



**Master
Gardener™**

An educational program of the LSU AgCenter

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. TAMMANY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 4

April, 2010

NORTHSHORE GARDEN SHOW & PLANT SALE: SPRING AND WINTER IN ONE WEEKEND

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For the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our Web site:
www.lsuagcenter.com



Visitors to the Plant Show on Saturday, March 20, enjoyed a beautiful spring day for garden shopping. On Sunday, winter returned with windy, cold temperatures. A.J. Heinsz-Bailey and Joan Gagliano take a break at the "barn" on Saturday. On Sunday, Rusty Batty, Jim Mizzell and A.J. Heinsz-Bailey, try to stay warm.



Dan Gill spoke about Colorful and Evergreen Plants for the Garden.



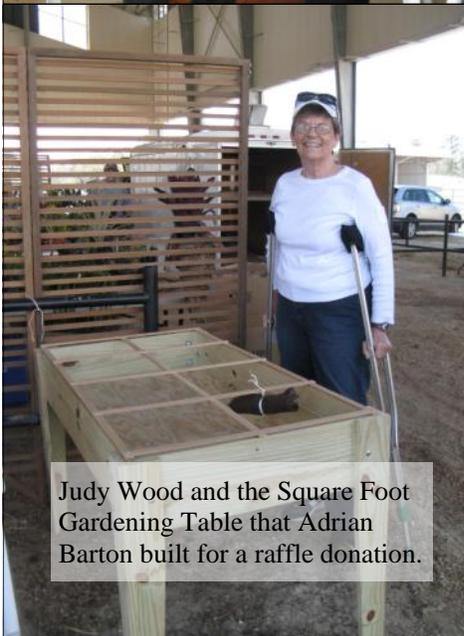
Debi Bowman and Judy Wood work the MG table.



Chris McNeely, Ruthanne Johnson, Libby Fontenot and Joan Gagliano work the Raffle Table.



Donna Dicharry brings her donations to the MG Plant Booth.



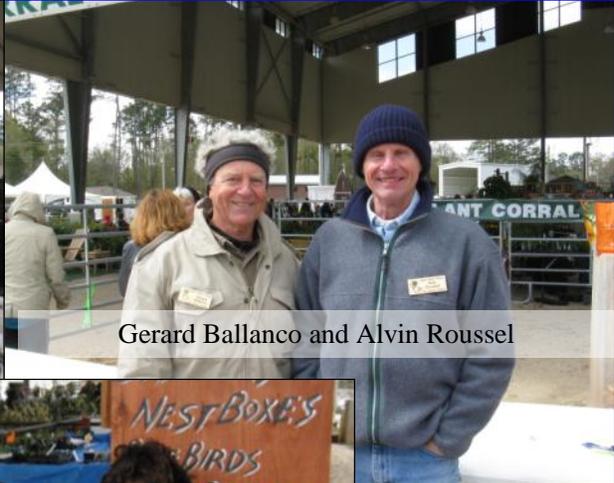
Judy Wood and the Square Foot Gardening Table that Adrian Barton built for a raffle donation.



Catherine Lynch, Pam Keating, Julie Deus and Boo Bordes work the MG Plant Booth.



Denise Stearns and Pete Pericone



Gerard Ballanco and Alvin Roussel



Barbara Moore tries to stay warm at the MG Booth.



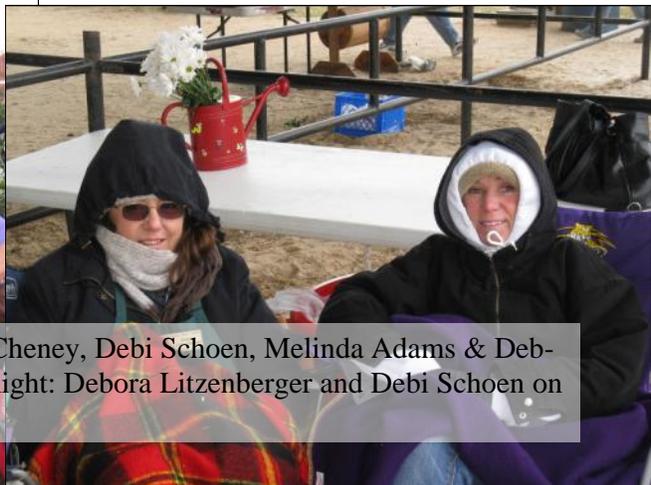
Guess who under all those clothes? Glenda Nanz



Donna Brown, Rodney Cross, Nancy Berulis and Julie Deus brave the cold to work parking on Sunday.



Spring to Winter: Left: Lisann Cheney, Debi Schoen, Melinda Adams & Debora Litzenberger on Saturday. Right: Debora Litzenberger and Debi Schoen on Sunday.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

“The Master Gardeners were everywhere. I had to beat them off with a stick,” said Pat Newman of Folsom Nursery.

Now that's a fine mental image. She really meant it as a compliment. I heard similar comments repeatedly from the vendors.

We have a reputation of putting on **the** most vendor-friendly Plant Show in the state. They look forward to coming to our Covington show because they know they'll do well, several told me.

And our reputation doesn't just stop at our annual Plant Show.



A project that was struggling because only one member was trying to keep it going has seen new life. The Slidell Memorial Hospital Rehab Garden is being reworked with new plants and even some bird feeders. Leslie Landeche, chair and Keith Knight could use some more help. Give them a call. They work the garden each Tuesday.

Our Herb Demonstration Garden at the Slidell Library has gone from a garden of dead and dying plants to one that is thriving. In addition to just the plants, on Tuesday April 13th from 4 – 7 pm, this committee of Master Gardeners will host their second annual Spring Herb Festival in partnership with the Slidell Library. If you would like to participate or lend a hand, contact Nancy Berulis or Betty Rose.

A new project, the Lacombe Butterfly Garden, on the grounds of, and co-sponsored by, the US Fish and Wildlife Service Lacombe Centre is set for groundbreaking on April 16th from 10 – 2. It will be groundbreaking in the literal sense since we will be preparing the ground. Call Denise Stearns if you can help. It is BYOT (Bring Your Own Tools).

Our spring and fall seminars have sold out.

All of our other committees and projects are going strong.

With all of this success and growth we have decisions to make. What are the duties of the MGs in these projects? Where should the project coordinators look for funding? What should the goals of these projects be? Should the MGs have an ongoing responsibility after the project is established? We have set up an ad hoc committee to deal with these questions. The committee will present its recommendations in the near future for our consideration on these and many more points. Rodney Cross and Judy Wood have agreed to serve on this committee.

Hope to see you all at the meeting.

Art
folsomart@bellsouth.net

**Azaleas
by
Rusty Batty**

Planting and Bed Preparation

One of the most important considerations for optimum performance of azaleas in landscape settings is proper bed preparation. Provide a loose, very well-drained soil. Most native soil in Louisiana is clay based. Amend clay soils with sand and a generous supply of organic matter, preferably pine bark. It is also recommended to raise the landscape bed 4 to 6 inches. Surface and internal drainage are critical.



Maintaining an ideal soil pH is also critical to azaleas success. The recommended pH for azaleas is 5.0-6.0, with 5.0-5.5 being ideal. Non- Indian azaleas are more susceptible to problems caused by improper pH than are Indian varieties. Soil pH needs to be determined by conducting a soil test. Organic matter additions may modify soil pH, so conduct a soil test after preparing the landscape bed. Many Louisiana soils need to have the pH lowered with elemental sulfur, aluminum sulfate or ammonium sulfate to grow azaleas successfully.

When planting, set the azalea plants in the hole no deeper than they were growing in the original container. If properly mulched, azaleas can be planted even 1 to 2 inches higher than the soil grade of the landscape used.

Fertilization



Azaleas need regular fertilization to perform well. Fertilize azaleas in late winter/early spring with an azalea –camellia fertilizer or a general use ornamental slow-release fertilizer. A recommended fertilizer rate 1-2 lbs of nitrogen per 1000 square feet of bed area. Broadcast the fertilizer over the bed area, or divide the fertilizer equally among the plants in the bed. Foliar applications of iron or application of a granular fertilizer containing iron, such as Ironite, may be needed when soil pH leads to deficiencies.

Mulching and Irrigation

Azaleas are a very shallow-rooted plant. If planted “high” in a landscape bed, they must be properly mulched to conserve soil moisture. Excellent mulches for azaleas are pine straw needles, pine straw shavings, cypress mulch and pine bark mulch. Leaves and compost can also be used. A proper mulch not only conserves soil moisture (reducing the frequency and amount of irrigation needed), but also increases the aesthetics of a planting, suppresses weed growth, adds organic matter to the soil and minimizes soil temperature fluctuations.

Irrigate azaleas during dry periods at the rate of 0.5-1.0 inch weekly. It’s best to water infrequently and deeply than water frequently and shallowly. Be sure to know the quality of irrigation water used on azaleas. Azaleas are sensitive to irrigation water of poor quality—water with undesirable alkalinity, sodium and chlorine levels.

Major azaleas pruning should be completed soon after flowering is over in early spring. Remove a small amount of wood annually by thinning out tall spindly canes instead of delaying until more severe pruning is required. Indica-type azaleas generally require more regular pruning than other varieties. Remember to have a reason to prune before beginning.



Hi Everyone,

The windburn from Sunday has subsided. The body core temperature is back to normal so I would like to thank everyone who participated in the plant show this past weekend. The attendance was down a little mostly due to the economy and Thor the wind god. I now know what it feels like to be sand blasted. The first day of Spring was not what I had ordered. I do think this was the best ever plant show for the number of master gardeners who rendered their services. You guys were incredible. I was amazed how easy everything fell into place. Robin, thanks for the husband loan. Rusty is always there for everyone's needs. We will have evaluations ready soon.

Due to the excessive cold and wet winter I have been busy with other endeavors. I had a calf in the laundry for a week. I went to Maryland for the heaviest snows in the last 100 years. I have volunteered all over the parish. Now is the time to set aside all things not pertaining to the garden. IT IS TIME TO DIG IN AND PLANT!!!!!!

I have found a kindred spirit in an author named David Masumoto. He has an organic farm of 80 acres in California. His philosophy mirrors how I enjoy the gardening experience in my soil system. Have you ever noticed when you garden you use all of your senses. You can ID your plants by smell. Each one is very distinctive. You can id the birds by sound before you even see them. Cedar waxwings, cardinals, crows, blue jays and white throated sparrows are everywhere but seldom seen. Sweet olive is smelled before you see the shrub. The soil in the garden smells rich and earthy ready for growing. Unfortunately, there are also smells we would not rather have associated with the gardening experience also. I procured tomato plants from Gaynell, Gerard, Janice, and Don. These test subjects will be my entries for the June tomato tasting. They are sitting on the floor in the kitchen waiting for Mother Nature to come to her senses.

The blueberries are blooming. The greens and lettuces are ready for repeated harvests. The majority of plants are ready to break dormancy. Spring fever is upon us. Get on the gloves and pull out the seeds. It's going to be another challenging season. longing to be back in the garden aj



A.J. Heinsz-Bailey, bundled up for the cold weather, assists Joan Gagliano with the raffle drawing on Sunday.



Discover what's inside »



Second Annual

Spring Herb Festival

***Tuesday, April 13, 2010
Slidell Library Herb Garden
4 to 7 PM***

Children's Activities

Plant a miniature herb garden to take home

Herbal Foods for Tasting

Teas, dips, and other foods using herbs / recipes provided

Make an Herbal Sports Soak

Supplies provided to make and take home ingredients for a relaxing soak in the tub

Ask the Expert

How to grow and use herbs

Growing and Using Herbs

4:30 to 5:00 Establishing an Herb Garden - Linda Franzo

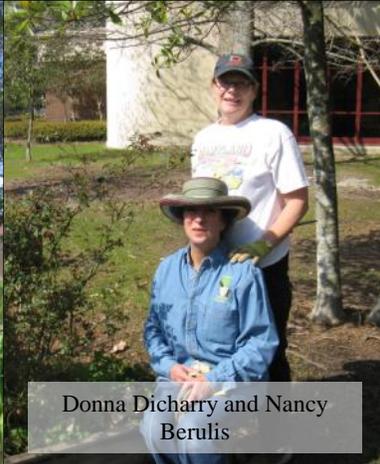
5:15 to 5:45 "Spring Cleaning" to a Healthy Body - Michelle Hall

6:00 to 6:30 Everything about Dill – Cooking Demonstration – Linda Franzo

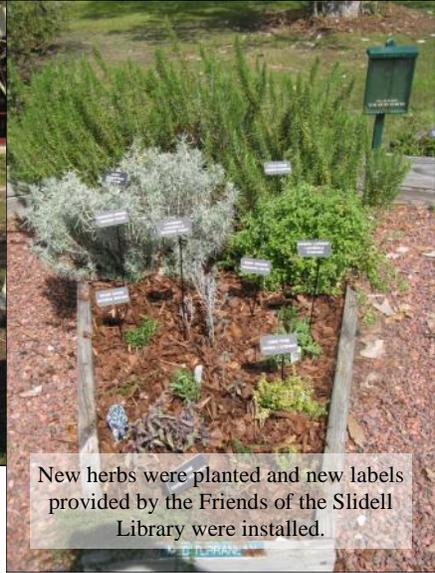
The Herb Committee of the St Tammany Parish Master Gardeners LSU Ag Center
Nancy Berulis, June Taffaro, Betty Rose, Barbara Blaga, Donna Dicharry, Hazel Harod, Ruthanne Johnson,
Debra Litzberger, Camille Schwandt, Denise Stearns, Deborah Turton, Judy Wood

The Friends of the Slidell Library

Linda Franzo - Passionate Platter
Michelle Hall – Ruby's Natural Foods



Donna Dicharry and Nancy Berulis



New herbs were planted and new labels provided by the Friends of the Slidell Library were installed.

Work Day at the Slidell Library Herb Garden March 23



Betty Rose



Judy Wood, Linda Franzo and June Taffaro



Deborah Turton



Hazel Harrod

Pine Island Rookery Birding

Sunday, April 18 – 4:30 PM to 8:00 PM

\$35 (Includes Wine & Cheese)

Here is the information on our field trip to Pine Island. More information can be found online at www.northlakenature.org. Registration deadline is April 7. You can register online or by mail with the form on the next page.

There is a private pocket of birding heaven on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Just east of the Tchefuncte River between Madisonville and Ponchatoula, lies a 3,000-acre private wildlife preserve called Pine Island. Along with an abundance of native flora, Pine Island is home to thousands of roosting birds and is a naturalist's dream come true.

Pine Island is the legacy of a logging operation once located in Madisonville. Cypress logging ceased at Pine Island nearly a century ago. Since then, the family which, until recently, owned the property, has assured that nature take precedence in the area and has maintained Pine Island as a wildlife refuge. The current owner continues that tradition. Today the private property is closed to the public, but birders with the Great Louisiana BirdFest are offered a rare glimpse into this lovely habitat.

You will drive through pines and mixed hardwoods, ending at the 300-acre man-made lake housing one of the south's largest rookeries. You can both bird the wooded areas abutting the levees looking for residents and neotropical migrants and enjoy the view of the many birds nesting in the rookery. Then, as dusk settles over the swamp, thousands of birds, including egrets, herons, ibis, Anhinga and more, fly in for an evening's rest. From the levee, the sight of these incoming birds is truly spectacular. The birding trip will remain at the rookery until sunset.

Pine Island is the perfect trip for the novice or the experienced birder. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to visit this ecological gem. While on this trip, you can get some beautiful photos of the rookery in addition to enjoying excellent birding if you bring your camera. For good shots of individual nesting birds, a long lens is needed, but any camera will give you memorable pictures of the scene.

Easy to moderate walking to bird wooded edges of the levee optional.

Wintering Birds: Pied-billed Grebe, Bald Eagle,

Residents and Breeding Birds: Double-crested Cormorant, Anhinga, Great Blue, Tricolored, Yellow-crowned Night, Black-crowned Night, Green, and Little Blue Herons; Cattle, Great and Snowy Egrets; White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill (one year), Wood Duck, Black and Turkey Vultures; Wild Turkey (one year), Purple Gallinule, Common Moorhen, Caspian Tern, Great-horned and Barred Owl; Red-bellied and Downy Woodpecker; Great-crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Fish Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Blue Gray Gnatcatcher, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated-, Pine-, and Prothonotary- Warblers; Boat-tailed Grackle, and more.

Possible Migrants: Osprey, raptors, warblers, tanagers, orioles and buntings.

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P.O. Box 8511, Mandeville, Louisiana 70470

Great Louisiana BirdFest 2010 Registration Form

Registrants with same address:

1. _____ Address: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
2. _____ City: _____
3. _____ Daytime Phone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____
4. _____ E-mail: _____

(for registrants at different addresses, please send multiple forms) (Confirmations sent by email whenever possible)

	Date / Time / Event	Registrant #				Total tickets	Non-members	NNC Members	Amount
		1	2	3	4				
Friday, April 16, 2010									
1	6:15 am - 12:00 pm						X \$40	X \$36	= \$
2	2:30 pm - 8:00 pm						X \$50	X \$45	= \$
3	5:30 pm - 9:00 pm						X \$20	X \$18	= \$
Saturday, April 17, 2010									
4	6:30 am - 9:30 am						X \$20	X \$18	= \$
5	4:00 pm - 7:30 pm						X \$40	X \$36	= \$
Sunday, April 18, 2010									
6	6:30 am - 9:30 am						X \$30	X \$32	= \$
7	12:30 - 3:00 pm						X \$35	X \$32	= \$
8	4:30 pm - 8:00 pm						X \$35	X \$32	= \$
	T-Shirt (specify size, Med, LG, XL)						X \$15	X \$15	= \$
	Patch						X \$5	X \$4	= \$
	Registration Fee (to defer name tag & other costs)						X \$5	X \$5	= \$
NNC Membership (if desired) Select membership category below and enter amount here.									\$
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED									\$

Northlake Nature Center Membership Categories: Student \$10 _____; Sr. Citizen \$10 _____; Individual \$15 _____;
 Family \$25 _____; Ecologist \$100 _____; Preservationist \$250 _____;
 Conservationist \$500 _____; Naturalist/Sponsor \$1,000 _____

Credit card payments: _____ VISA _____ MasterCard _____ Name on Card: _____
 Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: ____/____/____
 Signature: _____

Make checks payable to, and mail to: Northlake Nature Center, P.O. Box 8511, Mandeville, LA 70470-8511



Hammond Research Station
invites

Louisiana Master Gardeners
to a

Private Garden Stroll

Friday, May 7th 9 a.m. – noon

*Come see the largest herbaceous ornamental
plant trial in Louisiana!*

Over 400-500 different blooming plants in one location!

LSU AgCenter experts on hand to answer your questions!

Guest Speaker - Dan Gill

*Introducing the
"Louisiana Super Plants" program
10 a.m. and 11 a.m.*

Complimentary lunch served at noon

Hammond Research Station
21549 Old Covington Hwy. Hammond, LA 985-543-4125
www.lsuagcenter.com/Hammond

This is an event for Master Gardeners ONLY! NO guests. Wear your name tag. Call or email Rusty by May 1 to make your reservation. They need to know how many are attending to plan for lunch.

Bring your diseased, bug-eaten plants and pesky weeds. The following experts will be there to answer your questions:

Dale Pollet - Insects

Don Ferrin - Diseases

Ron Strahan - Weeds

Kathryn Fontenot - School and Community Gardens

LMG2010 Conference Overview

The annual state conference for the Louisiana Master Gardeners will be held in West Monroe from April 29-May 1, 2010, at the West Monroe Convention Center. Every adventure “*Through the Garden Gate*” offers new experiences that sustain the desires for more knowledge and stimulation from the world of gardening. The 2010 conference will address a wide array of interests, leaving everyone excited about continuing their journey “*Through the Garden Gate*.”

The conference is sponsored by the Northeast Louisiana and North Central Louisiana Master Gardener associations.

Our panel of instructors and speakers will include national, regional and local specialists on topics ranging from companion plantings, plant propagation, urban wildlife, native plants, hands-on projects, gardening history, wine making and much more. The conference will consist of five breakout sessions, each consisting of four classroom educational programs and one hands-on demonstration. Complementing the sessions will be our keynote speakers: **Joe Lamp’l**, host of two national television shows: GardenSMART on PBS and DIY Network’s Fresh from the Garden; **Dan Gill**, LSU AgCenter horticulturist, author and media personality; **Jenny Rose Carey**, director of the Landscape Arboretum on the Temple University Ambler Campus and adjunct professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Horticulture.

The conference will also offer educational displays, garden products and plant vendors, two socials, a silent auction, Master Gardener store and an opportunity to visit the Biedenharn Museum and Gardens and the Biedenharn Coca-Cola Museum. The ELSong garden is referred to as “Best Garden You’ve Never Heard of” by *Southern Living*, July 2009. Visit the Web sites www.bmuseum.org and www.biedenharncoca-colamuseum.com for a preview.

The conference is open to all Louisiana Master Gardeners and their guests. **Early Registration fee for the conference is \$110. After March 31, 2010, the fee is \$150.** Conference registration includes all educational programs, conference meals (excluding breakfast at motels), hospitality refreshments, vendor/exhibit area and socials (Thursday, Welcoming/Exhibitor and Friday, Kiroli Park Fish Fry and Entertainment).

To register and learn more about LMG2010, please explore our Web site. Please contact Steven Hotard at 318-323-2251 or e-mail if you have additional questions.

http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/lawn_garden/master_gardener/LMG+State+Conference/



AGENDA for April 21, 2010 General Meeting

1-Call to order & report quorum present

2-Opening ceremonies

3-Award Door Prize(s) (none this month due to plant swap)

4-Minutes from previous meeting

5-Officer's reports

-Treasurer – Dianne Ramirez

6-Committee Reports

-Plant Show – AJ Heinsz-Bailey

7-Project Coordinator Reports

8- Comments by Rusty (County Agent/ MG Adviser)

9- Unfinished business

10- New Business

11- Announcements

12- Program – Plant Swap

13- Adjournment

If you want to place an item on the agenda, please let Nancy Berulis, our recording secretary, know (phone: 643-8813 or email: nberulis@bellsouth.net) by the Thursday before the meeting.

March Meeting Highlights



Camille Schwandt, Don Lefevre, Janey Lively, Donna Dicharry and Lisa Lawrence are regular attendees at the meeting.



Christy Paulsell and Tom Cuccia won the doorprizes, beautiful baskets of petunias.



Rod Downie and Glenda Nanz gave a presentation on Pine Island for our upcoming tour.

Volunteer News

Hours:

Be sure to record your volunteer hours and education hours from the Plant Show. If you have any trouble recording your hours, contact Judy Wood at jazzwood@charter.net.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Bayou Lacombe Centre` Butterfly Garden:

Denise Stearns, Chairman of the Butterfly Garden, announces the first work day will be April 16 from 10 - 2 at Southeast Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters at 61389 Hwy 434 in Lacombe. From 1-12 take exit 74 south toward Lacombe, go about 2.5 miles, the refuge entrance is on the right. Bring a sack lunch; Denise will provide drinks. Bring your gardening tools and sun-screen.

Slidell Herb Festival:

The 2nd Annual Slidell Herb Festival is April 13 from 4 -7 p.m. Anyone interested in helping the day of the festival, contact Nancy Berulis at nberulis@bellsouth.net .

Fun Activity:

Be sure to come to the next meeting on April 21. We will be having a plant swap. It's a lot of fun and you can replenish some of the plants you lost during our long, cold winter. Just look at the haul from the last plant swap in October:



April, 2010

- 13 Slidell Library Herb Festival @ Slidell Library Herb Garden 4-7 p.m.
555 Robert Blvd. *See pg 7*
- 16 Work day at Bayou Lacombe Butterfly Garden. 10 - 2. Bring tools and a sack lunch, drinks will be provided. Southeast Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters, 61389 Hwy 434, Lacombe, LA
- 18 Pine Island tour. 4:30-8:00 P.M. www.northlakenature.org Must pre-register online or by mail. \$35/person. Photography lecture & wine and cheese. *See pg. 9*
- 21 Abbreviated meeting and plant swap at the Fairgrounds big barn, 10:00 a.m.
- 29-May 1* LMG2010 annual state conference in Monroe, LA. "Through the Garden Gate".
See flier on page 12

May, 2010

- 7 Open House exclusively for all Louisiana Master Gardeners at the LSU AgCenter Experiment Station, Hammond Research Station, 21549 Old Covington Hwy, Hammond, LA 9 a.m. until 12 noon. Reservations only for Master Gardeners. RSVP to Rusty. Wear Name Tags! Lunch provided. *See page 11*
- 19 9 a.m. Scholarship committee meeting prior to regular meeting. AgCenter.
- 19 10 a.m. Monthly meeting with guest speaker, Lynette Westfarms, on rust resistant daylilies. Presentation of Bobby Fletcher, Jr. Scholarships. Potluck

June, 2010

- 16 10 a.m. Monthly meeting at the National Guard Bldg.

STMGA Directory

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Notes from the Editor:

Spring is finally here! I hope you are enjoying the sunshine and getting your hands dirty. This is the most wonderful time of year for gardeners.

The Plant Show was lots of fun despite the cold weather on Sunday. That was definitely a bonding experience! If anyone has photos to add to the online photo album, just email them to me and I will put them online with mine.

There was no gardening article from a member this month. I hope you will consider writing an article on a favorite gardening topic for the newsletter. Write a review of a lecture, or even a new gardening product. Please help me make this an informative, interesting newsletter and also earn those last few hours you may need to fulfill your volunteer requirement.

The deadline for the May newsletter will be April 28.

Debora Litzenberger
dklitz@charter.net



THE GARDENGOER

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ST. TAMMANY MASTER
GARDENERS ASSOCIATION**

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