



# THE GRAPEVINE



Volume XVI, Issue 1

*Fort Bend County  
Master Gardeners, Inc.*

January-February 2006

**Don't forget!  
2006 Dues are to  
be paid by  
January 31**

## *Inside this Issue ...*

From the Garden	1
January Monthly Program	2
Monthly Programs	2
Green Thumb Seminars	2
Peckerwood Garden Tour	2
Notes from Mac	3
Landscape Updates	4
Scenes from the January 7 Workday	5
The History of Tea	5
2005 Awards Program	6
Gardening with "Little Ones"	7
Greet the Gardener	7
Fruit Tree Sale—February 11	8
Garden Checklist	8
Bylaws Amendments Vote	9
Try Something New?	9
2006 Board of Directors	9
Dates to Remember	9

## From the Garden

By Mary Beth McCaughey, President, FBMG S2000

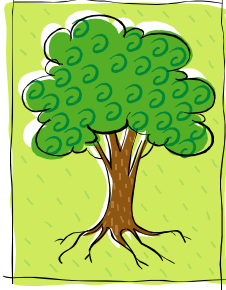
Happy 2006! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and that you received (or treated yourself to) some sort of new gardening item to begin the new year. My family tells me that my interest in gardening makes it easy to know what to get me for Christmas, although my Mother-In-Law just sort of shakes her head when she sees things like hand tools, t-shirts that glorify dirt, and yard art emerge from packages at the holidays. She grew up on a farm and remembers gardening as mostly hard work she'd not care to have to do again—but she's happy that I enjoy this pastime. Most of the McCaughey's were together for the holidays and I think I got the best present in the gift exchange. My Sister-In-Law, Felicia, gave me a pair of purple "wellie" boots—with paisley uppers! You're probably think this sounds a bit silly, but they have a steel shank so they should be pretty tough. I can't wait to try them out when I rework some of the beds in my back yard. I'll have to have Bill take a picture of me when I have them on in the garden, Felicia will smile but my Mother-In-Law will probably just shake her head...

I have another garden project to work on that's long overdue. Last summer I figured out how I could install two rain barrels on the side of the house to collect runoff from one of the gables on the roof. I drew up a diagram, researched various rain barrel styles and decided that I could use rain chains to direct water from the roof to the barrels. I even *ordered* two rain barrels. They've been sitting on my patio for almost six months now and this is the perfect time to get them in place and fully functioning. One or two good rainstorms and I'll have them filled. It's not going to make much difference in my water bill, but it's one small thing I can do for the environment. And I know that once they are set up I'll wander in that part of the garden more often, dipping into the barrels to perk up any thirsty plants. The job of getting the barrels in place won't be hard, it just requires more time than I've had the past few months. I'm tired of looking at these things on my patio though, so they are on the top of my list of gardening chores! I'll keep you posted on how I "roll out the barrels."

This time of year is full of promise. We have a fresh start on a new calendar and the weather seems to lure us outside to dream about and plan new gardening projects. I'd like to encourage everyone to join one of our upcoming monthly workdays to get re-acquainted with the various display gardens. A number of the gardens were highlighted recently in an article in the Fort Bend Herald and we get so many compliments from visitors. Come on out and spend a few hours, our Master Gardeners make great company. Workdays are one of those activities that you're not sure you have time for as you drive to them—but as you drive away you're glad you went.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Jeff McMullan for all of his work as FBMG President in 2004 and 2005. Jeff will now serve as Past President on the Board this year and Wayne Rhoden (who previously served as President and then Past President) has retired from the Board. You guys are a tough act to follow—but I'm looking forward to the challenge. Onward!





## **JANUARY MONTHLY PROGRAM:**

**"RIGHT TREE, RIGHT LOCATION"  
Ms. M. C. SWEARINGEN, ISA CERTIFIED  
ARBORIST**

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 26  
SOCIAL TIME—6:45 PM PROGRAM—7:15 PM  
MEMBER MEETING FOLLOWS THE  
PROGRAM—VOTE ON PROPOSED  
BYLAWS AMMENDMENTS**

**BUD O'SHEILES COMMUNITY CENTER  
1402 BAND ROAD, ROSENBERG  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

By Peg d'Hemecourt, Community Affairs Director,  
FBMG F2003

### **Upcoming Monthly Programs**

**Thursday, February 23** – "Choices for Growth: Quality of life and the environment" by Dr. John Jacob, Texas A & M Associate Professor and Extension Specialist.

**Thursday, March 23** – "Bromeliads" by Gene Powers, Ft. Bend County Master Gardener (S 2002).

### **Upcoming Green Thumb Seminars**

University of Houston at Cinco Ranch  
7—9 PM

**January 19, 2006 (note the change this month, only, to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday)** – "Fruits & Vegetables" by Susan Brodmerkel, FBMG Vegetable Garden Committee Chair

**February 9, 2006** – "Plant Propagation" by Jeff McMullan, Past President

**March 9, 2006** – "Home Lawn Care" by Terri Douglass, FBMG S2003

**SAVE THE DATE !!!  
SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 8TH**

**UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL TOUR**

**PECKERWOOD GARDEN  
HEMPSTEAD TEXAS**

About an hour's drive from Houston, poised on the edge of three climate and geological zones is one of America's most unique garden environments. Peckerwood Garden is the setting for an expanding collection of rare plants native to a wide region of the southern United States and to Mexico mingled with their Asian counterparts.

**MEMBERS-ONLY EVENT**

**MORE INFORMATION IN THE NEXT EDITION OF  
THE GRAPEVINE**



Pictured above: Fall 2005 Associates, James Buckley and Glenn Dresner hard at work on the brick pathway beside the greenhouse.

**Great work guys!**

## Notes from Mac

by Margo "Mac" McDowell,  
Fort Bend County Master Gardener Coordinator

We've made it through another successful year, thanks to all of you and the work you have done. The accomplishments were many! Our Master Gardeners classes are still being reported as the area's finest, and our program all in all has a reputation of being a fun and caring, which makes us a great place to learn. Couldn't get much better than that! The Fall 2004 class graduated, while the Spring 2006 class began; there were a couple of first places won at the State Conference, along with a couple of seconds! A record was set for our plant sales not only in the money numbers, but more importantly, we had more Master Gardeners volunteer than ever before! We have Master Gardener Specialists in Junior Master Gardeners, Entomology and Propagation! We survived the heat of the summer, especially the Master Gardeners who worked and worked on the Bazaar, and who climbed those hated stairs each week to retrieve their supplies. Then the Spring 2006 class graduated after we started the Fall 2006 class. It never ends, does it – thankfully!

I've heard recently that some of you may be wondering why it seems that we don't have as many volunteers as we used to. It's not that we are losing Master Gardeners, and I can offer an explanation. In essence, it appears that we don't have as many volunteers - that may be true; however, it is also true that we have had a reduction of participants by half in our classes – by choice. Two years ago, the decision was made to reduce our classes from 4 per year to 2 per year. This started with the Spring 2004 class. Even though that particular class had 60 members (whew) – the next class had 35. What's fascinating is that during the past several years our membership has been staying on an even keel. We've kept that number to around 200 (more give than take). What this actually means is that we are beginning to retain more Master Gardeners as members, which is good! So it all boils down to— we do have the people –power, now we need the people!!! (quote from Sallie—"I know where you live!")

Seriously, we've added educational programming, while maintaining what we already have, and we've managed to maintain a strong hold on our gardens; however, we could do better in our gardens as far as helping our fellow Master Gardeners. Any reason why seasoned Master Gardeners can't help with this?

Mind you now, we are doing fine, but we could use a lot more help with the gardens. I know there are many of you who haven't visited in a long, long time. I know you've all heard me say...we need more help with the Garden Committees. These committees need help in all

aspects of running a committee – it just not the chairs or co-chairs that do all the work! They need people to help plan the landscape, research plant materials, maybe even chemicals, recordings need to be written down, etc.

We have a couple of Fall 05 gentlemen working on a new pathway at the Greenhouse, we have a new Citrus Orchard being planned, the Cottage Garden is really taking shape, the Herbal Knot Garden is growing, the Berry Patch will soon have berries! But we still need your help – all the gardens could use extra hands – even if it's just to maintain the record book, take pictures, make a phone call! Being a member of a garden committee doesn't necessarily mean you have work out in the garden all the time!

Don't forget that our gardens are "demonstration" gardens, and there is a lot more to the garden and garden committee than planting – it's planning and recording.

There's a whole lot that needs to be done within our organization – the Hotline needs to grow, we need a Historical committee to organize and record our past – and future, gardens need extra hands not only the garden but administratively. And, of course, we can always use new ideas, so don't be afraid to voice those ideas.

The Fruit Tree Sale is just around the corner, and you know Cheryl Huber – Chairperson, is getting things in shape. She is a very hard worker, who loves to smile – so give her a call, (281-829-1724 or [hhubercool@yahoo.com](mailto:hhubercool@yahoo.com)) let her know you can help out with the sales, and maybe you can lend her a helping hand too.

### Hard Workers!



Dell Keene (S04) & Cheryl Huber (S04) working hard fixing the drainage at the Japanese Garden



## LANDSCAPE UPDATES

**All Garden Committee Chairs should be working on their proposed budgets for 2006. Submit your proposals to Nat Gruesen ([ngruesen@ev1.net](mailto:ngruesen@ev1.net)) or Margo McDowell ([mmcdowell@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:mmcdowell@ag.tamu.edu)) when you have them ready!**

### **Cottage Garden Activities**

By Becky Smith, Cottage Garden Co-Chair, FBMG F2004

The expansion of the Cottage Garden was one of the highlights of the gardens this past year. An arbor, fence, swing, windmill, and crushed granite pathways have been added to the landscape in just the right places to catch the eye. Flowerbeds have lots of new plants, including many butterfly plants from the Fort Bend County Fair. Also, over 50 beautiful yellow mums have brightened the borders of the beds.

The Cottage Gardeners have lots of plans for the upcoming year. The flagstone/crushed granite walkways will be completed. A bridge is being constructed over the dry creek bed, as well as a gate for the opening at the north entrance of the garden. The door and the benches on the porch, will be painted.

We are always looking for new and different plants appropriate for the cottage garden. An addition of more bulbs that do well in our area will also be planted.

To shade some of the area by the swing, we have talked about adding four posts covered with cattle panel wire that will be covered with an assortment of vines.

Come by and visit the beautiful Cottage Garden. You will be amazed at the progress!

### **Japanese Garden Update**

By Cheryl Huber, Japanese Garden Committee Chair, FBMG S2004

December was busy, and January will be no different. The Japanese Gardeners get no rest – and we're always happy to have more help!

December was a good time to get caught up on weeding and thinning the plants in the bog. It was also time for mulching the azaleas and combing the grasses. Things are looking pretty good. The committee also began breaking up the concrete surrounding the rocks in the dry-bed. A new design has been drawn up and rocks will be placed one at a time. We're going to re-use the existing stones and it may take some acid to clean up the stones. If you have any experience with this process would you give me a call? The February workday will be the day that we pour new concrete and replace the stones.

We have also submitted our budget for 2006 and are awaiting review by the Landscape Committee and approval from the board.

Elizabeth Barrow has completed a copy of the Garden Design on paper and named and numbered all of our plants. It was a tremendous undertaking. She and her husband are now using Cad (Computer Aided Design), software to create a computer copy for us. If you see Elizabeth, give her a big hug and tell her thank you!

We'll be trimming the dormant trees and shrubs in January and February and we always work in some weeding while we're out there. If you have some time to help, we'd love your company. Wednesdays and Saturdays are good days for me. If you'd like to be trained on how to trim the spiral junipers, let me know. The Japanese Gardeners are happy to share expertise!

### **Note from the Herbal Knot Garden**

By Roberta Owen, Herbal Knot Garden Committee Chair, FBMG F2002

Well, the last time that I checked our garden in December, things were looking pretty good. The perennials, shrubs, and trees were green and some of the cool season herbs like parsley, dill and cilantro were coming up from seed. The roses were a wonderful accent to the garden, too.

This year, our plan is to finish the back unplanted area. However, exact design is still in the initial stage. I feel so delighted that our garden is sandwiched between the berry patch and vineyard. This whole area is such a pleasure to enjoy now.

### **Vineyard Update**

Pete Pavlovsky, Vineyard Garden Chair, FBMG S2000

Happy New Year everyone! What a way to celebrate the beginning of The New Year.....sipping a little wine made from grapes from "The Master Gardeners Vineyard". Okay, now that I have your attention, we plan to prune grapes on Saturday, February 18, 2006. If you are interested in some cuttings or if you are interested in some vines for making wreaths, please let us know and come out to the "Brazos Bottom Vineyard" for your choice or just come out for the hours of fun.

## Scenes from the January 7 Workday

At right: Elsie Keeling (S2002) “coaches” Glenn Dresner (F2005) while Brenda ??? admires Glenn’s technique!



At left: Landscape Committee Director Nat Gruesen admires progress in the Cottage Garden

Photos by Becky Smith, FBMG F2004

## The History of Tea

Compiled by: Jodie Douglass FBMG S03, Source: [www.tripleaspectherbs.com](http://www.tripleaspectherbs.com)

Throughout the world, tea is second only to water in being the beverage of choice. It has many uses, such as to bring on sleep, restore good health, calm in times of stress, and simply add to the enjoyment of a solitary afternoon by the fire on a good old chinwag with friends. It can be taken hot or iced, plain or with lemon, milk or sugar, and drunk from a hefty mug or a dainty cup inherited from your granny.

Strictly speaking, the word “tea” refers to the leaves or flower buds of the shrub *Camellia sinensis* and is known as pure teas; however, infusions can be made from steeping any leaves, berries, flowers, root, bark or seeds in boiling water. The Chinese first brought to light the pleasures of tea drinking around 4,000 years ago, and called it “the gift of heaven”.

The cultivation of tea gradually spread to Japan and the Far East, and was brought to Europe in the sixteenth century by Portuguese merchants in Lisbon. It was transported by Dutch traders who formed the Dutch East India Company and began to trade directly with the Orient. It was taken into France in 1636 and Russia in 1638.

Tea drinking was slow to catch on in the Americas after William Penn brought it to the Quaker colony in 1682. Then as cities such as New York grew, tea gardens as fashionable as those in England became popular. Alas though, the issue of taxes reared its ugly head resulting in the famous Boston “Tea Party”, causing the rapid decline in tea as the beverage of choice.

Herbal teas other than *Camellia sinensis* have been brewed for thousands of years; more often they were drunk not just for pleasure but for healing purposes. Plato referred to them in 410BC, Aristotle in 480BC, and his student Theophrastus wrote “On the History of Plants”, advising of the uses of herbs. The Roman, Pliny the Elder, in 77AD, in his work, “Natural History”, referred in detail to the process of growing herbs for both culinary and medicinal uses. In England herb teas were widely used. Many of those who came to America brought seeds with them; chamomile, balm, elderflower and mints were the most widely grown. After the Boston fiasco, many folk banned the use of imported tea and so it was only natural that domestically grown herbs took precedence. These were patriotically known as “liberty teas”. Nowadays, the increasing interest in alternative medicines and organic foods has helped revive the art of drinking tea, especially herbal that does not contain caffeine.

Source: [www.tripleaspectherbs.com](http://www.tripleaspectherbs.com)

## 2005 Awards Program Honors Volunteers

By Mary Beth McCaughey, President, FBMG S2000

The 2005 Awards program recognized Master Gardener volunteer efforts across the organization for a wide variety of accomplishments. Taking the opportunity to blend an appreciation event with a little holiday cheer, the December banquet was a chance to step back and recognize individuals, as well as the achievements of our organization, in another busy year.

In keeping with prior year tradition, members with more than 100 volunteer hours received either the khaki FBMG awards shirt or a patch to put on their existing shirts. (Well, to be honest we got smart this year and handed out certificates for the shirts and our shirt expert Terry Douglass will work with recipients to get the correct sized shirts ordered). Everyone who attended received a "golden shovel" pin and will be receiving a blue kneeling pad with our Texas Master Gardener logo. The Awards committee felt that we needed to be well equipped for real gardening as well as stylishly dressed!

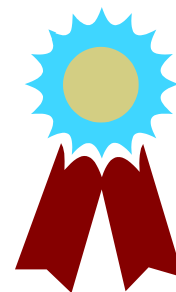
**Members who reported 100 or more volunteer hours in 2005 include:**

**Donna Alberts, S2003**  
**Marilyn Almon, transfer from LA**  
**Bill Appel, F1997**  
**Juanita Ayers, S2003**  
**Cliff Bergman, S2002**  
**Sallie Bourgeois, F1999**  
**Barbara Brannon, F1999**  
**Evelyn Coe, F2000**  
**Peggy d'Hemecourt, F2003**  
**Jodie Douglass, S2003**  
**Terry Douglass, S2003**  
**Ginny Grant, S2003**  
**Hester Hackstedt, F1999**  
**Terry Harris, S2003**  
**Ben Hobbs, F2002**  
**Cheryl Huber, S2004**  
**Elisabeth Jones, F2001**  
**Elsie Keeling, S2002**  
**Dell Keene, S2004**  
**Becky Leugemors, S1998**  
**Mary Beth McCaughey, S2000**  
**Karen McCoy, F2000**  
**Lynn McKillop, S1997**  
**Jeff McMullan, S2001**  
**Bill Murray, F1998**  
**Aleta Patrick, F2003**  
**Angie Pavlovsky, S2000**  
**Pete Pavlovsky, S2000**  
**Huma Qureshy, S2003**  
**Becky Smith, F2004**  
**Johnny Williams, S2004**  
**Sheryl Gee Wong, S2003**

## AWARDS!

**Members who reported up to 100 volunteer hours in 2005 include:**

**Joanne Ayers, S2003**  
**Deborah Birge, F2002**  
**Susan Brodmerkel, F2002**  
**Judith Chambliss, F2000**  
**Patti Daniel, F2003**  
**Patty Eagle, S2004**  
**Dayle Enderson, S2000**  
**Don Johnson, F2003**  
**Penny Johnson, F2003**  
**Don Jones, S2003**  
**Beja Marsella Trott, F2000**  
**Barbara McCormick, S2001**  
**Carolyn McDaniel, F2001**  
**Jay Meier, F2002**  
**Melinda Meyer, S1999**  
**Andrea Morgenstern, F2002**  
**Lynn Murray, F2003**  
**Doris Odom, F2000**  
**Catherine Pennington, F2003**  
**Ed Plant, S2001**  
**Gene Powers, S2002**  
**Burt Reckles, F2003**  
**Mary Rollins, S2004**  
**Gloria Scheel, F2003**  
**Shirley Valenziano, F2002**  
**Betty Weidermeyer, F2002**  
**Karen Zurawski, S2004**

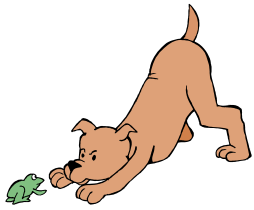


We also honored FBMG members who have completed all of the training and volunteer hours required of their chosen Specialist program. These members will be wonderful resources for additional training and activities in each of these areas:

**Don Johnson—Entomology**  
**Lynn McKillop—Propagation**  
**Jeff McMullan—Propagation**  
**Ginny Grant—Junior Master Gardener**

And last but certainly not least, we honored **Becky Leugemors as the Fort Bend Master Gardener of the year for 2005**. In addition to Becky's work in the Circle Gardens and all of her decorative cement creations, she has led our chapters work with TAMU on the CEMAP evaluation program. **Thank You Becky, we appreciate all of your efforts!**

All of these people contributed. Many more of you did also – so I encourage you to turn in your hours. We want to take the opportunity to thank you and celebrate our success as an organization again later this year.



## **Gardening with “Little Ones”**

### **Gardening With Dogs!**

By Margo ‘Mac’ McDowell, FBMG S1997

To set the scene – I think I have a nice large yard. I have gardens on both side fence lines, at the back of the house, and one very long, large garden that is towards the back fence. You can walk all the way around it; or in my dogs’ case – run all the way around it. They used to run all the through it.

I have 3 great dogs -- a 2 ½ year old Akita/Border Collie mix (Truman), and a 1 ½ year old Black Lab (Big Sam) and 1 ½ year old Schnauzer (Midgett). That’s 2 large males, and one pretty small female. My female Schnauzer that is my ‘culprit’. Midgett can run circles around the two bigger dogs, and she can really tear through a garden! When we first got Truman, he and I bonded big time when I was hand-tilling my vegetable garden. He tilled (dug) right along with me! It was great! I actually positioned him so that his soil (ha!) would be flying exactly where I needed it to! He can really dig.

Then we got Sammy & Midgett, and my gardens really took a turn for the worse. Truman became Alpha dog – my biggest nightmare! (Hear the shark music?) The issue in trying to garden with my animals was trying to keep them from digging in my gardens, and literally running through them. Oh! How frustrating that was. I was about to give it all up; I felt just so beaten...and so was my back yard. I thought I was never going to garden again. I never had such diggin’, destroyin’ dogs; I’ve never had so many dogs! But I just could not let myself be beaten by a bunch of hounds – so training began. I started taking them around one by one to all of my gardens and telling them “out!” and of course the word no.

The four of us kept this up for what seemed like forever. OOUT! NOooooo! Big Sam is the smartest and most gentle. I haven’t caught him doing anything wrong, and he listens like a champ – he’s my follower. But AH! You know what helped me the most? My garden grew! This past spring, I put in small fencing – that white short picket looking fencing – lots of it! Oh and I forgot to tell you that my neighbor has the most wonderful Boxer named Tyson... he’s a huuge muscular dog. He too has to come into my yard “through” the fence and visit us. (We’re about to invest in fencing stock!)

And then all of a sudden it seemed as though a miracle happened! I think my dogs grew up with my gardens! Truman, Big Sam & Midgett have stopped running “through” the gardens and were actually racing around them! What pleasure we get when we see our dogs run around and around the yard and not in our gardens. They have learned to retrieve balls, chew sticks and lay in the shade of the Drummond Maple. The training continues on a regular gardening basis...Midgett likes to pick green tomatoes, and is now discovered she likes

green peppers.

Occasionally, they mess up – I yell OUT! -- they stop what they are doing – even if its just standing on the edge of the garden looking in. I can be in the dry stores, and yell OUT, and everyone gets out! I can sit here while I write this and smile. But things are fine; my garden was beautiful last year, and I have discovered the wonderful world of gardening with my dogs. They have created their “pathways” and I’ve created mine ---right on top of theirs! I’m not sure who is smarter ... !

The neat part of having all these dogs is that they love being outdoors with me so as I now walk around my gardens and work in them, my best pals are right there with me – I’m never alone.



## **Greet The Gardener**

By Sheredith Heitzenrater,  
FBMG S2002

Here it is, deadline time, and I haven’t had time to interview any of you eager readers. My only excuse, and I think it is a fine one, is that my husband had to have open-heart surgery in November and that took all of my energy. The good news is that he is doing great. The bad news is that all of the well wishing friends and relatives sent planters. Not just any planter – but BIG planters!

I don’t know about you all but my indoor plants receive the same attention my outdoor ones get – water them once a week and they are on their own. Some of you, however, may own a Peace Lily. If so you know it gets big and there is nothing peaceful about it! If it doesn’t get watered at least every other day the edges of the leaves droop and turn brown. I already had one of those I’ve been dealing with for five years, and now we have another one!

The beauty of getting these planters from the florist is that they don’t tell you what the plant is. I tried calling to inquire but they can’t remember what they sent whom! We received a big one that shows pink veins when the sun shines through it. I took pictures of each one and made thank you notes with them. I guess I need to take the pictures to the florist and see if they can identify them.

Jim’s sister, bless her heart, told the florist to send something that can be planted outside. The florist sent a beautiful pink azalea. I have to admit my azaleas up north were huge but the ones here in Texas have not faired as well. Oh well, I’ll plant it as soon as it quits blooming.

We don’t often talk about indoor plants at our meetings. Some of you are masters at growing orchids, violets, and special ones such as the lipstick plant. Give me a call at 281-545-2090 and I’ll track you down for the next “Greet the Gardener” column!



## January—February Garden Checklist For South & East Texas

By Dr. William C. Welch  
Professor and Extension Horticulturist

- Now is an excellent time to transplant mature or established trees and shrubs while they are dormant.
- Make flower and vegetable garden plans now before the rush of spring planting. Time spent in armchair gardening before the fireplace will pay off in improved plant selection. Besides, it is fun to page through the garden catalogs.
- Sow seeds in flats or containers to get a jump on plant growth before hot weather arrives. Petunias, begonias, and impatiens should be sown in early January. Warm temperature plants, such as tomatoes, peppers, marigolds, and periwinkles, should be sown in late January or early February.
- Apply a light application of fertilizer to established pansy plantings. Use one-half pound of ammonium sulfate per 100 square feet of bed area. Repeat the application every 4 to 6 weeks, depending on rainfall. Dried blood meal is also an excellent source of fertilizer for pansies.
- Check junipers and other narrow-leaf evergreens for bagworm pouches. The insect eggs overwinter in the pouch, and start the cycle again by emerging in the spring to begin feeding on the foliage. Hand removal and burning of the pouches are ways of reducing the potential damage next spring.
- The life of the plant received as a Christmas gift can be prolonged with proper care. Keep the soil moist, but provide drainage so that excess moisture can flow from the pot. Keep the plant out of range of heating ducts and away from heating units. Keep in a cool room at night, preferably at 60 to 65 degrees F.
- Don't fertilize newly set out trees or shrubs until after they have started to grow, and then only very lightly the first year.
- When buying plants, the biggest is not always the best, especially when dealing with bare-root plants. The medium to small sizes (4 to 6 feet) are usually faster to become established and more effective in the landscape than the large sizes.
- When pruning shrubs, first prune out any dead or damaged branches; then thin out by removing about one-third of the canes or stems at ground level, removing the oldest canes only; and last, shape the rest



of the plant, but do not cut everything back to the same height.

- In Central and South Texas, the following flower seeds may be sown directly without protection in well prepared flower beds in February or March: nasturtiums, annual phlox, California poppies, coneflowers, and larkspur. Petunia plants may be set out in sunny, well drained locations, with little chance of cold damage except in far North Texas.
- Climbing roses should be trained but not pruned. Weave long canes through openings in trellises or arbors and tie them with jute twine or plastic/wire plant ties. Securing canes now prevents damage from winter winds, and contributes toward a more refined look to the garden when roses are blooming. Wait until after the spring flowering period to prune climbing or once-blooming shrub roses.



## Fruit Tree Sale—February 11

By Cheryl Huber, Fruit Tree Sale Coordinator,  
FBMG S2004

Planning for the annual Fruit Tree Sale planning is well on its way. We are once again looking for volunteers to help with this, our first fundraiser of the year. One of the biggest tasks is unloading the truck on the Friday before the sale, which is the morning of February 10th. The start time for this effort will be announced closer to the actual date so keep an eye on your e-mails or call a week before the sale to find out what time to show up at the Fairgrounds to help.

Please, keep in mind that the advertising is critical to the success of the sale. Our research indicates that the average spent by each person that comes to the sale is \$40. That means that each person you can persuade to come to the sale adds that much to our total revenue.

The sale date is February 11<sup>th</sup>. We will work in shifts for those who don't want to spend the entire day at the Fairgrounds. The morning shift is the busiest and needs the most help. No qualifications, other than a willing spirit, are necessary. We'll teach you everything you need to know. If you've worked the previous sales, you know how much fun we're going to have.

Don't forget to watch for the information about the Spring Perennial Sale on March 18th in the next edition of the Grapevine. If you're ready to volunteer for either of the sales this far in advance, e-mail Cheryl Huber, [hhubercool@yahoo.com](mailto:hhubercool@yahoo.com).

## **Proposed Bylaws Amendments Vote Thursday, January 26**

We'll be voting on the proposed Bylaws amendments at the FBMG members meeting following the monthly program on January 26th. Our main objective in updating the Bylaws at this time is to accurately reflect how FBMG operates and to include provisions recommended for effective management of Nonprofit organizations. If you have questions about the proposed Bylaws amendments, please contact our Member Relations Director, Sallie Bourgeois at LBourgeois1@houston.rr.com or 281-463-6753.

### **Ready to Try Something New?**

Thank you Jim Dougherty (S04) for stepping up as chair for the Front Yard! And now we are looking for someone to chair the **YardWise Garden**—unfortunately Dan Strode decided he couldn't accept the chairmanship. If your interesting in knowing more about coordinating the plan for one of our gardens, or working in partnership with another FBMG member to chair a garden, please let Nat Gruesen or Margo McDowell know—we'd like to know your ideas

Gene Powers, our Greenhouse Director, has indicated that he'll need to be out of town more frequently this year so he's asked that we start looking for someone else to take on responsibility for directing Greenhouse efforts. This job includes coordinating the programs and activities involving the Greenhouse on the grounds of the Fort Bend County Cooperative Extension and coordinating with the Horticulture Agent on issues such as diseases, pests and irrigation programs in the greenhouse. If you're interested, contact Gene Powers or Margo McDowell.

### **2006 Board of Directors**

President—Mary Beth McCaughey  
Vice President—Peggy d'Hemecourt  
Secretary—Barbara McCormick  
Treasurer—Marilyn Almon  
Past-President—Jeff McMullan  
Awards—Carolyn McDaniel  
Communications—Lynn McKillop  
Community Affairs —Becky McKay  
Fundraising—Barbara Brannon  
Greenhouse—Gene Powers  
Landscape—Nat Gruesen  
Member Relations—Sallie Bourgeois  
Master Gardener Coordinator—Margo McDowell  
Cooperative Extension Liaison—Ron Jerido

## **Dates to Remember**



**Activities marked \*ATC are eligible  
for Advanced Training Credit.**

**Jan 7**—Monthly Worday in the gardens

**Jan 17**—Sugar Land Garden Club meeting. "Texas SuperStar Plants of the Past, Present and Future" by Jerry Parsons, PhD. 10 AM, Sugar Land Community Center **\*ATC**

**Jan 19**—FBMG Green Thumb program, "Fruits & Vegetables" 7:00 PM, U of H Cinco Ranch

**Jan 26**—FBMG monthly program, "Right Tree, Right Location" M. C. Swearingen, ISA Certified Arborist 7:15 PM, Bud O'Sheiles Community Center. We will also be voting on the proposed Bylaws Amendments at the Members meeting following the program. **\*ATC**

**Jan 31**—2006 Dues payments due to Sallie Bourgeois

**Feb 2**—21st Annual Fort Bend County Vegetable Conference **\*ATC**

**Feb 4**—Monthly Workday in the gardens

**Feb 9**—FBMG Green Thumb program, "Plant Propagation" 7:00 PM, U of H Cinco Ranch

**Feb 11**—FBMG Fruit Tree Sale

**Feb 20-21**—Landscape Design Study Course II, Series XX. College Station, TX. **\*ATC**

**Feb 21**—Sugar Land Garden Club meeting. "Creating Your Own Tropical Sanctuary" by Linda Gay, Director of Mercer Arboretum. 10 AM, Sugar Land Community Center **\*ATC**

**Feb 22**—Spring 2006 Master Gardener Classes begin (Evening class)

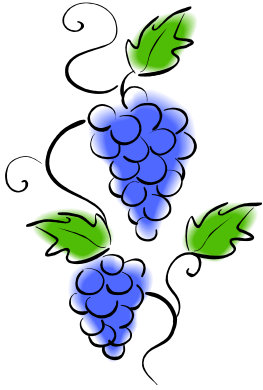
**Mar 9**—FBMG Green Thumb program, "Home Lawn Care" 7:00 PM, U of H Cinco Ranch

**Mar 18**—Perennial Sale!

**May 4, 5 & 6**—State Master Gardener Conference in College Station! Besure to make hotel reservations now!!

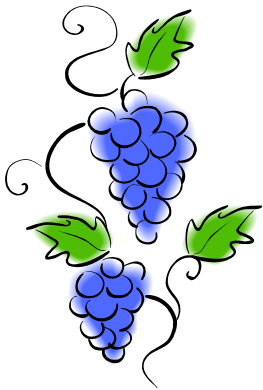
**Mark Your Calendar Now!**

# Reminders



**You can have your own By-Line! Submit an article for the "Gardening With Little Ones" column**

**The deadline to submit articles for the Mar/Apr edition of the Grapevine is February 17. Send articles in electronic format to the Editor at [mccaugheymb@aol.com](mailto:mccaugheymb@aol.com)**



Texas Cooperative Extension  
Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.  
1402 Band Road, Suite 100  
Rosenberg, TX 77471

## Editors

Mary Beth McCaughey  
Margo "Mac" McDowell

## Contributing Authors

Sallie Bourgeois, Jodie Douglass, Peg d'Hemecourt, Sheredith Heitzenrater, Cheryl Huber, Elisabeth Jones, Mary Beth McCaughey, Margo "Mac" McDowell, Roberta Owen, Pete Pavlovsky, Becky Smith, Dr. William C. Welch

The

**G**rapevine



is published by and for the members of Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc.

Ron Jerido  
CEA-Horticulture