Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

The 2009 Master Gardener Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, as always, was a delightful and enjoyable event. The magnolia banquet room tables were dressed in green, purple and yellow tablecloths. "Pearls" adorned each table signifying the 30 year anniversary of Master Gardeners in Florida. The centerpieces emphasizing this year’s theme "You Light Up our Lives", were made up of planted begonias surrounded by small lanterns that lucky attendees got to take home. Thanks to Carol Suggs for providing the attractive setting for our luncheon and for the donation of her collection of Mardi Gras beads.

Paul Cozzi, Bureau Director of Culture Education and Leisure brought greetings and thanked the volunteers for their time. He complimented the MG’s on their care for the gardens, noting how beautiful they look this year. Master Gardeners outdid themselves once again providing an abundant variety of delicious luncheon selections, enjoyed by all.

Prior to the eagerly anticipated raffle, Pam focused on the achievements of the assembled group. She recognized the milestone volunteer hours from our MGs, and presented awards to selected groups for their efforts in the garden and for their outreach to the community. The total number of Natural Resources volunteer hours for 2008 was 37,176 hours of volunteer service representing a monetary value of $646,119.00, or 18 full time employees. Well done!

Pages 2 and 3 display photos from the event, and are referenced by number in the text below.

The President’s Lifetime Achievement Awards to MG’s who have achieved more than 4,000 hours of volunteering service were presented to seven recipients: Brenda Payne, Jack Moss, James Wolfinger, John Kingsbury, Carla Lévesque, Lillian Wolfinger and Marcel Pincince (photo 1). In addition, seven MG’s were awarded President's Gold Achievement awards for achieving more than 3,000 hours of volunteer service: Al Baker, Donna Zacharczyk, Dorothy Whitley, Irene Costello, Jace Pinkard, Joyce Giesegh and Linda Culhane (photo 2).

John Kingsbury received a Silver Star in recognition of more than 5,000 volunteer hours (photo 3). A 2000 hour Key pin was awarded to John Hood for his service (photo 4). Pat Dietrich and Natalie Oliver were added to the thousand hour plaque for their 1000 hour achievement. Nine MG’s crossed the 500 hour milestone this year and their names have been added to the plaque: Joanne Kleish, Nancy Bevilacqua, Jessica Foster, Don Anderson, Pamela DeLong, Phyl Lawson, Mary Ellen Phillips, Marian Cirello and Bernadette Christian. Lois Archer and Phyl Lawson received an Acorn pin in recognition of their service as Mentors for the 2008 MG training class (photo 5).

Before the raffle, FBG Foundation President Vivian Haiken handed out Recognition Awards: free FBG membership to Master Gardeners, class of 2008 for completing their 75 volunteer hours for certification (photo 6). Recipients were Terry Berube, Sharon Bond, Nancy Dalton, David DeLaMarter, Emma Eshbaugh, Carole Farrand, Ed McKenna, Francine Pettina, Louis Pollicino, Stanley Warner, and Brandy Webb. (Each graduating MG, class of 2008, who completes their 75 volunteer hours, will receive a free FBG membership.)

Many wonderful people work behind the scenes, volunteers and staff, to ensure that this annual event is a success because what we do as volunteers deserves recognition.
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 at 727-582-2117.

Chuck Scaffidi
MG Editor
EXTENSION DIRECTOR UPDATE FOR VOLUNTEERS
By MARY CAMPBELL, Extension Director

The news never seems to get any better on the county budget and this year is even more challenging. Due to reduced revenue coming into the state and county from property taxes and sales tax revenues, there will be budget reductions this year and next. Robert LaSala, County Administrator, has met with the Board of County Commissioners to discuss a process that would implement reductions to get us on a more sustainable path for the next 3 years. Making the hard decisions on what the county can realistically expect in revenue for the next three years and then fitting our budget to that new reality will require some significant reductions. Extension has been asked to review reductions that could go up to 30% and possibly higher. All general revenue departments have been asked to do this.

The county government will be significantly impacted and services will be reduced. UF/IFAS is also looking at a reduction in faculty and vacant positions will be held until the budget picture improves. The county is being very proactive in looking at all possible ways to cut costs and increase revenue. County staff is encouraged to participate in an on-line suggestion process and all suggestions are being reviewed. Regular information is provided by the County Administrator’s office to update staff.

The Board of County Commissioners confirmed their support for the UF/IFAS partnership and the Florida Botanical Gardens. Volunteers will be even more valuable to us as staff resources dwindle for both outreach education and maintenance of the gardens.

As we all face the new reality that this recession has imposed on us, I want to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and ask that you call me if you have any questions. There are many unknowns at this point and for the well being of staff and volunteers it is important to reduce rumors.

It will not be easy to see some of the programs that have been so carefully developed by staff, reduced or go away entirely. This will be the situation all through county government and it is happening all over the state. There will be listening sessions with the Board of County Commissioners offered at various times and that will be the time to express support for services to our community. No one could expect the depth of the financial impacts in our community and leading Extension through this process will take everyone's support, patience and professionalism.

PUBLIC MEETING ON THE PINELLAS COUNTY BUDGET

The Board of County Commissioners values your opinion. Please join the County Commission and staff at the following public information meetings. The national recession and the real estate market downturn are forcing Pinellas County government to downsize. The reductions will affect the programs and services provided to our citizens. We need your feedback. All meetings will run from 5:30 - 8 p.m.

Tuesday, March 3 – Palm Harbor University High School
1900 Omaha Street, Palm Harbor

Monday, March 23 – Osceola High School
9751 98th Street North, Seminole

Thursday, March 26 – Gibbs High School
850 34th Street South, St. Petersburg

For more information visit www.pinellascounty.org or call (727) 464-3000
The 4-H Ochs vegetable garden has been in full swing since September and the fall planting was a huge success. Under the leadership of 4-H Agent Jean Rogalsky, several Master Gardeners and 4-H Volunteers plan and prepare for two plantings each year; one in October and the other in February. These hard working gardeners include: Julie Burton, Dick Berube, Barbara Orr, Carol Raines, Stan Warner, Nancy Bevilacqua, Pam DeLong, Sue Cherrie, Carla Levesque, Mercedes Bleather, and me.

Planning for the fall planting began in August with re-marking the plots, testing the irrigation, taking inventory, making purchases for new equipment, developing the annual plan and general sprucing up. Over 60 4-H’ers and their families arrived in September to register, and then it was time for them to clean up and plan their plot, install fences and lay down a nice helping of manure.

The Master Gardeners and Volunteers are integral to the success of the garden, not just planning and preparing the garden but teaching and guiding the families in the art of organic vegetable gardening. Each has a special expertise which helps in accomplishing the task. Julie Burton, a lifelong 4-H’er keeps everything in order with her handouts on what, when and how to plant; a monthly “to do” list for the children; signup sheets and a great idea on reducing water usage by installing gallon jugs in the plots. There are always plants to purchase and Barb Orr is the gal who gets it done; running between Wilcox and Willow Tree nurseries on a weekly basis and also starting plants from seed at her home. Composting is done by Dick Berube who learned the craft from John Kingsbury several years ago. This season, the fall compost was like black gold and the families were able to use it on their spring gardens. He is also the all around handyman fixing whatever falls apart, and something always falls apart.

Nancy Bevilacqua developed an impressive demonstration plot containing various types of trellises to provide the 4-H’ers ideas on how to deal with pole beans and snap peas. She also made some great, heavy duty tomato cages that came in handy as the tomatoes grew to epic proportions this year. Carol Raines, a teacher, is always there for the children. Her Scarecrows and Christmas wreath classes were well received by everyone, including the MGs and volunteers.

Stan Warner is a new MG to the Ochs impressing many of the families with his cabbage patch. When he is not lining the walkways with mulch, he’s working with the 4-H’ers in their gardens. What they really enjoyed though, was his Italian Pizzelle cookies during the Christmas meeting. Pam DeLong and Sue Cherrie are overall helpers and, among many things, tends to the community plots; planting, weeding and harvesting a wide variety of vegetables available to everyone.

Mercedes Bleather is our newest 4-H Volunteer and has been helpful in keeping the citrus grove cleaned up and mulching the walkways. Her first year and she grew the largest zucchini plant in the garden. Carla Levesque, our resident octogenarian continues to visit the garden and work in her plot. Carla is well known for her ability to use the most of any vegetable and discarding the least.

Me, well it’s my first year and I just keep asking lots of questions. I have, however been crowned by Julie as the resident expert on planting seeds. Teaching children how to plant an itty bitty seed under ¼ inch, or less, of soil is sometimes difficult, but we always seem to get through it with varying amounts of success. When all else fails, I can usually find a seedling in my garden to share with the 4-H’er.

While there are still some peas, tomatoes and greens growing from the fall, the spring planting began in mid-February. Plots were cleared of by-gone vegetables and weeds, compost added and new seeds planted; with great expectation. As an MG working closely with the 4-H’ers there is nothing more rewarding than seeing the glowing smile and exuberant excitement of a young gardener picking his/her first tomato, carrot or broccoli. It’s an experience the MGs and volunteers cherish.

Pictured left to right: Barb Orr, Dick Berube, Sue Cherrie, Jean Rogalsky and Stan Warner.
ANOTHER MG PROJECT
By CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

To further enhance the Children’s Stop in the Tropical Fruit Garden, a stop on the Children’s Trail, MGs Charles Kohnken and Wayne Huneke suggested that a circular bench be added. Charley and Wayne proceeded to find plans, and then obtained FBG sustainability and Risk Management approvals and funding from MGAA to start the project.

It was recently finished as shown in the picture with Charley (left) and Wayne (right) proudly testing...
THE BERUBE’S GARDEN TOUR
By CARRIE SHELBY, MG

On a sunny winter morning Terry and Dick Berube, both Master Gardeners, hosted a delightful garden tour. Gardeners gathered to enjoy each other’s company and take in the peaceful, and scenic settings. Before even stepping out into the backyard, visitors were greeted with the soothing sound of the poolside waterfall. Cozy seating arrangements surrounded the pool where one could sit and visit with friends while admiring the many well-tended plants placed within the screened enclosure.

A newly planted bromeliad bed hugs the outside corner of their birdcage. These low lying plants allow for an open view to the backyard where the eye can wander back to the impressive structure that Dick built that shelters and displays a pretty orchid collection. To give you a sense of the building’s size, about half of the structure is shown in the photo with Terry in the center, Gail Robertson to the left and Emma Eshbaugh to the right.

Thank you Terry and Dick for inviting us to visit your beautiful garden retreat. I’m sure you inspired many to get out in their gardens and dig, prune, transplant or just step back, sip some lemonade and appreciate.

ST PETERSBURG TIMES REPORTS ON LAWN AND GARDEN HELP DESK

In the Sunday, February 8 edition of the Largo Times the County Extension Lawn and Garden Help Desk was featured:

"You have heard the Pinellas County Extension has opened a satellite office in north county. The news has made you curious. Although it's a humbling experience to visit the extension, created by expert horticulturists, you believe it's time to check out what goes on there."

To read the full article: http://www.tampabay.com/news/environment/article973875.ece

THE STARBUCKS COFFEE COMPOST TEST

Used coffee grounds make good soil amendments. That's the buzz among gardeners lately. But what do your coffeepot's leftovers really add to the soil? To find out, Sunset sent a batch of Starbucks' used coffee grounds — the company gives them away for free — to a soil lab for analysis. Turns out the grounds provide generous amounts of phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, and copper. To read Sunset's article visit: http://www.sunset.com/garden/earth-friendly/starbucks-coffee-compost-test-00400000016986/index.html
At our recent in-service training day, the staff at Extension was shown the results of a survey of green office practices which had been circulated the week before. The results weren’t too surprising; Extension staff members are a pretty “green” bunch. Here are some of the results (with 75% of staff responding)

- **70%** of staff turns off their PC and peripherals (printers, shredders, speakers, etc.) at the end of each day. This represents about $1500 in energy savings per year.
- **50%** have reduced the default margin settings on Word documents. By decreasing the amount of margin space around the perimeter of a document, more words will fit on the page, meaning multi-page documents can be significantly shorter. We burned through 60 cases of office paper last year; that is 300,000 sheets. Changing margins could save 60,000 sheets or 12 cases.
- We are split **50/50** on whether we make double-sided copies or not. Often times it is simply not practical. Of course double-sided copies reduce paper use by half.
- **80%** use the recycling bins in the office. Between Heritage Village and ourselves, we recycled 3.5 tons of office paper in 2008. That is great news.

We in Urban Sustainability, Mary Campbell, Vestina Crayton and I extended our services to anyone in the building who wishes any further help in being greener. A few staff were not sure how to reset the default margins on a Word document and we will certainly help there.

Now we hope that our wonderful volunteers who help so much in running the office can help us as we strive to reach 100% green! Take this quick survey and we will share the results in an upcoming newsletter; [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xYCaAra_2bcq76eQlH7Zesig_3d_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=xYCaAra_2bcq76eQlH7Zesig_3d_3d)

**Here are Mary’s Top Ten Green Office Tips:**

- Print on both sides whenever possible
- Reuse the back of a one-sided document for drafts before the sheet is recycled
- Use reusable mugs and dishes for drinks and food during the day to reduce waste
- Reduce margin settings to save paper
- Turn lights out when you leave the room
- Turn off computer screen if you are going to be out for a long period of time
- Turn PC completely off every day
- Use recycling containers for every type of item collected
- Reduce idling time for work vehicles
- Use post-consumer recycled content office supplies
HERBFEST SPICES UP PINELLAS COUNTY MARKET IN THE PARK

BY CHUCK SCAFFIDI, MG

HerbFest was held at Pinellas County Market in the Park on Valentine’s Day, Saturday, February 14. As part of the activities Master Gardeners sold and educated the public on fresh herbs. Along with the Market fun, four programs were planned.

- **Family Fun Learning – The Wonderful World of Herbs** got guests up close and personal with more than 100 different plants during a tour of the herb garden. Guests made a mug cozy to add to the fun.
- **Growing Herbs in the Suncoast** program was scheduled with experts from Pinellas County Extension. Guests learned how to select the right herb to grow and tips for care in the Suncoast area.
- **Tea Thyme** program was brewing. Instead of dunking a tea bag to enjoy a nice cup of tea, guests learned how to use fresh herbs for a special beverage.
- **Cooking with Herbs** demonstration is on tap. Guests learned how herbs brighten every meal with a little imagination. Recipes were shared, and fact sheets offered.

The Extension booth provided literature of what extension offers the public. Mary Campbell, Extension director shared this booth with Vivian Haicken, FBGF Chair who gave roses to folks as part of a FBGF membership drive. Over 100 people enjoyed the herb festivities and lectures.

Thanks go to Cindy Peacock, Staff who was responsible for organizing this event and the Master Gardeners who supported her and helped make this a successful event.
**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- MG Update Meetings
- MG Garden Tours
- MG Garage Sale
- PolyCom Training
- 2009 Costa Rica MG Trip
- Volunteer Hours Sign in
- Pruning Class
- Earth Day Celebration
- Green Thumb Festival

**RECORDING YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Please Remember to Sign Out!
The computer program for logging volunteer hours is in the volunteer office.
- You must **sign in and sign out** when you are at Extension.
- You can still log your time in the book or use e-mail, but it is preferred that you use the computer sign-in sign-out method.
- With over 200 volunteers at Extension it becomes a considerable burden on the volunteer coordinators to manually enter your hours.

If you have been sending your hours by e-mail, use the form in the log book as a guide and send to: MGEDU@co.pinellas.fl.us.
Please direct your questions to coordinator Chuck Scaffidi or an assistant, Susan Baughman or Mary Crowe.

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**Master Gardener Update Schedule - Mark your Calendar!**

**Special Note from Chuck Scaffidi, MG**
I would like to form a committee to arrange educational trips and plan a speakers program for the MG monthly update meetings. A speaker has been arranged each month up to May 2009. I am looking for MGs interested in becoming an education committee member, for those interested please contact me at 727-582-2117 or email cascaffidi@juno.com.

**Monday, March 9, 9AM** Landscape Design Basics Gail-Marie H. DeChapman, Extension Specialist in UF Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology. Mentor Meeting to follow March program.

**April 8, 10AM** Questions from the Desk – a hands on review of Plant ID, diseases and pests - Andy Wilson, Horticulturalist

**May 8, 10AM** Insects - Cindy Peacock, Horticulturalist

**MG Garden Tours**

- **Wednesday, March 25, 10AM-12noon**
  At Sue Hamill’s - 3477 Shoreline Circle, Palm Harbor
  Sanctuary at Cobb’s Landing

- **Monday, April 20, 10AM-12noon**
  At Gail Robertson’s - 11045 117th St N, Seminole

**Marsha Williams-Colin, MG, Having a Gardener’s Garage Sale**

- **Saturday, March 14 & Sunday March 15 from 9:00AM to 5:00PM**
  At 1945 59th St N. St. Petersburg
  Selling plants, pots, hand and electric tools, shepherds hooks, bird feeders, outdoor furniture, stepping stones, bricks and other items.

**PolyCom Training On Rapidly Approaching Pest**

**Thursday, March 19 from 9:30 - 10:30 AM at Extension**

There is a threat to the commercial avocado industry, nursery business, and urban avocado growers from the redbay ambrosia beetle-laurel wilt pathogen that is a rapidly unfolding story. This pest complex is moving south fast and Drs. Peña and Ploetz from University of Florida are working quickly to come up with some short-term control. However, as this pest moves south, Urban Agents, Master Gardeners, and Commercial Agents will begin to be inundated with calls about why their avocado trees are dying. Furthermore they will want to know where they can send a sample for ID and what they can do to control the disease.

The PolyCom training will benefit all MGs who attend. Master Gardeners who work the front desk and the North County Plant Clinic should also attend.

**Master Gardener Costa Rica Trip 2009**

Costa Rica has some of the most diverse wildlife and natural landscapes in the world, ranging from tidal mangrove swamps to sandy beaches, and from tropical rainforests to subalpine mountains. Florida Master Gardeners traveled to Costa Rica in 2004; they had such a wonderful experience, they decided to go back. **Date: April 22 through May 3 (12 days/11 nights)**

Itinerary: [http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/tours/costa09_2.shtml](http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/tours/costa09_2.shtml)
■ Hold the Date for Pam’s Retirement Party!
Wednesday, March 18, 3 - 6 PM, Open House in the Magnolia Room

■ Get the Finer Points of Pruning at Palm Harbor Library
Improve the look and health of landscapes by learning why, how and when to prune shrubs and trees at a Pruning Basics and Benefits Program offered by Pinellas County Extension Master Gardeners at the Palm Harbor Library. A free program presented by Pam Brown, Pinellas County Extension Agent, will be offered twice Wednesday, March 11, at 2 PM and 6:30 PM, and participants may attend either session. The library is located at 2330 Nebraska Ave. in Palm Harbor.

Careful pruning done correctly can promote good branch structure and improve the health of trees and shrubs by removing dead, diseased and dying branches. Regular pruning can extend the life of trees and shrubs by encouraging new growth and better air circulation. Pruning can also control plant size and form, train young plants and help flowering and fruit production.

Admission is free, but space is limited. Citizens can register online at www.pinellascountyextension.org with a click on the "Online Class Registration" button or call 727-582-2100. This Pruning Basics and Benefits Program is the third program of the 2009 Pinellas County Extension Master Gardener Garden Series.

Be sure to stop by the new Master Gardener Plant Clinic at the library on Wednesdays from 10 AM to 2 PM. Master Gardeners offer diagnostic services that include soil testing along with information about identifying plants, treatment for insects and ideas for Florida-friendly landscaping. Please note that water tests still need to be delivered to the Largo Extension office, and no live animals should be brought into the clinic for identification. The north county location is convenient for residents unable to travel to Pinellas County Extension in Largo.

■ Celebrating Earth Day at Pinellas County Extension
On Saturday, April 18 in addition to all the wonderful produce and products available at the weekly market in the park, Pinellas County Extension will welcome extra Earth-Friendly friends to celebrate Earth Day 2009. The celebration will take place from 9am-1pm and admission is free. Stroll through the market and learn more about being Green by visiting the following booths:

- Pinellas County government departments will be on hand to explain their eco-efforts.
- Local green organizations will have booths promoting their activities and to help you get involved!
- Extension educators will be providing free instructional sessions on how to live a greener life.
- The Florida Botanical Garden Foundation, a non-profit organization that supports the gardens, will be giving out free Oak tree seedlings. So visit their booth, take a tree and also learn what benefits you receive by becoming a Foundation member.
- There will be family fun activities, give-a-ways and all in the gorgeous surroundings of the Florida Botanical Gardens.

For more information, call 727-582-2100

■ 23rd Annual Green Thumb Festival—Saturday & Sunday, April 25-26, 9 AM-4 PM
At Walter Fuller Park, 7891 26th Avenue N., St. Petersburg
Join in the fun and excitement of celebrating Arbor Day and Earth Day at this annual festival. Now in its 23rd year, the Green Thumb Festival features environmental and horticultural exhibits, vendors (with every kind of plant imaginable), the Garden Club of St. Petersburg Flower Show, a grow and share program, a diagnostic clinic (bring soil and water samples), a recycling rally, free mulch, plant auction, more than 2,000 trees for sale for $3, free Butterfly plants (500 each day), tool sharpening booth, entertainment, children's programs, other environmental programs and exhibits, and a food court! Mark your calendar so you don't miss this annual event.

Children's Plant Fair in the Walter Fuller Community Center
9 AM to 2 PM, Saturday and Sunday
Garden Club of St. Petersburg Flower Show in the Walter Fuller Community Center
9 AM to 4 PM, Saturday and 10 AM to 3:30 PM, Sunday

For more information visit http://www.stpete.org/parks/greenthumb.asp
Help Needed in Composting and Raised Vegetable Bed Areas!

Volunteers are needed to work in the composting and raised vegetable bed demo areas on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Contact John Kingsbury 727-569-6409, Pam 727-582-2112 or Carol 727-582-2124 to let them know if you are interested in this volunteer activity. You might get to take home some wonderful compost!

Help Needed at Weedon Island Compost Workshop

Dr. John Kingsbury needs just one more volunteer to assist with the Compost Workshop at Weedon Island Educational Building on Saturday March 7. You would need to be there around 9:15 a.m. to help set up and etc. You would be out of there by around 12 Noon. If anyone can help, please call Dr. John directly at 727-596-6409.

Attention St. Pete MGs:

Two volunteers are needed at a table at Williams Park in St. Pete each Wednesday starting immediately until May from 11 AM to 2 PM. The event is called "Art in the Park", and the coordinator is Chris Sylvia. Chris’ direct number is 727-804-6993.

This opportunity qualifies for volunteer hours. It would involve putting together the handouts and the display. Then just handing them out and talking with event attendees about Gardening Pointers, Florida Friendly Landscaping, etc. You can choose a different specialized subject each week if you like.

Butterfly and Wildlife Gardening

Bardmoor Elementary school has grant money to put in a large butterfly and wildlife garden. Cindy Peacock has sent the teacher, Ken Bolton, lots of information about butterfly and wildlife gardening. Ken would like some expert advice on how to create and plant the garden. It sounds like fun! If your interested contact Ken at 727-547-7824.

Dunedin Library Gardening Program

The Dunedin Library is looking for Master Gardeners to establish a regular speaking schedule for them similar to the programs offered at Palm Harbor Library and the West St. Pete Community Library. If any of you would be interested in coordinating this, please contact Elaine Hartman at ehartman@pinellascounty.org or 727-464-3674 or Pam Brown at pwbrown@pinellascounty.org or 727-582-2112.

Hold the Date for Pam’s Retirement Party!

Wednesday, March 18
3 – 6 PM
Open House in the Magnolia Room
I can’t believe that the time has come for my final column in this newsletter. Over the last eight and a half years I have gotten to know and work with you in both a personal and professional way. I had not worked so closely with volunteers prior to changing professions and coming to the Pinellas County Extension office as an Extension Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator. I met my first Master Gardener, Sam Skemp, on the day in September 2000 that I interviewed for this position. He said so many kind things about this place that I knew that if offered the job, I would accept. The rest is, as they say, history!

We have trained many Master Gardeners during my years here and many of you became faithful long term volunteers. I am so grateful for your loyalty to our Extension office and the many varied tasks that you all perform that makes this office so successful and special. We have sometimes been called the Disney of Extension, and you have a part in that distinction. Because of you, I have also been successful. Thank you for making me look good.

When I first arrived, I set several goals for our Master Gardener program. I hoped for some Master Gardeners who would feel comfortable presenting educational programs to the public at various locations, who would provide diagnostic help at our help desk and who would work at an off site Plant Clinic on a regular basis. I am glad to say that all of these goals have been met. There are so many of you to thank for this process and success. I so appreciate your willingness to work towards these goals. The school gardens and tours are also a wonderful educational outreach. Those of you who work with children are very special and I am most certain that the teachers and students appreciate all of your efforts on their behalf.

So many of you volunteer in our Florida Botanical Gardens, working with the horticulturists past and present to keep the gardens as a Florida-friendly landscape to use as our outdoor classroom. Thank you for the recreation of the Native Garden, the new Butterfly Garden, the up-keep of the Herb Garden, the Tropical Fruit Garden, the many of you the work throughout the landscape, the Rose Gardens, Bromeliad Garden, Compost Happens area and the raised bed demonstration flower and vegetable gardens. Some of you are great at building things like the front deck, the pergola in the Native Garden, the fence around the Herb Garden and the raised beds. I am sure that I have left something out, but it is not intentional. You have all been wonderful.

The Plant Sales were also a great ride. So many good things were done and purchased with the proceeds that benefited FBG and Extension. The great field trips were wonderful learning events – these would not have been possible without the hard work of so many of you propagating plants, raising them up, advertising, managing, and then the really hard work on the plant sale day. It was a great time of camaraderie that I think I enjoyed as much as each of you. Many of the plants in my landscape were purchased from those plant sales – thank you for broadening my plant pallet.

I also want to thank the Mentors, past and present. Your job of helping assure that the Master Gardener trainees successfully complete the training and navigate to become certified Master Gardeners is so important to our success. I also appreciate the fact that you provide me with guidance when asked.

Last but certainly not least are those of you who work inside helping with clerical tasks, keeping the newsletter going, putting volunteer hours in the computer, and just about any other task asked of you. Carol and I could not function effectively without your help. And those of you who step up to volunteer for special project and events are very important. Our outreach program is successful due to your willingness to help at these events and extend our coverage.

You have probably heard me say that this is the best job that I have ever held. It is been so rewarding and enjoyable and you as volunteers are a big part of that enjoyment. I will miss seeing you all on a regular basis, but, Carol has already registered me as a county volunteer. I hope to be volunteering regularly with the North County Plant Clinic group and also sometimes here at the Extension office. So, I will have opportunities to see you now and then. This is not good by, just see you later!

You are all the best volunteers and we are so grateful for all that you do for us.

Thank you for everything, especially the memories!

♥ Pam
Mark Your Calendars for March 13, 2009
Celebrate the 4-H Centennial in Pinellas County
By JANET GOLDEN, Distance Education & 4-H Program Leader

2009 is here and with it comes the Florida 4-H Centennial Celebration! Did you know that nationally 4-H celebrated 100 years in 2002, but in Florida we reach 100 next year? Pinellas County 4-H would like to celebrate that milestone here locally. The Pinellas County 4-H Foundation is hosting a fundraising dinner with a centennial theme on Friday, March 13 at 6:30PM at Banquet Masters in Pinellas Park. Tickets will be $50.00 for adults and $25.00 for youth. This will include a buffet meal, guest speaker, and plenty of entertainment. The proceeds will go to the Pinellas County 4-H Foundation to support the operating expenses of the 4-H programs and to pay for youth scholarships.

Tickets may be purchased and more information provided by contacting Erhan Ozey, 4-H Board Treasurer, at 727-641-8344 or you can fill out the application on the next page.

For details on some of the events listed go to the calendar on the Pinellas County Extension Lawn & Garden website:
You are cordially invited to attend the
Pinellas County 4-H Foundation
Centennial Celebration & Fundraising Dinner

on Friday, March Thirteenth
Two Thousand and Nine
at Six-Thirty in the evening
to be held at
Banquet Masters
8100 Park Boulevard North
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

Donation
$50.00 per Adult ~ $25.00 per Youth

Proceeds to benefit the
Pinellas County 4-H Youth Development
We look forward to celebrating with you.

Please return the enclosed RSVP Page
on or before March 2, 2009

For more information, please contact
Erhan Ozey at (727) 641-8344
erhan.ozey@pc4ffoundation.org

RSVP
Pinellas County 4-H Foundation
Centennial Celebration & Fundraising Dinner

On Friday, March 13th, 2009 at 6:30pm
At Banquet Masters, 8100 Park Blvd N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781

Please complete the following (PLEASE PRINT):
Name/Company: ________________________________
Address: ____________________________
City, State, Zip: ____________________________

□ I am unable to attend, but would like to give a
donation in the amount of $__________
Number of Adults attending: ______
Number of Youth attending: ______
Total Amount: $__________

Please mail your RSVP on or before March 2, 2009
to receive your ticket(s) to:

Pinellas County 4-H Foundation, Inc.
c/o Erhan Ozey
P. O. Box 66595
St. Petersburg Beach, Florida 33736

Paying by check
Please enclose your check payable to:
“Pinellas County 4-H Foundation”

Credit Card Payment Option
Amount: ________________
First Name __________________________
Last Name __________________________
Credit Card Number: __________________________
Credit Card Type (circle one) Master Card Visa
Discover
Expiration Date: __________________________
Credit Card Billing Address (if different than given above):

__________________________________________
City __________________ State ______ Zip Code ______
Telephone: __________________________
e-mail: __________________________

Signature
Good Work Volunteers!

Reminder—Mark Your Calendar!

- **MG Update Monday, March 9 at 10AM**
  Landscape Design Basics

- **Wednesday, March 18, 3 - 6PM**
  Pam's Retirement Party