

LA-TERRE

Master Gardeners Association

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

BY: JOEL HELMER

I hope this finds you all well and rested from summer vacations. As Master Gardeners, we will look back on our summer with extreme heat and torrential rains on our minds. How many nightmares have we had watching our lawns and landscapes transfer from sun scorch to root rot. Even our great LSU Mater Gardener Handbook could not help with what Mother Nature has thrown our way. Trust me, I looked it up so many times, no rain with brown dying grass. The book said, "Water deeply for long periods of time." The next month, eighteen inches of rain with plants wilting and falling to the ground. I looked it up. The book said "Don't over water, will cause root rot." Did they not consult Mother Nature when writing the manual! The good news is we may be coming close to a cooling period. Once again we will be happy gardeners and our lawns and landscape will look just like our manual says they should. Keep the Faith.

April - Such a good month; with it comes the success of our Garden Festival. Everyone did such an outstanding job on the plant sale. I never knew plants grew legs and could walk as fast as those did. The educational displays were so busy all day. The questions were so good. I even saw research books being pulled out to make sure everyone's questions were answered correctly. The bargains were flying in our flea market. Everyone was excited about their new treasures. As always, Dan Gill wrapped up a great day of fun and education for all.

May - Let's see if I can remember. The 2011-2012 election of officers. With that being said, I would first like to thank our out-going executive board members for their dedicated service to our organization. A special thank you for entrusting me to continue to steer this ship as your President. As I reflect on the success of our past presidents, I hope I will be able to continue moving our organization in this positive direction.

As for the board, I cannot think of a better group with which to work. A special thanks to Earline Theriot, Sandra Kaul, Janice Bourgeois, Janet Baudoin, Diane Dykes and Debbie Robichaux. We thank you for your confidence in us and look forward to working with you this year.

June - The heat is on and so was Vegetable Field Day. Over 180 attended even with the temps rising. Competition was fierce this year for the biggest tomato. Sales of produce were good but the talk of the day was the delicious tomatoes. Our LSU experts put on great presentations during the day. Master Gardeners and LSU experts were happy to answer all questions during the garden tour. Food prepared from the produce was enjoyed by all. After Field Day over 1,200 pounds of produce was donated to food banks and shelters in our community. It doesn't get more rewarding than that.

I have enjoyed looking back at the fun we have shared the past few months. I look forward to the months we have ahead because I know you will be sharing them with me. In my last message I told you don't forget to stop and smell the roses. This summer I learned something from my youngest grandchild, Alexandria. Although roses are beautiful we mustn't forget to take time and also smell the Zinnias! Through a babe's eyes!



Photo submitted by: Joel Helmer



Vegetable Field Day
Photos submitted by: Joel Helmer

2011 LTMGA Meeting Dates:

September 14, 2011
November 9, 2011

All meetings will be held from 4PM-6PM at the Main Library in Houma.

APPRECIATION DAY

BY BRENDA GAUTREUX, MASTER GARDENER

On Friday, May 13th, approximately twenty LaTerre Master Gardeners boarded a bus and headed to the Hammond Research Station. There we joined hundreds of other Louisiana Master Gardeners for Appreciation Day. Several LSU AgCenter doctors were “on call” to answer our questions about plant diseases, bugs, weeds, and areas of concern. The Veggie Lady and Rain Gardener completed the field of experts.

“Sun Garden and Related Plant Highlights” was chosen as our focus for the day. We viewed several Louisiana Super Plants from 2011 (Sun Patiens, Serena Angelonias, Butterfly Pentas, ‘Shoal Creek’ Vitex) and previewed others being evaluated in the trial gardens. All plants were magnificent and it was very difficult to “flag” only two of our favorites! You may contact www.lsuagcenter.com/hammond or www.lsuagcenter.com/superplants for more information.

Visiting Master Gardeners enjoyed touring the sun gardens and were treated to lunch in the *Made in the Shade* garden. We also heard Dr. Gary Bachman, Host of Southern Gardening (FaceBook), from Mississippi State University (www.msucare.com), present *My Favorite Plants*. After seeing some of his incredible photos, they’re my favorites now too! Dr. Bachman reminded us that there are no right or wrong plants and stated, “If YOU like it, plant it!” Some of his favorites included: Echinacea, Caladium, Liriope, Coreopsis, Ornamental Peppers, Lantana, Copper Plants, Celosia, Gomphria, Ornamental Sweet Potatoes, SunPatiens, Profusion and Zahara Zinnias, Hydrangea, and Beauty Berry.

Dr. Dan Gill (www.wvl.com and “Listen Live” on WWL radio) presented “The Origin of Cultivars” complete with slides and a sound show. Yes, we heard actual rain and lightning and thunder while he spoke. (And yes, we looked hopefully out of the windows on the ride home and were elated to see a few puddles as we neared Houma!) The root of Dr. Gill’s presentation was that you cannot save and replant hybrid (or F1) seeds. Another hint: remove green shoots from variegated plants or the solid green will dominate. Of course he leaves us with the reminder to go to the LSU AgCenter’s website to learn more about Louisiana Superplants.

Don’t miss out on an opportunity to visit the Hammond Research Center in the future. My first trip will not be my last.



La-Terre Master Gardeners attending Master Gardener Appreciation Day.

Photo by: Joel Helmer



Riding the bus to Hammond for Master Gardener Appreciation Day.

Photo by: Joel Helmer



Above: Landscaping at the Senior Center

Below: Landscaping at a Habitat for Humanity house

Photos submitted by: Joel Helmer



Items of interest:

LTMGA dues are payable now. Please mail your \$12.00 dues for the 2011-2012 fiscal year to:

LTMGA
511 Roussell Street
Houma, LA 70360

July 13, 2011: LTMGA general meeting; 4:00PM-6:00PM; Main Library in Houma.

August 1, 2011: Reflections in the Garden; “Gardening Green- Low Input/ High Input” by Dan Gill
12:00PM-1:00PM
Burden Center (4560 Essen Lane, Baton Rouge)
Admission- \$5.00; bring your own lunch

August 6, 2011: Plant sale at New Orleans Botanical Gardens Pelican Greenhouse
9:00AM-12:00PM

September 3, 2011: Plant sale at New Orleans Botanical Gardens Pelican Greenhouse
9:00AM-12:00PM

September 14, 2011: LTMGA general meeting; 4:00PM-6:00PM
Main Library in Houma

September 24-25, 2011: Fun Family Weekend at Burden Center
8:30AM-5:00PM
Corn maze, hayrides, and more fun

October 3, 2011: Reflections in the Garden; “Cool Colors for Fall Gardens” by Bill Rountree
12:00PM-1:00PM
Burden Center, Baton Rouge
Admission- \$5; bring your own lunch

October 8, 2011: Old-fashioned Roses at Hodges Gardens State Park
1000 Hodges Loop, Florien, LA 71429
9:30AM

November 7, 2011: Reflections in the Garden; “Bringing in Mother Nature Inside for the Holidays” by Emily Stich
12:00PM-1:00PM
Burden Center, Baton Rouge
Admission- \$5; bring your own lunch

My View from the Camera Lens

by: Carlotta Matherne

It's that time again. Time for another Master Gardener function that is important enough to require our remembering it with photographs. I'm glad I was asked to again be the club photographer for the day and I was honored to be entrusted with this responsibility. It's also a fun job.

The day before our "big do" I've checked my two cameras out thoroughly and charged my three batteries fully. I had to make sure I had enough power to take me through the entire event.

I always try to get a good shot of something that will sum up what our purpose for that day is all about as my opening picture. Sometimes the light will not be right at the outset of our event and I have to make a mental note to go back to it when a more advantageous setting is available.

I get to walk around the event the entire time, visit with all of you, and try to catch all of you doing your assigned tasks while not realizing I am snapping away. The candid shots always seem the best to me, except for the times when I can capture some of you cutting up for a good fun shot.

All your personalities show up through the camera lens. When you see me coming, the shy ones pretend they don't see me put the camera up to my face. The outgoing will usually grace me with a big smile. The accommodating ones will help me along by giving me a nice "busy" pose. I appreciate all of these. I have a camera favorite. No matter what she wears her bright personality shows through. I'll let you all keep guessing who that might be.

If I'm fortunate enough to continue doing this job in the future you should be on your guard. You never know when I'll be coming around to get an unexpected shot of YOU at your best—you hope! You never know when you'll turn up in the local paper. Happy Gardening to all.



Master Gardeners (Janet Baudoin, Audrey Fournier, and Earline Theriot) and Betty Breaux attended Thibodaux Garden Club's Tour of Gardens.



Master Gardener, Kayla Rhodes, attended the New Orleans Hibiscus Show

END OF THE GARDEN

Kathleen Cuneo, Master Gardener

Our garden at the USDA is suffering the effects of the intense heat and the frequent rain.

So, we are in the process of pulling up the spent plants and salvaging the remaining edible produce. We have been blessed with an abundance of vegetables and our community organizations that are in need have been blessed in turn. The land will be plowed and allowed to lay fallow for a season - awaiting the time for replanting.

"There is an appointed time for everything...
A time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant."
Ecclesiastes 3:1-2



Photo submitted by Kathleen Cuneo



Cheryl Skinner did a "Square Foot Gardening" presentation for the Cajun Pepas organization in April.

Master Gardeners pictured left-right: Cheryl Skinner, Janet Baudoin, Audrey Fournier, Brenda Boudreaux, Marjorie Hodson, and Earline Theriot

Photo submitted by Earline Theriot

Tips for You... and Your Taste Buds Too

Master Gardener Recipes:

Squash Custard

1 box of yellow cake mix (any kind); mix to package directions. *Except:* Use 6 egg yolks (set aside egg whites for meringue).
3 medium white squash (patty pan) or yellow squash; boil and drain well
1 large can evaporated milk (12oz.)
1-2 teaspoons banana extract

Mix all ingredients well with mixer- a hand mixer will do fine.
 Grease, or spray, sheet cake pan.
 Bake at 350 degrees until toothpick test denotes done. (I find 30 minutes at 350 and then 20 minutes at 300 degrees works well in my oven).

Standard Meringue:

Use **egg whites** that were set aside.
 Add:
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla

Bake at 300 degrees for about 12 minutes. Let cool. Very good after refrigeration.

-recipe submitted by Carlotta Matherne

Eggplant Casserole

1 lb ground beef
1 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup tomato sauce
1 cup peeled & coarsely chopped potatoes
1 1/2 cup peeled & coarsely chopped eggplant
3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
2 eggs
1 cup plain greek yogurt

In a skillet, cook beef and onion until meat is browned and onion is tender. Drain off excess fat. Stir in eggplant, potatoes, tomato sauce, chili powder, nutmeg, salt, and garlic powder. Simmer, covered, for 20 minutes or until potatoes and eggplant are tender. Stir in cheese.
 Spoon into a 1 1/2 quart casserole dish. Beat together eggs and yogurt; spoon atop eggplant mixture.
 Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes, or until top is set.
 Sprinkle with parsley.
 Makes 6 servings.

-recipe submitted by Marcella Konos

Vegetable Tips:

Cabbage: to absorb cabbage odor while cooking, place a small cup of vinegar on the range, or add a wedge of lemon to the pot.

Cauliflower: to keep cauliflower white, add a little milk during boiling.

Carrots: Remove the tops of carrots before storing. The tops drain the carrots of moisture, making them limp and dry.

Tips submitted by: Marcella Konos

Gardening Tips: July *

Vegetables to plant include cantaloupes, collards, okra, peanuts, pumpkins, southern peas, and squash. Plant transplants of eggplants and hot peppers. Plant seeds in small pots to grow transplants of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, bell peppers and tomatoes that you can set out later.

Harvest herbs regularly to keep the plants shapely and under control.

Avoid widespread use of herbicides to kill broadleaf weeds in the lawn. High temperatures increase the chance of damaging the grass.

Keep colorful flower beds well groomed and weed free. Try to deadhead often to encourage continued flowering.

Gardening Tips: August *

Vegetables to plant include seeds or transplants of bell peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, bunching onion sets, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, collards, cucumbers, lima beans, mustards, snap beans, Southern peas, peppers, shallots, squash, tomatoes, and turnips.

If needed, may dig and divide Louisiana irises and calla lilies.

Prune ever-blooming roses about 1/3 their height in late August. Remove any dead canes and weak, spindly growth.

Watch for chinch bug damage in lawns, especially St. Augustine grass. Look for enlarging areas of brown, straw-like grass. Treat with an insecticide labeled for chinch bugs and follow directions carefully.

Begin to order spring-flowering bulbs from catalogs for delivery in October.

Gardening Tips: September *

Plant transplants of broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage. Plant seeds of broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, Chinese cabbage, cabbage, collards, mustard, kale, and turnips. Plant seeds of squash, cucumbers, bush snap beans, and bush lima beans. Plant transplants of tomatoes and peppers. Plant sets of shallots and bunching onions and small, whole Irish potatoes in early September.

Water pecan trees regularly if there's not at least one good rain a week. A drought now will cause the trees to drop green pecans.

Do not apply fertilizers containing nitrogen to most landscape plants after September. May reduce the hardness of some plants and promote winter injury.

Landscape shade trees should be carefully evaluated to make sure they are in good shape since it is hurricane season.

* All monthly gardening tips were taken from the Get It Growing calendar published by the LSU AgCenter.

Master Gardeners are reminded to report your volunteer hours online. If you cannot report hours online, please forward information to:

Janet Baudoin (Lafourche/Assumption)
jefb159@yahoo.com

or

Diane Dykes (Terrebonne/St.Mary)
tommydiane@earthlink.net

If you or someone you know would like to be a Master Gardener, please contact Barton Joffrion at bjoffrion@agcenter.lsu.edu or 985-873-6495. New classes begin in January.

LTMGA newsletter contributors:

Kathleen Cuneo, Cheryl Skinner, Brenda Gautreaux, Carlotta Matherne, Chuck and Joel Helmer, Earline Theriot, Kayla Rhodes, and Marcella Konos.

LTMGA newsletter editors:

Kathleen Cuneo, Brenda Gautreaux, and Cheryl Skinner

If you have any item that you would like to see added into the fall newsletter, please email Kathleen Cuneo at kathleencuneo@att.net or Cheryl Skinner at ussatlanta@yahoo.com. The deadline for submissions is October 15, 2011.