Making New "Fronds"  
A Garden Tour

By DEBRA KRAMER, FBG volunteer

On a sunny morning in February, a group of Master Gardeners and volunteers met at the home of Mike and Margie Evans, owners of West Coast Tropicals, to view their collection of plants. They live close to commercial Alt. 19 but we were quickly transported to a palm paradise. Palms and cycads that have their origins in exotic, far-away places grow happily here. Tall, short, pear-shaped, frizzy, delicate, smooth and rough skinned (the plants, not the Master Gardeners…) —I quickly ran out of adjectives to describe the variety of tropical trees and plants that thrive on little over an acre of land.

Mike began by describing how their yard was prepared. The congested native vegetation on their property was removed (except for the oak trees) and he started with a clean slate. He tried valiantly to convince us that the tall, majestic palms and lush, healthy cycads that surrounded us were planted as youngsters less than 15 years ago. It felt as though the plants were pleased to be there. They looked confident and were proudly strutting their stuff for the appreciative spectators. No sweaty palms to be found here.

We wandered along the curved paths. I tried to follow the long list of varieties as Mike calmly rattled off botanical and common names. But the magical sway of the branches and the rustling of the spiky leaves cast its spell and his voice faded into the background. I leaned against a tall, sturdy trunk, stared up at the ruffled green cluster of foliage and imagined a monkey smiling down at me.

I shook my head and focused on the group’s questions that were directed to Mike. How often do you fertilize? Once a year. What is in the fertilizer? Coated nitrogen pellets, frankincense and myrrh, a sprinkle of pixie dust. Didn’t you lose some palms to frost damage? Yes; I brought out the chain saw. How can you tell when a female cycad is ready to be pollinated? (You’ll have to attend his next tour to get the answer to this question.) What’s the secret to your garden? Growing palms and cycads under a leaf canopy provides dappled sunshine and protection from frost. They respond well to regular water and fertilizer. Yes, that was a logical answer, but as I toured the grounds I realized that there was a special undefined ingredient at work here. The proof was in the harmonious neighborhood where there were no enemies; only fronds.
The Green Leaf is published by Pinellas County Extension for Master Gardeners and others. The monthly newsletter depends on submission of articles from Master Gardeners, Extension staff and other authors.

Please submit articles and photographs to cscaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us

The Green Leaf and archives are available on-line by clicking on newsletter

MANAGING EDITOR:
Chuck Scaffidi, MG

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Kathleen Jamison, Volunteer

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.

MGs Show Their love in the Cottage Garden

By RUTH DAVIES, MG

Romance must have been in the air as volunteer Deborah Bradbeer with the Tuesday crew spotted some heart topiary forms behind the greenhouse. She asked if we could plant them with impatiens and put them in the cottage garden for Valentine’s Day.

It happened! The FBG Foundation bought us four flats of impatiens and with “found” sphagnum moss, a little fertilizer and lots of patience, the crew planted four hearts. After poking and prodding the plants into the forms, they spent two weeks in rehab in the greenhouse.

We don’t know how long they’ll last, but on Valentine’s Day they sure helped with the romantic mood in the Wedding Garden.

Tuesday crew set the impatient hearts in the cottage garden.

From left are: Marian Cirella, Ruth Davies, Ann Brown, Patty McCormick, Barb Orr, Tom Carrell and Deborah Brabeer

Ann Brown places an impatient heart in the cottage garden with help from (LtoR) Barb Orr, Tom Carrell, and Ruth Davies.
Geocaching in the Botanical Gardens

By LINDA WRIGHT, Volunteer

To all you “Geocachers” out there, I want to let you know that there is now a geocache in the Florida Botanical Gardens. As a volunteer and Master Gardener trainee I have been working in the Gardens for close to two years now. As an avid Geocacher, I thought it would make a perfect spot for a geocache.

For those of you not familiar with this activity, it is a high-tech treasure hunt game played throughout the world by adventure-seekers equipped with GPS devices. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online. Geocaching is enjoyed by people from all age groups, with a strong sense of community and support for the environment. There are 1,279,640 active geocaches around the world.

If you would like to learn more about this exciting game and try your hand at finding my geocache in the Gardens, please go to www.geocaching.com

Editors Note:

We will miss Linda who has gone back to work. If you would like to pursue this project let Chuck know at: 582-2117

Making Room for Orchids in the Garden

By TERRY BERUBE

For over 6 years I have been growing (and killing) orchids at home and at the Gardens. It has always been my dream to have a space in the Gardens where I could display them to the public without fear of having them sprout legs and walk.

My dream came true last month when I was given County permission to use the Tiki Hut on the Tropical Walk. The next big challenge was finding a way to secure the orchids and ensure they stayed in place. Thanks to the expertise and dedicated work of volunteers, Richard and Kathleen Harder, a plan was developed and the Tiki Hut was modified to hold several orchids high in to the palm and bamboo canopy. The Harders showed up early one Saturday morning with all sorts of tools and supplies, and expertly made two fabulous orchid planters in the Tikki Hut. You would never know that it was an addition to the original design.

I encourage everyone to go for a stroll along the Tropical Walk and enjoy the new orchids.
**Glass Mosaic Adding Art to the Wedding Garden**

The first corner of the mosaic that will soon fill the four empty pools of the Wedding Garden with glass water, goldfish and lily pads has been completed and the pictures show how it will look when installed. Everyone who has been fortunate enough to get a preview has been blown away! FBGF board member and project leader Heather Anderson and her glass-cutting and glass-gluing volunteers have been hard at work for several months on the colorful design. A date for the unveiling has not been set. There's plenty more to do, however, so all volunteers are welcome. No special artistic talent is required. Call volunteer coordinator Chuck Scaffidi at **727-582-2117** for details or email Heather at **studio@andersonart.com**.

Thanks to all who submitted an entry in the Mosaic naming contest. The winning name is:

**“Aquatic Reflections”**
**Reminder!!**

The March MG Update meeting will be on Tuesday, March 8th. We will start at 9am and finish around 1:30pm. This Update meeting is a potluck event and awards ceremony. Since this also happens to be Mardi Gras, I thought it would be loads of fun to have this be the theme of our lunch. If anyone would like to donate or lend Mardi Gras decor please let me know.

Trainees- you are invited too- you are part of the program now

Please bring a dish to share, and if you have a Mardi Gras/New Orleans recipe- all the better! (Please also remember to bring your own plate and silverware to help us conserve.)

Our presentation will about the Pinellas County fertilizer ordinance and we will talk about the new fertilizers that are available that are compliant with the ordinance. We will also discuss the goals of the ordinance and how to help our clients understand what to do and why it's important. Our speaker will be Anamarie Rivera, Pinellas County Watershed Management Division. I hope to see you all there!

Take a walk in our beautiful Florida friendly Botanical Gardens and see the many plants bursting in bloom.

Did you notice the magnificent camellias along the tropical walk? There are reds and pinks bursting out all over. Some have been in the gardens for many years now and are well established. Others were planted this fall and are responding very well to their new home.

Don’t forget to take a walk around the azalea garden that was planted last spring. Several species are already in bloom, with more due in early spring.

**Fan Photos from Florida Botanical Gardens**

If you haven't signed up, it’s easy to do. Use the link below and click on the green signup button at the top of the page. Become a fan today so that you can view visitor photos and comments. If you have photos of the gardens you would like to share on our Facebook page, we'd love to have them. You can also share your experience at the gardens on the “Wall.”

Become a fan, check out our on-line gallery of Garden photos, and invite your friends to become fans as well!  [Link to the FBG Facebook](#)
SAVE THE DATE

Celebrating People in Action

Pinellas County Volunteers

Please plan to celebrate with us as we honor our volunteers.

DATE: Thursday, April 14, 2011

TIME: 4:00 to 6:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Pinellas County Extension
Magnolia Room
12520 Ulmerton Road
Largo

Presentations will include:
Presidential Lifetime Achievement Awards
Partners In Public Service (PIPS) Awards

Food and beverages will be available.
What Counts to You?

Parks, Social Services, Code Enforcement ...

Your Pinellas County Commissioners want to know what’s important to you.

THURSDAY, MARCH 10
5:30 to 7:30 P.M.
Palm Harbor University High School
1900 Omaha St.
Palm Harbor

TUESDAY, MARCH 15
5:30 to 7:30 P.M.
Dixie Hollins High School
4940 62nd St. N.
St. Petersburg

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6
6:30 to 8 P.M.
etownHall: Budget 2012
www.pinellascounty.org/etownHall

For more information visit
www.pinellascounty.org/budget
or call (727) 464-3000

Pinellas County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To obtain accessible formats of this document, please contact the Communications Department at (727) 464-4600. If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in these proceedings, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. At least seven days prior to the event, contact the Office of Human Rights, 400 S. Fort Harrison Ave., Suite 500, Clearwater, FL 33756, (727) 464-4062 (VT/TTY). Produced by the Pinellas County Communications Department. 2/11
Volunteers Needed to Support the Junior Docent Program this summer. In the past our Junior Docent summer program, Passport Adventures in History was staffed by our part time employees. Last year’s budget cuts eliminated these positions, so we are looking for just the right group of volunteers that enjoy history and working with teens and youth. This is a very successful program allowing Junior Docents to earn Bright Futures Scholarship hours helping with college expenses. Our juniors provide fun, active tours for recreation youth groups from the community. Six adults are needed to volunteer for 2 three-hour shifts per month, Wednesday, Thursday and/or Friday 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., from June 1 through August 12. Please help support this educational opportunity. Training provided.

National Quilting Day Celebration – March 19, 2011 – 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. This quilting extravaganza is a family event, so bring the children and help celebrate. The day is a grand way to reflect with pride on the traditions of quilt-making and the contributions crafters have made to their families and communities for many generations. This year’s focus is on the quilt making process. Donations are welcome and will support Heritage Village operations. The event is sponsored by the Pinellas County Historical Society. For more information, visit www.pinellascounty.org/Heritage.


Heritage Village RECYCLES! Glass, plastic and paper. H.C. Smith Store volunteer, Judy Dailey helps lead the way with providing special instruction on how to recycle at the Store ~ see attached flyer.

Now Collecting Items for the Flea Market and Book Sale: This year’s Flea Market and Book Sale will be during the annual Country Jubilee held October 22, 2011. Items will be accepted Wednesday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Arrangements should be made for large drop-offs by contacting the Pinellas County Historical Society: 727-582-2233. This is a great way to help raise much needed operating funds from household unwanted items! Please collect books, tools, dishes, silverware, sports equipment, crafts, toys, jewelry, furniture, decorative items, and art. Please no clothing, shoes, TVs or computer items.

http://www.pinellascounty.org/heritage/

A Buzzzzzzing Reminder: Those pesky mosquitoes are buzzing about…bring your repellant if working outside!
The Ringling Museum of Art is offering two tours of interest for gardeners.

The first tour is “Gardens in Perpetual Bloom: Botanical Illustration in Europe and American, 1600-1850,” now through April 24, 2011. More than 100 prints show “the fruitful collaboration of botanists, horticulturists, painters, and printmakers from the 17th to the 19th centuries.”

This exhibit shows the increasing interest in botanical illustrations spiked by scientists and explorers during these centuries. The publication of *Systema naturae* by the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus in 1735, organizing the plant kingdom according to their numbers of stamens and pistils, provided a need for accurately detailed plant illustrations. Explorers gathered seedlings, bulbs and plants from the remotest areas of the world, not only for these illustrations, but also for specimens in the gardens of monks and kings.

By the 19th century gardening had become a middle class pastime, providing even greater demand for exotic plants. The exhibit indicates the accompanying transition of plants as specimens for scientific study to subjects for art.

**Note:** Of added interest is that the viewer is provided with a colored brochure and map indicating the locations on the museum grounds of several plants illustrated in the exhibit.

Regular admission for the art museum is $25 and senior admission (over 65) is $20. The good news is that the art museum tour is **free on Mondays.**

The second tour is ”The Gardens of the Ringling: A Guided Tour,” every Thursday at 10:30 a.m., now through April 21, 2011. A highlight of this tour is Mable Ringling’s amazing Italian-designed rose garden, row after row of fragrant specimens from modern hybrids to 18th century old garden varieties. Conducted throughout the museum grounds by a staff horticulturalist, this tour will also locate any illustrated plants from the exhibit. Participants must meet at the Visitors Pavilion by 10:15 a.m. Admission is $20 (this is exclusive of the art museum tour). For reservations call (941) 358-3180.


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The Pinellas County Extension Office is promoting the Pinellas Energy Efficiency Project (PEEP) and needs volunteers to hand out literature and energy-saving devices. Go to [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/sustainability/energy_peep.shtml](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/sustainability/energy_peep.shtml) for a complete listing of dates and location. If you are interested, contact James Stevenson (jstevenson@pinellascounty.org) or Ramona Madhosingh-Hector (rmadhosinghhector@pinellascounty.org) for more information.

March 8 - **Taste of Dunedin,** Downtown Dunedin
March 11-13 - **Seminole Pow Wow Festival** & **Parade**
March 25-27 - **Oldsmar Days and Nights 2011**

March 10 - **Taste of Tarpon Food and Wine Festival** 4-7 pm
March 19 - **Country in the Park**
March 27 - **Tarpon Springs Fine Arts Festival**

More than 50 “floral Interpretations” will be displayed March 19-23 at Art in Bloom 2011 at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg,

Each designer chosen to participate in this annual event will select a particular work of art to inspire a floral arrangement. Many of these designers will discuss their arrangements at “Conversations with the Designers” on Sunday, March 20, from 2-4 p.m., open to the public.

The museum admission is $17 and $15 for seniors (65 and older). For more information about Art in Bloom events go to [www.fine-arts.org](http://www.fine-arts.org) or call (727) 896-2667.

Thank you MG Ellen Mahany for making us aware of these events.

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Help Wanted!

The Pinellas County Extension Office is promoting the Pinellas Energy Efficiency Project (PEEP) and needs volunteers to hand out literature and energy-saving devices. Go to [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/sustainability/energy_peep.shtml](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/sustainability/energy_peep.shtml) for a complete listing of dates and location. If you are interested, contact James Stevenson (jstevenson@pinellascounty.org) or Ramona Madhosingh-Hector (rmadhosinghhector@pinellascounty.org) for more information.

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**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- Nursery Discounts
- Extension Classes
- Volunteer Hours & VMS
- MG Update
- Garden Tour
- East Lake Library
- Highpoint Headstart
- Senior Community
- Orange Grove Community

**EDUCATION**
- MG CEU Credits
- Palm Harbor Class
- St. Pete Library Class
- Planting Pinellas Blog
- FBG Tour Guides Needed
- Question and Answer Sheet

**FBGF Members, MGs Can Save On New Spring Plants**
One of the benefits of Foundation membership is getting 10% discounts at several 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:

- Art Stone Orchids
  3611 Tyrone Blvd, St. Petersburg
  727-345-6733
- Country Club Nursery
  9850 Starkey Road, Largo
  727-397-4438
- DragonFly Garden
  730 Broadway, Dunedin
  727-734-4900
- Earthscapes Garden Room
  816 Alt. 19 N, Palm Harbor
  727-786-4859
- Esperanza’s Garden Center
  6001 Haines Road
  St. Petersburg,
  727-742-8499
- Jene’s Tropicals
  6831 Central Ave
  St. Petersburg
  727-344-1668
- Kathy’s Korners (trees)
  Nursery Inc. & Tree Farm
  6095 Haines Road N. St. Petersburg
  727-525-9640
- Palm Harbor Nursery & Landscaping (cash and carry items)
  450 Riviere Rd, Palm Harbor
  727-784-2992
- Summerwood Gardens, Inc.
  1171 Tarpon Springs Road
  Odessa
  813-920-2153
- Twigs and Leaves
  1013 MLK St. S (9th St),
  St. Petersburg
  727-822-5400
- Wilcox Nursery
  12501 Indian Rocks Road, Largo
  727-595-2073
- Willow Tree Nursery
  4401 49th St. N, St. Petersburg
  727-522-2594

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**Extension Classes**
Visit Extension’s on-line calendar for a list of classes that are being offered free to MGs, volunteers and FBGF members. (Must show membership card.) All others pay a nominal fee. You can register on-line.

**Volunteer Hours for Master Gardeners Only**
We are now able to collect all of your hours in the MG VMS online. Now you can track all of your Pinellas County volunteer time in one place! For any non-Master Gardener work, simply choose the following project category: X_NON-MG Pinellas County Volunteer Hours
Some examples of volunteer time that go in this new category include:
- working at the FBG gift shop
- working on the Wedding Garden mosaic project

This means that Master Gardeners can report all of their time in the new system and will no longer be logging into the County VSP. The system is web-based, secure and user-friendly - you can even jump on from your web-enabled cell-phone if you like. Go to https://florida.volunteersystem.org and click on the New User tab.

For those who are unable to input hours, we will still provide a log book and a volunteer to input your hours.

Volunteers, other than MGs, will continue to use the County VSP system and log book outside the volunteer office. Please adhere to the policy described at left.

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**Record Your Volunteer Hours**
Please Remember to Sign Out!

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

The computer program for logging volunteer hours is outside the volunteer office, near 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: cseaffidi@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.
Important Announcements

■ **MG Update, Tuesday, March 8, See "reminder" Page 5**

■ **Garden Yard Tour, March 21** Our March garden tour is at Jo Klie's home. It is scheduled for March 21st, Monday, from 10 to 12. Her address is 1916 McKinley St. Clearwater.

■ **East Lake Community Library** has requested an MG to help with designing, planting and maintaining a small raised garden, about 8’x14’. They want to replace existing plants with Florida Friendly species and add signage to educate the public. This would be a great opportunity to showcase the Master Gardener program.

■ **Highpoint Headstart** needs help with a spring vegetable garden!

■ **Local senior community has a vegetable container garden** and they need an MG to consult twice a year. This is a requirement from the State, so we really need one or two of you to come forward on this one. They are happy with the progress and results they are getting and just need you to give them some pointers and directions.

■ **Orange Grove Elementary needs your help!** They have secured a grant ($500) and they want to create a butterfly garden and maybe even a carnivorous bog garden. The school has a very active Green Team that you would work with to make recommendations and suggestions for their project. They are already growing vegetables and composting and they want to expand. The school is in Seminole at 10300 103rd St. This sounds like a fantastic group and a great way to give back to your community.

Education

■ **Earn Continuing Education Credits**

Master Gardeners can earn up to four continuing education credits by completing Plant ID Modules at [http://gardening solutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/outreach/plant_id/index.shtml](http://gardening.solutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/outreach/plant_id/index.shtml). For instance, 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**

Classes are offered on the second Thursday of the month from 2 to 3:30 p.m. and from 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. at the Palm Harbor Library, 2330 Nebraska Avenue. To register, go to [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/) Click on the Take Action “Register for a program tab” and then Click “Extension Service” You may also call (727) 582-2100.

■ **St Petersburg Community Library MG Class Series**

Classes offered free at the main branch of the St. Pete Library located at 3745 Ninth Avenue N. (**This is a change of venue.**) To register, go to [http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/](http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu/). Click on the Take Action “Register for a program tab” and then click “Extension Service” You may also call (727) 582-2100.

■ **“Planting Pinellas“ blog** Check it out at [http://plantingpinellas.blogspot.com/](http://plantingpinellas.blogspot.com/)

■ **Garden tours** - Where are the MGs who used to do this? Is anyone interested in starting this up again? Training materials are available and Theresa would be happy to work with volunteers and MGs. If you have never given a tour, but would like to, please let her know.

■ The **Question and Answer sheet from Andy’s Diagnostic Session in the January MG Update** is now available in the MG VMS. Look under the Newsletters/Documents section and then click on Andy’s Diagnostic Training.

Contact Theresa Badurek at 727-582-2109 or tbadurek@pinellascounty.org to follow up on any of the items in the newsletter.
Happy Spring everyone! By the end of this month I will have been here at Extension for a year. I can’t believe how quickly this year has sped by! In honor of this occasion I have renamed this feature “Plantcetera” (Bob Albanese’s brainstorm - thanks Bob!). The idea being that I can write about anything related to plants, Master Gardeners, volunteering, etcetera.

In the last year there has been a lot of change. It’s been a whirlwind for me, but many of you have been very helpful along the way. Thanks for showing the “new kid” around; I feel part of the Extension Family now. I know it’s also been a lot of adjustment for you, so I thank you for hanging in there through it all. We have the best Master Gardeners in Florida and I can’t wait to see what we can do next!

Thank you so much for all that you do!

Theresa Badurek
727-582-2109
tbadurek@pinellascounty.org

**2011 March Thank You, Volunteers!**

- **MG Update Tuesday, March 8, See “reminder” Page 5**
- **Garden Yard Tour March 21**
  Monday, from 10 to 12. Jo Kliesh address is 1916 McKinley St. Clearwater.

**MG Plant Clinic at the Palm Harbor Library –Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
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://www.pinellascounty.org/scripts/publish/webevent.pl?](http://www.pinellascounty.org/scripts/publish/webevent.pl?)