

MG Volunteer in the Spotlight



Class of 1994 James Fletcher Blackwell

Note: A veteran Master Gardener will be introduced to our readers with a look at his or her personal background and the contributions made to IFAS programs. Through these articles we will explore the 23-year history of Master Gardener activities and how Extension has been enriched by their efforts.

By Sam Skemp, MG

James was born in Oklahoma on August 9, 1930 but soon moved to his grandparents' farm in Cleveland, Tennessee where his parents built their home. He began gardening on the farm at the age of four when growing vegetables for food was very important during the midst of the depression. His schooling included attending Bradley High School.

James enlisted in the Air Force in July 1948, taking basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. He then went to Roswell, New Mexico and was assigned to the Fire and Crash Department. While working in the Crash Department, a B-29 bomber overshot the runway. General Lindbergh was a passenger and James remembers he was very unhappy about the situation. James attended Photo school at Lowry AFB in 1948 and returned to Roswell. While at Roswell he was unaware of the U.F.O. incident. He reenlisted in 1950 at Langley AFB, Virginia. In 1951 he was assigned to the 548th Recon

Squadron at Yokota AFB in Japan, providing direct support for the Korean War for three years.

James' next assignment was to the Recon Squadron at Lockborn AFB, Columbus, Ohio. While there, he received a big surprise at Commander's Call, winning NCO of the Month of the Squadron and also for the base. In 1955, he served temporary duty in French Morocco, and in 1956 in Thule, Greenland. In 1957 he was transferred to the 8th Air Force Headquarters, Westover Air Force Base. "We processed and printed film from the U2 spy plane. It was very exciting, but long hours and hard work." "In 1960 we transferred to Systems Command but stayed in the same laboratory processing satellite film. Forty years later, we had our first reunion. Then the men and women were allowed to tell their wives and husbands what we did due to declassification of the outfit."

James transferred to Eglin AFB, Florida in 1962 and then to Wiesbaden AFB, Germany in 1963. His 7499th Support Group was another spy outfit. One Squadron had cargo planes equipped with hidden cameras that flew round trips to Berlin twice daily along the both sides of the corridor photographing Russian and East German tank training grounds. "We could not reveal that we were Photo and Photo Intelligence to our friends, but at Christmas, the tank groups tramped letters in the snow- - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to the 7499th Support Group, so our secrets were well known by our cold war opponents." James then processed film from the X70 recon plane (a faster version of the U2) for two years.

James' last assignment was to the 363rd Recon Squadron at Shaw AFB, South Carolina where he was NCIC of flyaway trailers supporting Recon F104s. He worked with infrared photos, which could photograph day or

night without flash. He retired from Shaw AFB on September 30, 1967, moving back to Cleveland, Tennessee and starting a garden. He currently lives in St. Petersburg.

James became a Master Gardener in 1994 and worked with Grant Hurst in the herb garden for four years. In 1997 he began serving as a key ambassador to Heritage Village, establishing the Heritage Vegetable Garden near the Moore House and bringing the activities of the Extension Service and Heritage Village closer together. The garden soil has greatly improved by extensive use of compost. Antique herbs and vegetables are grown in raised beds surrounded by a picket fence to discourage rabbits.

Many Master Gardeners have worked at the Heritage Garden under James's leadership. On Tuesdays, 45 to 100 school children visit this garden. James has used his outstanding photographic skills covering major events such as Seasonal Sensations, EarthFest, etc. for Extension. He has served as a Master Gardener Mentor and currently serves as a member of the Extension Advisory Council.



In Memory of Carrol Killen December 12, 1928 – May 14, 2005

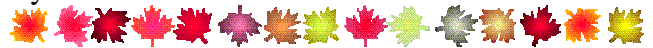


Carrol joined the Pinellas County Master Gardener team in 1991 and volunteered over 3000 hours during his 14 years with us. While he volunteered in various areas, he is best known for his leadership of the “Banana Boys” in the Tropical Fruit Garden. Carrol had a thirst for knowledge, asking many questions of the Horticulture team so that he could then provide

the best answers for the many visitors to the Tropical Fruit Garden.

Carrol spent 31 years in the Air Force flying fighter jets and retired in 1977 as a major. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross and a Purple Heart for injuries received when his plane was shot down in Vietnam. After retirement he volunteered for the St. Petersburg Police Department prior to joining the Master Gardener program.

A private family funeral service was held on May 19th. We will have a memorial for him prior to the Master Gardener Update on June 8th at 11 a.m. in the Tropical Fruit Garden. Please try to attend.



Garden Tips



Tap these resources for Florida native plants

By YVONNE SWANSON, MG

It's no surprise that Florida gardeners are turning to native plants. They require little to no extra water or fertilizer compared to most exotics, save money and don't pollute surface water with chemicals that run off into streams and creeks. They're also the best choice for attracting native wildlife, including birds and butterflies.

The Florida Native Plant Society offers information, resources and links at www.fnps.org. The local chapter meets monthly in Clearwater. Call (727) 544-7341 for more information. You can also search for documents on native plants at the University of Florida's Electronic Data Information Source (<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>).

There are some helpful books with color photos of plants that you might want to add to your own library or recommend to others.

Horticulturists at the Pinellas County Extension Service frequently consult *A Gardener's Guide to Florida's Native Plants* (Rufino Osorio, University Press of Florida, 2001, \$24.95) and *Native Florida Plants: Low-Maintenance Landscaping and Gardening* (Robert G. Haehle and Joan Brookwell, Gulf Publishing Co., 2004, \$18.94).

It's best to be an educated consumer when shopping for native plants, urges Dale Armstrong, coordinator of the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods program, which promotes the use of native plants. Make a list of plant material before you shop, and find a nursery that specializes in Florida natives, such as Wilcox Nursery in Largo (727-393-8110), which is a member of the Association of Florida Native Nurseries (www.afnn.org). A good source for books and supplies for backyard birding and butterfly gardening is Nature's Focus in Seminole (727-393-8110) and Tarpon Springs (727-453-6959).

Another good source for plants is the low-cost nursery at Pinellas Technical Education Center (727-893-2500, ext. 1101) in St. Petersburg, where horticulture students grow and maintain native Florida plants.

Flag Day is celebrated on June 14th Each Year~

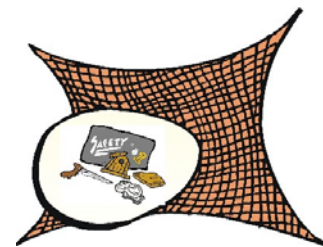
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

Flag Day is the birthday of the United States flag. It became a holiday in New York State in 1897. In the next few years other states joined New York. But it was not until 1916 that President Woodrow Wilson established Flag Day by national proclamation.



Safety Nets

By PAM BROWN
Horticulture Agent



Heat exhaustion

Signs of heat exhaustion include an increased temperature, faintness, rapid heartbeat, low blood pressure, an ashen appearance, cold, clammy skin and nausea. Symptoms often begin suddenly, sometimes after excessive perspiration and inadequate fluid intake.

Heat exhaustion is one of the heat-related syndromes, which range in severity from mild heat cramps to heat exhaustion to potentially life-threatening heatstroke.



If you suspect heat exhaustion:

Get the person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned location.

- Lay the person down and elevate the feet slightly.
- Loosen or remove the person's clothing.
- Have the person drink cool water, not iced, or sports drink containing electrolytes.
- Cool the person by spraying him or her with cool water and fanning.
- Monitor the person carefully. Heat exhaustion can quickly become heatstroke. If fever — especially greater than 104 F, fainting, confusion or seizures occur, dial 911 or call for emergency medical assistance.

Source: Mayo Clinic web site

Heat exhaustion self-defense

- Avoid eating high-fat, high-protein foods before going outdoors
- Drink plenty of water one-half hours before going outdoors to work – take plenty of water with you.

- Avoid alcohol and caffeine drinks – they can hasten dehydration
- Wear loose, lightweight clothing

Source: Mary Hardy, M.D

MASTER GARDENERS TOUR THE WEED PATCH

By PAT DIETERICH



**What's in a name?
That which we call a rose
by any other name
would smell as sweet....
William Shakespeare,**

Romeo and Juliet

And sweet, indeed, was the fragrance as fifty-seven Master Gardeners, horticulturists, and staff toured The Weed Patch Vineyard and Rose Garden on Tuesday, April 26th. After a two-hour plus bus ride to the site northeast of Ocala, we were invited by our hosts Dan Mills and John Tucker to tour the gardens at our leisure.

You can complain because roses have thorns, or you can rejoice because thorns have roses.

Tom Wilson, from the Ziggy comic strip



No complaints were heard, but rather gasps of approval as we advanced from garden “room” to “room”. Here a fountain, an arbor, and formal plantings; there an old shed glorious beneath copious blooms. John informed us that the rose garden was only six years old, and previously had been just a weed patch. When they decided to grow roses, they toured other gardens and did extensive planning. In particular, they wanted each rose bush to be fully accessible, so the beds are spacious, with grassy alleys in between. They are especially proud of the split rail fence with triangular additions that supports the massive shrub roses and large-flowered climbers.

Specially forged towers also support climbing roses, and supply additional vertical interest.

I don't know whether nice people tend to grow roses, or growing roses makes people nice.

Roland A. Browne

Keeping in mind the three basic requirements of any plant for sunshine, water, and fertilizer, Dan and John shared these Seven Steps to Successful Roses. First, roses need a minimum of six hours of sunshine. Second, plant roses so that they have good drainage and plenty of space for air circulation. Third, be aware of the rootstock—unless the rose is an Old Garden variety, Fortuniana rootstock is most desirable. Fourth, roses have high nutritional needs and require soil enhancement. Fifth, regular deadheading and removal of defective foliage is the key to healthy roses. Sixth, prune regularly, more severely in February, and renew mulch frequently. Seventh, if desired, spray weekly to control foliage diseases, but only as absolutely necessary.

One may live without bread, not without roses.

Jean Ricepin



Fortunately, we did not have to put that adage to the test, as our box lunches finally arrived and were rapidly consumed. Inspired by the roses, and weary from the winds and the drive, we arrived back at Extension with just enough time to unload our rose bush purchases before the rare-in-April-but-delightful rains began. Copies of the information supplied by the Weed Patch, including lists of different types of roses and suppliers, are available in the volunteer office.



Important Announcements!

■ **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 in by this method.

■ 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 place the clippings in the basket that is in the **break room**.

Please include the name of the publication and date published.

■ MG Participation in Events

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. Please follow this procedure.

See **Chuck Scaffidi** (582-2117) if you have questions about this procedure. MG members manage the advisory account.

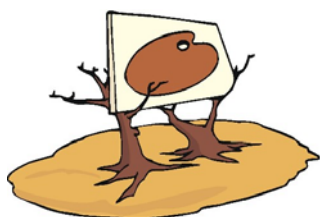


Volunteers Needed!!!

For Volunteer Opportunities:

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

■ Do you like to paint?



If soooo- we have a fun painting project that needs to be done.

We have four large fake trees.

They have styrofoam brown trunks and plywood

for the canopy and earth messages on them. You may have seen them around the gardens.

They need a fresh coat of paint and detailing. They also need a coat of sealer. We would like to use them around the gardens.

Come by and take a look and see if that is something you would like to do.

See Cindy Peacock or Pam.

Thanks.

■ Tour Guides Needed

Tour guide season is between September and 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 tours. Also, you may assist during a tour to get experience - **sign up!!**

■ 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.

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 me or call **582-2117** if you are interested or you feel you are working on a project we should consider.

Although UPARC was not a 1st place winner in the **International MG Search for Excellence program** the award committee has requested us to provide a poster depicting the UPARC MG project. The poster will be displayed at the MG conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada July 24-27. I have literature about the conference in our volunteer office for anyone interested in attending.

Seven states in the USA were winners including an entry from Florida.



Volunteer Opportunities and Events for June

■ MG Advanced Training

June 8, Wednesday, MG Up-date 12:00 pm.

Pam will be presenting Integrated Pest Management in the Landscape for the Master Gardener Up-date at 12 Noon on June 8th. Join us and learn about newer insect and disease pests.

Two “Helpful, Harmful, Harmless” Insect ID card decks will be given away as door prizes.

★ **SAVE THE DATE** - *GardenFest III* is set for **Saturday, November 19th, 2005!** We look forward to the continued support of Master Gardner’s teaching at this event. If you are willing and able to participate in upcoming meetings, recruiting vendors, setting up on the eve of 11-19 or helping on the date of this event, please contact Cathy Nelson at (727) 785-7562 or at blacknels@hotmail.com or Ruth Davies at sunflower1368@juno.com.

Our first meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, **June 14th, 2005** at noon, at special events. Other meeting dates will be scheduled at this meeting. Come hear about planning to date, and help brainstorm GardenFest. Will meet for a brainstorming session on Tuesday, June 14, noon, in the conference room. Bring a bag lunch and suggestions to improve and grow GardenFest, which will be **Saturday, Nov. 19**. No need to RSVP, just come.

★ MG Plant Sale Meetings

A reminder to all, the plant sale meetings are the last Friday of the month and all are welcome to attend. **Next mtg June 24 10:00 am in aud A.**

The Plant Sales require an extraordinary amount of MG hours to make this a special and successful event. Your continued support is encouraged and we would like a goal of having the most MGs involved. This is a very rewarding learning experience personally. Knowing

that plant sale profits benefit Master Gardener programs from education to supporting charitable organizations is an added bonus.

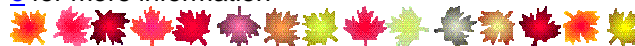
Get involved!!! Start by coming to our plant sale meetings and/or talk to the plant sale team leaders.

25th Annual FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER CONTINUED TRAINING CONFERENCE

October 24-26, 2005

University of Florida
J. Wayne Reitz Union
Gainesville, Florida

<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/gardener/index.html#site>
e for more information



with you – MGs
The sun always shines

I am certainly glad that June is here. It means that in another month, I will be able to breathe for a bit before Master Gardener training starts in August. This spring was way too busy. I keep saying that next year I will cut back on the things I agree to do, but it is just too hard.

We lost another of our dear Master Gardeners, Carrol Killen on May 14th. Carrol had been an MG since 1991 and had worked in various areas. He is best known lately for his work in the Tropical Fruit Garden as the leader of the “Banana boys”. We will be having a short memorial in his honor in the Tropical Fruit Garden prior to the Master Gardener Update on June 8th. The memorial will start at 11a.m. with refreshments afterward, prior to the Update. He will certainly be missed – I for one will miss his gentle ways.

I need a volunteer to take the schedule for the Master Gardener class that starts in August and

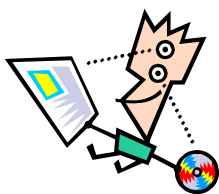
find the pages in the new Master Gardener Text Books that pertain to the subjects being presented. I would need the volume and page numbers for each class presentation. If you are able to do this for me, please give me a call at 582-2112. The new text books have the colorful covers, not plane green. If you do not have the new books, I have a set you can use.

The summer heat is finally here after a delightful spring. And, we really had spring for a change. I loved the breezy, low humidity days and cool nights. What a treat!

If you are working in the landscape now that the temperatures are rising, please be sure to take water with you and wear a hat and sunscreen. If you forget sunscreen or insect spray, I have a variety of products in my office on the top shelf just inside my door for your use. Please help yourselves if you need anything. Remember, also to watch out for fire ants. If you see a mound, please let us know the location so that it can be treated right away. Remember also to take breaks in the shade. You are all so precious to us and we do not want anything to happen to you.

We appreciate all that you do!

♥ 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 @ **727-582-2117**.

Chuck Scaffidi, Editor



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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.

Managing Editor: Pam Brown, Extension Agent II
Production Editor: Chuck Scaffidi, Master Gardener

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/](http://www.flbg.org)
Click on “**Master Gardener Program**”, click on “**MG Newsletter**”



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The enclosed material is provided as one of the many services relating to the educational programs offered by this agency. Our statewide network of faculty is prepared to provide current information on food, agriculture, marine and natural resource science, energy, nutrition, family and 4-H youth, and related fields. We will be happy to help you with additional information upon request.

Pamela W. Brown

Pamela W. Brown
Extension Agent II, Environmental Horticulture

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