The New Florida Garden at Extension

By Mary Campbell, Extension Director

Pinellas County Extension has a long history of demonstrating for our community the ways to promote urban sustainability through our landscapes. Urban sustainability promotes the conservation of resources for future generations. Reducing water use, attracting wildlife, using fewer chemicals and using the right plants for success is always a part of our Extension educational programs. To bring that into focus for the many visitors to Extension, the horticulture staff is designing a Florida-Friendly landscape right out our front door at our Largo office. The goal is to demonstrate for visitors how easy it is to have an environmentally friendly yard that promotes good stewardship of our environment.

The demonstration area will use the existing bromeliad garden to begin the journey through a shade garden and wind along a path that will combine plants that easily fit into a homeowner’s design. The garden will include native and non-native plants that combine together to create a beautiful impact any homeowner can use. From the shade area the walkway will lead to sunnier areas with less water and finally to a very dry area that will demonstrate just how little water is necessary to have an attractive yard.

Part of the garden will also be a native plant demonstration area that will showcase shade tolerant plants. Many times as trees grow and create shade in a yard, homeowners are challenged to find native plants that thrive in lower light. Through the dedicated support of two Master Gardeners, Mindy Bickey and Michael Stewart, we will have a native demonstration garden that will provide new ideas to entice any homeowner to “go native”.

The benefits of a Florida-friendly landscape help us create a sustainable environment that benefits all of us through better conservation of our resources. Since Pinellas County is 95% built out, it is through our existing landscapes that we will make the most impact. Use of native plants that thrive in Florida soils, reduced water use, fewer chemicals added to our environment, plants that support native wildlife, and decrease of runoff into our bays are a few of the ways that we can all help create a sustainable future.

Pictured top.: Mindy Bickey, Michael Stewart & Jean Field
Middle: MGs Mindy Bickey & Michael Stewart
Bottom: Jean Field, MGs Michael Stewart, Mary Ellen Phillips & Marie Singer
Big Vacation Bonus/
Cooperative Extension Services in Other Counties

Photos and article By JOANNE DRAKE, MG

What Master Gardener doesn’t try to fit in couple visits to gardens or nature parks while on vacation? We did exactly that this year … on our way to visit our son in Wilmington, N.C.

Doing a little research ahead of time helped a lot. I know how proud we are of our Pinellas County Cooperative Extension Center and thought … I’ll bet other Extension Centers are just as proud of their gardens. Knowing the county names you'll be traveling is very helpful in looking up the Extension Service addresses and web sites along the way.

My husband and I were delighted to find some beautiful gardens and thank goodness I brought my camera along! I’d like to share some of those photos and also websites that may be helpful to you. I find gardens and nature parks are great stress relievers when traveling.

Santee National Wildlife Refuge
2125 Ft. Watson Road
Summerton, South Carolina

Summerton is in Clarendon County and known as the outdoor sporting capital of the Southeast. Away from the noise and congestion of traffic … it was very peaceful at the refuge and we had a chance to get a little exercise walking around the grounds … observing colorful flora and abundant wildlife along Lake Marion.

South Carolina State Parks Web Site:
www.southcarolinaparks.com

The Arboretum (Sun-up to sundown … 7 Days a Week … Admission Free!) www.arboretumnhc.org
North Carolina Cooperative Extension Center (New Hanover County)
Helping People Put Knowledge to Work
6206 Oleander Dr.
Wilmington, N.C. 28403

The Arboretum offers seven acres of demonstration and trial gardens tended by Master Gardeners. The Japanese Garden was most impressive. There were several displays of patio gardens in a shaded area using mulch, garden art, shade loving plants and ground covers. A little stroll around the walkway, towards the office, brought us to the Children’s Garden including a child size cottage. It looked so inviting … I wanted to go inside but had to hurry to the next “must see” on our list, Airlie Gardens. A Master Gardener Volunteer in The Arboretum office so graciously gave us directions and we discovered it was just a short distance away.

Airlie Gardens www.airliegardens.org
300 Airlie Rd.
Wilmington, N.C. 28403   (910) 798-7700
They honored our Florida Botanical Garden Membership Card
Chiropractic Association Issues Gardening Safety Tips

In the International Chiropractors Association's (ICA) July 5th 2001 issue of the Chiropractic News Service appears tips and warnings concerning safe gardening related to spinal health. Because of the emphasis on a healthy spine relating to a healthy nervous system and therefore overall good health, the ICA issued the gardening tips as a preventative measure. The ICA release starts by saying, "The best preparation for safe summer gardening is a body properly conditioned and supported by exercise, good posture, and chiropractic care all year round.

The ICA went on to recommend a list of 10 “Do’s and Don’ts of Gardening” These guidelines are designed to help you garden safely.

The ICA's Do's and Don'ts of Gardening
1. Warm up with light movement or a brisk walk to loosen your muscles and increase your flexibility. The smooth coordination of your muscles and ligaments is an important part of safe exertion in gardening and other activities.
2. Know your strengths and limitations. Do not overexert, vary your activities, and take regular rest breaks.
3. Avoid bending over repeatedly while standing upright when performing ground-level work like weeding. Get down closer to the task by kneeling or sitting on the ground or a gardening bench, rather than bending and twisting from the waist.
4. Keep your back protected when you stand up from a sitting or crouched position. Rise up by straightening your legs at the knees, not by lifting your torso at the waist.
5. Lift dirt and plants by letting your arms, legs and thighs carry the load: bend and straighten at the knees instead of the back and hips. Lift the load close to the body’s torso and center of gravity, and handle smaller, more manageable loads at a time.
6. Use long-handled tools to give you leverage and help you avoid having to stoop while raking, digging, pushing or mowing.
7. Switch hands frequently when doing prolonged raking, hoeing or digging actions. Repetitive motion on one side can bring on progressively serious joint imbalances and may produce postural misalignments and pain, including muscle spasms in the neck, shoulder and lower back.
8. Don’t work too long in one position, especially one that is awkward or unusual. This can reduce circulation, restrict mobility, and promote strain injuries.
9. Carry objects close to your body. Keeping the load close to your center of gravity reduces the risk of straining your neck and back.
10. Don’t overexpose yourself to long periods in the sun. Utilize protective measures for your head and skin, drink plenty of fluids, and take frequent breaks.

Rats in your Rafters?

By SANDY HUFF
Snap traps set on the floor of our barn weren't catching any of the rodents that were raiding my feed and seed bins. Keeping our pets out of the traps was worrisome too. A friend told me the secret to catching rats and mice: look for gnawed wood and grimey paths along my rafters and soffitts. Then nail a trap about 3 inches under that path. Find a spot where you can prop up a ladder, but out of reach of pets. Mount the trap with the bait end up.

For bait, smear peanut butter UNDER the little trip lever, so the rat has to nose at it. It's working!
**Important Announcements!**

VSP5 the new county computer program for logging volunteer hours is now in operation. You must log your hours here the day you volunteer. Those that can not be here when they volunteer can log hours on a standard form so your hours can be entered by an assistant Volunteer Coordinator. If you have been sending your hours by e-mail use the form as a guide. Send to: [MGEDU@co.pinellas.fl.us](mailto:MGEDU@co.pinellas.fl.us).

Training continues and we will provide the forms. See Chuck or Jan Curtain or an asst. Coordinator.

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**Pinellas County Extension & Florida Botanical Gardens**

We need help in collecting all publicity related to the Extension and FBG Gardens. Please clip any articles you see that mention us in any way, including weddings and outside events. Please bring the clippings to the volunteer office.

Please remember to include the name of the publication and date published.

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**MG Advisory Association**

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

The MGAA documents are available for all MGAA members on request. We have detailed how MGAA operates and is organized, and defined the duties of committees. The next MGAA meeting October—will announce later.

The following Grant letter applies to Staff and MGs:

The Master Gardener Advisory Association (MGAA) Policy and Procedures describes the procedure for applying for grants from the association.

Quoting from The Articles of Association of Master Gardeners: “The purpose for which the Association is organized is to receive, manage, account for, and expend revenues received from activities of the Master Gardeners of the Pinellas County Extension. The funds will be used for the support and enhancement of the Florida Botanical Gardens (a Pinellas County, Florida public botanical garden), for dissemination of environmental and horticultural information and for various educational activities.” With this purpose in mind, and to fairly expedite the grant process, the Association created a Grant form to be submitted to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee then processes the grant applications. Their recommendations are then submitted to the Board to obtain a quorum board member vote.

Every January and June the Budget Committee will prepare a report listing all requests in priority order and with their recommendations. The Budget Committee working with the Finance Committee will submit the availability of funds for the grants in the report.

The Grant form challenges the applicant to exhaust all avenues of funding before requesting money from MGAA. Recognizing the competition for funding, the justification for a project becomes critical. Keep in mind, grants will only be considered if they fit into our Association purpose.

The association members will work with you and your supervisor to assist you in determining your funding needs to supplement or add to your department budget.

Please contact me or Pam Brown to discuss this Grant approach or availability of the MGAA documents.

Chuck Scaffidi, MGAA chair
Pam Brown, IFAS Extension Agent, MGAA Advisor

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**The Thursday Green Team is having a rare summer indoor pig-out, the date is set for Thursday August 17th, it is going to be hot and possibly raining so we are planning on being inside auditorium A/B, you are all invited.**

If you can come please plan on bringing a covered dish to share (a sign up sheet is on the bulletin board in the lounge). We usually start grazing about 11:30 or so. We will be showing two video tapes, the topic is gardens of England, the shows are scheduled to start at noon, they are about an hour each (yes you can get G.E.U.’s).

Bob Albanese  PS
Thanks for the Well!!!

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The Florida Master Gardener license plate is available for $8.00 (including tax) in the volunteer office.

Please see Chuck or call 582-2117 to reserve a license plate.
IFAS Plea for Matching Funds
Dr. Arrington requested a donor who would like to match a $500.00 contribution to the Master Gardener Professorship. Sam Skemp matched this. Thanks Sam!! – who has contributed in the past. I have the forms and information if you want to know more about this Professorship program. You can always contribute to this fund and I will provide the contact information.

We are currently at a Platinum Patron Level (over $6,000).

How about nominating our agent as a candidate for this honor. It means a $5000 annual salary supplement and $3000 annual grant will be provided to support Extension programming for 3 years. I need help with nomination and interpreting the rules. Please see me!! –Chuck Scaffidi Volunteer Office-582-2117

Chef Of The Day
MG’s, show your composting skill. Direct MGs to chop, grind, mix, water and stir. Take home mature compost and a compost bin.

Assistant Chefs
MG’s wanting better composting skills and hands-in. Help make a batch and take home a compost bin.

Both available Wednesdays, 9 to 12 noon adjacent to the Herb Garden weather permitting. Call Extension to schedule. MG reservation line at 582-2247

Hello Master Gardeners!

I am very excited to announce the dates of this year’s Florida Master Gardener Continued Training Conference. We are taking the conference out into the state as we did two years ago and will be in Jacksonville this year October 23rd-25th. We have looked at the evaluations from last year’s conference and are sure that this will be the best event ever. We have a nice mix of general sessions, and concurrent sessions and I think that this year will be a very important year to attend so that you have the latest information directly from the specialists. Registration information will be sent to all the Master Gardener Programs in the state, so make sure you get yours. See you in October!


Sincerely,
Tom Wichman, Florida MG Coordinator

Volunteer Opportunities and Events for August
For Volunteer Opportunities:
Please see or call Carol Suggs to volunteer for events (582-2124) or the contact person in the help wanted ad.

Up-coming Master Gardener Update Training Topics
Aug 8 (Tuesday)–11:30-12:30am Magnolia Room. (note new time)

Wildlife Safety will be presented by our own naturalist extraordinaire – Jeanne Murphy. Join her to learn about the wildlife in Pinellas County along with what you need to do to keep safe around wildlife.

Up-coming update training sessions
September 8th - 10 - 11 a.m.
Florida Native Plants will be presented by our Departmental Training Specialist, Andy Wilson:
NATIVE PLANTS FOR FLORIDA LANDSCAPES: Encouraging Change.

There will not be Update training on October 8th due to the proximity to the date of the Plant Sale

November 9th (Note different date – due to MG training on the 8th) – This will be longer training involving several speakers about wetland plants and critters. There will be a Pot Luck with part of the class before lunch and part after lunch. More information to come at a later date.
I Need Your Help to Keep Our Gardens Growing

We need your membership in The Florida Botanical Gardens. You can get into other gardens free or at discounted prices, and that alone pays for your FBG membership. Discounts are offered at most gift shops. Membership offers prior notice and invitations to special FBG events. FBG membership makes a good gift for friends or family. FBG membership allows early admittance to the MG plant sales. Individual membership is $25; Family is $35; a supporting garden friend is $250. If you'd like a leaf on the tree with your name on it, $1,000 will help grow the gardens. See me or stop in at Botanical Bounty.

Mary Ellen Warner, Membership Chair

It's August and it's HOT! Doesn’t it seem like the summer just goes on and on? But, by this time last year we had seen five or more named hurricanes – so we do have something to be thankful for so far. Remember, the 2006 Master Gardener training is starting on the second of this month. Please welcome the new students when you see them and make them feel at home here and part of the group. Also, if you want to sit in on any of the classes as a refresher,

MG Plant Sale

By LINDA CULHANE, MG

Plant Sale Update

There is a great need for one gallon empty pots. Anyone who has a few or a lot extra, please bring them into the north side of the potting shed.

The plants and other items for the fall plant sale are really shaping up thanks in part to our terrific group of MGs who pinch, upgrade and water. (Although with all this rain, some of our watering duties have been taken over by mother nature, Thanks Mom…) We plan to put most of our efforts into getting our plants full and thick by pinching and trimming back the plants we have. Any plants propagated from now on will probably be reserved for the Spring sale.

The group leaders have been busy with shopping trips also. Patsy Schamber and I took a trip over the bridge and brought back scads of baby plants. The greenhouse crews were very busy for a few weeks propagating hundreds of new plants. They are finally growing up to look like adults. We have Sweet Potato (chartreuse and black), pink/white/green oyster, 8 different colors of portulaca, scabiosa, orange/red lantern, begonia, dusty miller, just to name a few.

Maureen Crawford, natives, also made a few purchases. She has asked if anyone has any natives at home, please plan to share with the sale. She has a big list of desired natives on our bulletin board. Sign up if you have some of these plants.

Nancy Bacinello, vines, has been propagating and separating the many intertwining tendrils. We have moved the vine area to the south end outside of the shade house. That will give the opportunity for them to receive more direct sunlight.

Part of the Thursday crew, Jack Moss and Jace Pinkard, are cutting and collecting bamboo stakes for the “Second Thyme Around” booth. They will be offered in 4’, 5’ and 6’ sections. Save the other second hand garden items also.

We have received a grand donation of unusual, exotic, and gigantic bromeliads from Peter Sabine, a friend in St. Petersburg. Peter was so gracious to give us so far 2 truck loads of plants.

There have been so much growing going on, the restoration area is being utilized for overflow. That area was cleaned up and re-surfaced with the ground cloth. Seems that the weeds grow profusely as well as our valued plants.

Any one who enjoys talking to the public, would enjoy the next job at the Sale. That is to pull together the Ask Me team. This is really a fun booth to work. And don’t fret you really don’t need to know everything about plants from memory. That is what books and computers are for. I found that by working there, I learned so much about growing, propagating, and landscaping just by answering questions for others. So please think of volunteering for this booth. You are able to meet so many new people and turn them on to the Extension and Gardens. If interested, please call me. 530-1250

As you can see we have a lot of effort going into the preparation of the sale. Our meetings are the last Friday of each month. All are invited and encouraged to attend. And Please bring in those one gallon pots. We have none.
Plant Sale funds contribute to The Green Leaf mailing.

Urgent!! To save mailing costs please tell Carol or me to remove your name from the mailing list if you can consistently and reliably access the internet version or if you choose to pick your copy up at Extension.

Managing Editor: Pam Brown, Extension Agent II
Production Editor: Chuck Scaffidi, Master Gardener 727-582-2117
Please send articles to Pam Brown or e-mail directly to Chuck cascaffidi@juno.com or Pam at pwbrown@co.pinellas.fl.us

The newsletter is available on the Internet at http://www.flbg.org/ Click on “Master Gardener Program”, click on “MG Newsletter”

We are especially appreciative of staff, MGs, and others who contribute articles, events, and other items of interest to the Green Leaf each month. Please submit your input by the 20th of each month. This will help us assemble and publish the newsletter in a timely manner. Also, to save mailing costs, please limit your articles to 700-800 words or less.

Limited newsletter space does not allow for full photograph viewing. If you would like a copy of any photograph presented in the newsletters, please contact me @ 727-582-2117.

Chuck Scaffidi, MG Editor
The Green Leaf is published by Pinellas County Extension Service for the County Master Gardeners and depends on submission of articles from Master Gardeners, Extension Staff and other authors.

Pam

If you are working outside, remember to drink lots of water; wear sunscreen, insect repellant and a hat; come inside at the first sign of thunder and lightning – and watch out for the alligators! You are each very important to us – we appreciate all that you do ♥ Pam

The schedule of classes will be posted on the bulletin boards.

The 2006 Florida Master Gardener Conference is scheduled for October 23 – 25 in Jacksonville. I have put information on the conference in the Volunteer Work area (where you record your hours) or you can access the information on the Internet at: http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/gardener/index.html.

I will be taking a van that will hold six people besides me. We will be leaving at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday October 22 since Jacksonville is such a long drive. I will have a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the back hall – first come basis. Remember, you must be a current MG (with your 100 or 50 hours in for 2005) to be eligible to ride in the van. If you do not have all of your hours in, you may sign up on the waiting list and if there is room, you can ride in the van.

The Florida Yards & Neighborhoods annual Eco-Garden Conference is scheduled for August 5th. Master Gardeners can attend at a reduced price of $15, which covers the cost of the notebooks and lunch. The agenda includes landscaping and gardening with Florida native plants, secrets to a Florida-friendly landscape and how to achieve recognition for your yard, creepy crawlies, and trees & storms. As always, we will have door prizes and exhibitors to visit. It should be an informative and fun day. See Carol or Wilma to register.

If you are working outside, remember to drink lots of water; wear sunscreen, insect repellent and a hat; come inside at the first sign of thunder and lightning – and watch out for the alligators! You are each very important to us – we appreciate all that you do ♥ Pam

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Start earning your hours now!!

New MG Class
Welcome!!!

Need immediate help in the following work areas:

♦ Saturday October 7 Plant Sale needs help in all phases of getting plants ready and many jobs during the sale. Earn and learn!!

♦ Also, would like someone to help our plant sale Chair Linda Culhane as a Co-Chair. A great learning and rewarding position.

♦ Besides all the gardening needs outside, for those who have computer skills can volunteer in our MG volunteer office. Work on our MG newsletter, IFAS award projects (4-H Ochs garden is a candidate for 2007), many other computer and graphics tasks. Also, need County Volunteer Personnel Services coordinator assistants to support Natural Resources recording of volunteer hours.

Incentives for completing your 100hrs!!

♦ Automatic member of MG Advisory Association. No membership fee.

♦ Florida Master Gardener license plate available for $8.

♦ Thanks to a team effort a MG Cookbook was recently published which collected recipes from MGs and their families. Profits from sales go to our MG Advisory Association.

♦ The MG cook book is sold to MGs or your class for $17.

♦ Receive your MG certification card and receive a 10% discount from: Garden Hardware and Wilcox Nursery

♦ Eligible for Educational field trips
Good Work Pinellas County Master Gardener Volunteers !!!

ATTENTION!
Master Gardener Update Training
Jeanne Murphy County Extension
Wildlife in Pinellas county &
Wildlife Safety
Aug 8 (Tuesday)–11:30-12:30am
Magnolia Room.
Brown Bag Lunch