

URBAN DIRT

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TEXAS HOME AND GARDEN SHOW

by Murray Kast

Neither rain, nor sleet, nor the worst ice storm in 20 years was able to deter the MGs who had volunteered

for the Texas Home and Garden Show at the George R. Brown Convention Center the weekend of Feb. 11- 13. As per usual, the MGs came out in force and with a vengeance to promote our cause and help build the treasury to continue our good work. We cleared about \$325.00 cash with approximately \$25.00 of inventory remaining. The inventory was in the form of "row cover" and stakes. Most of it was snatched up at the conclusion of the February meeting.

We have become so large as a group that we may tend to forego the camaraderie that is so appealing in smaller groups. More often than not, a volunteer was happy just to be working, not caring who would share the booth. I make mention of that because it demonstrates what a terrific group the MGs truly are (is that good English?).

Frankly, the entire show was down in attendance from last year and the early date for the exposition was not conducive to brisk tomato sales. The ice storm on the preceding Thursday made many realize that ever so often Houston does have a winter, even if just for a day.

As with any undertaking of this magnitude, there are special thanks that must be noted. Our President, Barbara Ferer, last year's chairperson held my hand most every step of the way. The value of a good woman cannot be underestimated. Finally, a big round of applause for Ruby Fairweather. Talk about "can do" people - Whew!!!! I dreaded preparing for the show, but knew it was part of my apprenticeship. It was the most gratifying experience I've had as an MG. If you didn't work this year, do it next year. You won't regret it for a moment.

(See page 5 for a special thank you to all the convention volunteers)



MARCH MEETING: 3/15/94

Executive Board	5:30 pm
Dessert and Coffee	6:30 pm
General Meeting	7:00 pm

SUBJECT:

"Perennials for the Houston Garden"

Speaker: William C. Welch, County Extension Agent -Horticulture

APRIL MEETING:

4/19/94

Executive Board	5:30 pm
Dessert and Coffee	6:30 pm
General Meeting	7:00 pm

SUBJECT:

"Practical Greenhouses for Houston"

Please remember: Bring plants to sell!



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Barbara Ferer

Thanks to everyone that participated in this year's Home and Garden Show. One of our most important functions as Master Gardeners is to let the public know about our many services and the show affords us a wonderful opportunity to reach out and get our message across.

We are so proud of the wonderful work that our volunteers are doing. However, more workers are needed in the floral test gardens. This is a great opportunity to learn about the new plants that are just becoming available to gardeners.

Let me let you in on a surprise, there will be an exciting trip coming up in April -sorry, no hints. Lois Sutton will be giving you the details at the March meeting.

One thought as we approach tax time. Remember that this is a non-profit organization so that gifts given in memory of people or for certain projects are tax deductible and a gift in someone's honor goes on forever.

I look forward to seeing you all in the gardens and at the March meeting. Until then, Happy Gardening!



HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

#2 Abercrombie Drive
Houston, Texas 77084

Phone (713) 855-5611
Fax # (713) 855-5638

OFFICERS:

President.....	Barbara Ferer 464-1416
President-Elect.....	Murray Kast 467-7491
Vice President.....	Lois Sutton 862-8857
Secretary.....	Eileen Whitwill 499-8380
Treasurer.....	"Buzz" Buzby 370-6521
Membership and Junior Past President.....	Tom Robb 465-5987

ANCILLARY POSITIONS

Advisor & County Extension Agent - Horticulturist.....	Tom LeRoy 855-5600
Harris County Extension Agency Secretary.....	Stephanie Gebhardt 855-5600
Editor Urban Dirt.....	Pam Libby 937-8437
Gulf Coast Fruit Study Group.....	Yvonne Gibbs 462-7052

FROM THE ORCHARD...

By Yvonne Gibbs



The Ted Teddlie Memorial Orchard is progressing beautifully.

The Stone Fruit Workshop was conducted by our experts, Tom Leroy and Bill Adams on Saturday, January 15, with Master

Gardeners and Fruit Study Members participating.

Everyone learned how to train and prune the trees and we each had the opportunity to collect some graft wood. Some took budding branches home to force for blooms inside. Some are quite fragrant and all are pretty. The weather was perfect, cool and sunny with no rain.

Since then lots of work has been done in the orchard by Kevin Topek and volunteers.

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR VOLUNTEERING, PLEASE CONTINUE DOING SO. WE NEED YOUR HELP!

There are a lot of new Tex Royal Peach trees planted and a few new apricot trees. Tons of mulch is being applied. Integrated pest management and nature's way is being implemented as far as we possibly can and still have a harvest. Let's hope nature gives us a helping hand this year and doesn't flood us like it has in years past.

Kevin has planted clover to put nitrogen back into the soil and has used slow release cotton seed meal as an organic fertilizer.

The grape pruning workshop conducted earlier in December was a success. There wasn't a shred of the vines left as all was collected by crafters to make basket handles and wreathes for the holidays. I whipped a couple together and they were great. I later saw one of less character offered at Randalls for \$25.00. So next time join us and make some for yourself.

We found out that muscadines are different from other types of grapes in that you can't take cuttings when they are dormant and get them to root. You have to work with actively growing material.

The planning committee for the Fruit Study Group met on December 9th and put together an agenda for 1994. We adopted a floating calendar. The meetings will alternate yearly. Our purpose is to have meetings when we can have some fruit in season for fruit tastings at each meeting.

Our meetings for 1994 are: January, March, May, and November, all at the same time and place, the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at #2 Abercrombie Drive. Our all day bus tour will be on Saturday, October 22, 1994. Several stops are planned, more on this later.

On March 8th, we will have expert, Bonnie Childers, speak on "Hardy Citrus Evaluation and Grafting Techniques." Be there! Bonnie has a lifetime of experiences with grafting fruit trees and has done it all. You won't want to miss this Question and Answer Session or the hands on grafting demonstrations. Dr. Nagle's new book, *Citrus for the Gulf Coast* will be available at the meeting. The author will be present to answer questions and to autograph your copy. There will also be a fruit tasting and various items displayed.

See you there!