Editor’s Note: Andy’s update choices at the December Master Gardeners’ meeting were graced by three beautiful yellow-flowering plants that bloom in winter. All of them are in full color in FBG gardens. Visit the sites below for more information about the featured plants as well as others that interest you.

By Ellen Mahany, MG

**Sweet Acacia** (*Acacia farnesiana*)

[http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st005](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/st005), [http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Results.aspx](http://florida.plantatlas.usf.edu/Results.aspx)

The yellow puff-ball clusters appear on this small tree not only in late winter but also after each new growth throughout the year. The young tree needs careful pruning to prevent spreading growth. Sharp thorns are another consideration. However, given a place in full sun, it is a low maintenance plant.

Don’t miss the full screen video show available at the plant atlas site. Find this plant in the northwest corner of the parking lot in front of the Extension Building.

**Forsythia Sage** (*Salvia madrensis*)


Among the more than 700 species of sage, there are very few yellow varieties. One of the largest salvias, this plant sometimes reaches 10 feet, thrives on regular watering, well-drained soil, and shade to semi-shade. Don’t miss the wonderful illustrations at this site, a self-described “photographic encyclopedia of plants.” You will find this plant at the Butterfly Station.
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 by the 20th of each month. This will help us assemble and publish the newsletter in a timely manner. Articles should be 700-800 words or less. If you would like a copy of any photograph printed in the newsletter, contact MG Editor Chuck Scaffidi at 727 582-2117.

cscaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us

Yellow Barleria (Barleria oenotheroides)
http://toptropicals.com/catalog/uid/barleria_micans.htm

This four-to-five foot shrub has cupped flowers growing on terminal green spikes two-to-three inches long. Although Top Tropicals is a commercial site, it provides information about many tropical plants, not just those in the sales catalogue. You will find this beauty behind the extension building near the west corner of the back wall.
Earth Renewal MOON
December 22-January 19

By Jude Bagatti, MG Volunteer

The Earth Renewal Moon is the first of the three Moons of the North. According to Sun Bear’s Medicine Wheel, the Spirit Keeper for Moons of the North is Waboose. The animal is the Buffalo, the season is Winter, the time of day is Midnight, and the color is White. The powers of the North are Purity and Renewal.

“People born under this moon are the Snow Goose people. Their plant is the Birch Tree, their color is White, their mineral is Quartz, and their elemental clan is the Turtle Clan. Like the snow goose, these folks respect authority, honor tradition, and are devoted to duty. They are also quick to nip if provoked. They are discriminating, prudent, industrious, perfectionistic, and excellent organizers. They must learn to be more humble and frivolous at times.” Capricorn is their equivalent astrological sign.

Several aspects of this moon resonate with me: I own a turtle pendant representing the Turtle Clan made of pipestone which only Native Americans are permitted to quarry. The stone’s dark red color is said to be due to spilled Indian blood seeped into the ground. Considered sacred, it is carved into pipes smoked during ceremonies. At Pipestone, MN, I came upon an Indian at a small depression who was mining the stone by hand chisel. He gave me a few treasured pieces.

My black and white photograph of shadowy Birch Trees taken in Japan is one of my favorites for its ethereal appeal.

Lastly, my affinity for Quartz Crystal, mineral of this moon, is long-standing. So what is it with crystals, their so-called mysterious powers to heal, their abilities to be programmed? What of their curious applications in crystal radio sets? Are their professed uses new age pseudo science or proven fact? I think science and belief are both in play. Volumes, scientific and esoteric, have been written about the properties, beauty and magnetic attraction crystals possess: People wear them around their necks, close to their hearts for guidance and clarity; they place them along the spines of massage clients during treatments, as I, as therapist, have sometimes done; they hold them in hand while visualizing positive affirmations; and they cleanse them in the sun and salt water.

Walking in the Sinai desert while visiting St. Catherine’s Monastery in 1990, I encountered a Bedouin boy with dark quartz crystals. I traded my mini-binoculars for some singles and a cluster. Later I saw four adult Bedouin men sitting with an array of them, and realized crystal-selling was common here, not just the game of a young boy. I wondered what Bedouins believe about crystals.

In August, 1987, I was in Hot Springs, AR for the Harmonic Convergence, a rare alignment of celestial bodies. At this retreat we created grids of ten or more various sized crystals beneath our chairs as we sat and listened to readings, sang chants and meditated. We taped crystals to our foreheads at the third eye level. Hot Springs is the source of bottled Mountain Valley spring water, said to be the best in the country. We drank our fill daily, filling bottles and jugs from the free public fountains around town. Does the fabled water have anything to do with the formation of crystals? Or do the crystals enhance the water? Hot Springs is known as crystal country, a hotbed for seekers of buried quartz.

After the retreat, I grabbed a shovel I’d brought. Landowners may ask for donations to dig, but I had made connections with a few locals. They told me of secret locations down unpaved roads, and of a promising one where bulldozers were excavating a construction site. At those spots I could delve and dig freely. I surveyed the three places thinking I’d hunt a short time at each, never suspecting to be held by the spell of the quest. I ended up spending two sweltering days. On my knees, I wallowed away hours, lured by what the next scoop might uncover. How intriguing it was scraping and burrowing into freshly exposed red-brown clay, eyes suddenly fixed on glittering sparklers in the moist dark dirt! How strong a bond I felt with Mother Earth! At last I had a fine collection of personally-unearthed, virgin crystals, but the sight of me was far from sparkling. Legs caked up to shorts, arms coated to sleeves, dried clay under my nails, down my sneakers and socks, and face smeared with ruddy dust, my rust-colored body should have creaked.

Crystal lovers love swapping or giving them away. One thing’s “crystal clear”: the good vibes and intentions programmed into their crystals go with them.

Oh, just believe.

Contact Jude at 727-322-6211 or heyjudebagatti@msn.com
Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation Update

By Chuck Scaffidi, FBG Foundation President

The next Foundation board meeting is on Feb. 13 and visitors are welcome, especially anyone who may be interested in joining the board. By attending a meeting, you will get a better understanding of our organization and goals, and hopefully you will choose to become a board member. We would also like you to join us on Jan. 9 when we will review the results of the Holiday Lights event and talk about lessons learned. This is a great time to think about joining our team as we plan next year’s events. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. in the Palm Room of the Parks/Extension Building at the Gardens. Picture yourself here next year with these hard-working, fun-loving Holiday Lights volunteers and entertainers.

As the Holiday Lights soon come to a close we will miss it? ‘Of course’! Watching almost 40 days of family enjoyment and volunteer performances has inspired all of us. Following are photos of some of our volunteers and performers who by their endless efforts made this season’s event record setting:

Commissioner Karen Seel, Tom & Jan Tracy

Eoin & Colleen O’Leary

Joan Johnson, Bessie Morse, Sue Hamill, & Cheryl Korschek

Linda and James Magner

Arthur Davidson, Magaly Sharp & Kathleen Harder
WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU
Thanks to these generous community supporters for allowing the FBGF to make this year's Holiday Lights bigger and better than ever.

**In Kind Sponsors:**

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<th>Tampa Bay Times</th>
<th>bright house</th>
<th>CLEAR CHANNEL</th>
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**Corporate Sponsors and Donors**

**Garden Friends**
- Dr. Andy Hano, Dr. Don Luong, and Dr. Lane Ziegler
- Florida Cancer Specialists
- Ruth's Promise Adult Day Care
- Dr. Todd Clarkson and Dr. Donald Collins
- Oakhurst Medical Clinic and Eastbay Medical Center
- Gulf Coast Dermatology
- Robert Hamill
- Lancaster Insurance
- Haicken Family

**Garden Supporters**

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<tr>
<th>Richard and Terry Berube</th>
<th>Roadside Attraction Curiosity Shop &amp; Craft Lounge, Antique Alley, Belleair Bluffs</th>
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<td>Belleair Pools</td>
<td>Chuck and Joan Scaffidi</td>
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<td>Johnson Pope</td>
<td>Glenda and Richard Ouellette</td>
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<td>David and Emma Eshbaugh</td>
<td>Jack and Barbara Goss</td>
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<td>Rich and Kathy Harder</td>
<td>Lynn Bosco</td>
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<td>Caterina Stillwagon</td>
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We're Tweeting Up a Storm

To see what our followers are saying, click on the Twitter icon and follow a couple of simple steps. It’s fun, and a great way to keep up with FBG news between Green Leaves.

Maybe we can even get a botanical conversation going. Share gardening tips. Ask gardening questions. Tell us how wonderful the Gardens are looking. (All “attaboys” gratefully accepted.)

And Share Your Gorgeous Garden Photos

When you visit the Gardens and take fabulous photos of our trees, flowers, herbs, tropical fruits, butterflies, birds, and maybe even an alligator, please share them on our Facebook page. We’re getting more and more fans all the time. If you haven’t signed up, it’s easy to do. Use the link above and click on the connect symbol. Become a fan today so that you can view visitor photos and comments. You can also share your experience at the gardens on the “Wall.”

Special Announcements

The Taoist Tai Chi Society of the USA
St Petersburg Branch
Invites you to an OPEN HOUSE
Saturday, January 5, 2013
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Why Tai Chi?
Relaxation, Stress Reduction, Balance, Flexibility, Bone Strengthening, & Fun.

1811 Dr. MLK Jr. St. N.
(727) 896-2620
www.taoist.org

The St Pete Tai Chi branch performed at the holiday lights one evening. I did join in their performance because I’m a long-time member and have realized the many benefits of Tai Chi. I would like to see you benefit also—Chuck
Gift Shop Clearance Sale!
Sunday Dec 30 2-9:30 pm

The Florida Botanical Gardens
Foundation

Gift Shop Open Monday thru Friday
Check Lobby for hours

Dog Parade
Sunday Dec 30 2-4:30 pm
Thank You Celebration!

Please join us for lunch, friends, and fun at the Mid-County area Volunteer Celebration.

WHEN: Saturday, January 12, 2013 from 12 noon to 2 p.m.
WHERE: Magnolia Room at Pinellas County Extension
12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo

Please RSVP by January 3, 2013 with your name and the name of one guest, if any, to SMarkofski@PinellasCounty.org or call Sarah at 464-3571.
Getting It Together
In 2013: TOTAL WELLNESS FAIR

Thursday,
January 31, 2013
9:00 am – 1:00 pm

LARGO COMMUNITY CENTER
400 Alternate keene road
(Next to pines of largo)

Health screenings, WELLNESS INFORMATION, Hands-on activities, AND HEALTHY LIVING TIPS

- Informational displays, Product Demonstrations,
  Benefit information and educational materials
- Live Music and Healthy Snacks

Sign up for volunteer service opportunities in the community

- Door Prizes, Raffles, and give-aways

For more information, call the largo community center at (727) 518-3131

Presented by the city of largo volunteer corps advisory board (VCAB)
And the retired & senior volunteer program of Pinellas county (RSVP)

RSVP
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
Record Your Volunteer Hours
Please Remember to Sign Out!

The computer program for logging volunteer hours is next to the help desk. Make this your first stop and last stop. You must sign in and sign out when you are at Extension. When the computer is not functioning you can still log your time in the book. Those who volunteer at other facilities should e-mail hours after each visit. When not at Extension, please e-mail your hours to: c scaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us

Direct questions to volunteer coordinator Chuck Scaffidi or assistant Emma Eshbaugh.

The County VSP system and procedures applies only to non-MG volunteers.

Education

- **MG Update-** Jan 8 - none
- **Garden Tour-** This garden tour is going to be a real learning experience. Gavin McGovern is opening up his garden to us on **Tuesday, January 22 from 10 AM to noon**. His interest is aquaponics and he will explain how tilapia and vegetables are raised in the home landscape. Address is 1120 Woodcrest Avenue, Clearwater, 33756. This is a great opportunity to learn & socialize with fellow MGs and volunteers. My thanks to Cat Stillwagon for helping me set this up. Phyl Lawson 363-0067
- **Earn Continuing Education Credits-** Extension classes:
  Please register at: [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml)

  MGs can earn up to four continuing education credits. Modules at:


  One CEU can be earned by studying the plants and earning a passing score of 80% on the “Test Yourself” feature. Once a score of 80% has been reached, print the page and submit it to the volunteer office.

- **Palm Harbor Library MG Class Series-** Free classes every second Thursday of the month from 2:00-3:30 PM and 6:15-7:45 PM at the Palm Harbor Library, 2330 Nebraska Ave. To register [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/)

  click the “Registration” tab and then click “Extension Service.”

- **St Petersburg Community Library MG Class Series-** On holiday break Until Jan 10. Free classes offered at the main branch of the St. Pete Library located at 3745 Ninth Avenue N. To register [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/). Click the “Registration” tab and then click “Extension Service.”

- **“Planting Pinellas”** visit blog [http://plantingpinellas.blogspot.com/](http://plantingpinellas.blogspot.com/)

- **Extension Classes and Tours-** Visit Lawn & Garden - Pinellas County Extension on-line calendar for a list of classes where most are being offered free or at a discount to MGs, volunteers and FBGF members with a membership card. Also, sign up for a garden tour.


  Special discount offer for Rain Harvesting Workshop

Volunteer Opportunities and Announcements

- **Help Desk-** Please look at the VMS help desk calendar and see if there is a time that works for you. If you are a regular at the help desk please be sure you are signing up to avoid scheduling confusion.

- **MGs needed-** MG Sally Ervin is looking for help at Lowes: MGs that would like to volunteer at the Clearwater Lowe’s outreach Extension table on Saturdays anytime from 10-2 (can be 1 hr to 4 hrs) should e-mail Sally at servin307@hotmail.com. Lowe’s is located on Gulf to Bay near US19

  4H needs more MG’s to work with the children at the Ochs Garden. Gardening starts the first of September, 4H has an additional layer of screening for the children’s safety, so its important to sign up now. You may also contact 4H Extension agent Jean Rogalsky at jrogalsk@pinellascounty.org

- **San Jose Elementary-** in Dunedin is looking for a Master Gardener to help with several garden projects on their campus. They have raised beds for herbs and they also have a butterfly garden and other ornamental gardens throughout campus. They could really use an MG who would serve as a consultant and even work with the kids if you like. This is a very community-minded and green school that would be a lot of fun to get involved with.

- **Renovation Of Aquatic Education Area-** There is a lot more to do to get this magnificent area back to its former self. If you are interested in being part of the solution, the team is out there every Monday morning from 8:00 AM
Thanks to Local Nurseries, FBGF Members and MGs Can Save $$ When Beautifying Yards

One of the benefits of Foundation membership and being a certified Master Gardener is getting a 10 percent discount at many local nurseries. Just present your FBGF membership or MG card. We will continue to contact nurseries in the area to secure additional participants. Support our friends at:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art Stone Orchids</th>
<th>Country Club Nursery</th>
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<tr>
<td>3611 Tyrone Blvd, St. Petersburg</td>
<td>9850 Starkey Road, Largo,</td>
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<td>727-345-6733</td>
<td>727-397-4438</td>
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<th>DragonFly Garden</th>
<th>Earthscapes Garden Room</th>
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<td>730 Broadway, Dunedin</td>
<td>816 Alt. 19 N, Palm Harbor</td>
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<td>727-734-4900</td>
<td>727-786-4859</td>
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<th>Esperanza’s Garden Center</th>
<th>Hawaiian Orchid Connection</th>
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<tr>
<td>6001 Haines Road, St. Petersburg</td>
<td>Note:* (10% off all purchases)</td>
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<tr>
<td>727-742-8499</td>
<td>6260 Seminole Blvd, Seminole</td>
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<tr>
<th>Kathy’s Korner Nursery Inc.</th>
<th>Jene’s Tropicals</th>
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<tr>
<td>(10% off trees) 6095 Haines Road North, St. Petersburg</td>
<td>6831 Central Ave., St. Petersburg</td>
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<td>727-525-9640</td>
<td>727-344-1668</td>
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<tr>
<th>Palm Harbor Nursery &amp; Landscaping</th>
<th>Seminole Nurseries</th>
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<tr>
<td>(10% off cash and carry) 450 Riviere Road, Palm Harbor</td>
<td>6230 102nd Ave. N, Pinellas Park</td>
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<td>727-545-9619</td>
<td>727-545-9619</td>
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<th>Summerwood Gardens , Inc.</th>
<th>Twigs and Leaves</th>
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<tr>
<td>1171 Tarpon Springs Rd, Odessa</td>
<td>2131 Central Ave., St. Petersburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>813-920-2153</td>
<td>727-822-5400</td>
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<th>Willow Tree Nursery</th>
<th>Wilcox Nursery</th>
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<td>4401 49th St. N, St. Petersburg</td>
<td>12501 Indian Rocks Road, Largo</td>
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<td>727-522-2594</td>
<td>727-595-2073</td>
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<th>Hazel’s Garden &amp; Nursery</th>
<th>Sunscape Plant &amp; Tree Nursery</th>
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<tr>
<td>5063 Dartmouth Ave, St. Petersburg</td>
<td>4730 CR 16 St. Petersburg, FL 33709</td>
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<td>727-321-4599</td>
<td>727-347-2915</td>
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Note:* Only FBG Foundation membership applies
Thank You, Volunteers!!

2013 January Dates to Remember

- **Dog Parade** - Sunday, begins at 2 PM, Dec. 30 and Gift Shop clearance sale til 9:30 PM.

- **Mid-County area Volunteer Celebration** - Saturday, January 12, 2013 from 12 noon to 2 PM. RSVP by Jan 3

- **Yard Tour** - Tuesday, January 22 from 10 AM to noon

- **Total Wellness Fair** - Thursday, Jan 31 from 9 AM to 1 PM

MG Plant Clinic at the Palm Harbor Library – Wednesdays from 10 AM to 2 PM
Master Gardeners offer diagnostic services along with information about identifying plants, treatment for insects and ideas for Florida-Friendly landscaping.

For details on some of the events listed go to the calendar on the Pinellas County Extension Lawn & Garden website:  [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml?cmd=opencal&cal=cal6](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/calendar.shtml?cmd=opencal&cal=cal6)