



# THE GRAPEVINE



Volume XV, Issue 5

*Fort Bend County  
Master Gardeners, Inc.*

September-October 2005

## In a Nutshell...

By Jeff McMullan, President, FBMG S2001

I'm usually pretty good about getting my Grapevine article done ahead of the deadline. This time I was dreadfully late. We've been on the go for weeks as summer comes (hopefully) to a close. First there was Joanne's family reunion in Pennsylvania in early August. We were home only a few days before leaving for Jackson Hole, Wyoming to escape our brutal August heat. When I dutifully reported our safe return, my folks suggested that I come to Baton Rouge for a few days. Joanne had a business trip planned later in the week, but I postponed my decision until I got to sleep in my own bed for a couple of nights. Hurricane Katrina headed in to Florida bound for the Gulf, so I decided I probably should make one more trip.

My plan was to drive over to Baton Rouge, make sure that hurricane plans were adequate and then come home well ahead of any bad weather. My chores were done when I awoke on Saturday, but by then Katrina's path and the forecast were looking bad. I-10 was already filled with cars fleeing the storm and, while filling my truck with gas I decided that I should probably stay put. On Sunday morning, Katrina strengthened to Category 5 and I knew the Gulf Coast was in for a terrible time. Katrina moved inland wreaking destruction on Monday, but my hurricane preparations were adequate (barely). Downed trees took out the power lines, but the phones still worked and everyone we called had weathered the storm with only minor damage. Our cleanup was over quickly and we awaited the return of electric power in quiet, sultry darkness. On Tuesday the power company crews were working in the neighborhood so I packed up and headed home.

Westbound on I-10, I was comforted by the Nation Guard convoys, dozens (if not hundreds) of utility crews, and all manner of people and equipment in route to the devastated Gulf Coast. Roadside signs directed evacuees to shelters. The rest areas were filled with dazed families in quiet discussion of where to go and what to do. Awaiting a fast food hamburger, a father nervously suggested that they just take a vacation somewhere; no one thought that it was a good idea.

It was after I got home and turned on the television in my air conditioned living room that I became fully aware of the huge loss due to Katrina. My family was very, very fortunate. Lots of people will be needing lots of help for a long, long time.

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the Fall 2005 Associates. Enjoy your classes and we'll see you in the gardens.

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**Don't Miss the  
BAZAAR FOR ALL  
SEASONS  
on October 29.**





## **SEPTEMBER MONTHLY PROGRAM:**

"The Ecological City: Just How Green is it?" Dr. John Jacob Texas A & M University Associate Professor and Extension Specialist will discuss the impact of development on the environment and best management practices to reduce that impact.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22**  
**SOCIAL TIME—6:45 PM PROGRAM—7:15 PM**  
**MEMBER MEETING FOLLOWS THE  
PROGRAM**

**BUD O'SHEILES COMMUNITY CENTER**  
**1402 BAND ROAD, ROSENBERG**

## **COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

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

### **Upcoming Monthly Programs**

**Thursday, October 27** – "Sustainable Soil Health"  
Peter Cangelosi of San Jacinto Environmental will discuss soil health and fertility and offer advice on achieving sustainable soil health.

**Thursday, November 17**- "Plants Growing in the Lazy Gardener's Garden" Brenda Beust Smith, the Lazy Gardener, will share tips on gardening with plants that are colorful, easy care and long lived.

There will be no monthly program in December—mark you calendars now for the annual Awards Banquet on December 7.



### **Upcoming Green Thumb Seminars**

University of Houston at Cinco Ranch  
7—9 PM

**Thursday, September 8, 2005** – "Plant Growth & Disease Control" by Aleta Patrick (FBMG Fall 2003)

**Thursday, October 13, 2005** – "Soil & Composting" by Mary Beth McCaughey (FBMG Fall 2000)

## **Notes from Mac**

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



I know you all have heard me mention about how time just seems to evaporate. We go from starting one class to starting plant sales to announcing work days to graduating another class to organizing the bazaar to planning the awards banquet. And... (take a breath) in between we have fun going to conferences, mini-seminars and tours. Right now, we are in the beginning stages of another class, and getting to the tail end of working and planning the bazaar, plus a lot more!

We have 26 new faces in our Master Gardener family. Please welcome: Tricia Bradbury, James Buckley, Pat Crowder, Glenn & Brenda Dresner, Robin Eversole, Ellen Frank, Doyle Haas, Shaku Karkada, Deborah Le, Nancy Lindsey, Nicole Masullo, Ken Matthews, Diane Matula, JoAnne Mitton, Pam Nash, Patricia Novak, Rebecca Opich, Jerri Ostendorf, Cindy Pack, Danielle Raffield, Delores Reeves, Eileen Reichert, Shellye Schmorleitz, Shobha Shekhar, and Nancy York. They are excited to be part of Master Gardeners, and in some cases, have waited for a long time for the chance to take this class. Welcome!

One of the items that changed for this class is that we have gone back to the "committee" style for "green time" hours. The landscape requirement for the past couple of classes was to work in at least 4-6 gardens at either 1-3 hours each. So we found that Associates were working one garden for a couple of hours (or an hour) then flying to the next garden to complete that requirement. Not only was it hard for the Associates, but it was hard on the Landscape Committees. We've come to the conclusion that this system didn't work well because we couldn't pass knowledge back and forth between each other, the committees weren't growing, and people didn't get to know each other either. And you all know that I'm a proponent for building that relationship first! Even though the gardens themselves didn't look like they suffered – they are all beautiful – but the committees suffered. Remember the old "Committee Sign-Up Book"? That's what is in place again! The class has signed up for at least 3 gardens they would like to be "part of", and the fun begins for everyone.

I wanted to mention to everyone that Woody Coppedge (S04) who has been Chairperson of the Roses for about a year now has decided to step down as Chair. Woody worked very hard trying to ensure that the roses were always in tip-top shape. Woody did a great job, and we all thank him! It's amazing to see how that garden has grown because I remember when it was planted.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Notes from Mac

*(Continued from page 2)*

Boy, the Bazaar Committee is fun to watch! They have been busy for months working on their projects and now is the time for all of the work to come to fruition. Oh my goodness, the talent! The Bazaar for All Seasons will be held on October 29<sup>th</sup> at the Community Center from 9am – 5pm. Some of the projects have an educational emphasis! The committee is planning to have mini seminars scheduled throughout the day, and the idea popped up that we could also have tours of our display gardens at scheduled times. We still are such an unknown entity in this county, this will be a good opportunity to help folks understand more about us. By having the tours of the demonstration gardens, we we'll have the opportunity for the public to see us as Master Gardeners in action, and show off our gardens! We certainly could use help in this area, and would love to have several Master Gardeners take part in showing our gardeners off. Of course, we would all get together beforehand – none of us could do this cold!

One of the things I'm excited about is having a new Awards Director! Carolyn McDaniel has graciously decided to take on this new role! Carolyn is a graduate of the Fall 2001 class, and has been a solid certified member ever since. Her responsibilities will include the organization of FBMG awards and the recognition program, and coordinate efforts to produce and submit awards to the Texas Master Gardener Association.

I hope you all consider where you can play a part in Master Gardeners be it on the new awards committee, a landscape committee, or perhaps you see a need that we aren't fulfilling. Think about this, and give me call.

See you all soon!

### **A Special Thank You** From the FBMG Board of Directors

You've probably all read in Margo's APBees that Amy Ping, FBMG S2001, has resigned as Landscape Director. While we're sorry to hear of this decision, we appreciate and respect Amy's need to concentrate more of her time on her family and business. Amy served as Landscape Director for more than three years and made significant contributions to the design and beauty of our Display Gardens. We learned a lot from Amy and her efforts guiding the garden committees will be missed. We'll look forward to seeing you as your time permits Amy.

*"Thank You!"*



**Mark Your Calendars!**

**Saturday, October 29**  
**9 AM—5 PM**

**Bud O'Sheiles Community Center**

**Bazaar will feature:**

**Craft and Gift items**  
**"How To" Seminars**  
**Guided Tours of the Display Gardens**

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### **Preparing for the Bazaar For All Seasons**

**By Barbara Brannon, Fundraising Committee Chair,**  
**FBMG 1999**

The Bazaar committee is feverishly working to complete many of the projects started earlier in the year. We are always looking for help and will find something for everyone to do! We are currently meeting every other Wednesday. Our next meeting is Wednesday September 7th. Start time is 4 PM and we usually wrap it up about 8 PM. Meetings will be held every other Wednesday through September and starting in October we will meet every Wednesday. Projects currently in progress include Santa Claus picket fences, wreaths, bird houses, and tree ornaments to name a few. We are still looking for some to make purses and jewelry and someone that can sew. If you can help please come by and see us or let me know at lilbit-mom@aol.com or 281-533-9522. NEW ideas are always welcome.

The Bazaar for All Seasons will be held on Saturday October 29 from 9-5 PM in the Bud O' Shieles Community center. New this year there will be several "HOW TO" seminars—including Growing Herbs, Making Bird Houses, Ways to Cook With What We Grow, and Wreath Making and there will be several guided tours of our display gardens throughout the day. We are also looking for people to volunteer to help with setup on October 28 and with sales, seminars and tours on October 29. This will be a great event—we encourage you to find a way to participate!



## LANDSCAPE UPDATES

### Herbal Knot Garden News

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

Well, I'm trying to pick up from my 4 month break due to moving and illness. I'd like to thank Dell Keene and Jodie Douglass for overseeing all the work in the Knot Garden these past few months. Almost everything is so nice and green. Plus, Dell did a lot of hard-scape work in the garden which really tidied it up.

As usual for this area, it was a hot, hot, hot summer. In June we saw very little rain. Mid-July, we had a week-plus deluge, and now August, has been hit or miss on the precipitation. All that said, 90% of the plants in the Knot Garden have weathered it well. Of course, the best part of this summer was the electrical installation of the irrigation system and fountain (thank you, Doug Staff!). Now the garden can take whatever Mother Nature dishes out!

The plants that are really thriving and taking the heat are the Vitex, Bay Laurel, and Magnolia trees. The roses are doing extremely well, as is the Mexican Bush Sage, Mexican Mint Marigold, and Rosemary. I've never seen Rosemary grow so high! The chives and basil are blooming and attracting lots of bees. Let's put it this way, some of the plants are doing "too" well and are dwarfing the boxwood/yaupon hedge. My only real disappointment is the two Buddleias (Butterfly bushes) in the center of the Wildlife quadrant. They were beautiful last year with tons of butterflies in the middle of summer. This summer, I'm not sure if they've been hit by disease or what. If anyone visits the garden and has an idea on this problem, please let me know.

With the coming Fall, workdays in this garden will include the usual weeding, planting of cool season herbs, and some pruning. The back area still needs planting, but in the mean time, we're prepping the soil for the future.

### Vegetable Garden Update

By Susan Brodmerkel, Vegetable Committee Chair, FBMG, F2001

Two significant practices initiated by the FBMG Vegetable Committee this season promise to increase organic matter, maintain better water retention, ultimately improve soil fertility, and increase vegetable production.

Trench composting, presently practiced in Vegetable Garden Bed Three, and the Strawberry Bed near the Annex will be expanded to all garden beds. In addition, calcium foliar spray is expected to continue in vegetable production for at least the next two seasons.

"Currently, the results are anecdotal, but initial results on a planting of purple hull peas, certainly show promise," said Brodmerkel.

Ben Hobbs, FBMG F2002, has been using the calcium supplement, Calcium25, in his home garden for the past two years. "I have experienced a bumper crop of snap beans the past two years. Applying as a foliar spray, I extended using calcium on all my vegetables as well as blackberries this season. I noted increased root growth on corn and beans which I also expect when I pull my tomato plants."

"While my results are anecdotal," Hobbs said, "there is significant evidence that calcium is important for plant cell wall integrity, root development and leaf growth. In addition, it is recognized that calcium provides increased bacterial population in the soil which will convert locked up nutrients to make them available to the plants."

Confessing to looking for the magic potion, Hobbs began to expand his research into soil improvement. "I stumbled onto the writings of William A. Albrecht, Ph.D. professor of Soils at the University of Missouri College of Agriculture, prior to WWII. His ideas were tossed aside with the advent of chemical fertilizers."

Some of Dr. Albrecht's most controversial work was with the addition of calcium. He proclaimed that calcium is not only the prince of nutrients, it is the king. His research indicated that calcium and magnesium are nutrients lacking in most soils. He admonished agriculturists to feed the soil, not the plant.

Looking for a calcium product, Hobbs selected Calcium25, noting its availability in an organic farm publication. Magnesium, one tablespoon per gallon of water, is applied with the foliar spraying of compost tea. "Did my improved results come from five years of soil improvement, addition of calcium and magnesium, or foliar fertilizing, or all the above,?" Hobbs questions.

Trench composting is simply composting in a garden bed where the compost is eventually needed. The eight foot (8') wide garden beds allow two three foot (3') beds with a two foot (2") walkway down the center. The walkway is excavated approximately one foot deep and filled with plant wastes, leaves and grass clippings. The walkway prevents compacting of the planting area soil. After a season, the walkway compost is tilled and added to the grow beds to increase organic matter and humus.

### Sources:

Let's Live: Albrecht articles, 1953, Let's Live Magazine, January 1953 (Internet document)

William A. Albrecht, Only Balanced Soil Fertility Grows Balanced Rations, P. 10, Acres USA, Feb. 2005

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Landscape Updates

(Continued from page 4)

### Japanese Garden Update

By Cheryl Huber, Japanese Garden Committee Chair, FBMG S2004

I would like to welcome the new class to the Master Gardener program. I would also like to have an opportunity to introduce them to the Japanese Garden and invite them to join our committee. We're investigating the possibility of touring other Japanese Gardens, some locally and others around the state. There is a great deal to learn from others about the art of imitating nature in gardening. Did you know that that the curved black rock path in our Japanese Garden represents water? Come learn with us. We would love your input, to help us improve on the garden and to give us more ideas for our home gardens as well.

### From the Vineyard

By Pete Pavlovsky, Grape Committee Chair, FBMG S2000

Welcome to all the soon to be Master Gardeners. Thank you to everyone that signed up for the Grape Committee. It will be a fun learning experience. And a special thanks to all the grape committee members that helped get the vineyard in the great shape it is in today, especially Doug Staff and his partime volunteer. There is not a lot of work to be done in the vineyard until February 2006 at which time we will prune the grapes and store some cuttings for propagation. There has been some interest in the cut vines for use in wreath making. That is a perfect example of recycling.

## **Ag'tivity Barn Time at the Fair!**

The Fort Bend County Fair is just around the corner. Work on the Ag'tivity Barn by Texas Cooperative Extension (main office) and the Fort Bend Master Gardeners has been in the works for several months now. For those of you not familiar with this program, the Ag'tivity Barn is an educational exhibit which spotlights the Ag Industries, including horticulture, in Fort Bend County. It's a chance for the people in our area, namely the youth, to see what great resources we have in this county.

The fair begins with a parade on Fair Day, September 23, and ends on October 1st. The fair officially opens when the parade is finished. From 11am on Fair Day through the last day of the fair we must man the Ag'tivity Barn booths. You will have the chance to talk with people about your passion – gardening!

We need volunteers to man the horticulture booth during the hours that the Fair is open to the public which includes: Friday, September 23rd from 11 am to 9 pm (3 shifts available), Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 9 pm (3 shifts available), Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 11 am to 9 pm (3 shifts available), Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup> through Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> from 5 pm to 9 pm and Saturday, October 1st from 10 am to 9 pm (3 shifts available). We need 2 volunteers on each shift. Everyone who signs up to help will receive a handout detailing all the information for the exhibit.

We will also need volunteers to help with school/daycare group tours of the entire exhibit. The groups will be escorted on tours each morning beginning September 26<sup>th</sup> through September 29<sup>th</sup> and we need help from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm each of these days. Volunteers will help to get kids from activity to activity and you will be provided with all the information needed.

Please contact Mac if you would like to volunteer, and she can let you know what time slots are available – of course, there is volunteer time doing this! Joe Mask, our new Agriculture Agent, is doing a great job with Ag'tivity Barn. But we really need your help as Master Gardeners to proudly show off our exhibits and help with school tours – it will be a fun time!

## **New Column!**

### **Gardening with Little Ones**



Is there a "little one" in your life that makes your gardening more enjoyable? Perhaps your child, a neighbor or a visiting grandkid who is fascinated with seeds, bugs, or just playing in the dirt? Or, like some of us, is the little family member in your life a pet—one who amuses you during your gardening chores?

In the next Grapevine we'll begin a new column to share anecdotes and information about "gardening with little ones." This could include everything from helping a child understand the beauty of nature, to tips on discouraging your dog from digging up your vegetable garden. We'd love to have your input—a few sentences or a paragraph or two (please limit to no more than 300 words).

Send your contributions to the Editor, Mary Beth McCaughey, at [mccaugheymb@aol.com](mailto:mccaugheymb@aol.com).





## Greet The Gardener

By Sheredith Heitzenrater,  
FBMG S2002

Imagine meeting your future spouse as a blind date at a Halloween party. Master Gardeners Jodie and Terry Douglass did! She was raised as a city girl in San Antonio and he was a farm boy from Lawrence, Kansas. They met in 1959 and married the next year. They have two grown children, a granddaughter, and a wonderful Rat Terrier named Daisy.

Their first gardening experience came in a big way. When they married they moved to a farm in Kansas and proceeded to put in about ¾ acre of vegetable garden. This was Jodie's first experience with growing anything and she quickly learned what canning, freezing and preserving was all about. They admit 1964 was the most fabulous year ever for gardening. They put in 24 tomato plants and couldn't harvest them fast enough. It was quite a learning experience.

Jodie had attended a business college and worked for Proctor & Gamble. Terry had some college under his belt when he landed a job in data processing with Hallmark Cards. Wanting to avoid the cold weather they later pursued jobs in Texas and eventually ended up just outside of Sugar Land.

While building their new home several years ago, Jodie decided to take the Master Gardener classes so she could learn the right things to do with their landscaping. Terry just went along for the ride but got interested in the research aspects. Now he mans the Master Gardener Hotline several times each week. He claims the most frequently asked questions involve lawns, or when and what vegetables to plant in this area. Jodie works on the Herb Garden committee. She also volunteers as Chair of the Green Thumb Seminars. She presents the Green Thumb Landscaping seminar and Terry presents the Lawn and Lawn Maintenance seminar. Jody is also completing th Landscape Design Study courses.

Jodie says she was a member of a Garden Club for over 10 years and pretty much did things on the "trial and error" method. She felt the Master Gardener classes were such enlightenment. Now she understands why some of those early efforts died. Terry is still amazed at how many different things affect the individual plants. The system at their home works this way—Jodie plants it and it is up to Terry to keep it alive. Well, most of the time! In their backyard Jodie has one rule: if it doesn't bloom like she wants it to – it gets pulled!

Jodie's favorite flowers are the Crinum Lilies. Her flowerbeds reflect that interest and she has all sizes. Terry says tomatoes are still his favorite plants to fool with. Besides gardening, Jodie collects antiques, especially glassware, and likes to quilt. Terry would like to fish but instead collects thimbles and old silverware.

It gives him something to do at all of the antique shows Jodie loves to visit.

If you have ever wondered what it was like to have to pump your water everyday at your house, and run outside to the outhouse in cold weather, just stop Terry and let him reminisce. He might even tell you all about picking potatoes for spending money when he was in high school. Do call Jodie and ask for a tour of their yard. She would love to show off her rare Brown Bean Tree that her daughter brought back from the Orient!

## Composting Is Nature's Way of RECYCLING!

By Mary Beth McCaughey,  
Vice President, FBMG S2000



In Texas, more than 20 million tons of compostable organic materials like yard trimmings, food waste and paper go into landfills every year. When these materials decompose in a landfill, methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) is released.

In urban areas of Texas, as much as half of the water supply is used for landscape and garden watering. Using compost and mulch helps soil absorb and retain moisture, which can reduce watering requirements by fifty percent and reduce runoff into lakes and streams. Mulch and compost also insulate plants against extreme heat and cold, and slowly release nutrients that promote plant growth and resistance to pest diseases.

Fall is a great time to begin composting—grass clippings (nitrogen) are still plentiful and leaves (carbon) will soon be available. Consider adding a compost pile to your home garden this fall.

### "In the Garden With Urban Harvest"

Did you know that the Sunday Houston Chronicle has some great horticulture information—in the Real Estate section? Every week, the "In the Garden With Urban Harvest" features articles by local horticulture experts. They include Dr. Bob Randall, Director of Urban Harvest; Heidi Sheesley, owner of TreeSearch Farms; and Mark Bowen, author of Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast.

### Looking for Things To Do in Fort Bend County?

Be sure to visit [www.fortbendcalendar.com](http://www.fortbendcalendar.com) to find out about events and activities in our area. A number of local horticulture and environmental groups, including FBMG, post information on this site. Check out this site when you get a chance!

## Officer Elections!

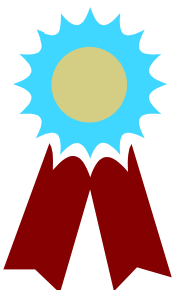
The Fort Bend Master Gardeners efforts are coordinated by our Board of Directors, under the leadership of the elected officers. The officers – President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are elected by our members. The elected officers, along with the Immediate Past President, make up the Executive Committee. The additional members of the Board, the Directors of our Standing Committees - Awards, Communications, Community Relations, Greenhouse, Landscape and Member Relations – are appointed by the Executive Committee in January of each year.

Officers serve for two year terms and the current terms expire at the end of 2005. With that in mind, a Nominating Committee has been formed to propose a slate of officers to serve from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2007. Membership Director, Sallie Bourgeois, FBMG F1999, is heading up the Nominating Committee. Any member in good standing (you must be certified and have paid your dues for 2005) is eligible to run for elected office. If you are interested in placing your name up for nomination to one of the officer positions, please let Sallie know by September 30<sup>th</sup>. She can be reached at [LBourgeois1@houston.rr.com](mailto:LBourgeois1@houston.rr.com) or by phone at 281-463-6753.

The Nominating Committee will propose a slate of officers at the October 20<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting, and additional nominations for each of the positions will be taken from the floor during the meeting. The full slate of candidates will be published in the November/December issue of the Grapevine. The actual election will then take place at the November 17<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting. You must be present to vote in the election and it takes 25% of the membership to make the election valid – so please mark your calendar for the meeting. You won't want to miss "The Lazy Gardener's presentation that night—so come out that night to support FBMG.

If you are interested in helping in another leadership capacity – say as the Director of one of the committees, please also let Sallie Bourgeois know. We want to keep FBMG a vibrant organization and involving new people with fresh ideas is part of the process!

### **AWARDS!**



**The recently formed FBMG Awards Committee will coordinate internal recognition of our members at the annual Awards Banquet on December 7th and will formulate the applications for state awards.**

**Welcome Awards Director  
Carolyn McDaniel,  
FBMG F2001**



## **Bylaws Update and New Operations Manual**

By Mary Beth McCaughey, Vice President,  
FBMG S2000

A committee of volunteers has been at work for a number of months in an effort to update the Bylaws for Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc. The update is necessary to reflect changes in the way our organization runs—such as detailing the provisions for additional financial controls that have been implemented over the past year, and the new Lifetime membership category that was created to recognize Wayne Rhoden when he moved from Fort Bend County. The effort will also include specifications recommended for all Nonprofit organizations under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. The specifications include verbiage concerning gifts and donations, dissolution, document retention and other “housekeeping” provisions aimed at improving the way Nonprofit organizations are run. Once the Board of Directors has finalized and approved the updated Bylaws, the membership will be notified and a vote to approve them will be conducted. We anticipate that the vote will be conducted some time before the end of calendar 2005.

In addition to the work on the Bylaws, the committee is also drafting an Operations Manual that will outline the details of the administration of FBMG. The Operations Manual is intended to supplement the Bylaws and to provide our membership with a better understanding of procedures, requirements for re-certification and membership, detailed responsibilities of the Board of Directors, Committee Chairs, Hotline volunteers and a host of other volunteer jobs. The Operations Manual will be distributed along with the proposed Bylaws.

FBMG members Sallie Bourgeois, Peg d'Hemecourt, Diana Jetter, Mary Beth McCaughey and Margo McDowell have been working on this project. It's not as fun as gardening—but it is one of those tasks necessary to keep FBMG a top-notch organization!

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### **Did You Know ... ?**

The first Master Gardener class was taught in Fort Bend County in 1989. As of August 11, there were 212 members in FBMG. This is everyone who certified and paid dues for 2005. It does not include the Associates in the Spring 2005 class or the new Associates in the Fall 2005 class. Of the membership:

- 11% took the Master Gardener class before 2000
- 12% took the Master Gardener class in 2000
- 8% took the Master Gardener class in 2001
- 19% took the Master Gardener class in 2002
- 20% took the Master Gardener class in 2003
- 30% took the Master Gardener class in 2004



## Garden Checklist For South & East Texas

By Dr. William C. Welch  
Professor and Extension Horticulturist

### SEPTEMBER

- Rejuvenate heat-stressed geraniums and begonias for the fall season by lightly pruning, fertilizing, and watering.
- Caladiums require plenty of water at this time of year if they are to remain lush and attractive until fall. Fertilize with ammonium sulfate at the rate of 1/2 to 2 pounds per 100 square feet of bed area, and water thoroughly.
- Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture. Hollies will frequently drop their fruit under drought conditions.
- Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off major pruning until midwinter. Pruning now may stimulate tender growth prior to frost.
- Divide spring-flowering perennials such as irises, Shasta daisies, gaillardias, cannas, day lilies, violets, liriopse, and ajuga. Reset divisions into well prepared soil with generous amounts of organic material worked into the top 8 to 10 inches.
- Prepare the beds for spring-flowering bulbs as soon as possible. It is important to cultivate the soil and add generous amounts of organic matter to improve the water drainage. Bulbs will rot without proper drainage.
- Plantings at this time can provide landscape color for three seasons. Annuals set out early enough will bloom as soon as Thanksgiving, and frequently last until Memorial Day. Annuals that should soon be available in nurseries and garden shops include petunias, calendulas, pansies, snapdragons, stock, sweet peas, and violas (from seed).



- Christmas cactus can be made to flower by supplying 12 hours of uninterrupted darkness and cool nights (55 degrees F.) for a month, starting in mid-October. Keep plants on the dry side for a month prior to treatment.
- Replenish mulches around trees and shrubs, and water every 3 to 5 days.
- Start cool-season vegetables, such as mustard, lettuce, arugula, broccoli, carrots, and turnips, from seed in well prepared beds.

### OCTOBER

- October through November is an excellent time to purchase bulbs while you still have a good selection in the garden center. They may be planted at any time with the exception of tulips and hyacinths.
  - Chill tulip and hyacinth bulbs in the refrigerator until mid or late December before planting. The lower part of the refrigerator is best. Do not leave bulbs in airtight bags during refrigerated storage.
  - Plant bulbs in well prepared beds so the base of the bulb is at a depth that is three times the diameter of the bulb. In sandy soil, set slightly deeper and in clay soils less deeply.
  - In addition to bulbs, check your nursery or garden center for started plants of snapdragons, pinks, sweet williams, poppies, and calendulas. Planted now, they will usually provide a riot of spring color; wait until late winter or early spring to plant in north Texas.
- 
- Keep Christmas cactus in a sunny spot where night temperatures can be kept below 65 degrees F. or if you allow the plant to become excessively dry. They should also be kept in total darkness from 5:00 pm until 8:00 am for about 30 days in October to initiate flower buds.
  - If you have saved seeds of your favorite plants, allow them to become air dry, then place them in an airtight container and store in the refrigerator. Be sure to label each packet carefully. Remember, seed from hybrid plants will seldom resemble the parent plant.
  - Prepare beds for planting pansies when the soil has cooled. They need a well-drained soil and exposure to at least a half-day of sun.
  - There is still time to divide and reset such perennials as phlox, violets, hollyhocks, irises, day lilies, and shasta daisies.
  - October is a good time to reduce the insect and disease potential in next year's garden. Clean up the garden, removing all annuals that have completed their life cycle. Remove the tops of all herbaceous perennials that have finished flowering or as soon as frost has killed the leaves.
  - Holly plants with a heavy set of fruit often suffer a fertilizer deficiency. An application of complete fertilizer late this month can be helpful and provide a head start next spring.
  - Plant seeds of sweet peas during October/November. Select a site where there is at least a half-day of sun and protection from north winds.



## Fall is a Great Time to Plant Perennials!

By Monica Zacher, FBMG S1998

The Sugar Land Garden Club will host the 7th Annual Garden Art and Plant Sale on Saturday, September 24th. The sale will feature perennials and hard to find plants from Treesearch Farms. These will be plants that have proven they can stand up to the heat, drought and rains that are all part of living on the Gulf Coast! Many of the plants attract butterflies and/or hummingbirds, many are native to this area and others are proven WaterSmart plants – those that require less water plus little or no fertilizers or pesticides to thrive here. The sale is Saturday, September 24 from 8:30 AM to 1 PM at 930 Sugar Lakes Drive (Sugar Lakes Subdivision) in Sugar Land.

Heidi Sheesley, owner of Treesearch Farms and a good friend to gardening organizations, will be the featured speaker at the September 20th Garden Club meeting. She will provide an overview of the plants—old favorites and new selections—that will be featured at the Garden Art and Plant Sale the following Saturday. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 20th, 10 AM at the Sugar Land Community Center, 226 Matlage Way in Sugar Land. The meeting is free and open to the public, anyone with an interest in gardening or horticulture is welcome to attend. *This meeting qualifies for FBMG Advanced Training credit. There will be a sign-in sheet at the meeting.*

Proceeds from Sugar Land Garden Club fundraisers are used within the community, including scholarships at Texas A&M and Stephen F. Austin Universities, support for Habitat for Humanity, the Fort Bend Women's Center and East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministries, library donations, and support for environmental education programs.

A few of the plants that will be available at the sale:

- 2 new Passion Vines—"Blue Bouquet" with unique coloring and "Vietnam" a stunning red bloomer
- Almond Verbena—a small, delicate looking tree with a wonderful scent. Butterflies love this one!
- A number of new Gingers for the area—including Yellow Trumpet Ginger, Mauve Dancing Lady and Purple Prince
- Several Abutilons—including "Magic Lantern" which blooms from spring through fall. Hummingbirds adore Abutilons.
- Natives include—Sweet Autumn Clematis, Native Prairie Aster, spring-blooming Penstemons, White Native Turk's Cap and more

For more information about Heidi's talk on Sept. 20 or the plants to be offered at the sale on Sept. 24, visit [www.sugarlandgardenclub.org](http://www.sugarlandgardenclub.org) or call Evelyn Coe at 281-565-9813.

## Dates to Remember

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



**Sep 5**— Labor Day, all County offices closed

**Sept 8**—Green Thumb Seminar, "Plant Growth and Disease Control", 7-9 PM, U of H Cinco Ranch, Rm 118

**Sep 10**—Monthly workday in the gardens

**Sep 19-20**—Landscape Design Study Course I, Series XX. College Station \*ATC

**Sep 20**—Sugar Land Garden Club meeting. "Old Treasures and Dazzling New Discoveries for Your Garden" by Heidi Sheesley. Sugar Land Community Center \*ATC

**Sep 22**—FBMG monthly program, "The Ecological City: Just How Green Is It?", by Dr. John Jacob with Texas Sea Grant Cooperative Extension. 7:15 PM, Bud O'Sheiles Community Center. \*ATC

**Sep 24**—Sugar Land Garden Club Garden Art and Plant Sale. 930 Sugar Lakes Drive, Sugar Land. 8:30 AM to 1 PM

**Sep 24**—Wildscapes Workshop. U of H Central Campus, Houston. 9 AM to 3 PM. \*ATC

**Oct 1**—Monthly workday in the gardens

**Oct 27**—FBMG monthly program, "Sustainable Soil Health", by Peter Cangelosi of San Jacinto Environmental. 7:15 PM, Bud O'Sheiles Community Center. \*ATC **Nominations for FBMG officers will be finalized at this meeting.**

**Oct 28**—Setup for the Bazaar for All Seasons

**Oct 29**—Bazaar for All Seasons. Merchandise, seminars and guided tours of the display gardens. Bud O'Sheiles Community Center. 9 AM to 5 PM.

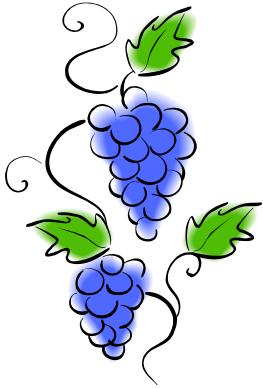
**Nov 3**—Graduation for Spring 2005 class

**Nov 4&5**—District Master Gardener Conference, Montgomery County. Call Margo for details. \*ATC

**Nov 5**—Monthly workday in the gardens

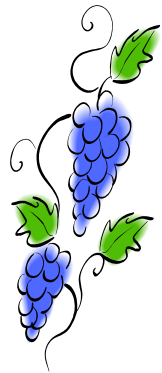
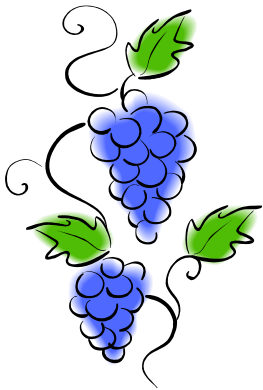
**Nov 17**—FBMG monthly program, "Plants Growing In the Lazy Gardener's Garden", by Brenda Beust Smith, the Lazy Gardener. 7:15 PM, Bud O'Sheiles Community Center. \*ATC **FBMG Officers will be elected at this meeting.**

# Reminders



**Take a minute and  
submit your volunteer  
and advanced training  
hours to Margo  
(a.k.a “Mac”)**

**The deadline to submit  
articles for the Nov/Dec  
edition of the Grapevine is  
October 19. Send articles in  
electronic format to the  
Editor at  
mccaugheymb@aol.com**



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