By JSM, MG

Marilyn’s early years could best be described as classic rural Midwestern. She was born in “Grandma’s house” and raised on a forty-acre farm near the village of Liberty Center, Indiana. Her father worked at General Electric and tended farm during evenings. She enjoyed helping her grandparents plant their gardens with their trademark Zinnias at the roadside end of the garden. The planting of Zinnias continues today as a family tradition. Her earliest recollection of life’s challenges occurred when her neighbor, a pig farmer, presented her with two piglets from one of his litters. Both were undersized and unlikely to survive. Marilyn, age nine, bottle fed them and cared for them until they developed into thirty pound beauties.

Marilyn was very active at Liberty Center High School. She participated in the school band, sang in the choir, and was a member of 4H and GAA (Girls Athletic Assn). She graduated valedictorian in her class of thirteen in 1957. After two years with the local Fort Wayne newspaper she decided to enter the field of health care. She worked at La Grange Community Hospital in various disciplines including the med/surg floors, ER, and served as In-service Director and Director of Nursing over a period of eight years.

As Marilyn’s interests in health care broadened, she became associated with The School of Opportunity in La Grange County and spent five years in a most rewarding activity as nurse/social worker primarily making home visits in the Amish community. She specialized in working with developmentally disabled children. In 1985 Marilyn enrolled in the Master Gardener program, Allen County, Fort Wayne. During her stay up north she answers residents’ hort questions via the phone lines and teaches Organic Gardening to new MG classes.

The La Grange County School Board welcomed Marilyn as its first female board member where she served for eight years and had the distinct pleasure of presenting a high school diploma to her youngest daughter. Marilyn has been an active member of the Mission Committee of United Methodist Church in Florida and Indiana for the past ten years.

Marilyn and Ralph are boating enthusiasts and consider their greatest adventure the two boat trips they planned and completed from Lake Michigan to St. Pete via the interior waterways. In 1979 they decided to divide their time between home in Indiana and Bay Island, South Pasadena, to be with friends and relatives. Ralph still maintains business affairs up north, and on a personal note, with five children and eleven grandchildren they have heard the chorus on many an occasion: “Come home where you belong - Indiana!”

Marilyn describes the Pinellas class of 1994, “A great class taught by an outstanding staff! Who can forget the likes of Joan Bradshaw conducting an MG class or the brilliant LaRue Robinson discussing native species.” Her class pal was the reliable James Blackwell. Marilyn enjoys working at the reception desk and during the early days had the opportunity...
The Seed Pod Has All The Fun

Remember the old fashioned Impatiens, before all the nice new colors? Did you ever hold an impatiens seed pod in your folded hand to get it to body temperature and then have it explode in your hand? When you looked in your hand after the explosion the seed pod had expanded like it had accordion bellows. It was/is great fun to show that trick to your grandchildren. Because of hybridizing, today, some plants have lost their enthusiasm for seed production and distribution. Let’s explore a few of the helpers in the distribution system. Convection currents (rising air) will pick up seed and take it up 2000 ft in the air, move it for miles, and drop it. That might explain how some of those funny “weeds” got in your back yard. Ants are very good movers of not only insects but seeds. If they find a large crop of seed lying around on the ground; their storage room will be full and several seeds may sprout, in yet, another strange place.

Queen Anns Lace, if you have some, try this, it you don’t have some, imagine this. This sub-shrub is a multi-head plant, when the plant begins to dry and go to seed the flower head forms into a rounded shape, let’s call it a ball. On rainy days the ball will close up very tightly to protect the seeds from falling off into the competitive area. On dry days it will open up very large, the seeds are coated with a sticky substance that will allow the seed to cling to anything passing by. And will get brushed off a little later. The seed head will continue to open on dry days and close on wet days. Another form of round seed head is the famous “tumble-weed”, yes, just another version of letting the wind be the “helper”. Poppies, Snapdragons and Irises use the wind in a manner like no other. When the seed head dries it enlarges and small holes are opened (this could be called the “hole-in-the-head” method). As the wind blows through the holes, the seeds are moved various distances from the mother plant, but away from the competition. The poisonous Mexican spurge or “arrow plant” produces the Mexican Jumping Bean. What make the seed jump? Inside some seed is a very small caterpillar. When heated, the caterpillar will jump and jump and jump until the caterpillar begins to pupate and turn into a Codlin Moth. The seeds that were not inhabited by the caterpillar will germinate as the mother plant is an annual and will not be competition.

Know the Seeds

They Truly Are a Miracle
Lesson 4

By BOB ABBEN, MG
**Congratulations** are in order for **Sam Skemp**. On January 15th he completed **20 years** of volunteering as a Master Gardener here in Pinellas County. Sam has volunteered 16,842 hours as of December 31, 2005. What an achievement. **Thank you Sam for all you do!**

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**The Challenging Epiphyllum**

By ROBERT C. MARX

Many years ago my cousin had a plant that resembled a Christmas Cactus except for the unusually large flowers that were about 4 inches in diameter. Unfortunately, the identification of the plant was unknown.

I often thought about the plant but never attempted to identify it. But recently, the latest “Thompson & Morgan Seed Catalog” pictured the red flower and three others in cerise, magenta, and gold, all indigenous to “Epiphyllum”, also known as “Orchid Cactus”. Some colors are powerfully fragrant. I immediately ordered a packet of seed, mixed colors that arrived at the end of November.

A plastic pot was filled with potting soil and the 30 seeds scattered on the soil then lightly covered with vermiculite. From the 30 seeds emerged 19 tiny seedlings, a good germination percentage for such small seeds. The seedlings are now six weeks old, are very slow-growing, and are just beginning to show the first true leaves.

Germination to flowering takes up to 2 ½ years. Never out to ignore a horticultural challenge, I am looking forward to caring for the plants during that lengthy period. If successful, the flowering plants will be brought to “Extension” in 2008 for all to see and enjoy.

If any MGs want a challenge, try the “Epiphyllum Orchid Cactus”. But act quickly; the supply of seeds is limited.

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**Garden Tips**

**Easily Grown Papayas**

By JOANNE DRAKE, MG

Odd shapes and sweet exotic flavors, papaya will provide you with a harvest almost year round in Pinellas County. It is easily grown from small, round dark seeds found in the cavity of ripe tropical fruit. You may want to wash the seeds to remove the membrane and gelatinous coating and then dry with a paper towel. The seeds should then be planted in a sunny spot, in a mixture of light, well-drained, porous soil with some compost mixed into it. After warm weather arrives, you may want to give the plant an organic fertilizer, such as chicken manure, followed with a deep irrigation. After that, the plants should be kept moist but on the dry side to avoid root rot. They don’t like wet feet. During the winter, you don’t have to worry about watering very often because they prefer to remain as dry as possible. The plants require a pH between 5.5 and 6.5.

The trees are considered a large herb and should be planted 6-8 ft apart since seedlings don’t do well when transplanted. Replace the plant about every 4 years, and rotate locations to help avoid any virus disease. We found that using compost incorporated into the soil has helped avoid most problems such as nematodes, which can attack the roots and cause rapid decline. A major hazard to papayas in Florida is the papaya fruit fly which resembles a wasp. Female fruit flies deposit eggs in the fruit and when hatched, infest it with larvae. The fruit may be protected from attack by placing paper bags over the fruit and securing with a twist tie or yarn during the early stages of development and replacing every two weeks as the fruit gets larger. The papaya fruit fly doesn’t seem to bother thick skinned varieties. Personally, we haven’t had any problem. Some of our trees have one to two dozen fruit on them. It would be a real chore to cover that many.

The melon-like fruit, round, oval or elongated should form in about 9 to 10 months after seed planting, varying by growing conditions and temperature. Papaya are ready to harvest when you notice the skin is starting to show streaks of yellow-green. By harvesting at this stage of fruit development … you’ll
ward off the critters! Let your fruit fully ripen indoors for about 3 or 4 days, when it will be slightly soft to the touch and fully yellow. Green papayas should not be eaten raw because they contain latex. The green papayas are frequently eaten as a vegetable if they are first boiled.

We often slice the ripe papaya in half, scoop out the seeds putting them aside to wash, dry and plant later. Slice each half of the papaya lengthwise, then into 2-3 inch wide slices and it is so much easier to peal and cube each slice. Papaya makes a wonderful breakfast fruit smoothie. Add ½ cup of cubed papaya to the blender with 1 cup of yogurt or 1 cup of 2% milk, ½ mango, ½ cup of sliced peeled banana and 1 tablespoon of honey to make a smoothie drink. Puree until smooth. This recipe makes one serving. Pour into a large glass and enjoy. Its fun to experiment with other fruit combinations added to the papaya.

Here is a website offering free seeds and tips. http://papayaseedco.tripod.com/papaya_seed/

Permaculture Principles Five

BY YVONNE EDMODSON

This is the fifth in a series of articles on permaculture. Permaculture is a combined word meaning permanent agriculture and permanent culture. It is a systematic way of combining humans, plants, animals, buildings and infrastructures (water, energy, transportation and communication) in ways that are ecologically sound and economically viable. Design is the core of permaculture. A good design considers the connection between things.

This article focuses on broad-scale site design. Planning the design is the single most important step before putting anything in place whether on the scale of a Florida backyard, a community garden, a family farm or an agricultural business. Only by walking a site and observing it in every season can we discover its limitations and its resources. This design step uses a key permaculture principle of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless labor.

Landform or topography (from the Greek “topos” meaning place) is an essential and unchangeable feature of a site. Topography affects microclimate, water drainage patterns, soil depth and composition, access to and views of a site. Granted, in Florida most of our topography is flat, but within that flat topography there is a multitude of variation. Features that must be noted and mapped include:

- Sun-facing and shade-facing slopes or aspects and prevailing wind directions. Cliffs or rocky outcrops and rough terrain. Drainage lines and watercourse both in the wet and dry seasons. Boggy areas, areas susceptible to erosion, salt spray or wind damage. Good and bad views. Hill heights, gradients, orientation to sea level and bodies of water and access via roads. Soil types and native and invasive vegetation.

Permaculture can be developed within any topography by adapting to the conditions of the site rather than using expensive or unstable methods to alter them. Think of the situation in the northern
section of New Orleans where huge (and ultimately ineffective) levees were built to hold back Lake Pontchatrain. Topographical conditions dictated wetlands should exist there instead of the homes and businesses.

Climate is the basic limiting factor for plant and animal diversity in an area. Site planning must consider the overall climate, such as our sub-tropical Zone 9a and 9b in Pinellas County, but take into consideration different microclimates both manmade and natural. Two properties located only a few miles apart can vary in rainfall, wind speed, temperature and relative humidity so it is vital to analyze the site climate in detail rather than rely on broad climatic statistics.

If we study the microclimates on our site we can place structures (house, greenhouses, barns, etc.) in the most favorable orientation to minimize solar gain or loss and take advantage of prevailing winds. We can focus beneficial energies like solar or wind power and scatter hostile energies such as drying winds, salt spray, or solar heat by planting or constructing wind breaks and shelters in ways most suited to our particular climate.

In Florida we don’t have to consider factors that people must who live in temperate climates or hilly or mountainous terrain. Such things as slope and its effect on aspect and wind speed and rainfall, cold air drainage, thermal belts, and seasonal frost dates don’t impact our homes and gardens to a great degree. However aspect (orientation to north, south east or west) and wind direction play critical roles in the comfort of our homes and the success of our gardens. In the days before air-conditioning, Floridians constructed and oriented their homes to benefit from coastal breezes which blow from ocean to land in daylight and from land to ocean at night. The overhangs on roofs were broad enough to block the angle of the sun at its zenith in summer and allow sunlight to warm the house when the angle is lower in winter.

In our gardens we can use microclimates created by buildings or trees to shelter tropical plants from occasional frosts or to protect heat-intolerant species. We can build or construct windbreaks to block salt spray or desiccating winds. We can consider our soil type and rainfall or water availability and plant trees, ornamentals, vegetables and flowers that can live easily within the limitations imposed by soil, water and climate.

Even with our flat topography we can use earth berms, mounds and swales to affect microclimate in a variety of ways:

- Blocking low sun on the west side of a house or garden. Blocking or channeling winds. Providing insulation and moderating indoor temperatures in built structures. Giving privacy, blocking unpleasant views or muffling traffic noises. Providing additional space to grow plants. Retaining and channeling water and preventing run-off during heavy rains.

One topographical factor of the coastal Gulf that has been ignored over the last few decades, thanks to a dearth of severe tropical storms, is hurricanes and the damage they do to structures and vegetation. When we build and plant we need to take into consideration this factor of life in Florida. When I see multi-million dollar homes along beaches where mangrove barrier islands should be instead, I consider it senseless. The owners, the developers, the community governments, the insurers; none of them have enough sense to understand their folly in allowing, building and insuring these hurricane bull’s eyes. If it comes down to money, and it usually does, it is money poorly spent on a poor design that is out of touch with the natural world. And permaculture is all about being in touch with nature and our place in it.

**Valentine's Day: February 14**

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

Despite occasional grumblings that it was invented by the greeting card industry, Valentine's Day actually has a long, rich history. Its earliest origins derive from a pagan festival called Lupercalia, in which Romans called upon the god Lupercus to keep the wolves away. As part of the festivities, Roman girls wrote their names on a slip of paper and placed them in a jar for the boys to draw from. The matches were supposed to be sweethearts until the next Lupercalia.

Lupercalia evolved into Valentine's Day after Emperor Claudius II, believing married men would prefer staying with their families to fighting his wars, decreed that Roman soldiers were forbidden to wed.
According to legend, a priest named Valentine conducted secret marriage ceremonies in defiance of the edict. On February 14, the eve of Lupercalia, he was beheaded for his crime.

After Valentine was sanctified, Christian priests adapted the pagan holiday, moving it back a day to honor him.

In the spirit of this venerable Valentine’s Day pagan tradition, our own Botanical Bounty Gift Shop is offering a discount promotion from February 1 to February 14. If you are a current FBG member you already enjoy a 10% discount. If you are also a MG you will receive an additional 10% discount. So keep those wolves away, hang on to your head and get a great gift all with one fell swoop! Volunteers are welcome in the Botanical Bounty Gift Shop.

Questions? Call Stacey at 582-2251

Important Announcements!

Palm Education

Pam Brown has a CD produced by Dr’s. Monica Elliott and Tim Brochat of the University of Florida containing PowerPoint presentations on Palm Diseases, Palm Fertilization, PhPhysiological Disorders of Palms, Palm Nutrient Deficiencies, and Palm Transplanting and Pruning. There are scripts to go with each presentation. Three of these CDs are available for MGs to check out and use for study. If you go through all five of the presentations it will equal 7 hours of continuing education units. Please see Pam if you would like to check out one of the CDs for study

It’s here and working

You now have the ability to send your volunteer hours by e-mail. The e-mail address is: MGEDU@co.pinellas.fl.us. Please be specific when doing this – include individual dates and hours worked just like you would in the logbook. MG Jan Curtin will be recording these hours that are sent by this method. I appreciate those that are using this method to report their hours and hope you will continue to do so.

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.

MG Advisory Association

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

The Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws were approved for 501(c) (3) IRS tax-exempt status

Congratulations to the members of the Bylaw committee Linda Culhane, Angela Strain, Noel Bell, and Gail Robertson. We are considering some changes to the Bylaws including our new address which we must tell the IRS. We will then submit the revised Bylaws to the IRS for approval. The Bylaw committee is now working on the Policy and Procedures document to address a conflicts concern, the details of how MGAA operates and is organized, and to establish and define the duties of committees.

We held our first board meeting on Monday, January 9. Association secretary Linda Barnett’s minutes were distributed to all by e-mail. If you did not receive a copy, please see me in the volunteer office.

The elected board members are Linda Culhane, Angela Strain, Noel Bell, Gail Robertson, Chuck Scaffidi, Jack Moss, Bob Abben, Donna Zacharczyk, Patsy Schamber, Sam Skemp, Linda Barnette, Rogers Davidson, Elsa Soto, Yvonne Edmonds, Barb Orr and Bob Kay.

After the Jan. 9 election of new board members, the following officers were elected: Chairperson Chuck Scaffidi, Vice-Chairperson Patsy Schamber, Secretary Linda Barnette, and Treasurer Noel Bell.

I appointed Patsy Schamber the interim chair of the budget committee, and Noel Bell the interim chair of the finance committee. Both chairs will be asking for members to serve on their committees.

I have scheduled a general meeting of MGAA on February 8 from 9:00 am to 10:00 am in the Magnolia room to elect
Finance Committee members and other association business. Please!! Try to attend.

MGs participating in special events should get prior approval and a check voucher from the MG Advisory committee if they are going to expend money for any event and expect reimbursement.

Volunteer Opportunities and Events for February/March/April

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

74th St. Elementary Gardening Initiative
They want to beautify areas of the campus using staff, parents, and students. They have requested a Master Gardener to guide them with soil preparation, design and planting, and with educational signage for plantings. Contact Suzanne Shirk, Media Specialist at 727-893-2120

Southern Oak Elementary
The PTA wants to redo the courtyard using parents and students. They have requested a Master Gardener to help with soil preparation, what to plant and proper planting techniques. Contact Kathy Akers at 560-0867

IFAS Award of Excellence for Master Gardener Projects

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG
The advisory committee will continue to assist MG startup projects and identify projects that have state award potential.

For all project award submissions we are in dire need of the following MG skills: creative writers, editors, reviewers, graphic artists and others willing to help. Please see me or call 582-2117 if you are interested or you feel you are working on a project we should consider.

We are so very proud that we received a state award for the Plant Sale project submitted this year. Uof F/IFAS is providing certifi-
cates of excellence to all MGs that participated in the plant sales. I will be submitting at least 75 names to IFAS for the certificates. Brenda Payne volunteered to help me identify all those that participated in the fall 2004 and spring 2005 plant sales. Hopefully, we will not miss anyone.

Noel Bell and I changed our association banks. Our MG account is moving to Cornerstone.

We now have a no fee bank account. Gail Robertson has agreed to replace Don Laughlen as a check signer.

In 2006 the Conference will be in a different location. Rumor says it may be Jacksonville.

Up-coming Master Gardener Update Training Topics

Mark your Calendar!

February 8 (Wednesday)–10:00-11:00am-Magnolia room following MGAAs Board meeting. Brown Bag Lunch
Pollination and Problems Speaker-Bill Edmonds. Presents an in-depth review of pollination, including pollination problems (many) and solutions (few).

Bill is a retired biologist, teacher, and nature writer. His graduate research, carried out at U of C Berkeley, UCLA, Stanford, & USC, included work on plant growth hormones, pseudo nerve currents in marine algae, and desert ecology (how animals, especially birds, survive without drinking water). He is now a member of the Academy of Retired Professionals at Eckerd College, where he keeps busy preparing presentations on various science topics.

March 8 (Wednesday), our own Bob Albanese & Michael Pettay will fill us in on the finer points of potting mediums for Bromeliads and Tillandsia (Bob) and for succulents and cactus (Michael).

MG Plant Sale Meetings

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG
The plant sale committee, starting with the April 2006 sale, is planning to expand items for sale by adding specialty plant varieties.
For the spring plant sale, we will be offering a new feature. Planned are specialty areas, which include flowering vines (Nancy Bacinello), native plants (Maureen Crawford) and tropical/exotic plants (Linda Culhane). To make this new feature a success, we are asking you to help donate plant material (cuttings) or starter plants for the sale.

Posted on the board at Extension is a list of each category as to what is already collected and what we desire to collect. Please check the list and help us if you can. Perhaps you have several plants on the list and would like to donate them to the sale. If you can grow them at home, and plan to bring them in the week of the sale, contact the specialty coordinator: Nancy-593-1719, Maureen 392-2206, or Linda 530-1250.

If you are like me, you have a pile of garden magazines sitting around gathering dust. Want to share them with someone who will appreciate them? Donate them to the plant sale, where we sell them at a reduced rate. We will be collecting them 2 weeks before the sale in April. Please contact Daisy Connolly 430-5394.

We are earnestly looking for someone to chair the plant sale committee. We meet once a month and would like the job to be filled by next meeting. Please contact me (Chuck Scaffidi-582-2117) if you are interested.

Thank you for your help in making this one of the greatest plant sales in the county. We’re working on it becoming the best in the state, and with your assistance we can succeed. The plant sales require an extraordinary amount of MG hours to make it a special and successful event. Your continued support is encouraged and we would like to set a goal of having the most MGs involved. This is a very rewarding learning experience personally. Knowing that plant sale profits, by far our biggest source of income, benefit Master Gardener programs from education to supporting charitable organizations is an added bonus.

Thanks to Angela Strain for Coordinating the Jan 27 meeting. Great Job!

Remember, we are looking for someone to chair the plant sale committee by the next meeting.

Next plant sale meeting, on February 24.

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**HerbFest**

**By Ruth Davies**

**Saturday, Feb. 11, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** We will disclose some of the secrets of herbs. Penny Khaled and Bob Linde of the Florida Herb Society will speak, and Nan Jensen and Karen Saley will cook delightful samples using herbs.

Vendors will join the Tuesday crew of MGs selling herbs, including The Misting Shed, Neem Tree Farms. Monica Brandies will offer her books on herbs and Florida gardening. Alan Cordell will be in the herb garden, speaking about the international collection here in the Florida Botanical Gardens.

To coordinate the theme of herbs, Alan, with help from Richard Davis, Jean Barnes and Chuck Scaffidi, will have a display about herbs in the lobby during February.

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**By CHUCK SCAFFIDI**

In recognition of achievement in our County, a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon will be held to thank all those valuable people who have so generously given so many hours to Horticulture over the past year.

**Date: Wednesday, February 15th at 11:30am**

It is a catered luncheon, staff will provide dessert. Featuring an awards program, door prizes, music and lots of fun.

Your invitation arrives attached to this newsletter. Call the RSVP message line 582-2247, Carol Suggs at 582-2124, or the volunteer office at 582-2117.

I found a few quotes about volunteers that caught my fancy and hopefully yours:

Volunteers are not paid – not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.

I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do. – Edmund Everett Hale
Suncoast Home & Remodeling Show
Start Date MAR 3  End Date MAR 5
Tropicana Field

This is the ultimate one-stop showcase for almost everything and anything for your home, patio and garden.

FY&N exhibit volunteers are needed. March 3-5. Two people from 11:00am to 8:00pm on March 3 & 4. Two people from 11:00 to 6:00pm on March 5, who can stay until the end on Sunday to help breakdown and load the van.

April 8, 2006 EarthFest
I need volunteers, morning and afternoon in the Extension tent to talk about composting, FY&N, Rain barrels, Micro-irrigation, and to help with the table where visitors come in to get their “passport” stamped. Please let Carol know if you are able to help.

Mark Your Calendars Now!
In June of 2006, Chattanooga will host the 2006 Southeast Regional Master Gardener Conference. They are expecting between 500-1,000 Master Gardeners from 16 states for the 4-day event. I would personally like to invite all Master Gardeners to attend what we think will be one of the best regional conferences that will be held in the southeast.

We will have a very special project for all Master Gardeners to get their hands a little dirty while they are attending the Conference. The project will be located between the two Tennessee Aquarium buildings along the banks of the Tennessee River. Once the project is completed it will be used as an educational tool for the schools and aquarium groups. Once completed, we feel the project will be one that all Master Gardeners can be proud to have been a participant.

We will also be hosting an open Informational Day to the public. On Saturday the 10th, we will have national and regional speakers starting at 10:00 am till 5:00 pm in the evening, and a large vendor area open to everyone to view and buy products and crafts for the lawn and garden.

Below is a link to the Conference Webpage:
The Southern Region Master Gardener Conference, A Blending of the Waters, June

More announcements:
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI
Pinellas County has approved volunteers to drive county vehicles. For some of us it will become very handy for pick-ups and deliveries.

You must take a 4-hour course to receive a license. I (Chuck Scaffidi) will make arrangements for this. A sign-up list is on my volunteer desk. We have two people so far. Please sign up soon so I can make arrangements for all of us to do it together.

Thanks!!

By YVONNE EDMONDS
The County has a well hidden transport service for any resident who can produce a letter from her/his ophthalmologist, internist, or whoever documenting that the resident should not be driving because of one or another medical condition.

It's called DEMAND RESPONSE and is administered by the county's PSTA. PSTA sells the resident a membership card for $25 that is good for 10 taxi rides from any point in the county to any other destination. At $2.50/taxi ride, that's a real bargain! Reservations for pickup must be made before 5 pm, preceding day.

For more info, call Demand Response at 540-1800, listen then press 2. Please pass this helpful info on to others.
http://www.agingcarefl.org/caregiver/resources/transportation/pinellas

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI
I promised to showcase Wilma Holley’s photos each month. I have either run out of space I decided on a photo this month as a little test. See if you can identify the butterfly sitting atop the Echinacea. Wilma has cataloged her pictures in 3 beautiful photo albums. You will find this one in her first album (she calls it her best shots). If you can’t identify it, you may have to ask her or our butterfly expert Bob Abben.

Anyway, it's a good excuse to look at her albums.
A huge Thank You is in order – the numbers are now in and last year (2005) our Master Gardeners volunteered a total of 30,947.25 hours for a value of $543,124 to the county. WOW! This is another record-breaking year!

Remember on February 8th we have a special speaker coming to talk about Pollination. Please note that the presentation will begin at 10 am

Spring is swiftly coming upon us and that brings many activities here at the gardens and out in the community. We will need volunteers to help us with these and I encourage you to look at the list of opportunities in this newsletter. Of special importance are March 3 – 5 for the Tampa Bay Home and Remodeling Show at Tropicana Field, and April 8 for EarthFest. We need two volunteers each morning and each afternoon the three days of the Home Show. The last crew on Sunday March 5th will be helping us take down the display. For EarthFest – I need volunteers in the morning and then the afternoon in the Extension tent to talk about composting, FY&N, Rain barrels, Micro-irrigation, and to help with the table where visitors come in to get their “passport” stamped. Let Carol know if you will be able to help.

We are planning for the next Master Gardener Training. If you think that you might be interested in helping with the training, please let Carol Suggs know. We need additional Mentors for this class. There will be Mentor training coming up in April. If you have been a Master Gardener for one year and have your 100 hours service done, you are eligible to be a Mentor. We need friendly, caring, dedicated people for this job. Try to attend one of the training sessions if you even think you might be interested. Attending the training does not obligate you to be a Mentor. Training dates will be posted in next month’s newsletter.

Attention Mentors: I would like to have a meeting with all mentors on February 8 at 11am After the MG Update presentation. We need to talk about the MG program and the next training class. Please plan to attend this important meeting – I really need your in-put!

Take care when you are working. Each of you is so valuable to us. We appreciate everything that you do and you will be honored on Feb 15. Please RSVP. ♥ Pam

MG Plant Sale funds contribute to The Green Leaf mailing.

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.

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Please send articles to Pam Brown or e-mail directly to Chuck cascaffidi@juno.com or Pam at pwbrown@co.pinellas.fl.us