

Urban Dirt

IN COOPERATION WITH THE TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Tomatoes and Peppers, Oh My!

By Linda Carlson

Harris County Master Gardener, Publicity Chair

Now is the time to be thinking of your Spring vegetable garden and at the top of your list "Tomatoes and Peppers". Those tomato lovers can probably taste those home grown tomatoes right now.

The annual Tomato-pepper Sale on February 26th. The sale times are 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. and will be located at the Harris County Extension office at 3033 Bear Creek Drive.

A long list of tomato varieties will be available including old favorites such as Celebrity, Champion, Carmello, Beefmaster, Bush Early Girl, Carnival, Dona and Goliath. In additions, we have Montfavet, Luscious and Bush Celebrity along with sauce types Roma VF and Enchantment.

There will also be a variety of cherry tomatoes: Cherry Orange, Juliet (grape type), Sweet Chelsea and Sungold. This year we are introducing a new cherry tomato, Snow White, an ivory colored tomato ripening to a pale yellow and deliciously sweet.

Fourteen different varieties of peppers will be offered this year including bell peppers; Big Bertha and Golden Summer. Other sweet peppers include LaParie, Sweet Banana, and Giant Marconi. Then we have mildly hot: TAM Jalapeno and for those who really like it HOT: Jaloro, Red Savina and Native Pequin.

We will have Green Eggplant again this year and I have grown this variety and it is delicious. Try it - you will like it!

Basil, one of our tastiest herbs, completes the list for this sale. We have Sweet Aussie, African Blue, Thai Siam Queen, Large Leaf Italian and sweet Basil.

We are looking forward to seeing you on February 26th. Don't forget, Precinct 2 Master Gardeners are having their sale the same day as well and will be offering many exciting varieties as well. Their sale will be from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Clear Lake United Methodist Church, 16335 El Camino Real in Clear Lake.

Think Spring and "Tomatoes and Peppers, Oh, My".

Volunteers Needed

Come help with setup on
Friday, February 25th and
with the sale on Saturday
the 26th.

Contact **Scott Hume** at
(281)855-5600 to sign
up.



President's Thoughts

By Doug McLeod

Harris County Master Gardener Association President



We are starting the new year with a new extension advisor. Carol is our new advisor and am sure she will enjoy working with the master gardeners. Cold weather will be over in our area by next month and the gardens at the extension center will be worked by very hard working MG's.

Ken Dorman left the board of directors and went fishing. Carolyn Cannon has replaced Ken. Am sure she will be an asset to the board.

Recently my wife & I toured Morocco for a couple of weeks and was a wonderful trip as we were in the snow in the mountains and it rained on us in the Sahara Desert. The cities in Morocco had elaborate gardens planted and the Rose was everywhere. The major streets were usually lined on both sides with orange trees. It is quite a sight to see so many oranges while driving down a street.

Happy Gardening



Harris County Master Gardener Association
3033 Bear Creek Drive (281) 855-5600
Houston, TX 77084 FAX (281) 855-5638

2004-2005 Board of Directors

President Doug McLeod
(281) 870-1907

1st Vice President Robert White
(713) 218-8261

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MG Advisors:

CEA – Horticulture Carol Brouwer
(281) 855-5600

Horticulture Secretary Becky Deasy
(281) 855-5600

Volunteer Coordinator Scott Hume
(281) 855-5600

Book Committee Anne O'Neil
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Greeting Committee Margaret Mason
Gloria Robb & Joyce Flott

Gulf Coast Fruit Study Group Yvonne Gibbs
(713) 462-7052

Hospitality Committee Jean Gordon
(281) 463-1221

Membership Tom Robb
(713) 465-5987

Publicity Linda Carlson
(281) 955-8013

Speakers' Bureau Beth Grunden
(713) 461-7159

Urban Dirt Tami Pipkin
UrbanDirt@houston.rr.com



Bear Creek News & Events

Include Your Garden in the Annual HCMGA Home Tour

The Harris County Master Gardener Home Tour date has been set for **Saturday, May 21, 2005**. If you would like to have your garden included in the tour, please contact **Becky Deasy** or **Katherine Peterson** soon, soon, soon! They'll give you an application form and ask you to tell them a little bit about your garden. For more information, contact **Becky Deasy** at **(281) 855-5600**.

See you in May!

Upcoming Events at Bear Creek

Feb 1 – Hamburger Tuesday

8:00 a.m. – Workday

Noon – Hamburger luncheon (\$3 donation)

Program – **Bill Adams** on

The Hampton Court Palace Flower Show

Feb 15 – General Meeting

6:30 p.m. – Desserts

7:00 p.m. – **Tim Kiphart** on **Using Native Plants in your Landscape**

Feb 25 – Annual Tomato Pepper Sale SETUP

Feb 26 – Annual Tomato Pepper Sale

8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Lots of great varieties will be available!

Mar 1 – Hamburger Tuesday

8:00 a.m. – Workday

Noon – Hamburger luncheon (\$3 donation)

Program – **TBA**

Mar 15 – General Meeting

6:30 p.m. – Desserts

7:00 p.m. – **Brenda Beust Smith** will be speaking about her **Favorite Lazy Gardener Plants**

Texas Master Gardener Association Website Info

The Texas Master Gardeners Association has a lovely website located at <http://www.texasmastergardeners.com>. The “Members Only” page can be accessed with the password **SUNSET**. For any questions, please contact Marva Beck at marva@tconline.net.



Carol's Comments

By Carol Brouwer, PhD
CEA-Horticulture

The Horticulture Program here in the Harris County office of Texas Cooperative Extension is indebted to the Master Gardener volunteers for the hard work and dedication they give in pursuit of the Extension mission. As we begin the New Year, it is a good time to be reminded of our common goal to bring research based horticulture information to the public. Master Gardeners are people trained by Texas Cooperative Extension to assist the local County Agents in fulfilling Texas Cooperative Extension's mission to provide educational opportunities to the public. In return for this work, volunteers receive university based horticulture training they can use in their own lives along with a myriad of other benefits such as new friendships, opportunities for recognition and continuing education.

A lot of great work is already being done. For example, during 2004, the Cylinder Garden program has brought sound horticultural information to the 10850 children participating in this program. This is an increase of 1884 children from 2003. This program is not possible without the assistance of the Master Gardener volunteers. In fact, over half the teachers responding to a recent survey about the program indicated that the main reason they enrolled in the program was because they would receive the assistance of the Master Gardener volunteer.

I would personally like to thank **Melissa Geis, Glen Graves, Sam Zabia, and Art Chapman** for assisting with the behind the scenes work that makes the program possible. I would also like to thank all of the 59 volunteers who participated this year including:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Amy Adams | Diane Garcia | Matthew Marcinek | Timothy Smith |
| Lynn Anderson | Melissa Geis | Marian Marshall | Justin Sparkes |
| Carol Baez | Iris Gerken | Tracy McLaren | Yvonne Sparks |
| Teresa Ball | Janet Giannoni | Theron McLaren | Kim Stone |
| Betsy Black | Jo Graves | Amy Mollberg | Gayle Storey |
| Robin Blevens | Sandra Gottschalk | Magaly Nagpal | Brian Taranto |
| Susan Carter | Glen Graves | Gudron Opperman | Richard Veracruz |
| Mary Cessac | Mary Ellen Hahn | Ross Palmie | Margaret Wallace |
| Tamara Christensen | Holly Hand | David Pena | Marda Waters |
| Leigh Christensen | Lynne Hester | Julia Perry | George Williams |
| Darrell Cornwall | Jamie Humphries | Bobbie Pierson | Edward Wood |
| Mary DePaula | Melissa Jenson | Dianne Reiff | Ming-Li Yu |
| Kerry Faler | Patti Kent | Tami Roach | Patty Zohlen |
| Amy Fintel | Lisa Kleopfer | Bernice Sanders | |
| Janet Foy | Richard Lund | Ashwin Shah | |

I want you to know that I sincerely hope that each and every Master Gardener has an enjoyable volunteer experience that is fulfilling to both themselves and the Extension mission. Scott Hume and I are both here to help you find the right spot for you. And believe me, we have plenty of work that needs to be done. Look for a complete list of volunteer opportunities in next month's issue of Urban Dirt or call us at (281) 855-5600 for a preview. In the meantime please check the Volunteer Opportunities on **Page 5** to see what is needed at the moment.

Volunteers Needed

Thinking about Spring and working outside in your garden? Remember getting stung by those horrible fire ants? Free your yard and your neighborhood of fire ants for this summer by killing them this spring. You can help cut down on their population by volunteering to work a booth at your choice of two shows. Or volunteer for both, and get into both shows for free.

February 11–13, 2005. 19th Annual Spring Texas Home & Garden Show.

Reliant Center (Halls A, B & C). Friday: 2–9 p.m., Saturday: 10 a.m.–9 p.m., Sunday: 11 a.m.–6:30 p.m.

April 1 - 3, 2005. Houston House Beautiful Show. Reliant Center (Halls A & B).

Friday: 2–9 p.m., Saturday: 10 a.m.–9 p.m., Sunday: 11 a.m.–6:30 p.m.



Volunteers will work in shifts handing out literature and answering basic questions, receive **free admission** to the shows, and earn credit toward their Master Gardener or Master Naturalist volunteer hours!

No previous experience needed. Information on fire ants and the Fire Ant Project will be provided prior to the show.

Come join the fun as we kick fire ant ___!

To volunteer, or for further information, please call **Terrie Lenert** at (281) 855-5650.

Cylinder Gardening

Volunteers are needed to help with the Cylinder Gardening program. You have a choice of ways to assist:

1. Assist teachers by delivering materials, answering questions and possibly attending planting and harvest days at the school.
2. Delivery only. Pick up the materials at the Extension office and the drop them off at a school.
3. Volunteers are also needed to work on the Cylinder Garden Steering Committee. If you would like to assist in the planning and implementation of this program, you would make a welcome addition to this group.

No experience necessary to work in any of these capacities. We have a bumper crop enrolled this semester so please call **Carol Brouwer** at (281) 855-5600 or email c-cammack@tamu.edu if you would like to get involved.



Harris County Extension 2005 Outreach Education Seminars and Workshops



Texas Cooperative Extension offers many seminars and workshops that are open to the public. Listed below you will find the programs that are currently scheduled for 2005. All of the following will be held at the Bear Creek Extension Facility, 3033 Bear Creek Dr., Houston, TX 77084. For Registration Information call 281-855-5600.

Saturday

February 12

8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Landscape Design Plus

Design. Topics will include WaterSmart concepts, Plant Selection, Recommended Plants for Harris County, etc. The afternoon will have breakout sessions on Establishing a Drip Irrigation System and a practice landscape design.

Class Limited to 40 Lunch Included. Fee: \$50.00

Wednesday

March 16

9:00 am – 11:30 am

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Floral Design

Class instruction and hands-on assistance. Flowers and Container provided for take-home St. Patrick's Day and Easter arrangements.

Each Session Limited to 20 Refreshments. Fee: \$50.00

Saturday

April 2

8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Basics of Residential Horticulture – Part I

An introduction to the science of gardening with seasonal appropriate information.

Subject to change, the topics will include Botany, Plant Diseases, Insects, Lawn Care, Vegetable Gardening, Recommended Plants & Trees for Harris County and Internet Resources.

Class Limited to 60 Lunch Included. Fee: \$50.00

Saturday

August 13

8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Basics of Residential Horticulture – Part II

Continuing the introduction to the science of gardening with seasonal appropriate information.

Subject to change, the topics will include Composting, Lawn Diseases & Care, Bulbs, Fall Vegetable Gardening, Recommended Plants & Trees for Harris County and Tree Care & Pruning.

Class Limited to 60 Lunch Included. Fee: \$50.00

Saturday

November 19

9:00 am – 11:30 am

1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Floral Design

Class instruction and hands-on assistance. Flowers & Container provided for two take-home Thanksgiving arrangements.

Each Session Limited to 20 Refreshments. Fee: \$50.00

Saturday

December 10

9:00 am – 11:30 am

1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Floral Design

Class instruction and hands-on assistance. Flowers & Container provided for two take-home Christmas arrangements.

Each Session Limited to 20 Refreshments. Fee: \$50.00

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids, services or accommodations in order to participate in these functions should call (281) 855-5600 for assistance.

Floral Design Workshop

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

9:00 am - 11:30 am

or

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Morning Instructors:

Dr. Carol S. Cammack, CEA Horticulture

Michael T. Morrison, CEA Horticulture

Evening Instructors:

Michael T. Morrison, CEA Horticulture

Susie Miller, Designer, Houston Country Club

Learn how to create beautiful flower arrangements!

Class instruction and hands-on assistance

Flowers and Containers provided



Take home your own St. Patrick's Day and Easter Arrangements

Cost: \$50.00 Class size is limited so Register Early!

Floral Design Workshop

March 16, 2005

Fill-in and return application to:

*Texas Cooperative Extension / Harris County
 ATTN: Educational Outreach
 3033 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, TX 77084*

Tel: (281) 855-5600

FAX: (281) 855-5638

mtmorrison@ag.tamu.edu

Name: _____ Phone: (_____) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ E-mail address: _____

Make Check Payable to: Texas A&M University

Please Select one: Morning Session _____ Evening Session _____

**A PLACE WILL BE HELD FOR ONE WEEK FROM RECEIPT
 OF PHONE, FAX or E-mail REGISTRATION**

(to allow time for your check to arrive — conflicts will be resolved based on the envelope postmark)

Please tell us how you found out about this workshop _____

Volunteer Hours

See below for instructions.

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email address _____

Period covered – from _____ to _____

| Date | Facility or Garden Name | # Contacts | Hours |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|-------|
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| Total hours this worksheet | | | |

Submitting your volunteer hours. Please drop off completed forms in the inbox on **Scott Hume's** desk. Scott can be reached at (281) 855-5600 or oshume@ag.tamu.edu.

Want to fill out this form on your computer? The volunteer hours form included here is for printing out and filling in by hand. But we've posted a spiffy version on the MG website, which you can fill out on the computer in Acrobat Reader before printing to save you all that tedious handwriting. The downloadable version even prints the current date and totals your hours for you. Get it at <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/hcmga/urban.htm>

Garden Gifts

News from our Outreach Gardens

By Kenneth Dorman
Harris County Master Gardener

Nature is an unfathomable force. The same energy that causes a seed planted in the earth to germinate and grow into a beautiful flower can cause a fault in the earth to rupture and wreak unimaginable destruction. Mortals have not been given the ability to understand, but do have the fortitude and faith to overcome. Strengthen the fortitude of the people affected by the events in Southeast Asia by your faith and love.

Well, we ended up the garden year at Christian Community Service Center with a combined production of fresh, organic fruit and vegetables of just over one ton at 2,483 pounds. This is from fourteen raised beds of 4' by 8' and one long bed with fruit trees measuring 3' by 200'. I don't think any bed went unplanted for more than a week during the year.

Production is down a little from last year, 200 pounds to be exact, the big loss being in melons, bell peppers, chili peppers, eggplants and sweet potatoes. We planted the melons in two raised beds instead of along the fence in the bed with the fruit trees and lost over 200 pounds of production and as reported many times before, the mealy bugs got the peppers and eggplants plus we didn't plant any sweet potatoes. We had big gains in snap beans, field peas, tomatoes, okra, cucumbers, oranges and tangerines.

Production was as follows: Apples, Anna and Dorsett – 13# (first year); Arugula, Rucola – 14#; Beans, Florence, Gina, Kentucky Blue (pole) – 158#; Bok Choy – 14#; Broccoli, Packman – 34#; Cabbage, New Jersey Wakefield and Savoy – 74#; Cauliflower, Snow Crown – 35#; Carrots, Touchon – 19#; Chard, Bright Lights – 15#; Cilantro – 5#; Collards, Green Glaze – 15#; Cucumbers, Sweet Success – 564#; Eggplant, green – 127#; Figs, Celeste – 28#; Lettuce, Crawford Reseeding – 105#; Melons, French Orange Hybrid – 202#; Mustard, Mizuna – 15#; Okra, Zeebest – 107#; Onions, 1015 – 80#; Papayas – 16#; Peas, Field, Black-eye and Pink-eye purple hull – 103#; Pepper, sweet, Big Bertha – 7#; Peppers, hot, Mucho Macho jalapeno, Habanero, Serrano – 76#; Potatoes, Red Lasoda – 83#; Satsuma oranges and tangerines – 62#; Squash, summer, Calabasa – 67#; Tomatoes, Celebrity, Dona, Champion – 453#. We still have arugula, broccoli, cilantro, carrots, habanero peppers, lettuce, papayas and cauliflowers left to harvest over the next few weeks.

I know 99% of you could care less how many pounds of what kind of any of this stuff we harvested, but since we are an organization charged with informing and educating the public on matters horticultural we have to earn our keep and provide records. And, if any of you go to the trouble of adding all this up and it does not come out to be 2,483 pounds, too bad, it is all weighed on a baby scale calibrated by several expert fishermen.

As you know these articles are started early, this one in mid-December, which gives me the opportunity to include a unique experience, at least for me. Christmas Eve afternoon late I sat in a covered breezeway in my back yard in Houston, Texas, drank hot rum and watched snow fall. The day after Christmas I watched scenes of several million humans experiencing hell first hand.

Your life is precious. Love it.

** Ken Dorman is a Past-President of the Harris County Master Gardener Association and a coordinator of the Christian Community Science Center and Bonita Street House of Hope gardens.*

Folklore & Facts of Texas Native Plants

By Karen Breneman

Harris County Master Gardener and Master Naturalist

Humans arrived in Texas around 12,000 years ago. What did they eat? What did they wear? (There were certainly no Wal-Marts or malls.) Prehistoric man did leave a record of his life in the caves where he lived and in his burial sites. Examination of these sites suggests he had a varied diet of 23 different animals and 22 different plants. Among the plants which were eaten raw or processed by drying, grinding or baking are many of the succulents still found throughout Texas. Use of many of these plants continues today.

Historic man arrived on the shores of Galveston Island in 1528. The journals written by these early explorers offer a window into the ways of Texas. The stranded early explorers were accepted as visitors, sometimes held as prisoners, but the natives shared what little they had with them. The dependence on the prickly pear cactus and the ceremonial use of Texas Mountain Laurel, Datura, and Yaupon is well documented.

When the first Catholic priests arrived in Texas and found the passionflower, they decided nature had given them a tool for teaching Christianity. The flower appeared to exemplify the complete story of the divine passion of Christ. When the flower was sent to Spain and Italy, it received the name *Passiflora incarnata*. Each part of the flower has been designated a symbol in the crucifixion of Christ.

Many Texas native plants have been used for religious ceremonies, healing, and food. Some plants such as fleabane have been shown to contain the properties suggested by folklore, while others such as Boneset do not.

Plant Texas native plants. Enjoy the stories from the past, but most important enjoy the birds, butterflies, and other critters attracted to your garden.

To learn more, plan to attend Precinct 2 First Wednesday program on March 2, 2005 at 10 AM.

See you there.



Photo by Suzzanne Chapman, Mercer Arboretum

Precinct 2 News & Events

By Patricia Mitrowski

This month Precinct 2 adds 17 new Master Gardener's to our membership, congratulations to graduates: **Casie Pham-Korman, Rhonda Porter, Hazel Potvin, Suzanne Mitstead, Drew Williams, Marilyn Williams, Robin Brady, Ron Barbee, Suzy Crabtree, Sue Lane France, Louis Mickler, Charles Berry, Jan Kapner, Isabel Audio, Gloria Tome, Mary Dell Rogan and Natasha Fangman.** We really appreciate your enthusiasm and dedication to the Genoa Friendship Garden. It has made a world of difference.

The Production Garden and Winter Projects committees have been hard at work in the garden and it really shows. Charles Berry and Louis Mickler have organized the sale shed in preparation for our biggest sale of the year: The Tomato, Pepper and Fruit Tree Sale. Be sure to contact Janice Patrick if you'd like to help with this sale on February 26th, we need as many volunteers as possible and there are several phases to fit every schedule. The greenhouse is full of tomatoes and they are getting bumped up every week thanks to **Gloria Tome, Isabel Audio, Theresa Holloman, Jan Kapner, Barbara Morrison** and **Ray Parker.** **Linda Garren, Hazel Potvin** and **Angela Chandler** planted more of our peppers from around the world. **Beth Frohme, Ray Parker** and **Ruth Touchstone** have taken care of moving the huge Angel Trumpet and fig tree out of the Rose Garden allowing for much more room and light for the roses and day lilies. Beth has also been busy working on new signage for plant identification. **Pat Stier** and **Linda Garren** have been refinishing the television cabinet in the classroom. It is going to look great when they're done. **Marleine Oren, Pat Pate, Ray Parker** and **Pat Mitrowski** spruced up the Herb Garden and collected seeds for spring planting.

We are pleased to welcome back Paula Poynter back in our group. Paula has just returned from living in California and has agreed to coordinate our Community Outreach for several upcoming events.

We held our Saturday workshop on January 15th and it was a huge success. **Angela Chandler's** Living Wreath program is incredible. Thanks to **Julie, Suzanne** and **Jennifer** at Vaughn's Nursery in Channelview for all their support and allowing us to use their wonderful tea room for the class. A special thanks to **Rita Vasak** for handling the catering for the day along with her sous chefs of the day **Kaye Corey, Marleine Oren** and **Pat Mitrowski.** The food was delicious. **Carol Richardson** took care of registration and Theresa Dibello and Janice Patrick handled the supplies. We are already planning our next workshop to be held there. Watch for details!

Our January First Wednesday Program was well attended with lots of new faces in the audience. Thanks to **Angela Chandler** for teaching us about composting. For February we welcome **John Jons** who will present his program Introduction to Hybrid Teas. John is a Galveston County Master Gardener whose programs have won awards at the state level. In March we look forward to **Karen Breneman** and Legends and Folklore of Native Plants. All of our First Wednesday Programs begin at 10:00 am and are followed by a potluck lunch.

Precinct 2 News & Events

Upcoming Events

February 2. Introduction to Hybrid Tea Roses, by **John Jons**. 10 a.m. John is a Galveston Master Gardener and member of the American and Houston Rose Societies. His presentation on an "Introduction to Growing Hybrid Tea Roses" won a first place award at the 2004 Texas State Master Gardener Conference. 10:00 a.m. at 1202 Genoa Red Bluff. Potluck lunch follows the program.

February 26. Tomato, Pepper and Fruit Tree Sale. 9 a.m.– 3 p.m. at CLUMC 16335 El Camino Real, Clear Lake City.

March 2. Legends & Folklore of Native Plants, by **Karen Breneman**. 10 a.m. Karen Breneman is a Texas Master Naturalist and Master Gardener. Her presentation will include slides and discussion of the role played by major Texas native plants in prehistoric, historic and modern times, including roles played in shamanistic societies. Prickly pear cactus, Texas Mountain Laurel, Yaupon and Datura are featured with flea bone, sotol, coral bean and other native plants included. 10 am at 1202 Genoa Red Bluff. Potluck lunch follows the program. *See Karen's article on [Page 9](#).*

Precinct 2 Master Gardener of the Month

This month we'd like to recognize **Louis Mickler** as our Precinct 2 Master Gardener of the Month.

Since Louis completed the class this past summer he has contributed so much to our garden, he has taken over the Tool Shed, spent countless hours upgrading and repairing the irrigation system, worked in the Production Garden, assisted in both the Fall Sale and Herb-a-Palooza and he bakes the best cookies!

He not only graduated this month but received an additional reward for having volunteered over 100 hours. We really appreciate all of your hard work Louis, thank you.

Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

**2005 MARCH MART PLANT SALE
Friday and Saturday, March 18 and 19**

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP SHEET

Please complete the volunteer assignments section

Name: _____ Home phone: _____

Address: _____ Work phone: _____

City, Zip: _____ E-mail: _____

Please circle one of the two scheduled training sessions that you will attend:

Wednesday, March 9 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Saturday, March 12 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Will you attend the wrap-up party Saturday, following the sale? _____
Yes No

Please **mail, fax or deliver** this completed form to:

**Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens
22306 Aldine Westfield Road
Humble, Texas 77338
Attn: Nellene Harvey
(281) 209-9767 fax**



Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens is a Harris County Precinct 4 facility, under the leadership of Commissioner Jerry Eversole, located at 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, one mile north of FM 1960. Harris County Precinct 4 programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, sex, religion, national origin, or physical ability. Anyone requiring special assistance to participate in any program, or for more information, please contact Mercer at (281) 443-8731 or by email at mercerarboretum@cp4.hctx.net. On the web at <http://www.cp4.hctx.net/merc>.

Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

February Programs

Master Gardener Registration

Monday, **February 7**, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Harris County residents only from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.) Mercer offers registration for upcoming Master Gardener training. Designed for gardening enthusiasts of all ages and backgrounds, Master Gardener training includes landscaping, vegetable gardening, lawn care, pest control, propagation, pruning, and more. Class size is limited to 35 with a course fee of \$150. Register in person only. For more information and a brochure, please call (281) 443-8731.

Lunch Bunch: Snakes

Wednesday, **February 9** from noon to 1 p.m., join **Mike Howlett** from Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center for a discussion on common local snakes. Howlett tells why snakes can be great to have around and which ones to avoid. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy during the program. Please call ahead for reservations.

Birding Walk

Saturday, **February 12** from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., join Piney Woods Wildlife Society member **Al Barr** as he leads a walk through Mercer to observe the birds that call the area home. Binoculars, birding guides, comfortable and quiet walking shoes, and no bright colored clothing is recommended. Please call ahead for reservations. Families are welcome.

Master Gardener CEU Class: Roses

Join fellow Master Gardeners Tuesday, **February 15** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to learn about growing roses and how to evaluate different varieties. Local rose experts **Mei Hoppie** and **Carol Hellwig** share helpful hints for growing healthy roses. Following the discussion, help plant new "trial rose" beds on the perimeter of the new daylily beds. Bring a dish for the potluck lunch that starts at 11 a.m. Call Mercer to reserve a seat.

Preparing Your Garden for Summer

Saturday, **February 19** from 10 a.m. to noon. Are you ready for summer? You have dusted off your swimsuit and blown up the kids wading pool, but what about your garden? Attend this seminar at Mercer Arboretum to learn what you can do to have a beautiful garden throughout the summer. Please call ahead for reservations.

Texas Bamboo Society

Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens is hosting the Texas Bamboo Society meetings Saturday, **February 26** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The monthly meetings feature demonstration or slide programs from 10 a.m. to noon; a "bring your own brown bag lunch" from noon to 12:30 p.m.; and hands-on training in Mercer's bamboo garden from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.

FEBRUARY 2005

UrbanDirt

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eDIRT FEBRUARY 2005

Master Gardener

Tomato & Pepper Plant SALES

February 26, 2005

Harris County Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Drive
8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

AND

Clear Lake United Methodist Church
16335 El Camino Real, Clear Lake
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Lots of great varieties for our area will be available at both sales.