

# UrbanDirt

IN COOPERATION WITH THE TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## Texas' Virus-Free Citrus Budwood Program

By Dr. John da Graca, Deputy Center Director  
Texas A&M University - Kingsville Citrus Center

Citrus, which exists in many species and varieties, has its origins in Asia (south China, north east India, south east Asia). It has been cultivated for over 4,000 years, and over centuries it has been moved around the world as seed, rooted plants and budwood, so that nowadays it is grown in virtually every country which has a tropical or subtropical climate.

Any plant will in time acquire its own collection of pests and pathogens. There are around 40 graft and/or insect-transmitted diseases - these include ones caused by viruses, viroids, and some bacteria, but share many features such as general symptoms and transmission methods.

What can we do to avoid losses? Prevention is the only option. Once a tree is infected by a virus, it is impossible to cure it. The new Texas virus-free budwood program is a mandatory program to ensure that nurseries propagate only from disease-free source trees.

We now have a foundation block of citrus trees of both the main commercial varieties and many of the varieties favored by ornamental and home growers - over 80 in all. These have all gone through a virus clean-up program (either in Texas or in California), and are tested on a regular basis for the main pathogens. Shortly, those varieties for which we have a sufficient supply of budwood, and have been evaluated for fruit quality, will be declared mandatory. We also continue to introduce new varieties for which there are requests, or which we think are worth evaluating for Texas.

We are currently providing nurseries across Texas with nearly 100,000 virus-free buds and cuttings annually, thereby reducing the risk of disease losses. Our main concern is tristeza, since this disease could wipe out the commercial industry. The law forbids the uncontrolled importation of citrus plants, budwood, or seed. Varieties can be introduced by the Citrus Center only from certain areas under permits issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and with suitable certificates from the source state.

By everyone cooperating in this program, everyone benefits. Experience elsewhere has shown that using only selected, disease-free budwood leads to better quality fruit for both commercial growers and homeowners.



'Changsha' citrus, at the home of Bill Welch.

# President's Thoughts

By Doug McLeod



**W**ell, another year is gone at HCMG. Time flies when you are having fun. I want to thank all of the master gardeners who volunteer their time and effort to ensure that the gardens, classes etc. run smoothly and on time. You surely deserve a large pat on the back.

Our upcoming sales for 2005 will kick off on **Jan 22, 2005** with our **Fruit Tree Sale**. Invite your friends and neighbors to this sale as we will have the fruit trees that will grow in our area. A program will be held in the Extension office starting at 8 a.m. with a break from 9:00 to 10:00 am as this is the time when the sale opens. The program will include demonstrations on grafting, Q&A sessions regards fruit trees and other great. The sale and programs will end at 2:00 p.m. Any of you that have access to neighborhood newsletters or newspapers should publicize this sale as this is a good way for the public to find out about our sales. **Becky Deasy** is putting together flyers for the upcoming fruit tree sale. Be sure and take a few and pass them out to friends and neighbors.

**Linda O'Keefe** and **Ken Dorman** have resigned from the board of directors. Linda said she wanted to devote her time and energy to her garden and Ken said he wanted to devote more time to fishing. I want to thank both for serving on the board as it can be time consuming and sometimes hard decisions have to be made concerning HCMG policy.

We have had a changing of the guard as **Michael** has moved to another post and **Carol** has taken over as our extension advisor. Thanks Michael for a job well done and am sure that Carol will do a wonderful job as our new advisor.

*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

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(281) 870-1907

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**Horticulture Secretary** ..... Becky Deasy  
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**Urban Dirt** ..... Tami Pipkin  
UrbanDirt@houston.rr.com



# Carol's Comments

By Carol Brouwer, PhD, CEA-Horticulture



Photo by Stephanie Baker

**G**reetings. I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season. We are entering a very busy time of year here at the Extension Office with classes and plant sales beginning this month. There is so much to say and do I'm not sure where to begin.

First, I would like to thank all of the folks who volunteered their time assisting Extension in its work during 2004. I would particularly like to thank all of the **Cylinder Garden volunteers**. This program is very valuable to the children and schools it serves. Our work is never finished though. The spring Cylinder Gardening session will be getting underway late this month. HISD has mandated that every school in its district should have some kind of outdoor habitat this year. We had record breaking enrollment of over 6,500 kids during the fall semester and I am expecting even more this spring. HELP! With this many students enrolled I can no longer rely on the interns to be the sole source of volunteers for this program. If you are willing to work with this program we could really use you. I need volunteers to work in one of two areas. The first is to assist teachers by delivering materials, answering questions and possibly attending planting and harvest days at the school. The second place we could use volunteers to simply deliver materials to the schools with no further

contact. Please call me if you can help out with this important program.

The **Master Gardener Fruit Tree Sale** is scheduled for the **January 22nd** from **9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** Set up will be on Friday. Contact **Scott Hume** if you are interested in volunteering to assist with the sale. The Fruit Study Group is sponsoring an educational symposium from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with a break from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. to facilitate sale purchases for symposium attendees. Speakers include Bill Adams, Ethan Natelson, and George McAfee among others. Topics will include chill hours, grafting and fruit varieties for our area. The symposium is free. See you there?

I have had two requests this month for Master Gardener assistance. These opportunities are extremely worthy of our support, but each would require a team of volunteers with a willingness to do some planting and maintenance. The first opportunity is with the **Daughters of the Texas Revolution**. They have a log cabin in the Medical Center with a landscape that they would like our help in making it reflect the time period of the Texas Revolution. They need help in identifying plants that would have been in Texas landscapes at that time as well as assistance in procuring, planting, labeling and possibly even maintaining this site.

The second project is similar. The **Lieutenant's House** is a 90 day treatment facility for adjudicated adults. The house is looking for advice, assistance and the donation of materials to beautify their grounds. Please contact me or Scott if you would be interested in coordinating or working on either of these projects.

*I am looking forward to a great year working with all of you.*

# HCMGA Christmas Tree... with a little help from our friends

By Virginia Joiner

**T**he weather outside is frightful, but the fire is so delightful. Well, the weather was bad and we did not have a fireplace but we did have a lot of fun. I want to thank **Cindy Appleman, Lynn Anderson, Marge Chambers** and **Bonnie Morrow** for their help. We started at 9 a.m. Marge, Bonnie and myself had to leave for a Board meeting at 10 a.m. When we came out the tree was finished and it was, as you see, beautiful. At the end Cindy and Lynn stood back and tossed the Butterfly Vine seed pods on the tree. We are still children at heart from time to time.

So much of what we used is from years past. Adding something new to the assortment each year is becoming more of a challenge. Keep your eyes open for that outstanding something for next year.

I want to thank my friends at **Plants for All Seasons Nursery** on Hwy. 249 for their help with the purchase of our Christmas tree. This is the third year they have helped the Harris County Master Gardener Association have a beautiful tree for a nominal price.

I hope you enjoyed the Rogue Gallery of Master Gardeners that helped to make the tree unique.



Photo by Carol Brouwer

# Garden Gifts

## News from our Outreach Gardens

By Kenneth Dorman

**J**anuary 2005 has a good sound to it for me. I think this is going to be a great year for the USA, the HCMGA, you, the world and me! If we can get about six or seven billion other folks feeling the same way won't we have fun.

We have had some different results from our broccoli, cauliflower and cabbages this winter. We set out the plants about the same as last year, but the hot weather in October and early November caused the broccoli to mature much faster than usual and the cauliflower just grew beautiful leaves. One of the cabbages bolted instead of making a head and the sugar snap peas just lay over and pouted. A few of the cauliflower are starting to make heads, but I doubt they will be very large. In spite of everything we did get a good amount of broccoli and some really nice cabbage. The lettuce is great, the arugula fantastic, strawberries super and carrots making up nicely.

I thought our two Satsuma trees were both oranges, I had only tasted fruit from one tree, but one is orange and the other a wonderful tangerine. What a nice surprise. On another track, I am beginning to be concerned about our papayas. We have a lot of fat, green papayas on two trees and I worry about a frost doing something to them before they are ripe. I have checked A&M's website with pitiful results and have not done much better on the rest of the Internet. Apparently there is not much call for information on growing papayas in Harris County, Texas. Suggestions from readers are always appreciated, even if ignored.

**Dr. Bob Strawn** is building a lake on his farm in a place that, by his own admission, is not a good location for a lake. Why would a well educated person that has dedicated a large portion of his life to trying to keep the public healthy decide to buy a piece of undeveloped sand, covered with rocks, gulleys, scrub oak, poison ivy, feral hogs and assorted snakes and bugs? Rest? Relaxation? Tranquility? Challenge? Even with all the added chores the farm requires he still comes to the garden on a regular basis and works like the dickens so I am not complaining.

We will put the production information for the CCSC garden in next month's article. Total pounds will not be quite as much as last year, but the product mix is a little different. We will get the group together over coffee and compare three years results and decide what to do for 2005. I have a feeling the raised beds need something, but I don't know just what and the soil analysis does not tell us much. Maybe we will send some samples to a new testing lab. In addition to compost, cottonseed meal and supplemental organic fertilizer we have added a small amount of Texas greensand to each bed plus some extra potassium and it seemed to help.

Some kind of varmint has eaten most of one cabbage and nibbled on a couple of the others. I don't think it is a squirrel or regular rat because the cabbage has mud on it like it has been handled with muddy paws, so maybe it is a coon. As long as he only takes one I don't care what it is. Even with the chewed cabbage and all the rain the garden looks pretty good so if any of you are in the neighborhood (behind Central Presbyterian Church on Richmond at Timmons) come in and look around. The garden is open and you are welcome.

My old Burmese cat attempts to teach me something every day while I am meditating. When I am very still and quiet he will come and sit in my lap and purr, letting me know he is content and I should be too. He is only concerned with right now and right now he is happy with his life and himself. Is that loving yourself?

*\* 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.*

# Extension News & Events

## Outreach Education Seminars and Workshops

Texas Cooperative Extension offers many seminars and workshops that are open to the community. All programs are held at the Bear Creek Extension office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Houston, TX 77084, unless otherwise noted. For more information call Michael Morrison at (281) 855-5600.



**Saturday, February 5. Basics of Plant Propagation.** 8:30 am – 3:00 pm. This all-day hands-on workshop will cover plant propagation by seeds, leaf and stem cuttings and layering (not grafting.) Includes many take-home starter plants. Class Limited to 40. Lunch included. Fee: \$50.00

**Saturday, February 12. Landscape Design Plus.** 8:30 am – 3:00 pm. This all-day hands-on workshop will have a morning of lectures on the Principles of Landscape 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

## Texas Master Naturalist Training Available

The purpose of the Texas Master Naturalist program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities. During the thirteen-week volunteer training session, students receive in-depth training in wildlife and natural resource management, customized to focus on their local ecosystems. Training is provided by educators and specialists from universities, agencies, nature centers, museums, and other organizations who donate their services. In return, volunteers provide service in the form of community education and demonstration projects, while pursuing advanced training in areas of special interest.

The Spring 2005 volunteer training session will be held at the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center (4501 Woodway Dr.) on Mondays, 9:00 am to noon, **February 28 through May 23**, with field trips also scheduled for weekdays. For evening classes, the Fall 2005 volunteer training session will be held at a location to be announced on a weekday evening, 6:00 to 9:00 pm, **September through November**, with field trips to be held on Saturdays. The cost will be \$100 for the training and \$30 for the curriculum which is optional.

For more information and to obtain an application form, call the Harris County Cooperative Extension at (281) 855-5600, write to us at [gcmn@tamu.edu](mailto:gcmn@tamu.edu) or visit our web site at <http://gcmn.tamu.edu>.



# Volunteers Needed

**T**hinking 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. 19<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Calling all Master Gardener's and interns living in the 1960 Spring area!

Shepherd's Garden, a donation garden located across from Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Community on Klein Church Road between Spring Cypress Road and Louetta Road is looking MG's to join our team to grow our garden! We have a team of volunteers from two churches that work with the present coordinator, a Master Gardener.



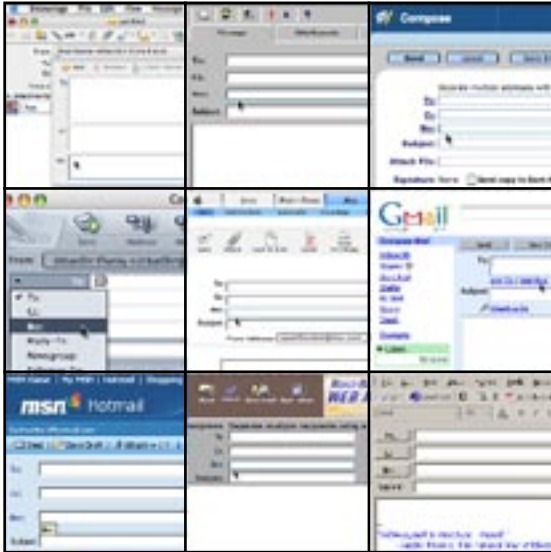
Each year we grow over 4,000 lbs. of vegetables and herbs for donation to three area food pantries serving the hungry. We have installed 18 raised beds with the help of youth volunteers. We have a few more left to install this winter and need your help to plan the garden, work with our volunteer gardeners, and bring some new blood to the management of the garden.

For more information, e-mail **Yvonne Tallent** at [ytallent@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ytallent@sbcglobal.net) or call (281) 813-9513.

# Web Surfin'

## Tech news for Master Gardeners

By Tom H. Robb, Jr



eDirt readers, zoom in for a look at how many Mac and Windows applications display TO, CC, and BCC information.

## Help preserve my privacy! part 2

Many people who are otherwise concerned about protecting their privacy make the mistake of entering their address list in the TO or the CC lines when sending out a group email. In doing so they expose the email address (usually including the names) of their recipients for all the world to see and copy. To make it even worse, many times the messages then get forwarded not only to a new recipient but to everyone on the list.

While multiple address mailings using TO or CC expose all names, the use of BCC shows only the name of the person receiving the message.

BCC is available in most mail programs, although in some it is not readily visible. For example, in Outlook Express if you don't see the BCC option in the "recipient field", click View on your menu bar and go to All Headers. Now you should see BCC along with TO and CC options. Click the BCC button to add the addresses for your

mass mailing. A "Select Recipients" window will open. Press <Ctrl> [Mac: Command] and click on all the names in your address book that you want to be included in your mailing. If you are sending the email to everyone in your address book, click on the first name, hold your shift key down then click on the last name in the list. One caution: when replying to a message, only use the "Reply All" button if you want to respond to the sender and everyone else that was copied or blind copied. When you click "Reply All," not only will the sender get your Email, but so will every other person that received the original Email. To respond only to the sender of the email, click the "Reply" button instead.

Most Email programs require that you enter at least one address in the TO line in order to hide the list of BCC names. Hint: send the email to yourself by using your email address in the TO line if you want all recipients to be hidden. AOL users, you must use another name in TO in order to make the list invisible.

For more information on how your email client handles BCC, go to the Google website at <http://www.google.com>. In the search box enter [Your mail program] [email] [BCC] without the brackets but with at least one space between terms. [Click [here](#). Just replace the word "Outlook" with the name of your email program.] This will give you a large number of links explaining the use of BCC for your program. A second search using [Your mail program] [Email] [addresses] will give you links to show how to set up your address books. [Click [here](#) to do it.] If you use AOL, Outlook Express, Netscape, Eudora, Yahoo Mail, Hotmail or MailCity go to [http://www.darientel.net/faq/blind\\_cc.htm](http://www.darientel.net/faq/blind_cc.htm) for a good set of instructions for using BCC. But please, begin using BCC to preserve the privacy of your friends and acquaintances.

*Happy surfin'*

\* Tom Robb, Jr. is a Master Gardener Past President, Chairman of the Membership Committee and Webmaster for the Master Gardener website <http://hcmga.tamu.edu>.

# HCMGA News & Events

## Upcoming Events at Bear Creek

### Jan 4 – Hamburger Tuesday

8:00 a.m. – Workday  
 Noon – Hamburger luncheon (\$3)  
 Program – **Tom LeRoy** on a mystery subject.

### Jan 18 – General Meeting

6:30 p.m. – Desserts  
 7:00 p.m. – **Mike Howlett** on **Attracting and Identifying Frogs and Toads**

### Feb 1 – Hamburger Tuesday

8:00 a.m. – Workday  
 Noon – Hamburger luncheon (\$3)  
 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**

## 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!

## 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 ques-



tions, please contact Marva Beck at [marva@tconline.net](mailto:marva@tconline.net).

# Events Around Town

## Urban Harvest Classes

Classes are held at Urban Harvest, 1900 Kane, unless otherwise noted. For detailed class listings and more information, visit [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org) or call (713) 880-5540.

**Wednesday, January 5. An Introduction to Permaculture**, by the Permaculture Guild of Houston 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. Free. Location: 2990 Richmond. Learn about four courses over the next year that will help you turn your yard or farm into a vibrant bird and butterfly-filled space with gourmet vegetables and fruits. Register at (713) 880-5540.

**Thursday, January 6. Backyard Orchard II: Care of Fruit Trees**, by Dr. Bob Randall. 6:15 to 8:15 p.m. \$20. This class dispels the myth that fruit trees require too much work and are a waste of time.

**Friday, January 7. Backyard Orchard III: Hands-On Fruit Tree Pruning**, by Dr. Bob Randall and Diana Liga. 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. \$20. Winter is the season for this garden maintenance activity so critical to healthy trees and successful fruit production. Class repeats on Fridays in January.

**Saturday, January 8. Backyard Orchard IV: Peaches, Plums, Pomegranates & Other Fruit**, by Ethan Natelson, M.D. 9:30 a.m. to noon. \$20. These are some of the best tasting fruits you can grow, and many are beautiful ornamentals too.

**Monday, January 10. How to Start a Community or School Garden**, by Gary Edmondson. 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. Free. Learn the basic ingredients for a successful community garden, including planning, coordination, finances, and garden design. Gary Edmondson is the School & Youth Gardens Coordinator for Urban Harvest.

**Starting Wednesday, January 12. Permaculture—The Ecological Foundations of Design**, by the Permaculture Guild of Houston 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. \$135. Location: 2990 Richmond. Topics for this course include world ecosystems, climate, water conservation, water supply and waste treatment, soil, trees and forests, pests, and Texas ecosystems.

**Friday, January 14. Backyard Orchard III: Hands-On Fruit Tree Pruning**, by Dr. Bob Randall and Diana Liga. 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. \$20. Winter is the season for this garden maintenance activity so critical to healthy trees and successful fruit production.

**Saturday, January 15. Fruit Trees for Metro Houston**, by Heidi Sheesley and Ray Sher. 8:00 to 8:55 a.m. Free. This class will describe the fruit that will be for sale at the Urban Harvest fruit tree sale.

**Saturday, January 15. Irrigation Basics**, information table. 8:00 a.m. to noon. Bayou City Farmer's Market, 3000 Richmond. Free.

Urban Harvest



**Working with Gardens & Orchards to Build Healthy Communities**

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# Events Around Town

## Urban Harvest Classes

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**Monday, January 17. How to Start a Community or School Garden**, by Dr. Bob Randall. 1:00 to 3:45 p.m. Free. Learn the basic ingredients for a successful community garden, including planning, coordination, finances, and garden design. Dr. Bob Randall has advised over 150 community garden projects since 1987.

**Friday, January 21. Backyard Orchard III: Hands-On Fruit Tree Pruning**, by Dr. Bob Randall and Diana Liga. 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. \$20. Winter is the season for this garden maintenance activity so critical to healthy trees and successful fruit production.

**Saturday, January 22. Preparing Herbal Teas**, information table. 8:00am to noon. Bayou City Farmer's Market, 3000 Richmond. Free.

**Tuesday, January 25. From Seed to Fruit... Tomatoes!**, by Mark Cotham. 6:15 to 8:15 p.m. \$20. Foolproof tips on dealing with pests, diseases, caging, harvesting, and plant rotation will be shared.

**Friday, January 28. Backyard Orchard III: Hands-On Fruit Tree Pruning**, by Dr. Bob Randall and Diana Liga. 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. \$20. Winter is the season for this garden maintenance activity so critical to healthy trees and successful fruit production.

**Saturday, January 29. Backyard Orchard V: Apples, Pears & Persimmons**, by Ethan Natelson, M.D. 9:30 a.m. to noon. \$20. This class will focus on the best varieties both for flavor and adaptation to our climate.

## Sadie Gwin Blackburn Environmental Seminar Rescuing Heirloom Plants

**January 27, 2005.** 9:30 a.m. Imax Theatre, Museum of Natural Science, Houston, TX. Open to the public. Free admission.

**Kent Whealy**, Director of Seed Savers Exchange (SSE) will be the keynote speaker at the seminar organized by the River Oaks Garden Club. Kent Whealy's lecture will describe the history and the growth of Seed Savers, and the ongoing efforts to build the heirloom seed movement.

The Seminar is free of charge and parking is available in the Museum garage. For further information contact: Gail Payne of the River Oaks Garden Club [gspayne@swbell.net](mailto:gspayne@swbell.net) or visit [www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org).



# Precinct 2 News & Events

By Patricia Mitrowski

We've had a great year at Precinct 2 in 2004, all of which, of course, is due to the hard work of our volunteers. With 100 active members we have accumulated over 8,000 volunteer hours for the year. That is simply amazing! We've accomplished so much in the garden, built a new storage shed, put in a pond, revamped the vegetable garden, put in an herb garden, prepared for expansion gardens, redesigned the perennial garden, added walkways, improved and repaired our irrigation systems. We've donated food to Cross Roads to help the less fortunate through our partnership with Clear Lake United Methodist Church. Our community outreach continues to grow with the great programs and workshops. The Summer Class of 2004 has made tremendous contributions to our group; we depend on them so much already. We've added a new sale to our list of events and we keep coming up with new ideas to promote the Master Gardener program to the community.

Thanks to everyone who makes our garden a success. A special thanks to **Gloria Gibson** and **Linda Garren** for planning such a great Christmas party. The food was wonderful, the gift exchange hilarious and the bead project was a hit. Awards are given at the Christmas party and this year they were especially beautiful. Thanks to **Angela Chandler**, **Janice Patrick**, **Marleine Oren** and **Pat Mitrowski** for working on that project. We had 6 interns from the summer class who received awards for having over 100 hours. Congratulations to **Charles Berry**, **Suzy Crabtree**, **Isabel Audio**, **Louis Mickler**, **Mary Dell Rogan** and **Gloria Tome**. Our Master Gardeners with over 50 hours were **Regina Flaherty**, **Signe Hawley**, **Ram Ramsoondar** and **J.C. Whitney**. In the over 100-hour category was **Beth Frohme**, **Gloria Gibson**, **Georgia Lau**, **Mary McGowan**, and **Pat Pate**. With over 150 hours are **Kaye Corey**, **Theresa Holloman**, **Patty Zolen**, **Shirley Jackson**, **Ginia Keene** and **Janellee Kister**. And finally with over 250 hours **Diane Bryant**, **Linda Garren**, **Christa Kaiser**, **Pat Mitrowski**, **Marleine Oren**, **Janice Patrick**, **Pat Stier**, **Ruth Touchstone**, **Barbara Morrison** and **Angela Chandler**.

We received a generous grant of \$1,000.00 from **Exxon Mobile** this quarter. Thanks to Exxon and **Pat Stier**—who is a retired employee—for this grant, a portion of which is to be used towards a scholarship for the Master Gardener Class.

Work continues steadily in the Vegetable Garden as **Angela Chandler** and her crew of regulars **Charles Berry**, **Gloria Tome**, **Isabel Audio**, **Barbara Morrison**, **Sue Lane France**, **Ron Barbee**, **Diane Bryant**, **Suzy Crabtree** and **Louis Mickler** work every Friday. **Beth Frohme**, **Johnny Jones**, **Drew and Marilyn Williams**, **Jan Kapner** and **Theresa Holloman** spend Wednesdays in the Perennial Garden. Feel free to join these groups whenever you have time. You'll learn so much and have a lot of fun too.

We will be welcoming new First Wednesday co-chairs **Ginia Keen** and **Marleine Oren** next month. They will be taking over the program planning from **Gloria Gibson** in the next few months. Thanks to Gloria for doing such an outstanding job and to Ginia and Marleine for stepping in. Anyone interested in joining the committee should talk to Ginia or Marleine.

## Master Gardener of the Month

This month instead of recognizing an individual member as the Precinct 2 Master Gardener of the Month, as we normally do, we'd like to thank everyone who has contributed so much this year.

# Precinct 2 News & Events

## Upcoming Events

**January 5. Composting**, by Angela Chandler. 10 a.m.

Angela Chandler will provide us with “everything” we need to know about Composting. This is a class you don’t want to miss and it’s a perfect time of year to begin a compost pile. 10:00 a.m. at 1202 Genoa Red Bluff. Potluck lunch follows the program.

**January 15th** we will hold our **Living Wreath Workshop** at Vaughn's Nursery located at 15647 Ave C in Channelview. The cost is \$55 and includes herbs and all material to make and take on wreath, hands on assistance and luncheon. Please call (281) 991-8437-preregistration is required, deadline for registration: January 7th.

**February 2. Introduction to Hybrid Tea Roses**, by John Jons. 10 a.m. John Jons 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.

## Precinct 2 Upcoming Events

### Jan 5 – First Wednesday

9:30 a.m. Registration

10:00 a.m. **Angela Chandler** on **Composting**.

11:00 a.m. **Pot Luck Luncheon**.

Bring a dish to share. 1202 Genoa Red Bluff. For reservations call (281) 991-8437.

### Jan 15 – Saturday Workshop

**Living Wreath Workshop**

9:00 a.m – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Vaughn's Nursery, 15647 Avenue C, Channelview (77041)

Registration deadline: January 7.

Call (281) 991-8437 for information.

### Feb 2 – First Wednesday

**John Jons** on **Introduction to Hybrid Tea Roses**.

### Feb 26 – Tomato, Pepper and Fruit Tree Sale

### March 2 – First Wednesday

**Karen Breneman** on **Legends and Folklore of Native Plants**.



# Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

## January Programs

### Lunch Bunch: Yard Art

Wednesday, **January 12** from noon to 1:00 p.m. join Mercer volunteer **Vicki Snyder** for a fanciful journey through the world of garden art. From outlandish to sublime, from serious to whimsical, art plays a part in almost every landscape. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy during the program. Please call ahead for reservations.

### Arbor Day

Saturday, **January 15** from 10 a.m. to noon, visit Mercer and learn the best way to plant a tree, along with the best trees to plant in our area. Trees will be given away while supplies last. Help create a forest for the future, and beauty and shade to enjoy for a lifetime.

### Landscaping with Ginger

Tuesday, **January 18** from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Bring your favorite dish and join fellow Master Gardeners for a potluck lunch. Following lunch, **Ceil Dow** will be sharing her knowledge and excitement about landscaping with ginger. Then spend an hour with **Linda Gay** in Mercer's garden, planning and planting a new Ginger Bed. So be sure you bring "work in the garden" attire! Everyone who participates in the garden will take home at least one type of ginger to grow at home. Please call to reserve a seat and to select a food category for the potluck.

### Volunteer Orientation and Training

Saturday, **January 29** or Thursday, **Feb 3** from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Mercer offers information on learning what it takes to be a volunteer. Orientation is from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and provides information about Mercer and what volunteering is all about. Garden and greenhouse training is from 10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and shows volunteers what they can expect to do at Mercer as they join the ranks of others that give their time.



*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](mailto: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.

### 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.

## Ongoing Programs

### Piney Woods Wildlife Society

The Piney Woods Wildlife Society meets the **third Tuesday of each month** from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Piney Woods Wildlife Society is a nonprofit organization for people interested in nature and the environment. Featured speakers give presentations on nature topics. New members and visitors are welcome. The December meeting will be held on Tuesday the 14th and will include the election of officers and a Christmas party. Then Saturday December 18 join this group at 9 a.m. for a winter bird count.

### 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.

### Cypress Creek Daylily Society

The Cypress Creek Daylily Society meets the **fourth Sunday of each month** from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Cypress Creek Daylily Society is an organization of daylily enthusiasts that have monthly meetings with featured speakers. A sanctioned daylily show is sponsored at Mercer each year. New members and visitors are welcome.

# Volunteer Hours

See below for instructions.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Period covered – from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Facility or Garden Name	# Contacts	Hours
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](mailto: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>

# January 2005

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<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Hamburger Tuesday at Extension Office page 9	<b>5</b> Mercer – Gardens of Hampton Court page 14  Urban Harvest – Permaculture page 10	<b>6</b> Urban Harvest Care of Fruit Trees page 10	<b>7</b> Urban Harvest Fruit Tree Pruning page 10	<b>8</b> Urban Harvest Peaches, Plums & Other Fruit page 10
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Urban Harvest How to Start a Community Garden page 10	<b>11</b> Work Day at the Extension Office	<b>12</b> Mercer – Garden Art page 14  Urban Harvest Permaculture page 10	<b>13</b> Urban Harvest Fruit Tree Pruning page 10	<b>14</b> Newsletter deadline tomorrow morning	<b>15</b> Arbor Day page 14 Urban Harvest Fruit Trees for Houston; Irrigation Basics
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Urban Harvest How to Start a Community Garden page 10	<b>18</b> General Meeting Extension Office page 9  Mercer – Ginger page 14	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Urban Harvest Fruit Tree Pruning page 11	<b>22</b> Fruit Tree Sale pages 2 & 3  Urban Harvest Herbal Teas page 11
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Work Day at the Extension Office  Urban Harvest Tomatoes page 11	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Rescuing Heirlooms page 11	<b>28</b> Urban Harvest Fruit Tree Pruning page 11	<b>29</b> Urban Harvest Apples, Pears, & Persimmons page 11 Mercer – Volunteer Orientation page 14

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## Fruit Tree Sale

**January 22, 2005**

Harris County Extension Office  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### Fruit Tree Educational Program

in cooperation with the Gulf Coast Fruit Study Group

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Lots of great varieties for our area will be available.  
Call Scott Hume (281) 855-5600 to volunteer to assist with  
the sale. See you on the 22nd!