



February VOL. 11 ISSUE 2

## Master Gardener

PINELLAS COUNTY

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## Gardens Must Look for New Ways to Attract Visitors

By KATHLEEN JAMISON, Assistant Editor

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation, which is the mainstay of the 182 acres of palm trees, Florida native plants and tropical flora that make up the Florida Botanical Gardens, is joining botanical gardens throughout the U.S. in trying new things to lure visitors.

The tenth annual Holiday Lights in the Gardens attracted more than 40,000 visitors, many of whom had never visited in daylight. "Our goal, as always, has been to provide a community experience while enticing those visitors to return to enjoy the natural beauty, serenity and learning opportunities that the Gardens offer," says Foundation president Chuck Scaffidi. "But, as the other botanical gardens are finding out, we're going to have to try some new things to appeal to different constituencies."

A new Foundation committee is exploring ways to bring art to the Gardens. Exciting nature-inspired glass mosaics will be rejuvenating the fountains in the Wedding Garden in the spring. (Watch for news of an unveiling celebration.) Other projects being discussed are a juried art show, a plein air festival, an outdoor sculpture exhibit and bringing in a renowned artist to create landscape installations made of sticks.

The FBGF also is partnering with Pinellas County in the nearby "Green Home" that will appeal to people who are interested in sustainability, more efficient use of natural resources, and environmentally-friendly options for builders and homeowners. As the FBGF's Sustainability and Green Home Committee chair, Terri Ziegler is our liaison to the Green Home Advisory Committee. FBGF members will participate in the landscape design and installation and, hopefully in the near future, on a water conservation station for children at the Green Home.

Demonstration gardens and opportunities to talk with the volunteers as they work in the gardens are educating homeowners about the plants that will thrive in this area. This a major mission of the University of Florida/IFAS Master Gardener Program that resides on the Florida Botanical Gardens Pinewood Cultural Park campus.

"We are going to do whatever we can to get our Largo neighbors as well as other Pinellas County residents and winter visitors to get to know and enjoy the Gardens," Chuck notes. "These are challenging but exciting times. We are learning that we can't afford to appeal only to gardeners any more. We have to adapt to changing times. We are open to any ideas and are looking for volunteers to carry them out."

Many, if not most, botanical gardens are similarly being forced to "rethink and rebrand." According to the New York Times, "Botanical gardens are experiencing an identity crisis, with chrysanthemum contests, horticultural lectures and garden-club ladies, once their main constituency, going the way of manual lawn mowers. Among the long-term factors diminishing their traditional appeal are fewer women at home and less interest in flower-gardening among younger fickle, multitasking generations."

The FBGF is already trying to determine how it can appeal to garden lovers, naturalists, environmentalists, conservationists and anyone else who is interested in what's happening with the planet. You can share your ideas with Chuck at [cscaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us](mailto:cscaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us).



*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

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*The Green Leaf* and archives are available on-line by clicking on [newsletter](#)

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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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

## *Mr. Rose Garden Celebrates 25 MG Years*

By KATHLEEN JAMISON, Assistant Editor

Master Gardener Sam Skemp loves his roses: The Julia Child, a butter yellow floribunda rose named for the famous French Chef. The Belinda's Dream, a large and fragrant pink variety. The red and double red Knockouts. All the glorious species that he has been tending and nurturing ever since the Florida Botanical Gardens first opened a rose garden in the Wedding Garden in 2000.

He feeds the rose bushes special formulas, sprays to keep them disease-free, snips and trims, and willingly provides all the other care the labor-intensive plants demand. His ambition is to have blooms in the garden year-round.

But even before he got addicted to roses, Sam was volunteering in the Gardens. He is a graduate of the MG Class of 1986 and in 25 nonstop years has logged more than 20,000 hours!

Along the way, he's been showered with much-deserved awards: 1986 and 1987, Outstanding Master Gardener; 1988, 4-H Volunteer of the Year; 1989 and 1992, Master Gardener Award of Excellence; 1994, Volunteer of the Year; 1997, Steward of Environment Award; 2000, Most Outstanding Senior Volunteer; 2005, President's Service Emeritus Award.



Sam Skemp with his roses.

**Way to go, Sam! You are an inspiration to us all.**

Sam, at right, receiving an award from the Rose Society.





## Choosing Trees and Plants That Fit Your Yard

**BY JANE MORSE, Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent**

We all love the majesty and shade of grand ol' oak trees, but do they really fit on a standard house lot? Live oaks should be planted a minimum of 30 feet away from any structure, but 60 feet is even better to allow the "grandness" of their potential canopy width of 120 feet. Just remember that that oak sapling you admire at the nursery today, might overwhelm your property in a few years. You may want to "think smaller" than that grand ol' oak.

Not to worry, though. There are many beautiful tree species to choose from that will fit in a smaller landscape and be very happy in a central Florida neighborhood: crape myrtle, dwarf magnolias, sweet acacia and Yaupon holly, for example. In addition to a tree's mature size, it is also wise to consider site conditions before selecting, paying for and installing a new addition to the landscape. Three of the most important are soil moisture, the amount of sunlight, and the acidity/alkalinity of the soil.

Soil moisture can range from well-drained to medium-drained to wet. Some landscapes remain well-drained even after heavy rains, while some soils can go from bone dry to very wet over the course of a year. If you have a well-drained soil and you plant a tree that likes wet soil, the tree will never survive on its own and will most likely never flourish. To the other extreme, think of a cactus planted in a swamp, or a swamp bay planted in the desert. Neither will survive. So it is very important to know your soil conditions before selecting a plant.

Sunlight is another extremely important consideration. Will the new plant be placed in full sun, part sun/shade, or total shade? Just as turf grass will never do well in full shade, most ferns will never do well in full sun. So selection and placement with regards to sunlight is also important for plant health.

Coastal soils, especially those with sea shells, are usually alkaline. Some plants cannot tolerate alkaline soils and will start to show nutrient deficiencies. Many common plants such as gardenia, ixora and azalea require acidic soils to be healthy. It is not practical to acidify alkaline soils, however. Acidic soils are sometimes found in Pinellas County, so if you don't see sea shells in your soil, have it tested to find out if it is acidic or alkaline.

Other site conditions to consider are cold hardiness zones (this area is in zone 9b), salt tolerance and the mature size (height and width) of the plant. You may also want to consider if the plant provides for birds, butterflies or other wildlife.

Plant selection can sometimes be very limited because the site conditions do not allow for a wide range of plants that will do well and survive. In my own yard I have found that I can only use plants that will tolerate bone dry to sopping wet conditions. This is a rather limited list, but the right ones will all do well with minimal care.

To learn more about specific plants that will do well in your yard - including "Small Trees for Small Spaces" - visit your local Extension Service at 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, call them at 582-2100, go to the UF/IFAS website at <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/resources.htm> and select plant database, or see this site for selecting landscape plants: [http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic\\_landscape\\_plants\\_central](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_landscape_plants_central) ■

## News From Our Resident Butterfly Expert

Long time and well-loved Master Gardener Bob Abben is finally home from the hospital after a long illness and is still as interested as ever in butterflies. He shared a letter from fellow MG Sally Duggan that he says makes him feel connected to the Gardens:

*I don't want to tax you as you are recovering....BUT...we had an interesting thing happen during our time in the butterfly garden at Chi Chi's today. A monarch decided to emerge while the 5th grade children were outside. Very thrilling. It was of course very windy and stormy today and we got a stick and moved him to a sheltered spot for him to prepare to fly away.*

*We got talking about his wings and how he needed to pump, etc. Then we got into the discussion of how the colors are not really there - prisms/tiles, etc. I know I have a book (Kind of a "Sunset" publishing thing) that I cannot find. Where do I put these things? I know you have the same book and wondered if you could find yours - and if so could we borrow it?*

*We also had a "Hidden Valley" moment with our 4th graders today. We harvested celery, broccoli and cauliflower and let them have at it with some ranch dressing and peanut butter. It was like the best thing they have ever tasted! They could not get enough. I'm thinking of contacting Hidden Valley Ranch dressing and having them film a commercial at the school!*

Thanks, Sally

## *January Yard Tour Prompts New Appreciation of Recycling*

By **BRENDA PAYNE, MG**

The 16 Master Gardeners who visited the Pinellas County Utilities Solid Waste Operation on Jan. 18 were pleasantly surprised that the facility was so lovely and nicely landscaped. We were greeted by Tom Roberts who was formerly employed by Pinellas County Extension as curator of education. Before our tour we were shown a short video explaining the workings of the operation. The Pinellas County Utilities Solid Waste Operations Bridgeway Acres site is a 700-acre integrated facility that includes a waste-to-energy facility, two district landfills, a yard waste processing area, recycling drop-off center, and a household electronics and chemical collection facility.

Pinellas County residents and businesses generate nearly two million tons of waste each year, approximately 30 percent of which is recycled. Pinellas County Utilities provides disposal for approximately 1.2 million tons of solid waste. About 85 percent of the material received at Bridgeway Acres is routed to the waste-to-energy facility. Residual ash from the facility is processed for size separation and to recover ferrous and non-ferrous metals that are sold to local recycled metal dealers. The ash residue is used as daily cover in the landfill and for roadway and berm construction.

The waste volume is reduced by 90 percent and its weight by 70 percent. This saves valuable landfill space and provides a renewable source of energy to power about 45,000 homes in Pinellas County every day. Solid waste operated as an enterprise, meaning that no funds are received from taxes. Revenue is generated through tipping fees (each truck pays \$37.50 for each ton dumped), sales of electricity, capacity payments and sales of metals received on site and recovered from the ash.

After the video we were loaded into two vans chauffeured by Tom and Rick for a tour of the facility. Our first stop was at the recycling drop off where we saw bins full of all types of electronics. We visited the “Swap Shop” and were encouraged to return to receive free paint, paint stripper, garden chemicals, and many other things. After walking around the nicely landscaped building, it was back into the vans to continue the tour.

We viewed the waste-to-energy facility and saw the garbage trucks unload trash that was picked up by two large claws then dropped to fluff up before being put into the incinerator. We drove through the ash and metal facility to see how usable metal is retrieved to be sold. The remaining ash is used to cover the landfill where refuse that is not suitable for the waste-to-energy is dumped. The pile is now 100 feet high and will eventually go to 150 feet. It is estimated that this facility will be in use for another 50 years. We passed the generator where the electricity produced is sold back to Progress Energy. We saw the site where homeowners can dispose of large items such as refrigerators, sofas and leftover building material, then onto the yard waste mulch field where it take 45 days to process yard waste into usable mulch. We were told that they produce more mulch than is used by the public, necessitating some to be put into the landfill.

We all left the facility with a new appreciation for recycling.



## *My First Day As a Florida Botanical Gardens Volunteer*

By DEBRA KRAMER, DNAMG\*

I felt confident pulling into the parking lot of the Florida Botanical Gardens for my first day as a volunteer. After all, I am a snowbird from New Jersey, which *is* the Garden State. I hoped no one would notice my status as a beginner (Latin: *novicea virginicus*) as I joined the group in the lobby.

My first pleasant surprise was realizing that there were a variety of gardening tasks that needed to be completed. There were choices! Not in the mood to trim a tree? Then grab a sprayer and apply liquid fertilizer. Feeling artistic today? Arrange some branches into a base for a plant sculpture. Interested in solitude? Find a patch of garden and do some weeding on your own.

The first two hours flew by. I noticed that the volunteers were heading into the extension building as if on cue. Break time! The next pleasant surprise was the variety of snacks that were available with absolutely no nutritional value. Potato chips, corn chips, double-dipped chocolate cookies were consumed with abandon. After all, gardening uses a lot of calories and we weren't done yet.

The next exciting event was being invited to tour the grounds in a golf cart while learning where the gardening tools and mulch piles are kept. I had an excellent driver who reassured me that she has completed the county course in cart control. Yes, it was my first time riding in a golf cart. I was impressed with the organized garden equipment and wished that a volunteer crew would visit my house for a real organizational challenge.

Staying focused on completing one task during my first morning kept me from feeling overwhelmed. At the end of the four hours, I slowly straightened my spine, brushed off the knees of my jeans, scratched a few insect bites and then marveled at the one corner I had improved. In future visits to the gardens, I will be sure to stop by and visit this special spot.

\*Definitely Not A Master Gardener ■

### *At Work in the Gardens: Then and Now*

Where would the Florida Botanical Gardens be without the collaboration of staff, volunteers and Master Gardeners? That's the way it's been since the earliest days. Bottom right photo is a look back to 1998 when the Wedding Garden was just beginning to take shape. And that's the way it is today. In recent photographs, Parks staff Bob Funari, below left, and Jason Vickers look happy with the supervision of MG Terry Berube, behind the golf cart.



Recognize the crape myrtles?





## *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](http://www.geocaching.com) ■

## *Three Coins in a Fountain*

More than that, actually. A recent cleaning of the water wall fountain in the formal gardens yielded pennies, nickels and dimes that added up to \$15!

"We make money any way we can," says MG and FBGF board member Terry Berube, who took the change home, cleaned it up, counted it and exchanged it for paper money that she has added to the donation box. "That's equal to \$2 donations from seven and a half adults at the Holiday Lights."

According to Wikipedia, the tradition of dropping pennies into ponds and fountains stems from the ancient European belief that water housed deities who would grant wishes in exchange for coins.

Let's hope all those wishes come true. Especially the one for an even bigger and better Holiday Lights next year. ■

Tossing coins in Rome's Trevi Fountain is supposed to guarantee a return visit.



Our fountain yields coins, too, and hopefully they also will mean a return visit.



## *For Your Homes and Gardens*

By STACEY ZIDI, Botanical Bounty Gift Shop Manager

Phew! The holidays have passed, the decorations are stored and we're looking forward to spring. The itch to gear up our homes and gardens is upon us, *but* we're not quite there yet! Here are some nifty DIY ideas that will keep you busy while updating and freshening your nest.

Cover a worn bulletin board with fresh fabric or add ribbon to reflect the current season. Update your push pins with something elegant for an "I'm-worth-it" splurge.

Save chopsticks from your local take-out joint to use as mini plant stakes or paint stirrers. You won't believe how many times you'll reach for these all-purpose kitchen helpers.

Put pretty (used) wrapping paper through your shredder and use to line gift boxes or protect breakables to be shipped or stored.

Line your flower beds with rocks instead of mulch. They prevent rainwater from splashing against the house, keep the soil moist and look über-stylish.

If you don't do it already, create a magazine/book swap with your friends – lots of great reading on the cheap! When all of you are done, consider leaving the magazines at your next visit to your dentist's/doctor's office or drop off at a local laundromat.

I make handy clips by gluing magnetic strips to the back of the clothespins. Your fridge can hold artwork, schedules and those family photos which you may have gotten over the holidays! Decorate or paint as you like.

Speaking of inexpensive projects, I was at the FedEx Kinko's copy center across from Largo Mall and they offer poster-sized enlargements of your favorite photos (matte or laminated-gloss) in sizes from 18x24 up to 24x36. If you're looking for inexpensive, original art work for your home or for a gift, that's one way to go.

FYI - Now that dishwashing detergents are phosphate-free, folks in our area have been disappointed with the hard-water residue left on plates and especially glassware. I spoke to a consumer rep at Proctor & Gamble (I use Cascade pods) and she recommended putting white vinegar in the extra detergent container when you're getting ready to run a cycle. Voila! All clean! Granted, everyone's machine is different, so call the consumer hotline of the brand you're using if you're not happy with the product.

**Please stop by Botanical Bounty and share any other tips or ideas you have!**

Many thanks to those who supported the shop and Gardens over the holidays – we appreciate you! ■



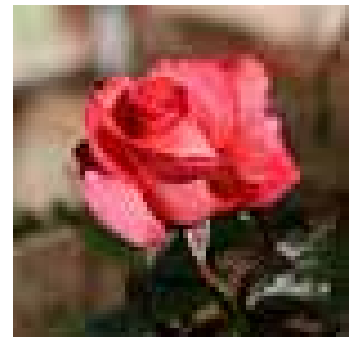
Stop by the gift shop to see all the exciting new spring merchandise.

## *Fan Photos from Florida Botanical Gardens*

Facebook fan Don Cassel visited the Gardens recently and posted beautiful photographs of roses, beauty berries and other blooming plants. He wrote: "Too bad that so many plants have been damaged by the recent cold weather. I look forward to returning as growth recovers." Thanks, Don!

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](#) ■





## *The Gardens' Glass Mosaic Is Called An 'Aquatic Reflection'*

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](mailto:studio@andersonart.com).

You can learn more about this exciting project at [http://otowclearwaterinfo.com/pdfs/OTOW\\_News\\_CLW\\_JAN\\_2011.pdf](http://otowclearwaterinfo.com/pdfs/OTOW_News_CLW_JAN_2011.pdf) or [http://www.tbnweekly.com/pinellas\\_county/content\\_articles/120810\\_pco-01.txt](http://www.tbnweekly.com/pinellas_county/content_articles/120810_pco-01.txt)

Out of many suggestions for naming the installation, the core group of volunteers who have been working on the mosaic at the Ochs house chose "**Aquatic Reflection.**"



## The CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW and ENGLISH GARDENS May 21— 28

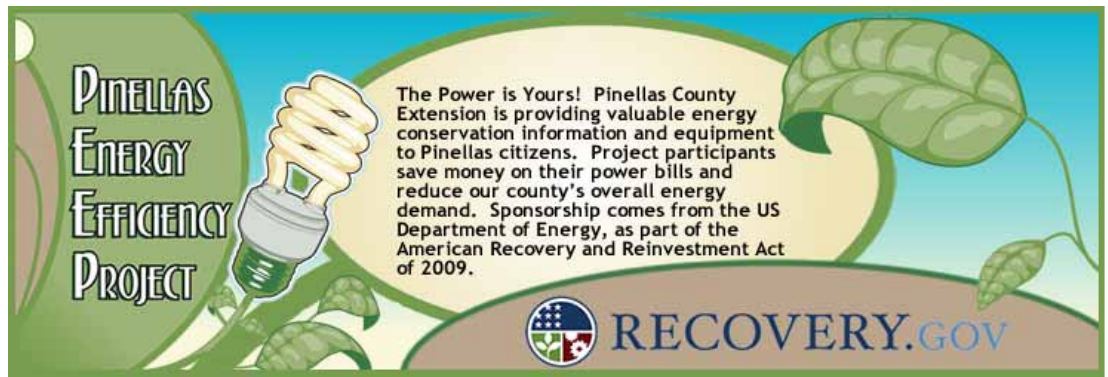


If you've always yearned to visit some of England's grandest gardens in the springtime, the Travel Unlimited agency is offering a week-long tour for \$2,799 that includes a day at the Chelsea Flower Show, one of the world's pre-eminent horticultural events; a day at the award-winning Borde Hill Gardens on the grounds of a 16th century Tudor mansion in the Sussex High Weald; afternoon high tea at a private estate; and a \$50 American Express gift card for Florida Botanical Gardens Master Gardeners, FBG Foundation members and volunteers. For more information, call the travel agency at 800-645-6969. FBGF will receive a percentage that will benefit our Gardens.

Join Foundation President Chuck Scaffidi and his wife Joan on this garden lover's dream trip. He has brochures in the volunteer office if you want to learn more. So far MG Pat and Karen Mann, Pat's friends, and MG Joanne Kliesh are joining Joan and Chuck. When the tour fills, it will close. Don't miss out.



*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](mailto:jstevenson@pinellascounty.org)) or Ramona Madhosingh-Hector ([rmadhosinghhector@pinellascounty.org](mailto:rmadhosinghhector@pinellascounty.org)) for more information.

Dates and locations of currently scheduled events:

Feb. 20 - [Tampa Bay Bridal Show](#) , Coliseum,

Feb. 25 - **2011 Phillies PhanFest, 5-7p.m.** *Bright House Field*

Feb. 26 - 10 a.m. -4 p.m, [Florida African American Heritage Celebration](#)

March 8 - **Taste of Dunedin**, Downtown Dunedin

March 10 -**Taste of Tarpon Food and Wine Festival** 4-7 pm,

March 11-13 - [Seminole Pow Wow Festival & Parade](#)

March 19 - **Country in the Park**

March 25-27 - **Oldsmar Days and Nights 2011**

March 27 - **Tarpon Springs Fine Arts Festival**

April 2-3 - **Tampa Bay Living Green Expo.** The Coliseum, St. Pete.535 4th Ave. North

April 8-10 - **Tampa Bay Blues Fest** Vinoy Park

April 9 - **The Dunedin Highland Games** Highlander Park

April 15 - **Senior Fun Day** Florida Auto Exchange Stadium, Dunedin

April 16 -17 - **Island Earth Days** Honeymoon Island State Park, Dunedin

April 18 - [Tampa Bay Job Fair](#), Coliseum

April 24 - **Smooth Jazz Fest**, Coachman Park, 2:30 to 9:30 p.m.

April 25 - **WQYK Fun 'n Sun Toyota Country Concert** Coachman Park, 1-9pm,

April 30 - **Touch a Truck**, Dunedin Community Center

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Nursery Discounts
- Extension Classes
- Volunteer Hours & VMS
- MG Update
- Garden Tour
- Rainbow Village
- Weedon Plant Clinic
- East Lake Library
- Highpoint Headstart
- Safety Harbor Garden

## EDUCATION

- MG CEU Credits
- Palm Harbor Class
- St. Pete Library Class
- Need Your Help
- Planting Pinellas Blog
- FBG Tour Guides Needed

**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:** [cscaffidi@co.pinellas.fl.us](mailto:cscaffidi@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.**

## *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	Palm Harbor Nursery & Landscaping (cash and carry items)
Carroll Brothers Nursery 4950 38 <sup>th</sup> Ave N, St. Petersburg	450 Riviere Rd, Palm Harbor Summerwood Gardens, Inc 11711 Tarpon Springs Rd., Odessa
Country Club Nursery 9850 Starkey Road, Largo	Twigs and Leaves 1013 MLK St. S (9 <sup>th</sup> St), St. Petersburg
Earthscapes Garden Room 816 Alt. 19 N, Palm Harbor	Wilcox Nursery 12501 Indian Rocks Road, Largo
Kathy's Korner (trees) Nursery Inc. & Tree Farm 6095 Haines Road North, St. Petersburg	Willow Tree Nursery 4401 49 <sup>th</sup> St. N, St. Petersburg

## ■ *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.**



■ *MG Update, Tuesday, Feb. 8, 9 a.m.-noon*

Largo resident Michael Fenton will share reminiscences of his “Botanical Explorations” and plant collection for Florida’s famous Fairchild Tropical Gardens.

■ *Garden Yard Tour, Feb. 19*

Hosts from 10 a.m.– noon will be West Coast Tropical's, 6015 100<sup>th</sup> Way N in St. Petersburg. They specialize in palms, cycads and bamboo. The owner has a beautiful garden that will amaze.

■ *Rainbow Village Community Garden*

This neighborhood, which is just across Ulmerton from the Botanical Gardens, is planning a community garden and needs a Master Gardener or two or three. This would be a great group to work with. They have plenty of space and kids who could really benefit from this kind of learning and community experience.

■ *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!

■ *Safety Harbor* is looking for someone to talk about the care and nurture of citrus trees in conjunction with a Grapefruit Festival the City of Safety Harbor Chamber of Commerce is organizing for the week of April 11-16.

## *Education*

■ *Earn Continuing Education Credits*

Master Gardeners can earn up to four continuing education credits by completing **Plant ID Modules** at [http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/outreach/plant\\_id/index.shtml](http://gardeningsolutions.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/> 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**)

Wednesday, 2-3:30 p.m. The Feb. 23 class will feature Pam Brown speaking on “Good Bugs, Bad Bugs” To register, go to <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.

■ *Need your help!*

Our Commercial Agent Jane Morse has been asked to help find judges for the **2011 Pinellas Regional Science Fair on Feb. 5.** Judges are served coffee, refreshments and lunch and Jane says it's always impressive to see the kids' hard work.

■ *“Planting Pinellas” blog* Check it out at <http://plantingpinellas.blogspot.com/>

■ *We have been getting questions about 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.

Contact Theresa Badurek at 727-582-2109 or [tbadurek@pinellascounty.org](mailto:tbadurek@pinellascounty.org) to follow up on any of the items in the newsletter.

## My Thoughts

By **THERESA BADUREK, Urban Horticulture Extension Agent**

Here comes the 2011 Class of Master Gardeners: Twenty-four talented individuals from diverse backgrounds who bring a wealth of life experiences, including three MGs from other states, a former Peace Corps volunteer, a couple of artists, and several retired from teaching, construction, website management, the airline industry, interior design,.

Several already have been working along side current MGs, but many are new here. Please welcome them and make them feel at home. They will all be spending some time at the Lawn and Garden Help Desk during the training period, so be sure to say hello!

Classes will be held once a week from Feb. 23 through April 20. Due to classroom size, the classes will only be open to the new trainees, but I am hoping to make a large part of the training available to current MGs online. This will be a great way to brush up and provide some more opportunities for continuing education. More details to come later!

This new class will soon be able to provide much-needed help in our outreach/education endeavors. In addition to the many requests I get throughout the county for Master Gardener expertise, I want to be sure to support our ongoing outreach/education projects. If you think your project could use an infusion of fresh MG energy, please let me know. If you tell me your needs I can be looking for those talents in the new group and encouraging them in that direction. Also, our monthly MG Updates will be a great chance for you to talk to them about project ideas and let them know what you all are working on throughout Pinellas County.

Thank you so much for all that you do!

Theresa Badurek  
727-582-2109  
[tbadurek@pinellascounty.org](mailto:tbadurek@pinellascounty.org)



## 2011 February Thank You, Volunteers!

### ■ *MG Update Tuesday, Feb. 8, 9 a.m. -noon.*

Largo resident Michael Fenton will share reminiscences of his “Botanical Explorations” and plant collection for Florida’s famous Fairchild Tropical Gardens.

### ■ *Garden Yard Tour, Feb. 19*

Saturday from 10 to 12 at West Coast Tropical's, 6015 100<sup>th</sup> Way N in St. Petersburg. They specialize in palms, cycads and bamboo. The owner has a beautiful garden that will amaze.

### **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?>