



ECHO

Extension's Community Horticultural Outreach

January— February 2005

Hello My Friends,

Happy New Year to you. Our group is off and running this year with plans and projects. An exciting new facet to the organizational structure of our group is the advent of an "Advisory Board" that is comprised of all committee and project chairpersons. This an effort to keep the leadership of our organization in-touch and up to date on current Master Gardener items of interest. When this Advisory Board meets quarterly, it will be a time for updates on projects and committees and a time for open discussion about questions, concerns or suggestions.



Another major reason that we are implementing this Advisory Board is that our Master Gardener group must become more organized for us to reach our potential. This Board is another great step in becoming more efficient, effective and getting everyone on the same page.

Educational programs of Texas Cooperative Extension are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.

Switching gears to entomology, a mite has been found to be the prime suspect in a rash of biting cases reported this fall. Although cold weather appears to have put a halt on most reports, many Texans over the last few weeks have responded to this story's release through AgNews. To read this latest news release, visit http://citybugs.tamu.edu/IntheNews_Details.asp?ID_Key=414

On a personal note, Piper and I are now the proud caretakers of two dogs, Chevy and Cowgirl. One is a Catahoula mix and the other is a Miniature Australian Shepherd. I realize that all of you reading this are cringing at the thought of our backyard landscape. Know that heroic efforts are being made to accommodate both flora and fauna.

I look forward to a wonderful year with you!

Landry Lockett, CEA-Horticulture, Texas Cooperative Extension

Getting to Know... Edith Hiett

By Janice Miller

I recently met with Edith Hiett and her husband Leon for the opportunity to get to know a little about her for this article. It was a joy! Thank you Edith and Leon.

Edith Hiett has the distinction of being a member of the first class of Collin County Master Gardeners from 1997. Edith lobbied to begin a Collin County Master Gardener program for several years before it finally came to fruition. Even so, the first class was a cooperative effort between Collin and other North Texas Counties. She said that each week the class was in a different location, so she had a list of the locations taped to the mirror so that she was in the correct place each week! Edith brought the picture of her graduating class of about 12 to our meeting. It impressed me that she knew where almost everyone was living and what they were doing. Edith and Mary Nell Jackson are the only two founding members still active in the association.

Edith's involvement with the Collin County Master Gardener Association is quite extensive. She was the President for the first two years of the association. She contributed to and edited the newsletter, then called "FYI". As a Master Gardener, she has conducted many short presentations on herbs. She enjoys an informal, hands-on approach to presenting. Often she brings along herbs so that everyone has an opportunity to touch, smell, and see what she is discussing. A benefit to presenting a topic is that often, you learn from the class. She told me of a presentation that she had done on making herbal vinegars. Edith had brought along peppers to be used in the vinegar, but was in a hurry so just snipped off some branches from the plant. A student asked if she could use the branch, leaves, and peppers in the vinegar to which she replied "yes". Edith said that the student showed her the completed project, which was a very ornamental display of the pepper plant branches in the vinegar. Edith said "I wish I would have thought of that!" Don't miss the April 28 meeting, because Edith will be sharing her top 10 tips for Herbs as a member of the panel discussing Flowers, Herbs, Shrubs & Vegetables.

Edith has many interests, but her passions are herbs and writing. She said that "her yard is a jungle, with no grass whatsoever." She has herbs, natives, and even some plants that are supposed to be tropical plants growing in her yard. She told me about some of her favorites. Cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus*) is said to be a tropical plant, but Edith is currently growing three six foot specimens. Cardoon has impressive silvery leaves, ridged stems and is often grown as an ornamental. It has Gray-blue thistle-like flowers that appear in late summer. (You may have been lucky enough to get seeds from this plant during the November Seed Exchange). She also described another plant that she acquired from a Tyler Nursery during a Master Gardener Convention. They called it a Dogwood Hibiscus, but the common names of plants vary greatly depending on where you are in the country. Therefore, Edith spent some time researching this plant and believes it to be a Confederate Rose Hibiscus. Its blooms October through December and each flower lasts only two days. Each bloom opens white, large, and beautiful, by the end of the first day it has a pale pink edging, day two ends with a gorgeous hot pink color. Leon, Edith's husband, said that he cuts these blooms so that they can enjoy their entire transformation!

Edith's extensive knowledge of herbs is shared with the North and Central Texas chapter of the Herb Society of America. As a founding member of the local unit, Edith has served in several executive board positions, most recently serving two terms (four consecutive years) as Program Chairman, securing speakers for regular meetings. She still serves on the Program Committee and the By-Laws Committee. The Herb Society of America maintains the herb garden at the Dallas Arboretum and also helps maintain a patio Herb Garden at Polk Elementary in Dallas. She related that one of the schools employees had brought a plant from home to include in the schools garden. The problem was, no one knew what the plant was (because it was from his native country) and the teachers had been told that the students could touch and taste anything in the garden! Needless to say, they had the plant identified (very quickly) and it was a safe plant for the schools garden.

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PLANT IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
Mexican Mint Marigold (*tagetes lucida*)
By Candace Fountoulakis



Like many North Texans, I consider the Hill Country of Texas as one of my favorite nearby destinations. For Master Gardeners and plant collectors this area rivals most anywhere for opportunities to indulge in our favorite pastime – acquiring plants! And not just any old plants, but hard-to-find, native and well-adapted plants for the water-thrifty gardens favored by those in the know in Austin and north Texas alike.

In recent years my visits to the west side of Austin have afforded me the opportunity to not only patronize the local nurseries who specialize in native and xeriscape-friendly plants, but to see them utilized to great effect in landscapes both large and small. One of the most eye-catching plants I have come to admire is ‘Mexican Mint Marigold’ or *tagetes lucida*, to you Latin buffs.

Also known as Mexican tarragon, because the leaves can be used as a substitute for the more well-known French tarragon, *tagetes lucida*, is as its name suggests, a member of the marigold clan, but stands much taller than annual marigolds that are frequently used as bedding plants. Although mint marigold blooms rather late in the summer, it has all-season allure when mixed with other early bloomers or bunch grasses. Its narrow, dark green leaves are abundant on long, unbranched stems which rise from the crown in spring. Their fragrance alone is worth growing this plant even if it didn’t bloom at all. The leaves’ aroma is a strong combination of sweet, spicy herbal essence and can be enjoyed either by brushing by the plant or harvesting the leaves for culinary use. A much-loved relative, Copper Canyon daisy (*tagetes lemonii*), blooms even later with small single flowers and boasts finely cut foliage with a delightful citrus fragrance.

In late August or early September, the buds of mint marigold open atop a multitude of 2½’ stems and you get to enjoy a golden yellow display for weeks on end. The simple flowers are small, with short petals and small round centers, but bloom in such abundance that you get the impression of a much bigger flower. The show is enhanced if you combine mint marigold with other late bloomers such as fall aster or long-blooming salvias in hues of blue, purple or red. In my own garden I have *tagetes lucida* bordering a narrow band of switch grass which waves just overhead at maturity. A winter hair cut of the browned stems down to about six inches will prepare this easy-care plant for spring growth. Well-drained soil and moderate water will ensure a long-lived perennial you’ll enjoy year after year.

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Edith is also a founding member of the Heritage Herb Club which is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year. She is the Editor for their monthly newsletter. Edith researches and writes an Herb of the Month column. Her last column was about Oregano which is the “Herb of the Year”. At a recent meeting, she requested ideas for her herb column because she wanted to include information on herbs that would be of interest to everyone. She reminded them that if they didn’t give her their ideas they would be stuck with her “weird interests” because she enjoys learning and writing about unusual plants. She was told by one of the members that they enjoyed her “weird interests.” Indeed they must, because the only membership benefit for the out-of-town members is the receipt of the Club’s Newsletter!

Edith is also an accomplished gourmet. In December she placed 3rd in the Dallas Morning News Holiday Cookie Contest for her Tarragon Sesame Crisps. She has also published fundraising booklets for both herb clubs on topics such as Herbal Teas, Pesto, Herbal Vinegars and Herbal Spreads. Although she didn’t tell me, I found that she is the four time winner of the North Haven Gardens Tea-Off.

I enjoyed my short meeting with Edith and Leon Hiatt. After re-reading this article and thinking back on our meeting, my biggest question is how does she fit everything she does into her schedule? I guess it comes back to, you find the time for the interests for which you have a passion.

Garden Checklist for January-February 2005

**by Dr. Bill Welch, Landscape Horticulturist
Texas Cooperative Extension**

- Now is an excellent time to transplant mature or established trees and shrubs while they are dormant.
- Make flower and vegetable garden plans now before the rush of spring planting. Time spent in armchair gardening before the fireplace will pay off in improved plant selection. Besides, it is fun to page through the garden catalogs.
- Sow seeds in flats or containers to get a jump on plant growth before hot weather arrives. Petunias, begonias, and impatiens should be sown in early January. Warm temperature plants, such as tomatoes, peppers, marigolds, and periwinkles, should be sown in late January or early February.
- Apply a light application of fertilizer to established pansy plantings. Use one-half pound of ammonium sulfate per 100 square feet of bed area. Repeat the application every 4 to 6 weeks, depending on rainfall. Dried blood meal is also an excellent source of fertilizer for pansies.
- Prepare beds and garden area for spring planting.
- Select and order gladiolus corms for February/March planting. Plant at two-week intervals to prolong flowering period.
- Check junipers and other narrow-leaf evergreens for bagworm pouches. The insect eggs over winter in the pouch, and start the cycle again by emerging in the spring to begin feeding on the foliage. Hand removal and burning of the pouches are ways of reducing the potential damage next spring.
- The life of the plant received as a Christmas gift can be prolonged with proper care. Keep the soil moist, but provide drainage so that excess moisture can flow from the pot. Keep the plant out of range of heating ducts and away from heating units. Keep in a cool room at night, preferably at 60 to 65 degrees F.
- Don't fertilize newly set out trees or shrubs until after they have started to grow, and then only very lightly the first year.
- When buying plants, the biggest is not always the best, especially when dealing with bare-root plants. The medium to small sizes (4 to 6 feet) are usually faster to become established and more effective in the landscape than the large sizes.
- Prune bush roses during February or early March. Use good shears that will make clean cuts. Remove dead, dying, and weak canes. Leave 4 to 8 healthy canes, and remove approximately one-half of the top growth and height of the plant.
- Now is an excellent time to select and plant container-grown roses to fill in those bare spots in your rose garden.
- When pruning shrubs, first prune out any dead or damaged branches; then thin out by removing about one-third of the canes or stems at ground level, removing the oldest canes only; and last, shape the rest of the plant, but do not cut everything back to the same height.
- Plant dahlia tubers in late February and early March.
- In Central and South Texas, the following flower seeds may be sown directly without protection in well prepared flower beds in February or March: nasturtiums, annual phlox, California poppies, coneflowers, and larkspur. Petunia plants may be set out in sunny, well drained locations,

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with little chance of cold damage except in far North Texas.

- Water foliage plants as well as other containerized plants only when needed and not by the calendar.
- Climbing roses should be trained but not pruned. Weave long canes through openings in trellises or arbors and tie them with jute twine or plastic/wire plant ties. Securing canes now prevents damage from winter winds, and contributes toward a more refined look to the garden when roses are blooming. Wait until after the spring flowering period to prune climbing or once-blooming shrub roses.

This article appeared in the January/February issue of *Lawn and Garden Update*, edited by Drs. William C. Welch and Douglas F. Welsh, and produced by Extension Horticulture, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System, College Station, Texas.

Out and About ...

Activities and Events of Interest

(The activities and events listed below are not eligible for continuing education or CCMGA Volunteer hours.)

From Songbirds to Raptors

Bring your whole family to meet live hawks, owls and falcons from the Blackland Prairie Raptor Center. Take a bird walk in the garden and learn how to identify the feathered friends that visit your backyard. Find out how to use native plants to attract more songbirds to your yard. Geared for all ages and skill levels. The event will be held Saturday, February 19 at 10:00 a.m. At the Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park, 3601 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Dallas, TX 75210. The cost is as follows: Adults \$3, seniors (60+) \$2, children (ages 3-11) \$1.50. Texas Discovery Gardens members and children under 3 admitted free. For more info: Call 214-428-7476 or visit the website at www.texasdiscoverygardens.org

Texas Trees Foundation invites you to join them on the third Saturday of each month for their volunteer work day to plant, transplant and learn about trees. The next date is February 19, 8:00 a.m. —12:00 p.m. at the TXU Urban Tree Farm at Richland College 12800 Abrams Rd. Parking Lot D.

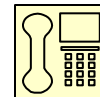
2nd Annual Johnson County Lawn and Garden Show

The Johnson County Master Gardener Association invites you to their 2nd Annual Lawn and Garden Show on Saturday, March 5. The show opens at 9:00 a.m. at the Cleburne Civic Center, 1501 W. Henderson, Cleburne. There will be exhibits by nurserymen, arborists, landscapers, gardening equipment and furniture suppliers. The show features four gardening specialists speaking on a range of topics. There will be plant sales, children's' activities, door prizes, and more.

Hello...Answer Line

By Rhonda Mieure

January/February, 2005



Commentary

Whew, it's already 2005! I hope this New Year finds you well and ready to start the gardening season. Actually, for many of us the 2005 gardening season started in 2004. I'll wager that many Master Gardeners have had bed diagrams drawn, plant orders prepared, soil tested and compost ready for weeks now. I thought everyone did that from year to year, but in reading Answer Line questions and client comments from previous years, I've discovered a huge segment of our community that doesn't even think about their garden until they start receiving the new plant catalogs in January. Given a choice, that is exactly what I'd do as well. Bright colors and pretty pictures are major distractions for me and I really struggle with sticking to the plan after I start opening the new catalogs. I have learned the hard way that it's not productive to buy one of every beautiful plant I see. If I veer off the plan very far I end up with a haphazard garden that blooms in May and November, plants that love to be wet in the same bed with plants that hate wet feet and a nursery bill that is just embarrassing. My goal as a Master Gardener Intern for 2005 is to educate anyone I can about long range garden planning. When we catch the phone at the Collin County Extension Center we're going to have great opportunities to impact the beauty of our community through education and I am SO excited!

Our calls for the coming months are going to be all about managing trees, ornamentals, vegetables and turf and all of the associated pests, diseases, soil amendments and fertilizers for the 2005 gardening season. While our obvious focus will be to provide scientifically accurate information regarding these landscaping and garden topics we also need to consider the unique position we're in as Master Gardeners. We have direct contact with our neighbors and we have a plethora of tools at our fingertips that we can use to educate them about the wonderful ways they can beautify our community and preserve our environment. We can teach people about IPM, Texas Superstars, Earth Kind Roses, Xeriscaping, composting and the wonders of having garden fresh vegetables on our dinner tables. Can you think of a more intriguing way to spend an afternoon at the office? If that's not exciting enough, consider the tools we have at our disposal.

We have Landry and the staff at the extension center, we have each other, we have a ton of paper documentation in the form of books and technical publications and we have the Internet— specifically the Texas A&M website and associated links. I spent a great deal of time in December and January perusing the Texas A&M website and the links to other horticultural and entomological websites. I am just astounded at how much information is available, not just to us, but to the whole community. We all know when we provide an answer to a client we are also supposed to provide our source of information. I'd like to suggest that we always provide the link to the Texas A&M Horticulture website as well. It's <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu> . Suggest to the client that they take some time to just wander through the site and see what kind of information is available. If you have the time and they have the access, offer to walk them through it and discuss it with them. We were taught in the 2004 MG class that our goal as Master Gardeners is to educate the community and I can't think of a better place to start — can you?

Administrative and Technical Topics

Listed below are seven tips that will enhance your experience on the phone with callers.

1. Read through the question and answer log from the previous week or two when you get into the office to take your phone shift. This will make you aware of any open issues that you may need to handle.

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It will also keep you informed as to what's happening in the community and any ongoing problem reports.

2. Don't hesitate to tell a caller you need to re-search their question and will call them back. Don't forget to call them back when promised.

3. Keep good records of your hours and report them on time. (NOTE TO SELF!!)

4. It's a good idea to study up on turf now as people will soon be working on their lawns again. A good source of information is <http://aggieturf.tamu.edu>.

5. You may wish to read up on Oak Wilt. Collin County has had the first confirmed cases. The official Texas State Oak Wilt website is <http://www.texasoakwilt.org>. Information can also be found on the Texas A&M Horticulture website by doing a search on "oak wilt" or "oak decline" from either the home page or the PLANT Answers page.

6. When a client requests information on soil amendmets and fertilizers and their soil has not been tested within the past three years we should recommend they have it tested before they pur-

chase any products.

7. If clients have not already planted, transplanted or pruned their trees and shrubs, now is the time to do it in most cases. If they wait too much longer they are going to risk interrupting new growth to transplant or prune. If they are planting a new tree or shrub it needs to be in the ground in time for the plant to develop a strong root system for support during the hot summer months.

Clients may be seeing insects in the house more during these cold months than they usually do. When we have the warm spells the insects think it's time to show up in the garden and when it gets cold they need somewhere warm to go – or a teeny little jacket if you have one.

Help Wanted

Volunteers are needed to fill phone support hours, please call Sheila Nelson at the extension center (972) 548-4232 and volunteer a morning or afternoon. Rene Mahoney is the Phone Line Coordinator and will make arrangements to meet you in the office your first day of phone duty.

Fundraising Update

Candace Fountoulakis will be taking orders for Neil Sperry's Gardens magazine and Texas Gardener, whose subscription rate recently increased.

1 year	\$21.95	(had been \$18.95)
2 years	37.95	34.95
3 years	47.95	35.96

Order forms will be available at regular monthly meetings or by contacting Candace Fountoulakis at fjohn94@aol.com. If you are planning on receiving these wonderful gardening magazines, the CCMGA receives a percentage of the subscription price for subscriptions sold through the Association.

Tax Time Reminder: The Collin County Master Gardener Association is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and as such, we are able to collect tax deductible donations. After consulting with a tax professional, if you wish to make a donation or if you have made contributions during the year, we can provide you with a tax receipt. Receipts must be requested through Beth DiGioia at missusdi@msn.com In order to provide a receipt you must include your name, a description of the item(s) donated and an estimated value. This information is necessary for our records. Examples of donations include monetary contributions, door prizes for the monthly meetings, and supplies for projects.



HOURS – When and Why

The obvious “why” you turn in volunteer and education hours is to become or remain a certified master gardener, but there’s more to it than this. Hours are not just of concern to CCMGA. Each month, Landry reports our hours to Texas Cooperative Extension. The numbers will also be examined on the federal level. All levels of government are interested in the use of time and resources and the impact we are having in our local community. Landry reports individual contacts made, descriptions of meetings and educational events, descriptions of projects and demonstration gardens and time spent educating people.

Your hours are due at the end of the month they are completed. To be included in Landry’s monthly report, they must be received by the first working day of the month, so I can compile a monthly report and a year-to-date report for each member and our organization. I also submit a continuing education report. I submit my report to Landry by the third working day of the month so Landry can send his report by the fifth working day of the month.

Hours are accepted up to one month after the month they are worked, but are considered late if they can not be included in the monthly report. Last year, **18%** of our hours were reported too late to be reported by Landry.

Remember you may turn your hours in at our meeting, or mail, or e-mail. If you have any last minute hours to report, you may even phone them in. This year, let’s try to report all our hours, even if we already have enough hours to certify, and let’s get them in on time. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Diane Sharp

Herb Extravaganza!

By Marion Buchannan, Dallas County Master Gardener
and shared by Sharon Meines who attended the talk.

Now that you have all those wonderful herbs that you grew during the summer and fall, here are some great tips to follow when preparing them to use and store.

Basic guidelines for use:

- Don't feel bound by an herb chart or recipe, most are based on classic combinations.
- There is no herb that is not good in any food.
- Use a light touch with herbs – don't overpower food.
- Use 2-3 times as much fresh herb as dried. Always start with the smaller amount, then increase if needed.
- Tender stems can usually be used along with leaves, except for garnish or in recipes like herb butters or cheeses.

Herbs can be incorporated into foods by the following methods: chopped, blended or processed, torn large or whole small leaves into salads, soups or marinated dishes. Whole branches can be added to soups, stews or marinated dishes (3-5 inches, no wood stems).

Some of the “Blender” herbs include bay, chives (preferably onion), marjoram / mild oregano (*Origanum x. majoricum*) and parsley.

Herbal groups with varying flavors are basil, mint, oregano, rosemary and thyme.

Herbs that require special care in selection or use include:

- Those with fleeting flavor – use in non-cooked dishes or add at the end of cooking. They include basil, coriander (cilantro), lemon balm, mint marigold and salad burnet.
- Those with distinct flavors which are often used alone are coriander (cilantro), dill, lavender flowers, lemon verbena, peppermint and salad burnet.
- Those which will hold up to long cooking time are bay, oregano (even mild varieties) or sweet marjoram, rosemary, sage and thyme.

Herb Butter Basics

Herb butters may include any single herb or a combination of several. With the addition of other ingredients, it is possible to have many completely different tasting mixtures. Keep several in the refrigerator or freezer for convenience. Dress steamed vegetables, or cook with vegetables such as green beans, turnips, dried beans and peas and squash. They make an excellent topping for baked potatoes, rice or pasta. Use for sautéing vegetables, meats, poultry and seafood. Substitute for other fat in sauces or soups of all kinds.

Fresh herbs have better texture for butter, but dried herbs may be used. Try to always have fresh parsley and chives. Butter or margarine may be used, soft or plain, but avoid freezing diet type margarine. Take care not to let butter or margarine get warm enough to separate when mixing. Herb butters may be melted for use, but take care when heating, especially when broiling, as the fresh green herbs burn easily and may result in an altered taste.

Savory Herb Butter or Cheese

1 pound butter, margarine, cream cheese, ricotta or a mixture
2 tablespoons finely sliced chives-onion or garlic
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley-preferably flat leaf
2-3 tablespoons other chopped fresh herbs: suggest dill, basil, bay (fresh), marjoram, tarragon, rosemary, sage, English or lemon thyme, spearmint or lemon balm.

Combine ingredients with a wood spoon or in electric mixer. Make into rolls to freeze and slice off as necessary. Can be used for sauces, vegetables, meats, poultry, seafood and breads.

Yield: 2 cups

Variations: Add one or more of the following:

2-3 tablespoons lemon, lime or orange juice and/or zest
Salt and/or pepper
2 cloves garlic, mashed
¼ teaspoon dry mustard
2 teaspoons curry powder
2 teaspoons ground caraway, celery, comino, coriander or fennel seeds (or a combination of both)
1/8 teaspoon Tabasco Sauce or 1.4 to ½ teaspoon minced fresh hot chile Serrano or jalapeño
1 teaspoon paprika

Note: All measurements given are approximate, since different herbs will vary in strength. Beware of too much parsley or the butter will end up green!

Master Recipe for Herbal Dressing

1 cup vegetable or extra virgin olive oil or a mixture
¼ to 1/3 cup lemon or lime juice, wine or cider vinegar or a mixture
¼ to 1/3 cup water
1 large clove garlic, peeled and cut into several uniform pieces – about 1 teaspoon
½ to 1 teaspoon freshly ground herbal seeds: celery, coriander, cumin or fennel or a mixture
½ to 1 teaspoon salt
1 to 2 teaspoons sugar, optional
1 tablespoon Dijon style mustard or good homemade mustard, optional
½ teaspoon hot pepper sauce or small piece of hot fresh chile – seeded and deveined
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/3 cup firmly packed fresh parsley leaves and tender stems
¼ to 1/3 cup fresh herb leaves and tender stems of choice – mixture of mild and strong or robust

Combine all ingredients (except herbs) in blender container or food processor work bowl. Blend until smooth; add herbs and pulse briefly. Taste for salt and other seasonings. Hot pepper can be increased to make a piquant flavor if desired. Salt measurement will vary depending upon use of mustard and type of vinegar. Sugar can be increased to accommodate sharp vinegars. Avoid blending too long after herbs are added to keep dressing from becoming green puree. Store in glass or plastic refrigerator containers.

Note: The only vinegar that is not recommended is plain white distilled, which has no flavor, only sharpness. Try white or red wine, rice wine or apple cider vinegars. Be careful when selecting apple cider vinegar as “apple cider flavored” is also offered. Balsamic vinegar is usually used on its own or with very few additional seasonings as it is made with various herbs.

Advisory Board Review

By Janice Miller

The Summer 2004 CCMGA class pushed our ranks to over 100. Our growing volunteer force is enabling the CCMGA to accomplish more and to pursue new volunteer opportunities! The growth of the association is wonderful, but with the growth comes the need for better organization and improved efficiency so that opportunities that arise may be met and responded to efficiently and expeditiously. The Advisory Board was formed to help with that task by removing as many of the day to day Master Gardener operational tasks from Landry as possible. The Advisory Board will help Landry to become (and this is a quote from Landry) “an ‘overseer’, not an ‘everydayer’”.

The Advisory Board will be meeting quarterly and is comprised of the Executive Board members and the committee chairpersons from each of the projects’. According to Landry Lockett “there have been many suggestions to have the Master Gardener Executive Board meet on a regular basis with project and committee chairpersons. This Advisory Board is a result of those requests. It is an effort to keep the leadership of our organization in-touch and up to date on current Master Gardener items of interest.”

The January 6 meeting was an extremely productive kick-off for the year. Each project was reviewed and discussed along with the projects budget and volunteer needs. The meeting enabled everyone to discuss what will be necessary in order to make each and every project a success. A highlight of the meeting was the depth of knowledge gained about each project and its focus. Because each and every project leader had such passion for their project and its scope, it was impossible not to get excited and want to be involved in many of the projects within the CCMGA. The next meeting of the Advisory Board will be April 14.

The Executive Board members and the Advisory Board members are listed below. If you would like more information concerning a specific project or committee, contact the project leader.

<u>Advisory Board 2005</u>		
President	Susan Owens	sowens143@hotmail.com
1 st VP	Linda Hornbaker	plantchic@aol.com
2 nd VP	Jan Madden	jmadden@airmail.net
Secretary	Emma Bookout	ehb@att.net
Treasurer	Beth DiGioia	missusdi@msn.com
Past President	Diane Poston	cisco007@swbell.net
Native Plant Display	Scherle Barth	Barth6@juno.com
Publicity/Calendar	Paula Brehm	g-brehm@msn.com
Habitat for Humanity	Carol Dean	carcdean@comcast.net
Info Booths	Renee Ferguson	rennybird@comcast.net
Fundraising	Candace Fountoulakis	fjohn94@aol.com
Hort Therapy	Sara Garretson	imtoons@aol.com
Yearbook	Erin Hoffer	erin.hoffer@usa.xerox.com
Extension Agent	Landry Lockett	llockett@ag.tamu.edu
SB/Telephone	Rene Mahoney	rmaho1055@aol.com
CEMAP	Mary Means	mvmeans@swbell.net
JMG	Sharon Meines	sjmeines@earthlink.net
ECHO/e-Minders	Janice Miller	Janicemiller@sbcglobal.net
Member Hours	Diane Sharp	rlds@airmail.net
Web	Carolyn Skei	ctexsskei@comcast.net
Urban Plant Det	Don Tillerson	45013@msn.com

Junior Master Gardener

By Sharon Meines

Now that the holiday season is over, youth organizational leaders begin thinking of spring and gardening programs for their children. JMG to the rescue!

The team's focus this year will be on Girl Scouts, home school groups and special events. **Linda Pope, Jennifer St. Germain** and **Jodie Yowell** have been working with McKinney and Plano public and private schools, but this spring we will be adding a Girl Scout troop and home school group from Josephine located in the south part of the county. They will be combining to become JMG certified. This is a first for CCGMA.

Our next big event will be the **March 5** booth at the **Dallas Garden Show**. The JMG Team will have a booth in conjunction with CCMGA. Come join in the fun by helping children create a work of art! Please let Sharon Meines know as soon as possible so she can make sure you get a free pass to the show.

Future plans for the team include creating a 6-week curriculum to coincide with the school curriculum and building a notebook of lessons with corresponding activities. **Jodie Yowell** will create a much needed brochure.

Because our program is growing we are always looking for new members to support the number of requests we are receiving. If you love to work with children and want to know more about the program, visit the website, jmgkids.com or contact Sharon Meines at 972-423-7083 or sjmeines@earthlink.net. Better yet, visit one of our meetings which are regularly held prior to the CCMGA regular monthly meeting. Check out the monthly calendar for time and place. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 24 at TAMU Coit Station at 10:30am.

If you know of a Girl Scout troop or home school organization that might be interested in JMG activities, please let one of the team members know.

Plant Sale Update

By Candace Fountoulakis

Saturday, April 2, is the date for the second annual Texas Superstar and Earthkind Rose Plant Sale to be held at Texas A&M— Coit in the pavilion.

Volunteers can sign up at any meeting or email project coordinator Candace Fountoulakis (fjohn94@aol.com) to request specific tasks or general assignment as we begin to prepare for the sale.

There will be more details about this year's sale as soon as they are available. We will be distributing a sale flyer to members in attendance at next month's meeting to post around the county, so be thinking about where you could advertise our sale with other groups with whom you associate that might be interested in acquiring these special plants for their gardens.

Our March meeting will be held at the pavilion (Thursday, March 31) at which time Dr. Steve George will address us about Superstars and the sale's objectives. Friday, April 1 we will begin set up for the sale on Saturday. You'll get plenty of chances at volunteer hours as well as joining in the fun of this major fundraising project, so sign up and get in on the fun!.

BUGGED?

[Mike Quinn](#), Invertebrate Biologist, Rare & Non-game Species, with TPWD, has recently updated his already outstanding Texas Entomology website with some new information. This includes Texas insect photos, videos and sounds; Texas beetle information and information on Texas butterflies by region. Here is a link to the Texas Entomology page: <http://www.texasento.net/index.html>

Check it out!

2005 MEETING CALENDAR

- February 24 **“Plants you thought you couldn’t grow in Dallas/North Texas,” (includes peonies.) Presented by Bob Wilson of Nicholson-Hardie Nursery.** Meet at the Pavilion bldg., TAMU-Coit Station, 11:30AM-1:30PM. (1 hr. education credit)
- March 31 **Dr. George will be presenting information on the plants included in our April 2nd plant sale.** We will be preparing for our plant sale. Meet at the Pavilion bldg., TAMU-Coit Station, 11:30AM- 1:30PM. (1 hr. ed. credit)
- April 28 **Panel discussion on Flowers, Herbs, Shrubs & Vegetables presented by Diane Poston, Edith Hiett, Susan Owens & Phil Shannon.** They will give their top ten tips and answer your questions. SRC bldg. Heard Museum 11:30AM-1:30PM. (1 hr. education credit)
- May 26 **Mary Nell Jackson will present “Planting & Harvesting Herbs for Herbal Teas.”** We’ll be meeting & having a picnic in the Pole Barn at the Heritage Farm, 1900 W. 15th St., Plano 75075, Ph. 972-881-0140. Tours of the site will be available. Each person will be taking tea home. 11:30AM-1:30PM.
- June 23 **Crepe Myrtle program** in conjunction with the Crepe Myrtle Symposium. Heard Museum, time to be decided. (1 hr. education credit)
- July 28 **“Plant Photography” by Dallas Morning News House & Garden Photographer, Natalie Caudill.** Heard Museum, Laughlin Room, 11:30AM-1:30PM.
- August 25 **“Rainwater collection in the home garden,” by Billy Kniffen, Extension Agent for Menard County.** TAMU Coit Station, Whitehurst bldg., 11:30AM-1:30PM. (1 hr. education credit.)
- September 22 **“Attracting Wildlife to the Fall & Winter Garden,” by Mary Lou Cole.** Heard Museum, Laughlin Room, 11:30AM-1:30PM. (1hr. ed. credit.)
- October 27 **“Greenhouse Gardening,” by Dr. Wayne McKay.** On-site teaching, TAMU-Coit, Whitehurst Bldg. 11:30AM-1:30PM. (1 hr. ed. credit.) Short election meeting.
- November 17 **Pot-luck party, seed & plant Exchange,** Heard Museum, SRC Bldg. 11:30AM-1:30PM
- December 1 **Graduation celebration** at the TAMU-Coit. Details to follow.

Volunteer Opportunities:

2 volunteers to assist the speaker during talks scheduled through the Speakers Bureau. Volunteers will be helping the speaker with set-up and handout distribution (there may also be other tasks, but you will not be responsible for presenting). You do not have to volunteer to attend all of the talks, attend the talks that interest you or are convenient to your schedule. Contact Rene Mahoney at rmaho1055@aol.com to volunteer. The schedule is on the Calendar.

5 Master Gardeners needed: Mary Nell Jackson will be giving a 15 minute presentation on herbs to students at Betty Haun Elementary School in Plano. The students will then be planting herbs in paper cups. The volunteers are needed to help (supervise and answer questions) the students to plant herbs. February 10th from 2:45—3:30. Contact Rene Mahoney at rmaho1055@aol.com to volunteer.

McKinney Volunteer Appreciation Day—2 Volunteers needed Saturday, April 16 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. The volunteers will help (guide) teenagers with potting plants. Contact Renee Mahoney at rmaho1055@aol.com. Contact Renee immediately if you are interested, the group is waiting for confirmation of volunteer availability.

Dallas Garden Show, Dallas Market Hall, March 4th, 5th & 6th. The CCMGA has been invited to participate with area MG Associations in information booths and as speakers. If you are willing to volunteer to help at the information table, or as a speaker or with the Junior Master Gardener projects at the show on any of the three dates, please contact Susan Owens at sowens143@hotmail.com.

All employees of the Collin County Extension office will be out of the office at a training course on **Tuesday, March 8th**. We are seeking the help of Master Gardeners to cover the **telephones** that day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Any length of time that you can serve would be appreciated. Two MGs at the same time would be great. Please contact Landry Lockett.

Texas Superstar/EarthKind Rose Plant Sale and Soil Symposium will be held Saturday, April 2nd. Mark your calendars now.

The information booths will be starting up later in the spring. Watch the e-announcements for dates of events as they are firmed up. At the current time, we need a couple of volunteers that would like to work on getting our boxes of publications ready to go. This includes evaluating the publications and making copies to stock two boxes. If you are interested in volunteering for this activity contact Renee Ferguson at rennybird@comcast.net.

For the opportunity to serve on the **Social Committee**: Contact Jan Madden - 972-596-1619 or jmadden@airmail.net We are looking for two or three people to serve on the committee and be available as needed throughout the year.

Continuing Education Opportunities:

“Texas Master Gardener Valentine’s Workshop” Floral Design class held Saturday, Feb. 12th or Sunday, Feb. 13th at Texas A&M University, College Station. Cost is \$140. For more details and/or to register visit: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/benz/index.html>

Small Acreage for Profit symposium. February 18th from 8a.m.—4p.m at TAMU—Coit Cost \$40. includes lunch and materials. Register by February 9 at (972) 548-4233. Contact Landry for more information.

Texas Master Gardener Specialist training on Oak Wilt. Attend one of two sessions: Session A on June 21 & 22 or Session B on June 28 & 29. Both sessions will be held at Tenroc Ranch, Salado, Texas. If you are interested contact Landry Lockett.

Landscape Design Course IV, February 21—22. Visit: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/newsletters/hortupdate/jan05/hujan05.html> for information and sign up forms.

Garden and Landscape Excursion to East Texas. Visit <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/newsletters/hortupdate/jan05/hujan05.html> for information..

February 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 <i>Wait, Don't Plant that Begonia—McKinney Garden Club 11:00</i> <i>Earthkind Roses—Heritage Ranch Garden Club 2:00</i>	9	10	11	12
13	14 <i>Bold and Beautiful—McKinney Senior Center 10:30</i>	15	16	17 <i>Container Veg. Gardening—McKinney Newcomers Club 1:00</i>	18	19
20	21	22 <i>Container Gardening—Plano Senior Center 10:00</i>	23	24 <i>Meeting—11:30 TAMU—Coit Bob Wilson—Speaker</i>	25	26
27	28 <i>Butterfly and Hummingbird Gardening—Celina Garden Club 10:00</i> <i>Hours Due</i>					

March 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 <i>Native Plant Garden Workday—TAMU— Coit</i>	3	4 <i>Dallas Garden Show Market Hall</i>	5 <i>Dallas Garden Show Market Hall</i>
6 <i>Dallas Garden Show Market Hall</i>	7	8 <i>Texas Superstar Plants and Earthkind Roses— Plano Senior Center 10:00 IPM—Heritage Ranch Garden Club 2:00 Collin County Extension office in Training Volunteers needed to answer phones. Contact Landry</i>	9	10 <i>Gardening in Collin County—Plano New- comers 9:30 Speakers Bureau Work- shop— 1:00-4:00</i>	11	12
13	14 <i>Texas Superstar Plants and Earthkind Roses— McKinney Senior Center 10:30</i>	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 <i>Meeting— 11:30 TAMU—Coit Dr. George— Speaker Hours Due</i>	April 1	April 2 <i>Plant Sale</i>

This and That

- **Next Meeting will be February 24, at TAMU- Coit Station in the Pavilion building at 11:30. Guest Speaker Bob Wilson of Nicholson-Hardie Nursery will present “Plants you thought you couldn’t grow in Dallas/North Texas.” (1 hour of education credit)**
- **The 2005 Texas Master Gardeners Advanced Training Seminar *For the Love of Gardening—Lessons and Inspirations* will be held in Denton at the Doral Tesoro Hotel and Golf Club, May 5-8. Access to the schedule, reservation forms and tour information is available at the Denton Master Gardener web site www.dcmga.com**

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