IFAS Award of Excellence for Master Gardener Projects

Jack Moss and I (Chuck Scaffidi) will be working with Elsa Soto and Angela Strain to exchange ideas and advise them on the resources needed to make the plant sale project a winner. We will then work with the plant sale team leaders to advise them of the information needed to develop the award package.

MG Projects Advisory Committee

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

We are in dire need of the following MG skills: creative writers, editors, reviewers, graphic artists and others willing to help meet the 2005 project deadline. Please see us if you are interested or you feel you are working on a project we should consider.

How about it Master Gardeners -- get involved!!
Pam Brown, MGs Chuck Scaffidi, Jack Moss & Sam Skemp

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: third Monday in January

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

Born in 1929 in Atlanta, GA, Martin Luther King earned a doctorate in systematic theology from Boston University in 1955. Shortly thereafter, Dr. King was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which orchestrated the Montgomery Bus Boycott in response to Rosa Parks' arrest for refusing to give up her seat on a segregated bus. From then until his assassination on April 4, 1968, King organized marches and protests, met with leaders from around the world, and published numerous books and papers promoting equality and civil rights. In August, 1963, King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, in December 1964. First celebrated as a national holiday on January 20, 1986, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was created to "serve as a time for Americans to reflect on the principles of racial equality and nonviolent social change espoused by Martin Luther King, Jr."

"I have a dream..."
Interesting Facts about Grapefruit

By ROBERT MARX, MG

Dr. Odette Philippe, a French nobleman who brought seeds and small plants from the Bahamas, introduced grapefruit to the United States in 1823 at Safety Harbor, Pinellas County Florida. Now a beautiful park in Safety Harbor is named in his honor.

Until then all citrus came from the Orient. The grapefruit was unknown elsewhere in the world and was never found in the wild. Shaddock, a plant found in the West Indies, named for Captain Shaddock, a 17th Century English ship commander, bears larger-grained fruits singly instead of clusters, as does the grapefruit, hence the name “grape fruit”. It is believed the grapefruit came from an accidental or intentional cross between a shaddock and an orange, with the orange predominating.

During the first quarter of this century, horticulturists made a strong effort to have the name “pomelo” apply to this species instead of grapefruit, but the latter name was too well known by growers and buyers. Pomelo is still the common name in Brazil (Portuguese) although “toronga” is still the common name in Spanish.

Grapefruit were slow in gaining popularity. They were popular in Florida for about fifty years before someone realized around 1880 the value of sending them to northern states. Today, the grapefruit brings millions of dollars each year to the growers in Florida. Oddly, it is little cultivated elsewhere in the world, although Palestine and South Africa now have commercial plantings for export.

Hollis Garden Field Trip

By PEGGY VINCENT, MG

The sunshine held promise of a warm and pleasant day ahead for 58 persons gathered in the main parking lot of Extension. A few minutes past the appointed time of 8:30 a luxury motor coach approached the awaiting group.

Very quickly everyone was boarded and we headed east toward Tampa and eventually to the beautiful City of Lakeland.

We arrived at Lake Mirror Park and were greeted by our outstanding guide Bill Koen, Horticultural Specialist and Landscape Inspector for the City of Lakeland. Upon arrival we were divided into two groups, and began our guided tour of Hollis Gardens. Stacey Smith of Hollis Gardens led the second group. Hollis Gardens is so named in honor of Mark and Lynn Hollis whose vision and benevolence allowed its construction in the year 2000 as the ‘centerpiece’ for Lake Mirror Park.
The garden acts as a living monument to the botanical history of Florida, where fresh spring waters sustained the trees and plants. We were guided through patterned flowerbeds, sculptures, ornamental fountains, a lily pond, native Florida plant preserve, herb and vegetable gardens, and botanical rooms designated by color. The beautiful Bermuda grass lawns prompted oo’s and ah’s all around. Our tour guides gave us names of wonderful new varieties and species at every turn. We all marveled at their knowledge and their wonderful sharing of botanical information whether plants, their origin, providers and preferred growing conditions, down to the fertilizers they found to be most effective.

Before re-boarding the bus Bill showed us around the new Barnett Park and facilities, due to be opened very soon. We then had a tour of the City of Lakeland, again led by our amazing host and tour guide. He guided our bus driver through narrow streets circling Lake Morton, home to hundreds of swans, both black and white, and around the museum and library grounds where test gardens for ‘Best of Show’ annuals were planted. Then on to Wire Lake, where we viewed a world-class collection of palm trees lining the shore.

Continuing our city tour, passing by Marchant Stadium, spring training grounds for the Detroit Tigers, baseball team; then along Lake Hollingsworth passing the Florida Southern College campus.

We headed out to the nursery operated by the City of Lakeland and used to procreate the many plants used in gardens and containers (some 300 container plantings). The variety was amazing! The generosity shown to our group was unbelievable! We were each allowed to choose a plant and also to bring back many plants to find a home in the Florida Botanical Gardens. Be sure to look for the Giant Star Potato Tree with its wonderful yesterday, today and tomorrow colorful blossoms.

We stowed away our precious living cargo and headed for the Branch Ranch and a wonderful lunch/dinner. We managed to buy out the produce stand across the road as well.

A tired and contented crew arrived back at Extension singing praises to Bill Koen, our host and guide and to Emanuel Fuller our great bus driver who knows local history and the highways and byways and gladly shared his great knowledge with us. Special thanks to Chuck Scaffidi for making all this possible, and to his able assistant Brenda Payne.

Anyone who wishes to send personal thanks to Bill Koen can reach him by email at bill.koen@lakelandgov.net or at 228 S. Massachusetts Ave., Lakeland FL 33801-5086 and Stacey Smith, Hollis Gardens, 702 E. Orange St., Lakeland FL 33801
The July 5 trip to visit the London gardens and the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show has a bit more interest. Recently, there was a security film documenting a ghost who opens a closed door every night. Maybe, by the time we get there, the ghost will be identified.

To have a thrilling vacation and transportation back on the Queen Mary 2, call Vanguard’s Judy Skaggs at (800) 624-7718 or visit the FLBG Web site.

Safety Nets
By PAM BROWN, Horticulture Agent

Tools of the Trade
- Match the size of the gardening tool handle to the size of your hand.
- Hold your tools in a loose comfortable grip. Holding too tight may cause injury.
- Use tools to reduce work:
  - Use a wheelbarrow or wagon to transport supplies
  - Use power tools for repetitive work
  - Use an extended handle to reduce the reach
- Keep digging and cutting tools sharp.
- Consider using a low, padded kneeling stool, with side handles to help you stand up, when working at ground level.
- Be creative! Adapt or create your tools for your comfort:
  - Pad the handle for hand comfort
  - Use knee pads or a foam pad for kneeling
  - Wrap a slippery handle with hockey stick tape to improve your grip on it

Canadian Physiotherapy Association

Important Announcement!

Beginning this month you will 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 in by this method.

Volunteers Needed!!!

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

MG Participation in Events
MGs participating in special events should get prior approval and a check voucher from the Advisory Committee if they are going to expend money for any event and expect reimbursement. Please follow this procedure.
See Chuck Scaffidi if you have questions about this procedure. The Advisory account is now maintained by MG membership.

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 mentions us in any way, including weddings and outside events. Please place the clippings in the basket that is in the break room.
Please include the name of the publication and date published.
Tour Guides Needed

Tour guide season got underway in September and will continue until May.

Please make your interest known to Tom Roberts or Sue Richardson; visit them or call 582-2242 to make an appointment. They will brief you on what is required of a tour guide and sign you up to shadow. Also, you may assist during a tour to get experience—sign up!!

So far this New Year two tours are scheduled.

January 29 the Garden Club of St. Petersburg will bring 40 visitors followed by the Perkiomen tours bringing 44 passengers on February 7.

Volunteer Opportunities and Events for January

MG Advanced Training

A GREAT PROGRAM FOR MASTER GARDENERS

By YVONNE EDMONDS, MG

On Saturday, January 8, at 1 pm, horticulturists John Tucker and Dan Mills will be here to give an illustrated talk on climbing roses and the structures that support them. They will give special attention to the best shrub roses for the Florida landscape.

John Tucker and Dan Mills have been gardening together since 1987. Prior to then, John managed an orchid greenhouse for 7 years and Dan worked at a wholesale nursery specializing in fruiting plants for Florida.

Not until 1998 did they go on a garden tour and become inspired to grow roses. Since then, they have established several rose garden areas on their property containing about 250 bushes in the ground and about 150 in containers. They grow roses from all the different classes that do well in Florida, including old garden roses, modern and classic shrubs, climbers, hybrid teas, floribundas, miniatures, and a few species. In the past two years they have started a small nursery. Specializing in old garden roses that do well in Florida on their own roots. They are both members of the American Rose Society.

MG Advanced Training February Heads-up

By YVONNE EDMONDS, MG

Tuesday February 8 between 10 am and 12 noon, local artist Allen Loyd will lecture and show slides about working with bamboo.

From 1-3 pm Allen will hold a special workshop working with bamboo. However since this is a hands-on class it is unfortunately limited to 8 people. If you desire to enroll in this workshop send me (Chuck Scaffidi) a note indicating your interest. We will hold a random drawing to select the 8 participants.

MG Advanced Training “Bonus Sheet”

By BOB ABBEN, MG

Did you miss an issue, do you need extra copies? We all know attending the “Up-Date” on the 8th of each month is sometimes not convenient. An MG may request any or as many copies (within reason) as needed for your use, family, friends, schools etc. The primary idea is to inform as many people about our world of horticulture and environment as possible. Here’s how to get your back issues. There is clipboard in plain sight in the MG volunteer office, just PRINT your name and issue or issues desired. We do not require driver ID or proof of age. All previous issues are listed on the clipboard. Your request will be filled ASAP and inserted in your timesheet record envelope.

Copies of the minutes of the previous advanced training meetings are available in the Volunteer office near your time sheet notebooks.
We need volunteers to man our display garden for the three days that the show is open. The show will be at **Tropicana Field** this year instead of the Expo Center. Last year we had two volunteers per shift and the shifts were 3 hours long. The shifts will be:

- **Thursday January 20**, 10 am – 1 pm, 1 pm – 4 pm, and 4 pm – 7 pm
- **Friday January 21**, 10 am – 1 pm, 1 pm – 4 pm, and 4 pm – 7 pm
- **Saturday January 22**, 9 am – 12 noon, 12 noon – 3 pm, and 3 pm – 6 pm

Please let Carol or Pam know if you can help and what times you prefer.

There is also a Master Gardener booth where we will need some volunteers, but Hillsborough and Manatee counties are also providing MGs for that booth. Our time in this booth is **Friday January 21, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** We need **4 MGs** to help during this time. Again, Please let Carol or Pam know if you can help.

**Note: Tampa Bay Flower Show** volunteers still needed for several of the shifts. If you called either Carol or Pam and left a message while they were off – Phone Mail crashed! Please call us again. We still need volunteers for **10 – 1 and 4 to 7 on Friday Jan. 21st.** and all three shifts on Saturday Jan. 22nd. We also need three more volunteers for the MG booth from 10 to 1 on Friday. **All volunteers get free admission to the show.** Please let Carol or Pam know as soon as possible.

Can you believe that it is 2005? I trust that everyone had a happy and safe holiday season and that travelers are home safe and sound.

January is promising to be a very busy month. Please read the call for volunteers for the Tampa Bay Flower Show. We need quite a few helpers for this event. Those who volunteered last year can attest that it was a fun event. It will be at Tropicana this year instead of the Expo Center. That gives more room for display gardens. This year’s show promises to be bigger and better than last year.

As we start into this New Year a lot of activities are coming up. These will require volunteers for help and we look to our Master Gardeners for some of this help. You have always been so generous with your time and I am sure that this year will be no different. Watch for opportunities in this newsletter or on the board in the back hall for sign-up sheets.

It has been several years since we did a mass ordering of Felco pruners. I would like to know if there is enough interest in ordering them again. When we last ordered them we were able to get the pruners for $30 each and the leather holsters for $5. If there are those of you that are interested in ordering, please let me know. We need to order at least 15 pairs to get the wholesale pricing. Please let Carol know (582-2124) of your interest so that we can assess whether to offer another order.

I don’t have the total volunteer hours yet for 2004, but I am sure it is a staggering number once again. I am constantly pleased and amazed at the amount of volunteer time and the many varied talents that you contribute to our organization. Thank you!

♥ Pam
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 about 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.

Chuck Scaffidi, Editor