Well What Would You Think

By CAROL BOYCE, MG

There used to be a really nice man living in the little yellow house on our street. He fit right in, he was one of us. At weekends he’d be out front with the rest of us waging the war for our lawns; herbicide at the first sign of a leaf that was not a blade, insecticide just in case some bug even thought of stopping by and a regular dose of fertilizer to keep it green. Know that TV ad where the guy says, “Look at that lawn, it looks just like a carpet!” that’s us.

THEN he sold his house to a woman who is NOT even a gardener! She doesn’t pull the weeds, she TENDS them! Yes I’ve seen her. But that’s not even the best (or worst) of it. She gets ecstatic when the weeds are covered with stripy green caterpillars chomping it down to bare stalks. I swear I watched her taking the caterpillar chrysalises INTO her house. I told the others and I got volunteered to ask her what she was doing with them (rumor was they were going in the stew.) She just went all starry-eyed and said there’s nothing finer than waking up to a brand new butterfly fluttering around the house! Go figure.

Recently things have taken a definite turn for the worse. She mentioned that she had found a snake nest with seven eggs under a pile of stones out back. Instead of getting the spade out, she covered them back up and said she was waiting for them to hatch! She told me this week she just met one of the new snakes curled up in a plant pot and that it was already two feet long. I swear the pleasure in her voice, you’d have thought she was talking about a new cure for dollar weed.

Now heaven forbid she said she’s going to dig a pond and invite the local frogs and, wait for it, put a bat house up on the front of her garage! I know it’s just been Halloween and she doesn’t LOOK much like a witch but what would you think? Snakes, frogs, bats……..

When she was away recently, some of us took a look over her fence. It’s a crying shame, you should see the mess where the green carpet used to be. Huge toads crawling about in all this undergrowth, jays, doves and squirrels stopping for a drink at the birdbath, even a huge yellow taloned hawk was perched in the old grapefruit tree. (We did try to warn her about the citrus rats but she smiled mysteriously and said there was more than enough fruit to share.) Lizards and geckos by the dozen sunning themselves on her porch, butterflies dancing over clumps of pink lantana that always seem to be in flower, though come to think of it, I’ve never seen her out watering them……

Latest rumor is that she’s not a witch but something called an Emm Gee and pretty soon she’s going to try and charm us into getting rid of some of our grass as well. We all agreed, no chance! (Don’t tell the others but I do wish her fence was lower so I could watch all the wildlife that never seems to come in my yard.)

I am proud to be an MG volunteer helping change the face of the Florida landscape one blade at a time. Thanks Extension for the knowledge you generously share!

Chuck Scaffidi

Another good year almost gone by. Let’s close it out with a safe and enjoyable holiday for all!!
A ceremony was held on Saturday October 23, 2006 to honor Judy Yates, former Director of Extension and the Florida Botanical Gardens. The Wedding Garden Rose Garden was dedicated to Judy with a plaque inscribed with the following:

“The Dr. Judy Yates Rose Garden
October 23, 2006
In recognition of her 23 years of service to Pinellas County Cooperative Extension and contribution to the Florida Botanical Gardens.
Every Garden Begins with a Dream”

It was a well attended joyful celebration with those that knew Judy so well, and who had worked for and with her during her tenure as Director. Many stories were told about their experiences together.

Sam Skemp and Judy looking good in front of the Sam’s well kept Rose Garden, now dedicated to Judy.

Chuck Scaffidi presented Judy an autographed picture of a group of Master Gardeners. Ruth Davies gathered the MGs for the photo a while back. What an effort to get them all together and looking so clean.

Lots of photo-taking with some of her close friends. Judy has written us a note thanking all that attended her celebration, and says she dearly misses her friends. The note is in the volunteer office.

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

“What’s Cooking in Your Garden?”
3rd in a series of articles by Jessica Foster, MG

“Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme”
Petroselinum crispum, Salvia officinalis, Rosmarinus officinalis, Thymus vulgaris

No, these are not just the words to a famous Simon and Garfunkel song! These are all wonderfully aromatic, easy to grow herbs that adapt to the Florida landscape with ease.

All can be grown from seed although the preferred method of propagation for Rosemary is cuttings due to its erratic germination. Sage and Thyme can also be propagated by cuttings and Parsley by division. With the exception of Parsley which is biennial (lasting two years) all of these herbs are perennial giving you the option to have big, beautiful specimen plants as a showcase in an herb garden. All enjoy full sun with a light, well-drained soil and some protection from high winds. Soil should be kept just damp. Rosemary enjoys a misting of the leaves as well. Amend soil with compost to produce healthy, vigorous plants. To harvest Parsley pick lower leaves including the stem. To harvest Sage, Rosemary and Thyme pinch off just above a node to encourage new growth.
Recipe for “Herbed Cornish Hen”

1 Cornish Hen, butterflied
4 tbl. Olive oil, divided
2 tbl. Parsley, minced, stems included
2 tbl. Sage, minced
2 tbl. Rosemary, minced
2 tbl. Thyme
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt & pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 350. To butterfly Cornish hen cut the backbone out with poultry shears, spread open and lay breast side up in a roasting pan. In a bowl combine parsley, sage, rosemary, thyme, garlic, half the oil and salt and pepper. Using your fingers or a knife, separate the skin from the hen. Rub herb mixture in between the skin and meat making sure to push herbs down to the legs and thighs. Rub remaining olive oil on the outside of the hen and season with freshly ground salt and pepper. Cook in oven for 1 hour. Before serving, cover loosely with foil and let rest for ten minutes. Serves 2

As the recent spotlight was on spinach … many of us experienced the disappointment of not being able to select “spinach pie” from our favorite Greek restaurant menu. Tainted spinach put a quick halt on the leafy greens sold at our local supermarkets, until the FDA, California officials and the FBI investigated the E. coli outbreak on these popular greens. All has been corrected and you’ll find spinach back on the supermarket shelves and also menus.

Several years ago, at “Garden Fest”, I met Penny Khaled from The Florida Herb Society of Pinellas County. The Florida Herb Society is a West Central Florida organization whose goal is to educate members and the general public in the growing and preservation of herbs for use in culinary, medicinal, and ornamental purposes.

This was my lucky day! Penny and her assistants were set up in the courtyard with all kinds of interesting herbs for sale. They were so gracious and anxious to share information. They even had Free Cuttings of Dawn Dewa, also known as Mollucan spinach (I had never heard of either before) … very similar to spinach and full of beneficial nutrients. I was encouraged to taste it and did so … right then and there. It was fresh and had a very nice texture. I was told that it could be used as greens in salads or cooked up like you would cook spinach … adding garlic or onions if you like. I took a cutting home, potted it and gave it TLC for a couple weeks, until it started to take off on its own. I’ve shared cuttings with local friends and our son in Wilmington, N.C. He is happy to report that he’s enjoying fresh salads and shares Dawn Dewa with friends and co-workers.

There’s nothing like growing your own vegetables and knowing how really safe they are. Dawn Dewa came to our rescue in a time of need. I just have to learn how to make Dawn Dewa Pie! Enjoy your garden and may you have a plentiful harvest.

For more information … go to web addresses below: http://starbulletin.com/2000/01/21/features/garden.html

In the Garden … Claims


Florida Herb Society of Pinellas County
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FLHerb

HERB SOCIETY MEETING:

Dawn Dewa
To The Rescue!
Photo and Story by JOANNE DRAKE, MG

The title of this story “Dawn Dewa” to the Rescue!” sounds like a brave young lady who may have acquired lots of friends because of her heroic actions. Actually Dawn Dewa is an edible, non-vining ground cover.

This vegetable has acquired lots of gardening friends because of its easy care and production of crisp salad greens. It grows well in full sun or partial shade and makes a nice addition to salads adding color and texture. Pruning gives a nice shape to your plant … otherwise it will grow long, soft branches, spreading into a dense ground cover. It’s a beautiful plant!

Many of us enjoy eating healthy foods that are full of nutrients … giving us lots of vim and vigor. Hey … that’s just what Master Gardeners need for turning compost piles!
Pam Brown, Vernon Bryant, and myself (Chuck Scaffidi) have discussed ways to reward our MGs in a way that would also benefit the FBG. Vernon is working to get the following proposal approved by the FBG board.

1. Any continuing MG who completes their required 50 hours by Dec 31 would receive a 20% discount on their next renewal. The foundation would issue a certificate that they would be sent with their renewal.
2. Any continuing MG who completes over 200 hours by Dec 31 would receive a 50% discount on their next renewal.

We didn’t have a discussion about the higher level recognitions but they felt that this would help their Master Gardener program.

If I hear more before we go to press I will try to update this or let you know by separate mail.
Chuck S.

Great American Teach-in

Many Master Gardeners participated in the Teach-In held November 15th at our Pinellas County schools. Job well done!! The schools, Pam Brown, and Cindy Peacock appreciate the efforts you made and we are sure you had a very rewarding experience—don’t forget—sign up again next year and pass the word how much fun it is.

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 $30; Family is $50; 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

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Lawn Mower Safety Tips
By PAM BROWN, Horticulture Agent

Before mowing, walk around the area in which you will be working to remove any objects like sticks, glass, metal, wire, stones and string that could cause injury or damage equipment. Nails and wire are the most hazardous objects thrown by mowers, capable of killing bystanders.

Source: www.consumeraffairs.com/recalls/mower_safety.htm

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Chuck S.

Attention Master Gardeners!!

Anyone interested in fulfilling their Volunteer hour requirements should speak to Stacey Zidi about volunteering at the Botanical Bounty gift shop.

The shop is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10am-5pm. Each day is split into two 3 ½ hour shifts, mornings (from 10-1:30pm) or afternoons (from 1:30 -5pm). I’m looking for a minimum commitment of one shift a week. No previous retail experience is necessary.
Call 582-2251 or szidi@pienellascounty.org

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Chuck S.
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 may 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.

Training is on-going and we will provide the forms. Remember travel & GEU time must be entered twice.
See Chuck Scaffidi or an assistant (Cathy Nelson, Mary Crowe or Adrienne Andrews).

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, as well as defined the duties of committees.

The next MGAA meeting is Friday December 8, after the plant sale meeting. Bring your lunch. Magnolia Rm.
I will be sending out an agenda to the members soon. High on my list is to discuss granting money to various charities and other needs at the FBG. Also, Vernon Bryant and Vivian Haicken FBG board members will be speaking to MGAA about enhancing relationships between MGs and FBG.
Please mark this date on your calendar. Even though these actions will require Board approval, opinions and suggestions from all members are always welcome.

Volunteer Opportunities and Events for December

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

No Master Gardener Update
Training on the 8th of December, but will be on the 6th.

The MG bus trip to Apopka on December 6th (Wednesday) will be the update training for December. We will have a full bus load of 57 passengers.
Departure is at 7:15 am. The extension building will be open at 6:45 am. To alleviate parking in the front lot you can also park in the EMS lots. We should return no later than 7:00 pm. The parking lots will be open and also the Extension. I encourage everyone to sign out for that day when we return and I will figure out the GEU and travel hours for you.
Lunch will be provided and I will be bringing a cooler with drinks. You may choose to bring a snack. Any questions please contact me (Chuck Scaffidi) @ 582-2117 or see me in the volunteer office.

Volunteers needed:
Heritage Village Garden – they would like a couple of Master Gardeners to help train the docents who will be tending this garden. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact Paige Noel at Heritage Village, phone 582-2123 or e-mail pnoel@pinellascounty.org.

Presenters for educational programs at area libraries – Several MGs who would like to schedule educational presentations for the public at area libraries. Please see Pam if you are willing. She will help you prepare a presentation or you can choose one from the 175 or so that are already done. You may need to do some research to come up with the material for a script if you choose one of the completed PowerPoint presentations.

MASTER GARDENERS

Message From Compost Happens
Save all green cuttings, etc. from around the Extension and put them in the containers in the composting area. Compost made from them will be sold to benefit the MG fund.

Please no weed seeds, nut grass, torpedo grass, etc.
Plant Sale News
By LINDA CULHANE

It has been over a month since the Plant Sale, and yet it seems like yesterday. I’d like to take this opportunity to inform everyone of the outcome of the sale, both in revenue and suggestions. We will have the next meeting on December 8th prior to the MGAA meeting. There is so much to cover, I hope that each of you will take the time from your busy day to help us out.

First off, the final revenue count for the sale was: $11,500 Quite an achievement for our 2-day sale. Early opening on Friday we made $1,500 and on Saturday day of sale $10,000, Thanks to all of the hard working MG’s. Now where did the money come from? The breakdown based on the receipts is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General plants</td>
<td>$4395</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herbs</td>
<td>1668</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fruit trees/bananas</td>
<td>410</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>243</td>
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<td>Special Priced Plants</td>
<td>3822</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Thyme Around</td>
<td>330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magazines/books</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Cuttings</td>
<td>66</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10967</strong></td>
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</table>

There was a discrepancy in the amount of final revenue and the amount based on receipts. The only explanation I have is that a receipt wasn’t made out for each sale. I could not reflect either how much was allotted to the sale of the compost since it was not itemized, but placed under Special Prices.

The results of the critique of the PS showed the greatest changes needed to be made in the following areas:

- Security
- Parking Assistance
- Customer support in Plant area
- Directing flow at setup

These are problems that we can certainly come up with a better system for each of the areas mentioned.

Also at the next plant sale meeting there are committees that must be discussed. You are cordially invited to attend the meeting on Dec 8. I look forward to seeing you and working out the problems together.

Seasons Greetings! – December is here and the holidays are upon us. It seems to come around more quickly as the years go by. We have Seasonal Sensations coming up on the first Saturday of this month with all kind of fun things to do. Then of course, enjoy the lights in the garden. I understand that they will be even more spectacular this year.

The Palm Harbor Public Library is looking for Extension gardening programs. If you are interested in getting involved with public presentations, please let me know (come by my office or call me 582-2112). We have quite a few PowerPoint presentations done on a myriad of subjects. They will just take a little researching to get the script together to go with them. I will be glad to help you.

We seem to be having a problem with food disappearing from the refrigerators in the break room. Much of the food in those refrigerators is for upcoming programs by Family and Consumer Sciences. They are not sure where the food is going. Please be careful and not eat anything from these refrigerators unless it has been labeled for employee or volunteer consumption. This loss has caused much last minute scrambling, not to mention the expense of replacing the food.

This year’s Master Gardener training just ended the middle of November. It was quite successful. Nine of the members of this class received their Master Gardener certificates and name badges during the last class. I am not totally sure, but this may be a record year for trainees who have their 100 volunteer hours completed by the time the class ends. Many of the others in the class are very close to the 100 hours. Congratulations to all of you!

I will be on vacation the last two weeks in December. I want to wish each of you and your families a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year! Thank you for the gift of your time and participation. You are all wonderful volunteers and we could not do this job without you.

♥ Pam
Congratulations are in order! The Master Gardener Class of 2006 has successfully completed their training. A record number of nine students completed their 100 hours prior to the class ending, and were presented with their MG name tags and certificates. You were a great class! We look forward to seeing your smiling faces around Extension and the Florida Botanical Gardens as you continue your volunteering.

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 for the County Master Gardeners and depends on submission of articles from Master Gardeners, Extension Staff and other authors.

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”

New MG Class

Welcome!!!

Continue to earn your hours!!

Need immediate help in the following work areas:

♦ Join the Plant Sale team. Need 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, 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), and many other computer and graphics tasks.

♦ Also, become a tour guide!

Or buy a cookbook. When you become an

LEAD A TOUR

MG put a MG license plate on your front bumper.
HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE
Gulf Coast Museum of Art

December 6, 2006
FREE Admission 3-5PM
Unique items available in Museum Store for Holiday gift-giving
Light Refreshments
Hot Cocoa
Visit the Museum, then
stroll through the Botanical Gardens and enjoy the Holiday lights

S.R. 688 (Ulmerton Rd.) to signal at 113th Street. Head south on 113th to next signal, at Walsingham Rd turn right and proceed 1 mile. Entrance for Museum and Florida Botanical Gardens on right, across from Walsingham Park. Free parking.

12211 Walsingham Road, Large, FL 33778
727-518-6833
psriram@gulfcoastmuseum.org
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<td><strong>Holiday Lights</strong> in the Florida Botanical Gardens –</td>
<td>Nightly 6 – 10 p.m. Nov 24 – Jan 3</td>
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<td>2 Seasonal Sensations – in the FBG Fun and lights 5 – 10 p.m.</td>
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<td>10 a.m. - Plant Sale Meeting – everyone welcome</td>
<td>11 a.m. – MGAA meeting – bring your lunch</td>
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<td>12:30 Mentor Mtg. Magnolia Conf. Rm</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>25 Merry Christmas Extension Closed</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Jan 1, 2007 Happy New Year Extension Closed</td>
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Good Work Pinellas County Master Gardener Volunteers !!!

ATTENTION!!
Friday December 8: MG plant sale mtg 10am, followed by MGAA mtg, followed by Mentor Mtg. Magnolia Room
Bring your lunch

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Employment Opportunity – affirmative action Employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap or national origin.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, IFAS, Florida A.& M. UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM AND BOARDS OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COOPERATING.