The FBG Foundation
“Friday Nights & Garden Lights”
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

Over 800 people visited the FBG Foundation, the first in a series of “Friday Nights and Garden Lights” celebrations held on December 7. The reward for this successful night was to see the holiday joy in the faces of these people.

Making this successful night happen were the many MGs, numerous boy scouts, and 4-H'ers. Vernon Bryant provided magnificent light decorations in the park and hosted this night event as Master of Ceremony. There was lots of interest for FBG Memberships.

A holiday star necklace was sold and worn by so many that it added to the aura of the garden lights. Cocoa and cider with delicious cookies were offered. Other activities included wonderful music by Lori Hafer and the Music of Your Life band. A parade of wings for children was led by Cindy Peacock. Also, photo opportunities with Santa were offered.

Two more events followed on December 14 and 21, and they were even more successful.

The holiday lights remained lit until Thursday night, January 3rd.
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, Urban Horticulture Extension Agent

PRODUCTION EDITOR:
Chuck Scaffidi, MG

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Carrie Shelby, MG

Please send articles to cascaffidi@juno.com or pwbrown@co.pinellas.fl.us

The Green Leaf is available on line by clicking on newsletter at: http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/master_gardener/index.shtml

JUST THE FACTS: Sustainable Landscapes
By MARY CAMPBELL, Extension Director

What are Sustainable Landscapes?
A sustainable landscape is well designed to suit local environmental conditions. With the careful selection of plants, a landscape will thrive with the soil, water and light that is naturally available. The landscape will survive times of drought and the weather conditions within that region. The plants in the landscape will not become pests or “invasive”. Plants that are too aggressive become a constant maintenance problem, as well as may grow “out of control”. A sustainable landscape provides habitat for wildlife, such as birds, frogs, butterflies and bats. Appropriate native plants should be a part of any sustainable landscape. Low maintenance inputs can be achieved with careful planning. Landscapes can thrive with reduced irrigation, mowing, and dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Use of Integrated Pest Management techniques can help maintain healthy plants, lawns and the environment. Less maintenance, water, chemicals and plant loss saves money!

Hints:
- Use Florida Friendly Landscape principles - http://www.swfwmd.state.fl.us/yards/
- Design the landscape with less lawn grasses
- Mulch beds to conserve water – recycled or environmentally sustainable mulches (not cypress)
- Understand the natural conditions in your local area so appropriate plants are selected

Why is it Important?
It is important in order to gain freedom from all the costs and environmental impacts. Creating a landscape with fewer chemicals that pollute our ground water, native plants that support wildlife, lower water use and less maintenance protects natural resources for future generations. The cost of maintaining an average home landscape per year is $500 or more. The pollution created from a gas-powered mower in one year is equal to a car driving 14,000 miles (Chiras and Wann, 2003, 29). To become sustainable and protect our resources for future generations, sustainable landscapes make sense.

Other Resources:
- Integrated Pest Management - http://ipm.ifas.ufl.edu/
- Florida Friendly Landscaping - http://floridayards.org/
Market in the Park
Every Saturday from 8 AM to 1 PM, until April 19, 2008.
http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/market/index.html

Master Gardener Booth Opened December 8th at Market in the Park
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

Master Gardeners Chuck Scaffidi, Cheryl Korschek, Peggy Vincent, Carrie Shelby, Marian Cirello and volunteer, Jean Barnes, planned and supported a MG booth on December 8th market day.

A fruit theme was planned with a poster and IFAS literature to be handed out describing the care of Bananas, Papayas and Dragon fruit trees. Thanks to the Banana boys (Charley and Wayne) who potted and prepared the plants for sale. Also, thanks to Marcel and Pat who transported the plants to our MG booth. Thanks to Betty Lipe, 4H, who is the coordinator for the booths, for finding an open spot and providing us with an easy to handle pop-up tent. Chairs and tables were available for the market participants to set-up as needed.

Extension and IFAS literature for promoting Extension was available and there was a sign-up sheet for recruiting potential candidates for the 2008 MG class. The “Ask Me” computer assistance was also set-up to answer the public's questions.

What did we learn? The market that day was not attended as well as previous weeks; however we received a lot of gardening questions which made the use of the “ask me” computer invaluable. There was an interest in buying plants. We sold about $64 worth of fruit trees even though that was not our main purpose, and we got inquires wondering if we were going to be there every week. The set-up was smooth and the vendors were more than happy to welcome and assist us. Everyone enjoyed talking to the public and seeing the activity around the other vendors, and of course we also did some shopping.

Overall it was an enjoyable and a successful day and we can assist those that would like to continue this effort.

We will provide a "lessons learned" report at a MG update meeting so that future market participation can be beneficial.

On the same day Cindy Peacock, behind our booth, presented a Family Fun Learning Woodlands Creatures Program. This was also successful.

The Children and Parents came to learn about the little things that nature provides.

Acorns, pinecones, palm leaves, berries, sticks, moss, leaves, flower heads, seeds, grasses- all that cool stuff and why it’s important to us, animals and insects. After touring and learning about the different plants, the children made a woodland creature from the pinecones, acorns, palm leaves seeds, mosses and sticks. It was a lot of fun for the 14 children that attended.

Cindy Peacock assisted by mom.
Goldenrod
By ROBERT MARX, MG

Pity the unloved wildflower, Goldenrod, scientific name, *Solidago* sp. Long vilified as the cause of hay fever, it is an unjustified reputation. The pollen is heavy and any excess immediately falls to the ground. The true culprits are grasses and a few other plants.

Goldenrod has a beauty generally not appreciated by Americans but the beauty becomes evident once one studies this wildflower. Europeans love Goldenrod and plant it in their gardens alongside blue or purple flowering plants for a striking contrast in colors.

There are a great many varieties of Goldenrod, from the tall showy Goldenrod down to more diminutive varieties as Wreath Goldenrod, only one foot tall with flowers along just one side of the stem. Little girls pick the stem and wrap it over their heads as a tiara, affording an opportunity for a loveable photograph.

My favourite is *Solidago odoro*, also known as Sweet Goldenrod, so named because a crushed leaf emits an odor similar to licorice. To me, it is rare as I know of only one stand alongside a lake in New Jersey, accessible only by a difficult climb on a rocky trail. Years ago I made the trek and obtained a plant for my garden, where it flourished for many years until I foolishly transplanted it in the middle of summer, then forgot to water it, resulting in its demise.

So, this summer I returned to the lake to obtain more root cuttings. Now that I am much older, the trail seemed much steeper. Two of the cuttings brought back are growing nicely. One shall remain in my garden in Virginia. The other will be donated to the Native Plant Area of Florida Botanical Gardens. Hopefully, it shall flourish and spread so that anyone passing by may pick a leaf and crush it to enjoy the delightful fragrance. Perhaps some Master Gardener will take upon the task of watering it regularly until it is will established.
Tampa Bay Home Expo
More MGs still needed: to plan, organize, and staff an Extension/FYN exhibit (in a 10'x10' booth) with MGs at the Tampa Bay Home Expo on January 25, 26, and 27, 2008 at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg.

- **Friday, January 25, 2008**
  10AM - 2:30PM and 2:30PM - 7PM

- **Saturday, January 26, 2008**
  10AM - 2:30pm and 2:30PM - 7PM

- **Sunday, January 27, 2008**
  10AM- 2PM and 2PM- 6PM Includes tear down after closing

If any of you are interested in helping with the exhibit booth please contact Marie Singer at mfhsingr@tampabay.rr.com or Dale Armstrong at darmstro@pinellascounty.org, or Carol Suggs at csuggs@pinellascounty.org. There is also a sign up sheet posted on the volunteer bulletin board in the hallway in the Horticulture dept. if you would like to sign up while at the Extension. We will need two (2) volunteers per shift and the last shift on Sunday the 27th will be in charge of the tear down and loading of the exhibit.

Visit website for more info about the event: [http://www.tampabayhomeshows.com/](http://www.tampabayhomeshows.com/)

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MG JUDE BAGATTI HAS PHOTO SHOW

Jude Bagatti will have a solo photography show and sale in the St. Pete Little Theater Lobby Gallery starting mid-December through January, 2008. The show, entitled *ONE BY ONE*, depicts 21 images of wildlife, including mammals, birds, reptiles and insects, echoing the theme of the musical *Noah’s Ark* which opens January 11th.

Her show can be viewed in the Lobby Gallery Monday thru Friday from 10AM to 5PM and on weekends when a play is in performance.

The theater is located at 4025 - 31st St. South, St. Pete, 727-866-2059.

For more details contact Jude at 727-322-6211 or heyjudebagatti@msn.com

![Photo by Jude Bagatti - "Capuchin Monk"](image-url)
Reporting Florida Master Gardener Hours

This is a recent policy statement from the University of Florida Master Gardener Program. Please observe the do's and don'ts of the bullet points. Chuck Scaffidi, the VSP Coordinator, will work with the County VSP office to provide a convenient method of separating out volunteer travel hours so they can be reported to the University.

Florida Master Gardeners from across the state donate large numbers of hours each year. The following guidelines should be followed for reporting volunteer time and continued training.

Master Gardener Volunteer Hours consist of time spent performing activities approved by the County Master Gardener Coordinator that support the mission and goals of the Florida Master Gardener Program in each county. Follow the guidelines below in determining what constitutes a reportable volunteer hour.

- Standard activities like answering phones, hosting plant clinics, giving educational presentations, planting and maintaining demonstration gardens, and other similar activities approved by the County Master Gardener Coordinator count as volunteer hours.
- Meetings often consist of a business portion and educational portion, and each part should be logged appropriately. The business portion of the meeting constitutes reportable volunteer time, while the educational portion counts as continued training.
- Travel time to volunteer activities should be logged and recorded, but does not count toward the pledged annual volunteer commitment.
- Attendance at educational events cannot count toward the pledged annual volunteer commitment. These hours should be logged and recorded as continued training hours (see next section).
- Time spent planning and executing Master Gardener related social functions constitutes reportable volunteer hours. Attendance at a social event does not qualify as volunteer time.

Master Gardener Continued Training consists of hours logged learning about the latest horticulture-related information. All continued training activities must be approved and deemed acceptable by the County Master Gardener Coordinator. Follow the guidelines below in determining what constitutes a reportable continued training hour.

- Meetings often consist of a business portion and educational portion, and each part should be logged appropriately. The business portion of the meeting constitutes reportable volunteer time, while the educational portion counts as continued training.
- Educational field trips are a great way to keep learning. The lecture or guided portion of the trip can count as continued training hours, but no part of the trip would constitute volunteer hours.
- Travel time to educational events should not be reported.
Update on the Children's Trail

By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

At last month's meeting the following items were discussed:

■ Developing a tree house plan.
■ Finalizing the number of garden stations.
■ Determine wording for signage on the kiosks and potential for incorporating illustrations by Todd Still.
■ Finalizing lease for binoculars.
■ Obtaining risk management approval of the sites.
■ Naming the critter logo to be used throughout the trail.

Committee Members: Dianne Wheatley-Giolotti, Mary Campbell, Vivian Haicken, Betty Lipe, Cindy Peacock, Chuck Scaffidi, Pat Dieterich, Lou LaGrande, Bobbie Jones, and James Stevenson.

Next Children's Trail Committee meeting is Wednesday, January 9, at 11:00AM after the FBGF Board meeting.

MGAA approved $2,000 for the Children's Trail MG Project

Master Gardener Landscaping Project

Excerpt from the Largo Times section of the St Petersburg Times, Wednesday, December 19, 2007

"A home of their own to celebrate the holidays....... No, it's not holly with red berries. Nor is it a poinsettia. But it is red and green. This unlikely Christmas greenery is called a firecracker plant. And Michael Yauch, 15, shows it off with pride. It grows in a place of honor near the front door of the new home Michael will share with his brother Ryan, 12, and mother, Pam. On Tuesday, Habitat for Humanity volunteers and a lawyer in a Santa hat gathered with the Yauch family to close on their new home near Rosery Road in Largo.

The Yauches picked up the keys in time to move in and celebrate Christmas in their own home. And the firecracker plant was part of a new Habitat partnership with the Pinellas County Extension Master Gardener Program. "We volunteered about 150 hours to do all the design and labor for landscaping Pam's home, and we remembered that her son wanted a firecracker plant," said Linda Culhane, committee chairwoman for the Master Gardener project. The 1,100-square-foot house itself is the work of more than 437 women from all over Pinellas County and beyond. Most were new volunteers to Habitat. The organization's Women Build program is designed to encourage women to participate in Habitat projects by providing a chance for them to learn building skills while helping a family."  

MGAA approved $2,000 for the Habitat for Humanity MG Project.
SAFETY NET

By PAM BROWN
Urban Horticulture Extension Agent

Happy New Year! I hope each and every one of you had a wonderful holiday season. I say this all the time, but I can hardly believe that another year has gone by. Time flies when you are having fun! And, I hope that each of you finds being a Master Gardener volunteer a fun job.

We always start out with a bang at the beginning of each year. There is a Master Gardener College opportunity coming up this month. James Stevenson will be teaching a repeat of his "How to Identify Plants" for those of you who did not get to take it last year. The dates are January 10, 17, 24 and 31 from 9 a.m. to 12 Noon in the Gardenia Room. He has a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the back hall. It will be first come – first served. The book for the class will cost $5.00 if you decide to keep it when the class ends. The second part of this class "How to Identify Plants II" will be held in March 5, 12, 19 and 26. Mark your calendars now for this class – there will not be a charge for this continuation class. In addition, as mentioned last month, there will be a Turf Day on January 22 and Palm Care Day on January 24. Please see Carol to register for either of these classes. Both will be taught by Extension Specialists.

I will be teaching the MG Update on Tuesday, January 8th. The topic is "What’s in a Name" and is about the scientific naming of plants – sort of a companion to the ID classes James teaches. Please Note: we will be meeting at the EMS building in the auditorium at 10 a.m.

There will be changes coming for the MGAA organization due to directives from the State level MG Program. The papers to incorporate the organization were finalized before the holidays. Now by-laws changes will need to be revised to fit the State guidelines. There will be additional information regarding voting dates for the revised by-laws and the election of board members coming from Chuck. Please look for this information and read it carefully.

How you report your volunteer hours is also changing. We have guidelines from the State MG Coordinator Tom Wichman that will need to be followed. The memo from Tom spelling out the correct way to log time is included in this newsletter (page 6). It is important that you read this memo – I will have to report cumulative time to the state in this manner. Remember, that starting in 2008 you will need to volunteer 35 hours (exclusive of travel time) and attend 10 hours of continuing education to maintain your Master Gardener certification.

Last year was a great year – as a group you logged 32,967 volunteer hours. This is worth $618,791 in the workplace. Wow! Thank you for all that you do. You are very important to our continuing mission here at Extension. We appreciate every single hour that you give!

Mark your calendars: in appreciation of all your efforts we are having our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Wednesday, February 6th starting at 11:00AM.

♥ Pam
# Christmas Tree Recycling 2007/2008

Please recycle your Christmas tree using local curbside or drop-off programs.

## The Following Have Christmas Tree Recycling Programs.

Christmas trees will be collected, processed into mulch, and distributed free to the public (click here for a list of free mulch sites). Please prepare your tree for recycling as follows:

- **Clean tree.** Remove all decorations including hooks, garland, tinsel, and lights.
- **Loose tree.** Tree should not be inside a bag or can.
- **Free access.** Residents of apartments or condos should place their trees near the garbage dumpster, but please don’t block access to the dumpster.

*Please remember that any Pinellas County resident can recycle their Christmas tree by dropping it off at the Pinellas County Solid Waste Operations facility located at 3095 114th Ave. N., St. Petersburg. The cost is $3 per load for a maximum of 5 trees. Hours: M-F 6-6, Sat. 7-5. For information, call 464-7500.*

To find out specific details about whether your city has a tree recycling program visit this link:


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## 2008 January

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<td><strong>TUES JAN 8, 10AM</strong></td>
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<td>MG Update Meeting</td>
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<td>&quot;Plant Nomenclature – What’s in a Name&quot; at EMS auditorium</td>
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<td><strong>SAT JAN 10, 10AM</strong></td>
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<td>Pruning Basics at Extension</td>
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<td><strong>TUES, JAN 22, 10AM</strong></td>
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<td><strong>THURS, JAN 10 - 31, 9AM TILL NOON</strong></td>
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<td>Intro to Plant ID Classes</td>
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<td><strong>FRI THROUGH SUN, JAN 25- 27</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TUES IN JAN &amp; FEB, 6PM-8PM</strong></td>
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<td>Florida Style Gardening Series at the St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church</td>
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<td>Jan 29, Feb 5, 12, 19 &amp; 26</td>
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## Looking Ahead!

**SATURDAYS IN FEBRUARY, 8AM-1PM**

- Market in the Park at Extension

**WED, FEB 6, 11AM**

- Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

**FRI, FEB 8, 10AM**

- MG Update with Wilma Holley, "Look What You Can Do With a Leaf"

For details on some of the events listed go to the calendar on the Pinellas County Extension Lawn & Garden website. http://www.pinellascounty.org/scripts/publish/webevent.pl?cmd=opencal&cal=cal6
Good Work Volunteers!

Reminders

- **MG Update Tuesday, January 8 at 10AM**
  In EMS Building auditorium

- **MGs needed for Tampa Bay Home Expo**
  Time slots available Friday, January 25 thru Sunday January 27 at Tropicana Field
  See page 5 for details.

- **Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon**
  Wednesday, February 6 at 11AM