



Urban Dirt

Volunteer Opportunities

Upcoming Plant Sales

Volunteers are needed to help with the Tomato Pepper Sale on February 28 at the Extension Office. Sign up sheets are available in the Master Gardener Room at the Extension Office or contact David Parish at 281.855.5635 or dwparish@ag.tamu.edu for sign up.

The Precinct 2 Master Gardener Spring Sale will be held February 28 in Landolt Pavillion at Clear Lake Park. Contact Georgia Lau at 281-837-8917 or gclau@comcast.net if you would like to volunteer.

Ask a Master Gardener Help Line

Volunteers are needed on an ongoing basis to take calls on the help line. Volunteering to help once or twice a week, month or even a year will make a difference. Half day shifts are available from 9:00 a.m. to noon or noon to 3:00 p.m. Full day shifts are available as well. Remember, you don't have to know all the answers, just the phrase "I don't know, but I'll call you back." If you'd like to participate in this fun and educational opportunity contact David Parish at 281.855.5635 or dwparish@ag.tamu.edu.

Work in the Gardens

Tuesday mornings are workdays in the gardens at the Harris County **Extension Office**. Monday and Wednesday mornings are the designated workdays in the Genoa Friendship Garden.

Cylinder Gardening

Volunteers are needed for data entry, to cut buckets, assist teachers and deliver supplies to schools for the spring semester. If you would like to volunteer for one of the opportunities or even join the Cylinder Gardening planning committee or volunteer to cut buckets or deliver supplies, please contact Louise at 281.859.6929 or klrugaard@aol.com.

Ask a Master Gardener Kiosk

Volunteers are needed to host the Ask A Master Gardener Kiosk at the Green Thumb Lecture Series held at the Extension Office. Times are 6:15 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. A sign up sheet is available in the Master Gardener room at the Extension Office or you can contact David Parish at dwparish@ag.tamu.edu.

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Continuing Education Opportunities

February 2009

Master Gardener Lecture Series: Extension Office

February 3. Tree Pruning by Mickey Merritt. 12:00 noon.

Green Thumb Lecture Series: Precinct 2

February 10. Vegetable Gardening by Angela Chandler
6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Bass Pro Shops (Hwy 288 at Bltwy 8).

Lunch Bunch: Mercer Arboretum

February 11. Water Conservation by Angela Chandler.
Landscape water conservation tips and a diy rain barrel demo.
Bring a sack lunch. Call ahead for reservations. 281.443.8731.
Noon to 2:00 p.m.

Master Gardener Lecture Series: Extension Office

February 17. Berries by David Parish. 6:30 p.m. - Desserts and coffee followed by the program at 7:00 p.m.

Master Gardener Lecture Series: Clear Lake Park

February 18. Citrus by John Panzarella 10:00 a.m. The Meeting Room at Clear Lake Park (Lakeside) 5001 NASA Road 1, Seabrook, TX 77586.

Green Thumb Lecture Series: Extension Office

February 19. Vegetable Gardening by Carol Brouwer, Ph.D., 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Green Home and Garden Workshop: Extension Office

February 28. 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Designing with natives and low cost energy saving ideas. \$20 registration includes lunch and refreshments. Visit <http://gcmn.tamu.edu> or call Sarah Smith at sarahbethsmith1@aol.com.

March 2009

Master Gardener Lecture Series: Extension Office

March 3. New Insect Threats by Dr. Carlos Bogran.
12:00 noon.

March Mart Gardening Series: Mercer Arboretum

March 3. Tropical and Gingers available at the March Mart Sale 10:00 a.m.

Continuing Education: Mercer Arboretum

March 3. Climbing Roses by Mike Shoup, Antique Rose Emporium. 10 a.m.

Green Thumb Lecture Series: Bass Pro Shops (288 & Bltwy 8).

March 10. Great Plants for Houston by Karen Breneman, Harris County Master Gardener and Carol Brouwer, Ph.D., County Extension Agent - Horticulture. 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Gardening Classes: Arbor Gate

March 10. Native Plants for the Gulf Coast by Jason McKenzie. 10:00 a.m.

Lunch Bunch: Mercer Arboretum

Mar 11. March Mart Preview See new plants and reliable favorites for sale at March Mart. Bring a sack lunch. Call ahead for reservations. 281.443.8731. Noon to 2:00 p.m.

Master Gardener Evening Lectures: Extension Office

March 17. Bog Gardening by Karen Breneman. 6:30 p.m. is desserts and coffee followed by the program at 7:00 p.m.

March Mart Gardening Series: Mercer Arboretum

March 17. Vines, Veggies and Herbs available at the March Mart Sale 10:00 a.m.

Master Gardener Lecture Series: Clear Lake Park

March 18. TBA 10:00 a.m. The Meeting Room at Clear Lake Park (Lakeside) 5001 NASA Road 1, Seabrook, TX 77586.

Green Thumb Lecture Series: Extension Office

March 19. Growing Plants from Seeds and Cuttings by Jean Fefer, Ph.D., Harris County Master Gardener. 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Gardening Classes: Arbor Gate

March 14. Southern Treasures by Dr. Bill Welch and Chrill Wiesinger. 10:00 a.m.

Lunch Bunch: Mercer Arboretum

Mar 21. March Mart Preview See new plants and reliable favorites for sale at March Mart. Bring a sack lunch. Call ahead for reservations. 281.443.8731. 10:00 am. to noon.

Gardening Classes: Arbor Gate

March 31. Wildscape Gardening by Diana Foss, Texas Parks and Wildlife. 10:00 a.m.

Announcements

Upcoming HCMG Field Trips

Georgette Person and Kristina Baldwin have scheduled a day trip to Stephen F. Austin's Mast Arboretum for Friday, March 27. The trip to ShangriLa in Orange, TX is rescheduled for Wednesday, April 22.

Further details about both trips will be available soon.

New Master Gardener Directory

A new Master Gardener Directory is available on the website in the Members Only section. Be sure to download your copy now. A limited number will be available in print for those without internet access at the Extension Office.

If you don't know the login information to the members only section contact David Parish at dwparish@ag.tamu.edu

Exxon Mobil Volunteer Grants Available

The Exxon Mobil Volunteer Improvement Program (VIP) is designed for employees, retirees, and other eligible participants who volunteer in the community on an individual basis. A \$500 grant can be awarded to a charitable, nonprofit organization after an eligible participant contributes at least 20 hours of volunteer time to the organization during a calendar year.

Each eligible participant (employee, retiree, surviving spouse, or director) may apply for four individual grants per calendar year. These grants may be for the same or separate organizations, provided 20 hours of work is performed for each grant. An organization may receive a maximum of \$5,000 per calendar year of Individual Volunteer Grants.

For more information, visit <https://secure12.easymatch.com/ExxonMobilVIP/CustomContent/common/Guidelinesivip.asp>.

2009 International Master Gardener Conference: Las Vegas, NV

March 22-26, 2009

The International Master Gardener Conference will address issues that gardeners everywhere face -- water conservation, proper plant selection, soil enrichment, pest control -- while also presenting new concepts in environmental stewardship and "green" technologies. Registration is now available. <http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc> Hurry to get your spot!

2009 Texas Master Gardener State Conference: Marshall, TX

April 23-25, 2009

Make plans to join us for the 2009 Texas Master Gardener State Conference, that will be held in beautiful East Texas.

The conference will feature world class azaleas, dogwood and crape myrtles, as well as unique bed & breakfast establishments, just to name a few. <http://tcaaa.tamu.edu/09statemeeting.htm>



President's Thoughts

By Sally Harpole

Harris County Master Gardener Association President

Happy New Year to all of you. We began this new year with a busy first week for Master Gardeners. Dr. David Creech was our speaker at the Hamburger Tuesday meeting. He had originally been scheduled to speak several months earlier but had to reschedule his talk because of one of the hurricanes that visited us in 2008.

That same week we held our Fruit Tree Sale and Fruit Study Symposium. **Doug McLeod**, the sale chairman, had been working for months on it and all his hard work paid off. People began lining up by 7:00 a.m. to purchase the trees and rose bushes that **Phyllis Fritsch** had for sale. The Symposium, chaired by **Yvonne Gibbs**, offered programs throughout the day on the care fruit trees.

Jean Fefer and **Virginia Joiner** will be co-chairing the Tomato and Pepper Sale that will be on February 28. **Jeanie Dunnihoo** will be there, too, with herbs for sale. The Tomato and Pepper Sale is always a popular sale and everything is usually sold out before noon.

Kristina Baldwin and **Georgette Peterson** have bus trips planned for the spring. Be sure to check David Parish's MG Update for what these trips are and when to sign up.

Louise Rugaard is working with Carol Brouwer on the Cylinder Gardening program. This program gives many school children their first exposure to gardening. Louise needs more volunteers to help her get all the supplies ready to deliver to the schools. If you are looking for a new place to work, give Louise a call.

We have all experienced some really cold days this month in the gardens. I thank all of you who have braved the cold winds, rain, and a little snow to work outdoors cleaning and preparing our beds. Keep up the good work!

Happy gardening.



Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Horticulture Program in Harris County
 3033 Bear Creek Dr 281.855.5600
 Houston, TX 77084 FAX 281.855.5638

CEA – Horticulture.....Dr. Carol Brouwer
 281.855.5600
 CEA – Horticulture..... Dr. Anthony W. Camerino
 281.855.5600
 Volunteer Coordinator David Parish
 281.855.5600
 Horticulture SecretarySheronda Bryant
 281.855.5600



**Harris County Master Gardener Association
 2008-2009 Board of Directors**

President Sally Harpole
 281.531.7561
 First Vice PresidentGeorge Frey
 281.888.1699
 Second Vice PresidentKristina Baldwin
 281.859.1044
 Past PresidentCarolyn Cannon
 713.462.1756
 SecretaryLinda Brewer
 832.276.1050
 Treasurer Jo Huskey
 281.829.2956

Directors: Anne Ashworth, Kenneth Couch, Georgia Lau,
 Louis Mickler, Anne O'Neil, Ross Palmie

Precinct 2 Steering Committee Chair.....Georgia Lau
 281.837.8917

Precinct 2 News

by Eileen Donovan
Harris County Master Gardener

Work in all of the Pet 2 gardens continues as always. In addition to regular tasks, **Tom Solomon** and his helpers have been growing vegetables for our spring sale.. The peppers that were planted in December and germinated on the new heating pads have already been bumped up. The tomatoes were seeded in early January and are coming along nicely. **Gloria Tome** has conducted a “bump up protocol” training for several MGs who will be helping with the process. Several gardeners helped the vegetable growing process by scrubbing trays and pots for the sale veggies. We expect to have around 4,000 tomato plants and close to 1500 peppers. That is a lot of planting and bumping.

MG Intern **Mimi Chapman** is developing a more accurate orchard map. Mimi’s new map will show the placement of all plants in the orchard (with their proper name) as well as the care schedule (pruning, fertilizing, irrigation, mulching, spraying) for each plant. All plants will have new labels. This documentation will be available to all so that, in the future, anyone will be able to care for the orchard. **Gerry Gafka**, the “Orchard Ogre” is standardizing the irrigation equipment in the orchard to streamline the repair process.

The crew dug up sweet potatoes and onions, and other vegetables are being harvested as they become ready. These are delivered to the food pantry.

The perennial garden group has been busy digging up seedlings/volunteers to be sold or given as door prizes. They have planted several new test perennials and repositioned stepping stones to facilitate access. They are also improving the drainage for the herb garden and straightening the border around it.

On December 17, **Jan Kapner** hosted the Wednesday garden group in her beautifully Christmas decorated home for a chili lunch. This was after they had all put in a full morning of work, of course. Everyone had a great time.

The first of the new Green Thumb Gardening Series was held on Tuesday, January 13 from 6:30-9:00 p.m. at our new location, the Bass Pro Shop located at the intersection of S. Sam Houston Tollway and SH 288. The topic was Fruits and Nuts, presented by Galveston County MG **Herman Auer**. It was huge success with standing room only. Thanks to **Louis Mickler** for continuing to organize and carry out these events

At last, our first Open Garden Day will be held on January 19 in conjunction with a Super Garden Workday. The garden will be open to the public from 9-10:30 a.m. We hope to see many faces there visiting and volunteering. By the time you read this, it will have passed, but I’ll let you know how it went next month.

Our Spring Sale is scheduled for February 28 from 9:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Landolt Pavilion in Clear Lake Park. We will be offering many fruit trees, berries, grapes and our famous GFG grown tomatoes and peppers. We will be setting up for the sale Thursday afternoon and all day Friday. On the actual day of the sale, volunteer activities start before daybreak. We need as many volunteers as possible, Please contact **Georgia Lau** if you can help.

Until next time....

February 2009 Volunteer Hours See below for instructions.

February 2009 volunteer hours and CEUs are DUE by March 15, 2009.

Name _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail address _____

Volunteer Service Hours

Date	Location	# of Contacts*	Hours**
* Number of people you educated during volunteer activity		TOTAL	
** Time spent volunteering			

Continuing Education Hours

Date	Topic or Title	Speaker's Name	Location*	Hours
*New for 2008, event must be affiliated with Texas AgriLife Extension, Texas A&M University or Mercer Arboretum. Exceptions must be approved prior to event with David or Carol.			TOTAL	

Please submit your volunteer hours to **David Parish** in person, by e-mail dwparish@ag.tamu.edu, fax 281.855.5638 or regular mail to 3033 Bear Creek Dr, Houston, TX 77084. The **Deadline** for submitting volunteer hours and CEUs is the 15th of the following month.

Would you like to fill out this form on your computer? We've posted a spiffy version on the MG Web site. You can fill it out on the computer in Acrobat Reader and submit it via e-mail or print it and fax or mail it. Get it at <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/mgdir/index.htm> (e-mail David if you don't have the password.).

February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2 Work Day: P2	3 Tree Pruning by Mickey Merritt: Ext. Off. HCMGA Board Mtg: Ext Off Work day: Ext. Off.	4 Work day: P2	5 Work Day: P2	6	7
8	9 Work Day: P2	10 Green Thumb - Bass Pro Shops, Pearland: Vegetable Gardening by Angela Chandler Work day: Ext. Off.	11 Work day: P2 Landscape Water Conservation by Angela Chandler: Mercer Arboretum	12 Work Day: P2	13	14
15	16 Work Day: P2 Newsletter deadline	17 Berries by David Parish: Ext Off Work day: Ext. Off.	18 Citrus by John Panzarella: Clear Lake Park Work day: P2	19 Green Thumb - Extension Office: Vegetable Gardening by Dr. Carol Brouwer Work day: Ext. Off.	20	21
22	23 Work Day: P2 Steering Committee: P2	24 Work day: Ext. Off.	25	26	27	28 Tomato and Pepper Sale: Extension Office Fruit and Veggie Sale: P2



TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE
3033 BEAR CREEK DR.
HOUSTON, TX 77084

281.855.5600 FAX 281.855.5638

<http://harris-tx.tamu.edu/hort>

<http://hcmga.tamu.edu>

URBAN DIRT • FEBRUARY 2009



Tomato, Pepper and Herb Sale

February 28, 2009

Preview: 7:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Harris County Extension Office



P2 Spring Fruit & Veggie Sale

Featuring fruit trees and veggies

February 28, 2009

9:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Landolt Pavillion at Clear Lake Park
