Know the Seeds

They Truly Are a Miracle
Lesson 5

Small Wonders by Robert Abben, MG

The Thistle is in bloom. The Thistle uses the wind to distribute its seeds, which look like parachutes. Try to imagine (or dream) the Earth as “barren”, (that is, with the usual water, sun and soil) except for one lone Thistle; thereby the distribution of its seeds would be unimpeded. By the end of the fifth year, there would be 7,960 trillion Thistle plants. These plants would cover the Earth and several other planets at the rate of one plant per square foot.

OK, enough of the dreamy stuff, let’s get back to Earth (careful where you step). Let’s visit the seashore, The Mangrove. The seed pod grows slowly into a long slender, very pointed spear shape, about 10 inches long. The seed pod will hang downward. When the seeds are ripe, the spear will rapidly detach itself from the mother plant and fall straight down into the shallow water sticking into the soft sand. The seeds are protected from predators (fish, turtles, etc) by the spear and will also germinate within the spear to bring forth another Mangrove plant.

These are truly Small Wonders, but sometimes I feel like there may be a little “smoke being blown”. The old fashioned tobacco farmers always planted the tobacco seed by the light of the moon … I can think of a lot of ways to finish that off, but I’ll leave it up to you and how you feel about smoking.

Some seeds of the Burs may contain TWO seeds within the seed, one being the upper, and the other being the lower. The upper is smaller than the lower. The larger, or lower, seed will sprout the next season, if the larger is not successful then the next season the lower or smaller seed will try. It possibly has a better chance of survival in case of unfriendly weather. The Small Wonder of this is how do the seeds know who is the larger? Something like children, “I’m the biggest, I get to go first”.

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THE SEED QUIZ

1. A large tree or plant, needs a large seed to provide nourishment.
   True ______  False ______

2. Seeds are at the beginning and the ____ of plant life.
   True ______  False ______

3. There are just six basic sizes and shapes of seeds.
   True ______  False ______

4. Several methods of seed distribution have been discussed.
   There are still 3 possibilities; can you name one of the others?
   _______________ extra credit for 2
   _______________ 3 will certainly give you a few
   more “hours” ______

To enter your answers, please place them in the “Seed Bank” (it’s really a box) on top of the file cabinet in Jean Fields office. YOUR NAME PLEASE. Look for your grade “hours” in your time sheet. Or if you like, you may E-mail them to me. rabben@ij.net
Branch Management: Protecting Your Trees from "Bad Pruning"

by Michael Pettay - Pinellas County Extension Horticulturist

Hello all. It's Springtime. Sun shining. Birds singing. Chainsaws howling. I get very nervous when I hear chainsaws in the neighborhood. Winter and early Spring is the time when many of our trees are targeted by untrained or unscrupulous lawn service and tree service companies who practice "topping" and other forms of improper tree pruning. It's a very sad thing to see beautiful trees disfigured by “bad pruning.” It reduces a tree's useful life span and can create a hazardous situation later. I feel badly for the homeowners too, as they often just don't know how harmful bad pruning can be.

I've been known to walk up the street to investigate when I hear the "anti-noise" of chainsaws close-by. I am relieved if I find they are not being topped. However, closer inspection often reveals a type of pruning almost as bad as topping. Instead of topping, the pruners are "hat racking" the trees. Hat racking, also known as "tipping" or "heading," occurs when people cut off the tips of large branches near a bud or small lateral branch. If the poor tree doesn’t die, a broom-like bundle of several weakly attached sprouts will then develop near the pruning cut. This new growth does not have a strong attachment point on the branch. As the shoots grow they interfere with each other causing included bark and crossing limbs. The new shoots also grow at a very rapid pace, making them brittle and liable to wind breakage.

Topping and hat racking can also create larger stub cuts that are highly susceptible to decay. Once the decay starts in a stub-cut branch, it can spread into the trunk, weakening the structural integrity of the tree and ultimately leading to its death. How much rot develops depends on many factors, including the species of tree, weather conditions, age and general health of the tree, and what else is going on in the landscape around it. The process is insidious because it's slow. Few folks make the connection between topping or bad pruning done 10 or 15 years ago and a rotten branch breaking off a tree today and landing on their Volvo. Additionally, the loss of certain growth regulating hormones, concentrated in smaller, lateral branches, reduces the tree's ability to thicken and strengthen major branches.

In fact, a hat-racked tree may rebound so dramatically, as if it were overcompensating for its losses, that many folks mistakenly believe it is somehow healthier. Some unprincipled service company representatives are well aware of this misperception and use it to take advantage of homeowners, promising them fuller-looking trees. This is simply not the case. There are no natural healing points on a branch other than at crotch areas. Since topping and hat racking is almost always done at a point in-between, decay is the most likely result. Decay weakens branches by reducing the strength of the wood. Compound this with the rapid new growth and you have a branch that is now much more likely to break than before it was cut.

Much of this tree abuse takes place in the evenings or on weekends. This is often because the perpetrators are well aware that they are doing something wrong and are trying to avoid the code enforcement people. Under Article 4, of the City of Pinellas Park’s Land Development Code, topping or hat racking trees is not permitted. Interestingly, this same city code also describes trees as a “beneficial public resource.” I’m thinking that some of our neighbors may be surprised to learn that they don’t actually own their trees, at least not in the way they do their pool cages or yard art. Taking an axe to your pink plastic flamingo may be somewhat weird, or even therapeutic, but it’s not illegal. Taking that same axe to your trees could get you a hefty fine.

Also, I often see an increase in bad pruning during periods of heavy weather. Remember the 2004 hurricane season,
when we had four hurricanes within a six-week period? Professional arborists learned a great deal from that experience, not the least of which was the unfortunate lesson that nothing is hurricane proof, including some really big trees. Actually, it’s always been my experience that a lot of folks don’t really take notice of their trees. They are just a part of the scenery, like the backdrop on a stage, where the real action takes place out in front. They are just furniture. Also, like furniture, they are often viewed as virtually indestructible. My wife, the city girl, has made the rather interesting observation that people think of trees as being made of wood, rather than wood being made from trees. However, if some trees came to get you during the four storms your perspective may have changed. Some folks may have panicked between storms, and availed themselves of some really bad pruning. Some of this bad pruning may have made things worse.

Amongst the lessons learned from the four storms was that trees with full, rounded, natural-looking crowns fared much better than trees that had been topped, hat racked, or "lion-tailed." Lion tailing refers to removing a tree’s interior branches, leaving “tufts” of leaves out on the ends. I’ve seen all of these pruning styles used on my own block over the last few seasons. Full crowns deflected damaging winds around themselves. In trees that have been over pruned, branches that may have previously been supported by others were less able to endure exposure to strong gusts that a full canopy would have deflected. Lion-tailed trees showed many "twisting" injuries, where the remaining leaves, clustered at the ends of branches, acted like sails.

Trees that had been "pruned up," because folks were made nervous (often by their insurance agents) by large, low-hanging branches over their roofs, did not fare as well as trees allowed to keep their lowest branches. Large branches develop load bearing capability over time and in relation to the rest of the tree. Removing a limb over the house may overbalance the tree in the opposite direction, causing it to fall on your Volvo or your neighbor’s house. There were some reports, especially during the exceptionally rainy Hurricane Jeanne, of trees falling over only as far as their oldest, largest limbs would allow, rather like the kickstand on a bicycle, thereby protecting the houses from any further damage.

In conclusion, bad pruning can be dangerous for both trees and people. Good pruning is both an art and a science. When pruning trees, it is often wisest to retain the services of a professional arborist, especially if your pruning project involves working above the ground or using chainsaws. A trained and experienced arborist can determine what kind of pruning is needed to improve the health, appearance and safety of your trees. Here are a few things to consider when choosing an arborist:

- Membership in a professional organization, such as the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the National Arborist Association (NAA) or the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA).
- Certification through the ISA Certified Arborist Program.
- Proof of insurance.
- A list of verifiable references.

Avoid using the services of any tree company that advertises topping, or cannot give you an estimate of the job. Bad pruning is often a “copycat crime.” I am encouraged by the attempts of more and more tree care professionals to educate themselves and homeowners on how to avoid bad pruning and to keep their trees safer, more healthy and beautiful.

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An Enduring Plant

A true story by Robert Marx, MG

My widowed neighbor loves to travel and also enjoys flowers. With plants she does have a magic touch: Every plant she touches dies.

Recently, before leaving on a cruise she requested that I water the plants in her carport. The carport is on the opposite side of her house from mine so I never see it and wondered what she could possibly be growing. Investigation after she left revealed a few small clay pots with scraggly plants all about to expire. But, sitting on a picnic table was a beautiful tall hydrangea with lush green leaves and large attractive flowers. The plant was in a beautiful ceramic container.

Every other day, I watered the small plants but paid special attention to the hydrangea. The dense foliage hid the soil so I had to poke the spout of a small watering can into the foliage and hoped the ensuing watering was adequate.

After several days the flowers on the hydrangea were still surprisingly beautiful. It was then that I made a mortifying discovery.

The beautiful hydrangea that I had diligently watered is an artificial plant.
A Poem Recited by Staff at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon February 15.

Written by Jean Field

Roses are red, Plumbagos are blue, This Valentine poem is from Extension to you.

Your heart is in teaching, Your hands are in soil, we need you so badly when our workloads boil.

Children feel proud over a tomato they grew, Might never have happened, if it wasn’t for you.

Our herb and spice garden is second to none, Because of the immeasurable job you have done.

Papayas, Bananas and Mangos, oh my! they fruit with a bounty, Thanks to you guys.

Our naturalists teach us wherever we roam, To honor our wildlife as this is their home.

The Greenhouse is bursting with plants for the sale, Supported by volunteer hands without fail.

Our volunteer office is bustling with professional hands, without you, Lord knows how we would meet our demands.

The committees you join and the projects you chair, Pave the road for Extension to reach everywhere.

The Gardens are bursting with flora and fauna, Thanks to your working beside us each morn.

Butterflies flutter on plants red and blue, They come to get nectar from plants that you grew.

The compost is baking, it’s turned and prepared Visitors learn from demonstrations you’ve shared.

The ponds are a classroom that few ever see, Displaying the wetlands so beautifully.

Looking around, we see helpers and friends, Supporting our community, on you we depend.

To our dear volunteers we salute you this day, For your unending patience and tireless ways.

If we don’t always say it, we think it, that’s true, From the hearts of us here, our sincerest

THANK YOU!

Chuck Scaffidi and his elves: Peggy Vincent, Brenda Payne, Jean Barnes, Joyce Juhnke, Wilma Holley, Jean Field and all the volunteers who received door prizes thank all the contributors who donated these door prizes for our volunteer appreciation luncheon that was held on February 15.

A big Thank you!! Remembering them in someway will be appreciated. Also, don’t forget Pam Brown and staff for their efforts, especially Carol Suggs in her painstaking way of doing the table settings and gifts.

HomeGuard Pest Control, 12585 Ulmerton Rd., Largo
Samnik & Associates, Expert Tree Consultants, 1015 Michigan Avenue, Palm Harbor
Wilcox Nursery, 12501 Indian Rocks Rd., Largo
Amplex, Wholesale Nursery
Kenny’s Lawn Service and Landscaping, 1620 21st St.N, St. Petersburg
Something Different, 9425 Ulmerton Rd. Largo
Beckett Lake Nursery, 2251 Montclair Rd, Clearwater
Historic Bok Tower, 1151 Tower Blvd., Lake Wales,
The Florida International Museum, 100 Second St., St. Petersburg
Lowry Park Zoo, 1101 Sligh Avenue, Tampa
Willow Tree Nursery, 4401 49th St., St. Petersburg
Country Club Nursery, 9850 Starkey Rd., Largo
Carroll Brothers Nursery, 4950 38th Avenue, St. Petersburg
Rozanskis Orchid House, 6200 102nd Ave., Pinellas Park
Crabby Bill’s Seafood Restaurant, 401 Gulf Blvd. Indian Rocks Beach
PJ’s Oyster Bar, 501 1st St, Indian Rocks Beach
Golden Rain Nursery, Wholesale
Charlie and Millie’s Pizza, 10593 Seminole Blvd., Seminole
Clearwater Country Club, 525 N. Betty Lane, Clearwater
Botanical Bounty Gift Shop
Sunken Gardens, 1825 4th St. N, St. Petersburg
Receiving special recognition from Pam Brown are the following volunteers:

**5000 hours**: Robert Abben and Chuck Scaffidi.

**2000 hours**: Ray Bradshaw, Linda Culhane, Ruth Davies, John Kingsbury, Richard Klimpel, Marcel Pincince, Ruth Reed, Robert Weil, Dorothy Whitley

**1000 hours**: Linda Barnette, Noel Bell, Richard Berube, Barbara Orr, Barbara Parks, Gail Robert-son, Mary Ellen Warner, Patrick Mann

**500 hours**: Karen Ruff Blackwood, Dick Davies, Pat Deiterich, Suzanne Girves, Irma Porterfieldd, Margaret Quinn, Joyce Smith

James Blackwell, Chuck Scaffidi and Bob Abben received the President’s Call to Service Award presented by the Presidents Council on Service and Civic Participation in recognition and appreciation of their commitment to strengthening our Nation and for making a difference through volunteer service.

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**Safety Tips**

**Pesticides**

By PAM BROWN
Horticulture Agent

Although pesticides can be useful, they also can be dan-gerous if used carelessly or aren't stored properly. Here are some tips for safer pest control:

- The most effective way to reduce risks posed by pesticides is to use non-chemical control methods to reduce or eliminate pest problems. Around the home, such measures include removing sources of food and water (such as leaky pipes) and destroying pest shelters and breeding sites (such as litter and plant debris).
- If you decide you must use pesticides, always read the label first and follow the directions to the letter, including all precautions and restrictions.
- Don't use products for pests that are not indicated on the label and don't use more pesticide than directed by the label. Don't think that twice the amount will do twice the job.
- Use protective measures when handling pesticides as directed by the label, such as wearing impermeable gloves, long pants, and long-sleeve shirts. Change clothes and wash your hands immediately after applying pesticides.
- Before applying a pesticide (indoors or outdoors), remove children, their toys, and pets from the area and keep them away until the pesticide has dried or as recommended by the label.
- Don't spray outdoors on windy or rainy days. Take precautions to keep the pesticide from drifting or running off into the vegetable garden, pool, or neighbor's yard.
- Remove or cover food during indoor applications.
- If using a commercial applicator or lawn care ser-vice, ask for information about potential risks and safety precautions to take.
- Don't buy more pesticides than you will need. If you have leftover pesticides, check with your local government to determine whether your community has a household hazardous waste collection program or other program for disposing of pesticides. If no community program exists, follow label directions and any state or local regulations regarding disposal. Keep the telephone number of your area Poison Con-trol Center near your telephone: **1-800-222-1222**.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Dr. Isadore Grossman, died on January 30, 2006 at the age of 100. He is survived by his wife of 74 years, Esther. He came to this area in 1991, from his native Baltimore, where he operated a family medical practice for 50 years.

Dr. Grossman volunteered at Extension in the greenhouse and shade area in 1993. In 1994, he and Esther graduated as Master Gardeners. Always willing to assist in any way, he served on the Help Desk, and then joined his wife as an active member of the Timely Topics mailing team.

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. I appreciate those that are using this method to report their hours and hope you will continue to do so.

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, Physiological Disorders of Palms, and 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.

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. However, the Bylaw committee (myself, Linda Culhane, Angela Strain, Noel Bell, and Gail Robertson) agreed to and incorporated the changes to the Bylaws I indicated in the last newsletter. They were recently sent to the IRS for approval. Please see me if you are interested in receiving a new Bylaw copy.

The Bylaw committee is now meeting every Friday to work on the Policy and Procedures document. We are detailing how MGAA operates and is organized, and defining the duties of committees.

I have scheduled a general meeting of MGAA on Wednesday March 8 at 11:30 am in the Magnolia room to conduct association business. This follows the Update training so bring a brown bag. Please!! This is your association 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.
Up-coming Master Gardener Update Training Topics
March 8 (Wednesday)–10:00-11:30am-Magnolia. MGAAs Board meeting to follow. Brown Bag Lunch
Don't miss this opportunity to be taken to the Potting Shed by staff horticulturists Bob Albanese and Michael Pettay.
In a Multi-Media presentation, Bob will be Giving us the Scoop on potting mixtures for Bromeliads, while Michael will Fill us In on container blends for Cacti and Succulents.
See you there!

Volunteer Opportunities and Events for 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 last year. UofF/IFAS is providing certificates of excellence to all MGs that participated in the plant sales. Brenda Payne volunteered to help me identify all those that participated in the fall 2004 and spring 2005 plant sales. She did a very thorough job in identifying 84 MGs They were submitted to IFAS for certificates.

We truly hope no one was missed.

Mentor meeting March 16
There will be a Mentor meeting on March 16th at 10 a.m. We will be discussing changes to the MG training application and other issues pertaining to this years training class.

MG Plant Sale Meetings
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG
Linda Culhane is now chairing the plant sale committee. She did a great job at her first meeting and passes on this message:
As you may have heard, our next plant sale is just around the corner, Saturday, April 1. This event takes a tremendous effort in which many of our MGs take part. We hope that each of you will be able to participate in some way. Some of the ways to help would be:
Assist with the set-up on Wed, Thur, or Fri before the sale.
• Save cardboard boxes and deliver them to the extension on Fri, March 31
• Grow plants for the sale and deliver them to the extension on the setup days
Attention Master Gardeners!!

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

Call 582-2251 or szidi@pienellascounty.org

HerbFest

By Ruth Davies

What a success. Great turnout and a financial bonus for MGAA.

The Tuesday crew, Marcel Pincince and Patrick Mann are all fested out. A huge crowd visited HerbFest at Extension on Feb. 11 and heard about herbs from Penny Khaled of the Florida Herb Society and Monica Brandies. The day went far beyond our wildest imagination. Allen Cordell offered a walking-talking tour of the herb garden; Mary Campbell and Cindy Peacock had a program for children; and Nan Jensen, Karen Saley and Richard Davis cooked up some delicious herb pasta and more.

More important plant sale information:

Patsy Schamber requested that those bringing in plants not wait until the last week unless you notify her. She will need that time to make labels. A note will be placed in the Green Leaf of this request. Patsy is starting a “Communication Log” to enhance the communication between Greenhouse/Shade house leaders. All plants received liquid fertilizer Monday (Feb. 27).

Leaders will be notified by Patsy to hold a team leader meeting after the Plant Sale.

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 April sale. Please contact Joanne Drake 395-0677. She will be bundling the old issues together to sell for 10/$1. Newer issues will be $.50 each. She requested baskets to hold the newer issues.

Parking/Security: Marcel is team leader. MGs were requested to park in front of the extension to save places for our customers on the day of the sale.

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. Plant sale profits, by far our biggest source of income, benefit Master Gardener programs from education to supporting charitable organizations is an added bonus.

Next plant sale meeting, on March 24.
Mark Your Calendars Now!

In June, 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. (June 8 to 11).

All Master Gardeners are invited to attend what will be one of the best regional conferences that will be held in the southeast.

There is a 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, 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 services.

Below is a link to the Conference Webpage: [http://srmgc.tennessee.edu/](http://srmgc.tennessee.edu/)

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I Need Your Help to Keep Our Gardens Growing

We need your membership in The Florida Botanical Gardens. You can get into other gardens free or at discounted prices, and that alone pays for your FBG membership. Discounts are offered at most gift shops. Membership offers prior notice and invitations to special FBG events. FBG membership makes a good gift for friends or family. FBG membership allows early admittance to the MG plant sales. Individual membership is $25; Family is $35; a supporting garden friend is $250. If you’d like a leaf on the tree with your name on it, $1,000 will help grow the gardens. See me or stop in at Botanical Bounty.

Mary Ellen Warner, Membership Chair

Pizza Garden Help Needed

If you have 4 hours that you could give to 4-H, we need you. The Pizza Garden Field Trip will occur on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, April 4, 5, and 6, 2006. We particularly need Guides for the workshop groups. This would involve a Disney type of activity where you would lead your groups from station to station for 4 workshops and lunch. By the way, Lunch for you is included. If you are free between 10 am and 1 pm on any or all of those days, contact Betty Lipe at 727-582-2528 to volunteer. It is a fun and rewarding experience.

MGs can count hours for this event.

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.

Are You Aware of SHARE?

SHARE is a not-for-profit organization that builds and strengthens community through volunteer service. SHARE offers savings on food. Everyone who volunteers just two hours a month is welcome to participate. There are no income requirements, just a desire to make a positive difference in the world. If you want to enroll or need additional information about this program, please call 800-536-3379 or email aboutshare@juno.com.

Spirits of Fancy “with Asian Delights“

April 8th, 2006 Saturday Evening from 6 to 8:30

This special evening will feature wine tasting and exotic foods. Music will fill the air. An auction will offer rare bamboo, palm, hanging baskets, art and more. Door prizes will please all.

To travel with us, your ticket is $25 for FBG members and $35 for nonmembers.

For reservations, call 582-2191. A check is confirmation, make payable and send to:

The Florida Botanical Gardens

Spirits of Fancy

12520 Ulmerton Road

Largo, Florida 33774

Pizza Garden Help Needed

If you have 4 hours that you could give to 4-H, we need you. The Pizza Garden Field Trip will occur on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, April 4, 5, and 6, 2006. We particularly need Guides for the workshop groups. This would involve a Disney type of activity where you would lead your groups from station to station for 4 workshops and lunch. By the way, Lunch for you is included. If you are free between 10 am and 1 pm on any or all of those days, contact Betty Lipe at 727-582-2528 to volunteer. It is a fun and rewarding experience.

MGs can count hours for this event.
Spring has sprung, I think, and now the busy season begins. It seems that we have some festival or program every weekend.

I really appreciate all of you who have volunteered to help at the Home Show the first weekend in March.

There are several activities in March and April where I need volunteer help.

**March 18th - Safety Harbor Bloom N’ Garden Festival** - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Main Street. I need a couple of volunteers to help with an Extension exhibit.

**April 1st Plant Sale** from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Please remember to sign up to help in an area that day. The proceeds of this sale benefit all Master Gardeners and there is a job for everybody. Remember that the Plant Sale meetings are held the last Friday of each month (except this month) and everyone is invited to attend.

**April 8th EarthFest** 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. - Need volunteers to man educational booths to answer questions and give out educational information on composting, mulching, rain barrels, invasive/exotics, Florida Yards and Neighborhoods, butterflies and any other Earth Day/Arbor Day subjects – use your imagination. These activities will all be under one large tent. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the back hall.

**April 29th – 30th Green Thumb Festival** - 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. each day at Walter Fuller Park in St. Petersburg – Need volunteers to help in the Extension tent and with children’s activities at our tent. Will be helpful to have a couple of strong guys to end up Sunday and help take down the tent and exhibit. This is a fun festival and we give the volunteers plenty of time to roam and visit the other exhibits. A sign-up sheet will be on the back hall bulletin board.

You have all been so willing to volunteer and help with these activities and I am always grateful.

We are in need of additional volunteers to be Mentors for the Master Gardener Trainees. I am looking for dedicated, caring, and attentive individuals who have been in the MG program for one year and have their 100 volunteer hours to be certified. This year’s MG training class will be held on Wednesdays from August 2 – November 1. There will be Mentor training classes scheduled probably some time in June. If you think you would be interested in becoming a Mentor, please let me know. You can attend Mentor training without committing to being a Mentor. That way you will know what you are getting into before you decide.

♥ Pam

Plant Sale funds contribute to The Green Leaf mailing. Urgent!! To save mailing costs please tell Carol or me to remove your name from the mailing list if you can consistently and reliably access the internet version.

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.

Managing Editor: Pam Brown,
Extension Agent II
Production Editor: Chuck Scaffidi, Master Gardener
727-582-2117
Please send articles to Pam Brown or e-mail directly to Chuck cascaffidi@juno.com or Pam at pwbrown@co.pinellas.fl.us