteed attention-getters and will not go unnoticed. And, by the way, men tend to favor yellow-based reds (like scarlet), while women tend to favor blue-based reds (like burgundy). If you and your spouse don't agree on what "red" to plant, this could be why.

Crisp And Clean

If you are the type of person who likes things neat, tidy and precise, white is the color for you. We think of doctors in their white coats and laboratories with white walls and equipment because we associate this color in our environment with cleanliness, orderliness and precision.

Crisp flower beds or border plantings of white will give your garden a well-planned and orderly look. But don't expect the color alone to do all the work—you still will need to tend to your garden.

Masses of white can be hard on the eyes, so you might want to include areas of other colors as well.

White is also the last color to fade from sight as darkness falls so it's a good choice for areas you want to look at in the evening and also a good choice for bordering pathways since you can follow your way easier even as it gets dark.

Keeping Your Cool

When our field of vision is filled with blue, our bodies actually slow down, and we begin to get calmer. You can use this attribute of blue to create a feeling of coolness even in a full-sun garden by planting lots of blue flowers (lighter blues are better than dark blues).

Even if it's 95 degrees, you'll feel cooler in the blue area of your garden.

Let The Good Times Roll

What if you like lots of different colors mixed in among each other? That's great. Mixes of bright colors give a happy festive look to an area.

Mix different flowers, different colors and different textures to your heart's delight, but just be careful not to overdo it. Too much mixing can look more disorganized than festive, so using three or four colors again and again can help tie the look together.

If you haven't thought about the psychological effects of color before, these tips might give you a starting point for creating not only the look you want in your garden but also the feel you want as well.



Photo by Dr. William M. Johnson

Copper Canyon Daisy

2016 MGA MONTHLY MEETINGS

January 12, 2016

Overview of the 2016 Calendar Year
6:00 pm - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

February 16, 2016

John Jons - Preview of Spring Plant Sale
10:00 am - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

March 8, 2016

League City Water Smart Park
1810 Louisiana,
4:00 pm - League City

April 12, 2016

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

May 10, 2016

Rodney and Lynne Mize - Backyard Meeting
5:30 pm - 4004 Lovers Lane
Dickinson

June 14, 2016

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

July 12, 2016

Emmyline Dodd - Presentation on Insects
5:30 pm Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

August 9, 2016

Mary Lou Kelso, Moody Gardens
Galveston Island

September, 2016 TBA

Fall Plant Sale Preview
Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

October 11, 2016

Raini and Bret Cunningham - Backyard Meeting
5:30 pm - 2711 Avenue O
Galveston Island

November 8, 2016

Ira Gervais - Annual Meeting, Election of Officers
5:30 pm - Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

December 13, 2016

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



*By Judy Anderson
MG 2012*

GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Upcoming Master Gardener Programs

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

Check your e-mail for an invitation to our upcoming Graduation, certification and recognition program and MG Reunion to be held on Tuesday, June 14 at the home of Mikey and Allen Isbell's home on Galveston Island

Tuesday, July 12, 2016 6:00 p.m.

Emmeline Dodd Presenting Insects and S'More

Emmeline Dodd was a biology professor at the College of the Mainland for 31 years where she received the Medallion of Excellence in Teaching from the University of Texas, named COM's Teacher of the Year four times, and selected as a Piper Professor (top ten professors in the state of Texas). Emmeline is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University and the University of Houston Clear Lake; she was selected as a distinguished Alumnus in 2004 by both universities. Emmeline is a Master Naturalist and devoted to many Bay Area philanthropic efforts including the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the Cattle Baron's Ball benefiting the American Cancer Society. In 2015, the Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce selected her as one of the 50 Faces that shaped the Bay Area during its 50th anniversary celebration. Won't it be fun to hear her program?

Tuesday, August 9, 2016

Master Gardener Day at Moody Gardens

2:00 pm Check in at Moody Gardens Visitor Center
2:30 pm Depart by shuttle for Greenhouse Tour by Curator, Donita Brannen
3:30 pm National Parks 3D, Visitor Center
4:30 pm Rainforest Pyramid tour by Curator, Donita Brannen
5:45 pm Dinner, Garden Restaurant, Visitor Center
7:15 pm Moody Gardens Hotel Sunset Viewing 9th floor
More details to come!



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FEEDBACK



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