
The Garden Scoop

La-Terre Chapter

Master Gardener Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1

Spring 2007



Bloom Where You are Planted ...



WOW! It's hard to believe the La-Terre 2006-2007 Club Year is coming to a close. It's been an enjoyable experience for me. Really! It's been gratifying to see the Habitat for Humanity homes that have been landscaped and the financial encouragement we've received from the general public. It seems the year has been one of planning, more often than not. La-Terre has had a strong representation in the planning for the Louisiana Master Gardeners' State Conference. The chairperson for the conference, Lafayette Master Gardener Association, is quoted as saying, "La-Terre is la-generous!" We will be in charge of registration. Please make plans to attend and volunteer your services.

Our industrious committee for the Second Annual Bonne Terre Garden Fair has been busy planning for this event for the past year. They're determined to make it better than the great success we had last year. I'm sure it will be with the volunteer help of all our La-Terre members.

We've presented educational programs to a number of organizations, assisted with 4-H activities, participated in the presentation of The Home and Garden Trends, the Homebuilder's Show, and continued to maintain the landscaping at the Terrebonne Folk Life and Culture Center. Our website has been updated by dedicated volunteers and is fast becoming one of the best in the Louisiana Master Gardener websites.

Sadly, we've lost a dedicated member, Sandra Chiasson, who will be missed in many ways. We will remember her energy and enthusiasm for gardening, her love of her Cajun hibiscus, and her contributions to the recipe section of the newsletter. To continue her legacy, another dedicated volunteer has stepped up to fulfill Sandra's unfinished work as an assistant volunteer coordinator.

Our numbers have increased with the completion of the Class of 2006. However, we still need our members to

develop presentations in their areas of interest. We cannot continue to repeat the same programs year after year. Please consider partnering with someone who has the same horticultural interests to develop new programs toward educating the public. Horticultural information for the general public is one of our major objectives.

All in all it's been a good and productive year for La-Terre. With your help as volunteers we can preserve our reputation as an exemplary organization. Each of you has expertise in one or more areas of horticulture and/or gardening. Make a resolution to share this talent in the coming year.

I thank all of you for the cooperation and volunteerism which made my responsibilities as president of La-Terre gratifying. Thanks for the memories.

"Don't forget to bloom where you're planted! "

Raymonda Guidroz
President



My Neighbor's Garden...



The 2006 La-Terre Chapter of the Louisiana Master Gardener program graduated on October 2nd at the home of Aline Barr of Thibodaux. Thirteen master gardeners in training were recognized for fulfilling the requirements of the Louisiana Master Gardener program and have twelve months to complete their initial 40 hours of approved volunteer service to the LSU AgCenter.

Graduates are:

Gregory Adams, Lafourche
Aline Barr, Lafourche
Angele Soignier-Coffman, Lafourche
Donovan Forte, Assumption
Faye Guidroz, Lafourche
Ruthie Hassell, Lafourche
Julie Jemison, Lafourche
Jeanne LeBlanc, Lafourche
Marianne Matherne, Terrebonne
Wendy Ordoyne, Terrebonne
Nell Page, Terrebonne
Gloria Spence, Terrebonne
Earline Theriot, Lafourche

Congratulations to these graduates! Their class project will be helping plan, implement, and evaluate the 2007 Bonne Terre Garden Fair.

Master Gardener Website

Cheryl Skinner has been doing a lot of work on the La-Terre Master Gardener website. I encourage you to check out her efforts and look around the entire site while you are there. You may even find something beneficial outside the realm of horticulture! The link below will direct you:

www.lsuagcenter.com/la-terre

Bonne Terre Garden Fair

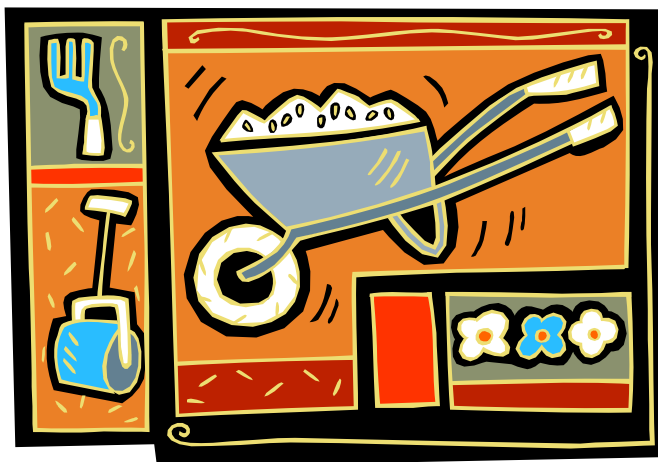
The second annual Bonne Terre Garden Fair is Saturday, May 5th at Southdown. I encourage all of you to sign up to help out. Set up is on Friday, May 4th so you can secure plenty of volunteer hours at this educational, fun program. Complete details at:

http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/lawn_garden/master_gardener/parish_img_programs/La-Terre/Events/2007+Bonne+Terre+Garden+Fair.htm

"You can bury a lot of troubles digging in the dirt." Author Unknown



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**The Garden Scoop
Guest Garden Expert:
Dr. Allen D. Owings**

**New Plants to Enhance
Our Landscape Efforts**

The last five to ten years has seen a tremendous increase in the number of annual bedding plants, herbaceous perennials, roses and similar plants being released for residential and commercial landscape use. The LSU AgCenter has conducted landscape trials on many of these plants. Here is a summary of some new plants to consider for our south Louisiana landscapes.

One newest trends in bedding plants has been the release of new petunia varieties. Most of the new petunias are seed propagated spreading petunias. These include the 'Wave' petunias. These petunias reach heights of about 12 inches and, as the name implies, spread about 2-3 feet. Colors available in the 'Wave' series include purple, pink, misty lilac, lavender, blue, and rose. Over the last couple years, 'Tidal Wave' petunias have been introduced. These are classified as hedgiflora petunias – they reach a height of 3 feet with a spread of 3 feet. Colors available in the 'Tidal Wave' group are cherry, pink, silver, and purple. Also, 'Easy Wave' petunias are available in multiple colors and have a growth habit most suited for hanging baskets.

'Profusion' zinnias are a new group of zinnias referred to as landscape zinnias. The 'Profusion' zinnias are available in five colors – white, orange, cherry, apricot and fire. Some of the 'Profusion' colors have been named All-America Selection winners. 'Profusion White' and 'Profusion Orange' have also been named Louisiana Select plants due to their superior landscape performance. These zinnias last longer in the landscape than our traditional zinnia species and varieties.

Any discussion of new plants from the last five years has to include the 'Knock Out' rose. The original 'Knock Out' rose is a cherry red and is an AARS winner from 2000. Now, there is 'Knock Out Pink', 'Blushing Knock Out', and

'Double Knock Out'. New for 2007, and another AARS winner, is 'Rainbow Knock Out'. New for the fall of 2007 will be 'Double Pink Knock Out'. These roses are considered landscape shrub roses and do not need fungicide applications to perform well. Blackspot resistance is excellent and powdery mildew resistance is very good. Non-stop blooms can be expected from these plants.

In addition to 'Rainbow Knock Out', All America Rose Selections for 2007 are 'Moondance' and 'Strike It Rich'. 'Moondance' is a floribunda rose from Jackson and Perkins with creamy-white flowers contrasted by glossy, dark-green foliage. 'Strike It Rich' is being introduced by Weeks Roses and is a grandiflora with deep, golden-yellow flowers swirled with ruby red and a strong, spicy fragrance.

Athens Select plants have been receiving some attention the last few years. These are heat and humidity tested plants recommended by Allan Armitage at the University of Georgia. One of our Louisiana wholesale greenhouse growers (Dupont Nursery in Plaquemine) is a licensed propagator of these plants. Athens Select plants include the following:

- 'Bourbon Street' copper plant
- 'Gail's Choice' alternanthera
- 'Red Threads' alternanthera
- 'Summer Flame' alternanthera
- 'Bonita Shea' begonia
- 'Linde Armstrong' cleome
- 'Red Ruffles' coleus
- 'Velvet Lime' coleus
- 'Firefly' cuphea
- 'Plum Mist' cuphea
- 'Susan's Little Gen' cuphea
- 'Cuban Gold' duranta
- 'Black Beauty' graptophyllum
- 'Chocolate' graptophyllum
- 'Tricolor' graptophyllum
- 'Azure Skies' heliotropium
- 'Tricolor' hypericum
- 'Athens Rose' lantana
- 'New Gold' lantana
- 'Prince' pennisetum
- 'Princess' pennisetum
- 'Stars and Stripes' penta
- 'Ragun Cajun' ruellia
- 'Cajun Blue' scaevola
- 'Blue Sue' setcreasea

- 'Persian Shield' strobilanthes
- 'El Dorado' turnera
- 'Homestead Purple' verbena
- 'Ron Deal' verbena

You can get more information on these plants at www.athensselect.com.



'Pink Knock Out' rose



'Summer Flame' alternanthera



'Tricolor' graptophyllum



'Blushing Knock Out' rose

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Questions for Lulu the Ladybug...



Last year my caladiums were beautiful. Will all of them come up this year? I don't see any leaf growth so far. Should I plant new tubers this year?

Maybe you should be patient! The soil still needs to warm up with a prolonged period of warm weather. We also haven't had a lot of rain this spring. You may get some of your caladium tubers to produce leaves this year but you probably won't get as many leaves as you did last year. Luckily caladiums are not expensive. If you want a full border of caladiums this spring and summer go to the nursery and buy a supply of tubers and plant them this year. Whatever comes up from last year is "lagniappe".

Source: "1000 Gardening Questions and Answers", The New York Times.

I have a bed of irises that has just about finished blooming. These are not Louisiana irises but plants with no name or history that I got from a friend. They produce lovely blooms. Can I divide them when they finish blooming?



Your friend must have given you some good older irises that do well here in south Louisiana if they are blooming and multiplying enough to need division. Generally irises only need to be divided every three or four years. September and October are the preferred months for doing this easy task here in our area.

Source: "Louisiana Gardener's Guide", Dan Gill and Joe White.



I received an orchid plant for Easter. How do I keep it alive? Help!

Believe it or not, most orchids are relatively easy to grow. They are more hardy than they look. There are some basic conditions that you need to be aware of when keeping your orchid in good growing condition. Your plant needs humidity, light, orchid fertilizer, and good air circulation. Many orchids will do well in the shade of a tree during warm weather. Get information about your particular orchid to learn about its preferred growing conditions. Then you can provide the best the water, fertilizer, and light conditions for your plant.

Source: "Growing Orchids is Fun". A.P. Hollingsworth.



....Shep Templet

2007 Bonne Terre Garden Fair

The 2nd annual Bonne Terre Garden Fair will be held on Saturday, May 5, 2007, at Southdown Plantation in Houma. Come join the Houma area's celebration for garden enthusiasts. This is an important fund raiser for our chapter. It's a fun and educational day for people who share a common interest, gardening.





Master Gardeners on the Geaux...

Peru

Peru, Land of the Incas, is also a land of enormous contrasts in landscapes and climates. It's long, narrow coast is a dry, rugged desert with less than an inch of precipitation per year. The highland consists of all the areas of the Andes Mountains with permanent glaciers and valleys of green grass.

As we drove along the coast, the main plant life consisted of a ring of trees surrounding an oasis and coastal farms irrigated by rivers which flow from the mountains. Almost everything else is completely bare. The mysterious Nazca Lines covering 193 miles of desert were fascinating. They are a series of geometrical forms and straight lines in the earth that depict human and animal shapes which can only be appreciated from the air.

From the coastal desert, we traveled to the Andes Mountains. There, the friendly, local people were as colorful as the crops they grew. In native dress, they sold their rainbow of produce and handmade goods in local markets. One of my biggest thrills was not the condors with 10-foot wingspans soaring overhead in Colca Canyon, but afterwards, sighting a giant hummingbird with less than a 10-inch wingspan.

The highlight of my trip was, of course, Macchu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas. High in the Andes Mountains, it is the most beautiful, well-preserved archeological site in South America. It is a 100-acre complex consisting of a palace, temples, warehouses, houses, irrigation terraces, and stairs believed to be built by the Incas around 1440 and abandoned in 1532. It was then reclaimed by the jungle until it was rediscovered in 1911. The lush green surroundings and bromeliad-covered mountainsides were gorgeous.

Peru is a beautiful country, from the deserts to the mountains. Its people, flora, and fauna are truly unique!

...Paulette Henry

European Tour

Donna Bucci and her husband Ronald recently returned from a 19 day tour of Europe. Their tour included England, France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, and Germany.

St Paul de Vence is 7 miles west of Nice, France along the Mediterranean Sea. It is an ancient village atop a cliff just outside Monaco and was built in the 16th century. It is built on a rocky outcrop and surrounded by its ramparts built on the orders of Francois St. Paul. It is certainly one of the most beautiful villages in the Provence area. It is now an artist's community which has inspired numerous famous artists, poets, and writers and some even took up residence there. St Paul de Vence was a favorite for the couple as they drank in the warm sea air and wandered through a maze of charming streets, and viewed ancient fountains, gateways, and porches.

The photo shows Donna under a flourishing cascade of deep magenta bougainvillea in St. Paul deVence.

...Donna Bucci





From the Bookworm...

column for “The Daily Advertiser” since 1994, and her articles have appeared in the Louisiana Gardener Magazine.

There are so many wonderful books that could offer inspiration right now as spring ever-so-briefly visits our area, and everyone is searching for a thrilling addition to their well-established flowerbeds. As I rummaged through the stack of notes in my newsletter folder, I ran across an e-mail from our recently departed friend and MG, Sandra Chiasson. She loved referring to a book that was on her bookshelf:

“Ornamental Gardening in Acadiana and the Gulf States” by Ann Justice with William Ellis Fletcher as consultant. Sandra once told me that Justice, who resides in Lafayette, has written a question and answer gardening

The book offers a wellspring of advice on plants that thrive in our area and their use in gardens of the coastal South. Included are wonderful question and answer sections divided by topics such as container plants and house plants and one on bulbs, rhizomes and tubers. There is a wonderful section on propagating annuals and perennials. She also offers troubleshooting information. If you are not familiar with this book, you might want to check it out to find a plant that will add some pizzazz or find out why one of your new transplants is in need to prompt attention.

...Carol Naquin



Garden Tip: I keep an old shower curtain to line the back floor of my SUV when I am buying plants, mulch, fertilizer, etc. It keeps my car clean! I just shake it out or hose it off then fold it until next time I need it.

...Donna Bucci

Herbs for the Season...Bay Leaves

Bay--*Laurus nobilis*, is in the Lauraceae family. Sweet bay is an aristocrat in the herb garden. Its noble leaves were shaped into garlands to adorn heroes and poets. Its dense shrubby growth has an unmistakable aura of its own. Bay produces glossy, bright green leaves that are both smooth and tough. In mid-summer the plant has fluffy, yellowish-white flowers, followed by small black fruit

Bay originated in the Mediterranean, in an area where winters are mild. In the South it is semi hardy, so plant bay on a sunny south or east exposure. Bay will also do great as a container plant in ordinary potting soil. You

can propagate bay by taking heel cuttings (snap tips off branches instead of using clippers). It can take from 6 to 10 months before you see roots, or you can grow bay from seed, picked fresh in spring.

Bay leaves can be used dried or fresh, whichever you prefer, in soups, stews, vegetables, and sauces. Bay leaves are also used in bouquet garni. Bay forms a beautiful and fragrant foundation for decorative wreaths, and when dried lends its spiciness and soft green color to potpourris.

...Harriett Green





Garden Tip: Good recycling tip:

Hang on to those plastic scoops that come in a box of laundry detergent. One way to reuse them is to measure chemicals in the garden. Read on the label how much product is needed. Pour that amount of water into the scoop and mark with a permanent marker. Label each scoop with the name of the product used to avoid contamination. A small hole can be drilled into the handle, and using string can be hung from the container.

...Donna Bucci

Flower Power..... Hummingbird Magnets

Yellow Cestrum

Cestrum auranticum

Huge clusters of 1-1/2" tubular yellow blooms are borne profusely throughout summer and fall on this large shrubby evergreen perennial. It is low maintenance and easy care, sun to part shade. The average mature plant size is 5-7'tall, 3-5'wide. My plants bloom year round.



Cestrum



Cuphea

Candy Corn Plant

Cuphea micropetala

This is one of the larger cupheas, known as the Giant Cigar Plant. It forms a shrub up to four feet tall, with larger flowers than *C. ignea*, despite its epithet (*micropetala* means having small petals). It is an outstanding hummingbird magnet, with orange, yellow, and white tubular flowers resembling candy corn, carried on erect to arching two-foot stems.

...Shirley Huggins



Amis de Jardin “Garden Friends”

La-Terre Master Gardener Nita Richardson



Nita Richardson grew up in an Indiana farming town of about three hundred people. Cornfields bordered her home on three sides and a crop of beans on the fourth. Reflecting on her home place she said, “Some years, they planted corn on all sides. You couldn’t see anything

but corn. Those years, we were really *Children of the Corn.*” Each summer she rode a school bus with other children to nearby farms. She and the others earned money “de-tasseling” corn. Her parents raised sheep and planted no less than one quarter of an acre in vegetables to feed their five children. Consequently, Nita’s early memories of gardening brought forth thoughts of hard work. In addition to the garden, the family farm had many fruit trees. Nita’s first glimpse into the joy of gardening was the pleasure one row of zinnias brought her mother.

After Nita earned her B.A. in theology, with a minor in music and Christian education, from Oregon Bible College in Oregon, Illinois, she worked in South Carolina. There she met a friend who was pursuing a florist license. The excitement rubbed off each week when Nita gave her friend’s daughter voice lessons. Her friend always had a new plant in her greenhouse that she couldn’t wait to show Nita. The green thumb sprouted for Nita and evidently stuck, because the May cactus her gardening friend gave her in 1981 is still thriving in her den.

Houma became her home when she married Neil Richardson. He is a partner at Beyer, Stagni and Company and will retire in August after twenty-nine years as a C.P.A. Nita worked at Ellender Insurance until she and Neil started their family. Their daughters are twenty-one and twenty-two years old. Nita remembers how she finally caught the gardening bug. When her girls were young, they always wanted to play outside. Working in the yard worked well with watching them outside. Dutch irises and day lilies are among the plants she has enjoyed growing, but she admits easy plants are her favorite. Nita strives to have something

blooming every season. Gardening is therapy for Nita. It’s an opportunity to think things through, have private time, and receive the reward of the blooms.

Nita is a charter member of the La Terre Master Gardeners and has served as secretary, a board member, and on the several committees including, bylaws, speakers, Bonne Terre Garden Fair, and Aitkens Subdivision. She has also served on the Terrebonne Horticulture Council.

In addition to her contributions to the gardening community, Nita has served as interim music director, directed youth choirs, and sang at Mulberry Baptist Church and First Baptist Church. Currently she attends First Baptist Church of Houma and sings choir specials. Her hobbies include reading self-improvement and gardening books, hiking, visiting with family, and shopping with her girls. She has a passion for music but says the accomplishments she is most proud of are her daughters, Leslie and Lindsey.

Neil and Nita plan to retire in Franklin, Tennessee this August. Tennessee was a resting point on the many trips they made back to Indiana. Year after year, they enjoyed their visit and the comments evolved from, “Isn’t this a nice place?” Or: “I could live here.” To: “I want to retire here.”

The master gardeners have given Nita good friends and an opportunity to give back through presenting programs for garden clubs, GLOW sponsored by Nicholls State University, and other events. She suggests master gardeners do projects that interest them, teach, and have fun.

A Goodbye Message from Nita

“I’ve loved living and working in Houma and felt welcome. I thought I’d live here until the day I died but God moves us around. It has been a pleasure to be part of this club. This group will be the hardest to leave because you’ve become like family.”

Lagniappe: When asked what flower Nita would be if she could chose one she said, “A Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow because it’s always changing.”

...Pamela Kopfler





Garden Tip: To deter critters from digging in your garden, lay down some chicken wire over the soil. Freshly planted seeds and bulbs will sprout right through the holes. In already established beds, place pieces of chicken wire between the plants. Mulch as usual- no more problem!

...Donna Bucci

La-Terre Master Gardeners Activities: May, 2007/November, 2007

These are the dates, presently scheduled, for La-Terre Master Gardeners. PLEASE mark your Calendars!

- 5/04/07** Set up for the Bonne Terre Garden Fair at Southdown Museum & Plantation. Information and times later.
- 5/05/07** BTGF (Bonne Terre Garden Fair) at Southdown. We need you there by 8:00 AM.
- 5/17/07** La-Terre Quarterly Meeting from 4:00-6:00 PM at the Main Library in Houma. This is a **mandatory meeting** for the election of officers for the 2007-2008 club year. Dues are due at this time and no later than the first of June. You may pay at this meeting. The Acadiana Master Gardeners, Lafayette, will be presenting a program on the Louisiana Master Gardener State Conference. They are the hosts and sponsors for the state conference.
- 5/31/07** All volunteer and continuing hours should have been turned into your Assistant Volunteer Coordinator, Judy Soignier or Lois Davis. Bobby needs this information for LSU AgCtr in Baton Rouge by June 1st. Please turn in all of your information, even if you have not completed the requirements for the year, including the Class of 2006.
- 7/19/07** La-Terre Master Gardener first quarterly meeting for the 2007-2008 club year. It will be held at the Main Library from 4:00 - 6:00 PM. Dues for the 2007-2008 club year are now overdue!
- 9/11/07** La-Terre Master Gardener second quarterly meeting for the 2007-2008 club year. It will be held at the Main Library from 4:00 - 6:00 PM.
- 10/10/07** Louisiana Master Gardener State Conference, Lafayette, LA. Begins on the evening of 10/10/07 through 10/12/07. More information forthcoming. La-Terre is in charge of registration at the conference. If you're planning on going and are willing to help, Let me know ASAP.
- 11/15/07** La-Terre Master Gardener third quarterly meeting for the 2007-2008 club year. It will be held at the Main Library from 4:00 - 6:00 PM.



Thanks for all you do to make La-Terre Master Gardeners a great organization!

...Raymonda Guidroz



From a Gardener's Kitchen...

We celebrate the life of a cook's cook, Sandra Chiasson, our recipe section staff member. Sandra was our first choice when we sought someone to take over the responsibility of our newsletter recipe page. She knew which local produce were in season and planned ahead to have recipes that were appropriate for each issue. She always had that special knack for knowing what people liked to eat here on the bayou. We miss Sandra in our family of Master Gardeners. We were fortunate to have worked with her on many projects of common interest in the community over the years.



We asked her daughter, Robin, for her mother's favorite recipe. Without hesitation she said, "That's got to be her rum cake. Everyone loved her rum cake. It is delicious!" We are pleased to publish Sandra's recipe here with her family's permission.

Mom's Rum Cake

Ingredients:

1/2 c rum (white/light rum)
1/2 c water
1/2 c oil
4 eggs
1 yellow cake mix
1 small instant vanilla pudding

Directions:

Mix all those ingredients together. Bake in bundt pan at 325 degrees for 50 minutes. While baking make your rum sauce. Pour the sauce over the hot cake in pan. Keep some sauce to pour on top. Let the cake sit until cool. Remove it from the pan and pour the remaining sauce on top of the cake.

Sauce:

1/4 c water
1/4 c rum (white/ light rum)
1 stick butter
1 c sugar

Directions:

Boil all those ingredients on stove top until all are dissolved.

...Sandra Chiasson





**“Glass in the Garden”...
Chihuly at the Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Mo.**

Glass sculptures in a botanical garden...sounds odd, doesn't it? You have to experience it. I did during the summer of 2006 when I traveled to St. Louis, MO, to the Missouri Botanical Garden to view over 30 glass sculpture installations by the famed glass artist, Dale Chihuly.

Most of the glass sculptures were placed in the Climatron, the glass conservatory which is one of the center pieces of the garden. This is a climate controlled glass house that showcases plants that are indigenous to different environments around the world. Chihuly and his team placed sculptures among the plants. The glass pieces were dramatically spotlighted for special nighttime viewing.

The multicolored blue and white chandelier in the Botanical Garden lobby, typical of Chihuly's large scale sculptures, greeted visitors at the Garden's entry building. This piece, along with the Walla Walla Onions in the reflecting pools in front of the Climatron, have been donated to the Garden by generous benefactors and remain a permanent reminder of the Chihuly glass exhibition of 2006.

Dale Chihuly was born in Tacoma, Washington in 1941. During college he was introduced to glass making as an art form. He taught and studied for many years, receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to study in Venice at the famous Venini glass factory. An unfortunate automobile accident left him blind in one eye, unable to continue glass blowing as a career. In order to continue to pursue his passion he began to develop the team concept in his artist studio. He first experienced this during his Italian studies. Over ninety people from his studio were involved in mounting this exhibition at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Dale Chihuly is represented in major museums around the world. He continues to be the preeminent glass artist of our time. Remembering his mother's love of plants and inspired by his own fascination with magnificent glass conservatories in botanical gardens around the world, he continues to place his works in botanical gardens for public viewing. www.dalechihuly.com

Fortunately, you have an opportunity to see a Chihuly exhibition in Shreveport, LA, September 23- November 30, 2007, at the Louisiana State Exhibit Museum. He will also have exhibits in Coral Gables, FL, Pittsburgh, PE, Waco, TX, and Washington, D. C. during 2007. Plan a trip. You won't be disappointed.



...Shep Templet





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MG Roy Arceneaux has set up an efficient system for growing zucchini, crookneck and patty pan squash, and tomatoes hydroponically in his suburban backyard.

