



An educational program of the LSU AgCenter

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

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3

March, 2010

### GROW YOUR OWN GROCERIES SEMINAR



“Grow Your Own Groceries” Committee: Dennis Koepp, Sandy Arnoult, Boo Bordes, Julie Deus, Chairman, Sandra Pecoraro, and Penelope Gilles.

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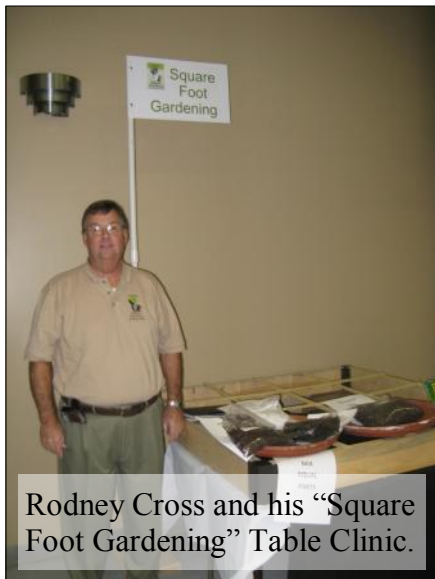
On February 24, our newest Master Gardener Class presented a seminar at the Bogue Falaya Room in Covington. The event was sold out with approximately 175 people attending. The presentations included: Alan Vaughn, Plaquemine and St. Bernard County Agent, “Citrus...Orange You Glad You Can Grow It”; Dr. Dale Pollet, Entomology Specialist, “Home Gardens Preparation and Management”; Mr. Ed Dawson, Waldheim Blueberry Orchard and Nursery, “Blueberries for St. Tammany Parish”; Dr. Kiki Fontenot, Home Gardening Specialist, “Vegetable Gardening for Beginners”; and Kathy Mauthe, Tangipahoa Parish, Family Consumer Scientist, “Fresh Food: Storing and Preserving”. Table Clinics on Square Foot Gardening, Composting, Soil Testing, All About Seeds and Ask An Expert were available for attendees to ask questions and see demonstrations. If you attended all of the presentations, you earned **5 educational credits!**



Dr. Kiki Fontenot, Home Gardening Specialist



Debi Schoen gets advice at the "Ask An Expert" Table Clinic from Kathy Mauthe, Tangipahoa Parish, Family Consumer Specialist.



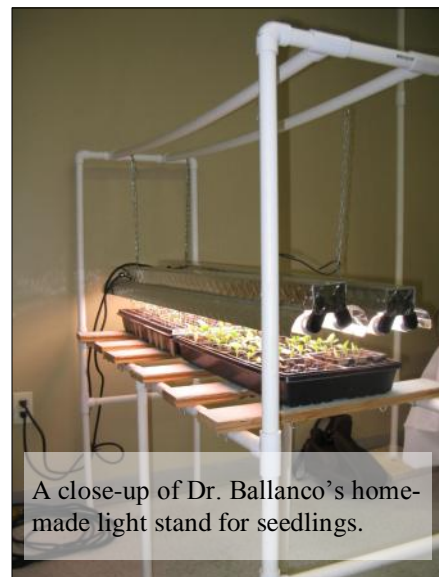
Rodney Cross and his "Square Foot Gardening" Table Clinic.



Dr. Dale Pollet, Entomology Specialist and Alan Vaughn, County Agent



Dr. Gerard Ballanco and his "All About Seeds" Table Clinic.

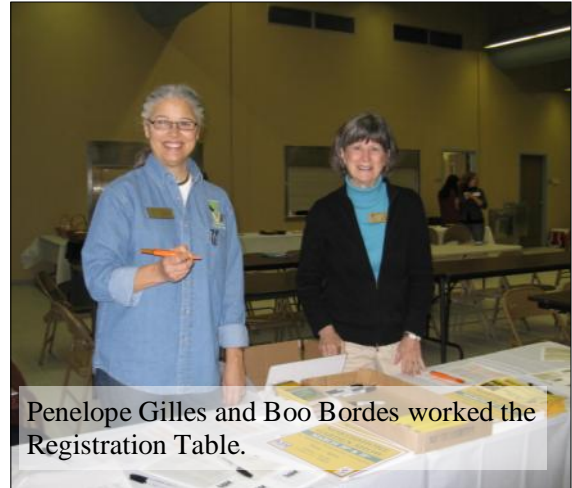


A close-up of Dr. Ballanco's home-made light stand for seedlings.





A full house at the seminar!



Penelope Gilles and Boo Bordes worked the Registration Table.



Linda Deslatte and Ruthanne Johnson worked the Composting Table Clinic.



Art Scott, President, Julie Deus, Chairman, and Rusty Batty, LSU AgCenter County Agent



Janice Roussel, Art Scott and Liz Scott



Judy Wood, seminar advisor

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of my first landscaping projects when we moved to Folsom was to remove three large, beautiful oleander shrubs right next to our deck.

This was because children have been poisoned by sucking the nectar from oleander flowers. Eating the leaves can be fatal to pets, livestock and humans. Even the smoke from burning the stems, roots and leaves can cause symptoms.

The Master Gardeners of St. Tammany recently received a request from the Slidell Library for help with a teen's edible flower garden. The teens would do the work. We are requested to provide a few talks on planting and cultivating practices that would help the garden be a success.

I hope we have an expert on edible flowers amongst us. If you can help, contact AJ (email: [ajjim@hotmail.com](mailto:ajjim@hotmail.com) or 985-898-3567)

I am far from an expert on edible flowers, but have been growing a few for a number of years.

When our grandkids visit, we stress that not all flowers, leaves and berries are edible. They are told not to eat anything unless Mimi or Gramps tells them it's ok.

It is just natural for kids to imitate us by grazing on flowers or leaves as we wander about our vegetable and flower gardens.

We also caution them about taking their newfound knowledge to other gardens or nurseries and eating flowers that may have recently been sprayed or had a systemic insecticide applied.

I have found that most ornamental flowers are not really tasty. I use them more as a visual treat to brighten up a dish or salad. A few exceptions include nasturtiums, the flowers of herbs, and especially the flower petals of the pineapple guava....most delicious flower I have ever tried.

Happy grazing.

Art  
[folsomart@bellsouth.net](mailto:folsomart@bellsouth.net)



## March Mowing and Maintenance

By

Rusty Batty

Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines. Regular mowing is just around the corner. For some folks that may be a warning to take an early and long vacation. For others, it's a signal to shop for the latest mega-horsepower mower. Still others are anxious to stretch one more year out of there great, great, grandfathers, slightly smoking, push mower.

In any case the grass is growing and it will need mowing. Keep these tips in mind as March mowing begins.

- Service your engine. For do it yourselfers change the oil, spark plug and air filters. Sharpen or install new blades. Tighten nuts and bolts. Lubricate all moving parts. For everyone else, including your neighbor, bring your mower to the local small engine repair shop.
- Do not fertilize your lawn now. Target dates to fertilize are April 15 for St. Augustine, Bermuda, and Zoysia. Wait till May 1<sup>st</sup> for centipede. Early fertilizing can cause more harm than good by forcing early growth in cool weather.
- Apply pre-emergence herbicides now. This is an ideal time to get ahead of the summer weed problem by stopping their seeds from spouting. Weed and feed combination application are not recommended. As mentioned earlier, it's too early for fertilizer in March.
- If needed water your lawn. Usually March rains offer adequate moisture. If we have minimal rain, water thoroughly at least once a week.
- As the grass grows, mow it at the right height. Some people make a mistake of mowing especially short the first few times. Keep in mind short shoots = short roots. Scalping the lawn now will cause weakened lawns all summer. Cut Bermuda at 1" inch, Zoysia and Centipede 2", St. Augustine 3".

So start those engines. Let the lawn games begin.





# Growing a Suspicious Plant

by  
Pattie McGinnis

When a friend offered me seeds for a hibiscus I thought it would be fun to try to grow one from seed. When he told me that the plant would look like marijuana, I was a little suspect. He warned me that the leaves would look like cannabis with palmately compound leaves with serrate leaflets. Its name is Cannabis Hibiscus or "October Rose Hibiscus ". What would my neighbors think?

The seed sprouted very quickly. When it grew to be about 12 inches tall, I planted one of the seedlings in a sunny location in my front yard.

Before long it was like a plant from the Little Shop of Horrors- it took over ! It was growing rapidly and taking over the flower bed. , I mean *really* taking over. It grew over the nearby plumbago, towered over the butterfly plants, and it even dwarfed my newly planted Drake elm tree seedling.



It was truly amazing but it didn't stop there. When the flowers started to appear they were gorgeous. Large saucer shaped burgundy flowers were spectacular! The blooms opened in the morning then closed in the afternoon (similar to a Morning Glory). What was also so amazing is that the leaves resembled cannabis - yes, marijuana. The burgundy flowers caught my neighbor's eye and when she came closer to look at it, the shape of the leaves started discussions.



My neighbors were very interested in growing their own,. In September when the seed pods began to dry out I picked them ( being very careful of the small, hair like splinters on the pods). I saved seeds in envelopes.

It was a lot of fun growing this plant as well as being beautiful to look at.

I have seeds to give away .I will bring some to the Northshore Garden Show this month.

## Pattie's Mystery Plant



Does anyone know what this plant is? Pattie McGinnis has asked several people and no one can identify it. Email me @ [dklitz@charter.net](mailto:dklitz@charter.net) if you can identify this plant. I will share the identification in next month's GARDENGOER.



Hammond Research Station  
invites

Louisiana Master Gardeners  
to a

## *Private Garden Stroll*

Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/Hammond)

This event is 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](http://www.bmuseum.org) and [www.biedenharncoca-colamuseum.com](http://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, Ki-rola 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/](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/lawn_garden/master_gardener/LMG+State+Conference/)



# NORTHSHORE GARDEN SHOW

**MARCH 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>**

**St. Tammany Fairgrounds, Covington**

**9am – 4pm**

**Adults – \$3.00  
Under 12 – FREE**



## NORTHSHORE GARDEN SHOW

**March 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> - St. Tammany Fairgrounds, Covington**

Saturday	Topic	Presenter
10 am	Rose Care and Maintenance	Patrick Youngblood
11 am	Deer Resistant Landscaping	Dr. Don Reed
12 noon	Colorful and Evergreen Plants	Dan Gill
1 pm	Bad or Beneficial Bugs	Russell Harris
2 pm	Weeds in Southern Lawns	Dr. Ron Strahan

Sunday	Topic	Presenter
10 am	Worming your way to Compost	Linda Rowe
11 am	Frugal Gardening	Don Lefevre
12 noon	Poison Ivy, Detection and Prevention	Pam Twardzik
1 pm	Top Ten Vegetable Insects	Dr. Alan Morgan
2 pm	Top Ten Vegetables to Grow	Dr. Kiki Fontenot

## Volunteer Information

### Volunteers Needed:

In a few weeks the annual **Northshore Garden Show and Plant Sale** will be here. It will be held the weekend of Saturday, March 20 and Sunday, March 21. There is still the opportunity to sign up. Shifts both days are from 8 a.m. until noon and noon until 4 p.m. This is a great opportunity to earn a large portion of your required volunteer hours for 2010. It's also fun! Your volunteer help is needed for this event to be a success. Our organization depends on this event for the majority of our yearly operating funds and to endow the Bobby Fletcher, Jr. Scholarship Fund. To sign up, contact Judy Wood at [jazzwood@charter.net](mailto:jazzwood@charter.net).

Submitted by : Judy Wood



Volunteer hours for working **Parking** at the Plant Show!

### Raffle Items Needed:

Joan Gagliano and Glenda Nanz are asking for donations of gardening related items for the Raffle Table at the Plant Show. Help us raise funds with your donations. You can bring items to the March 17th meeting or call Joan @ 985-892-7827 if you have questions.



### Master Gardener Plant Booth

Pam Keating is requesting plants for the Plant Booth. This is another fund raising opportunity for us. Please get those cuttings, divisions or seedlings potted up. Please bring these to the MG Plant Booth on Friday, March 19 during setup or first thing Saturday morning.

**Signs & Flyers** for promotion of the Northshore Garden Show are available for pick up at the AgCenter office, M-F 8-4:30. Yard signs should be put up in early March, one to two weeks before the plant show, on private property or areas with permission given. Take down and return signs to the office Monday, 3/22. Please help promote this event by putting up these signs and flyers across the parish.

The **2010 Master Gardener Membership Directory** with names and contact information of all current St. Tammany Master Gardeners is available for pick up at the AgCenter office.

**Slidell Library Spring Herb Festival:** Please save your cardboard milk and juice containers, with lids, for the children's planting activity. Bring to the next meeting on 3/17.





## February Meeting Highlights



Bob Stroud spoke about growing camellias. If you stayed for his informative presentation, *you earned 1 education credit!* Best tips: buy plants grown locally, not in California; plant elevated; baby new plantings for at least 2 years (water well at least once a week); and keep branches off of the ground by 6-8 inches. Visit the American Camellia Society website for in-depth information: <https://www.camellias-acs.com/>

Terry Keating shown with cyclamens donated by O'Keefe's Nursery. The door prizes were won by Donna Dicharry and Kathy Connelly.



Glenda Spano described her role as our Historian. She makes beautiful scrapbooks of all of the Master Gardener activities and brought two of them for everyone to browse through. If you see newspaper clippings and photos of our members in action, please save and give to Glenda at the meetings.

***Thank You!***

***For everyone who helped cover the office while I was out with my  
Mother...***



***Your kindness is appreciated.  
Thank you all for everything.  
Those words just cannot  
convey the depth of gratitude  
of all my loving thoughts.  
I offer these common words  
and say thank you. Knowing  
that I have good friends so generous  
and thoughtful is a gift itself.***

***Your Friend,  
Mary Beth Kaizer***

## **AGENDA for March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), 2010 General Meeting**

**1-Call to order & report quorum present & confirm everyone is wearing green**

**2-Opening ceremonies**

**3-Award Door Prize (s)**

**4-Minutes from previous meeting**

**5-Officer's reports**

-President— Art Scott

-Treasurer —Dianne Ramirez

**6-Committee Reports**

-Program — Glenda Nanz

-Plant Show —AJ Heinsz-Bailey

-Historical and Publicity - Scrapbook —Glenda Spano

-Spring Seminar —Julie Deus

**7-Project Coordinator Reports**

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

**9- Unfinished business**

**10- New Business**

-Possible tour of Bracy's Wholesale Nursery following the Master Gardener Stroll at Hammond Research Station on May 7.

**11- Announcements**

**12- Program – Pine Island - Rod Downie**

**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](mailto:nberulis@bellsouth.net) ) by the Thursday before the meeting.





## March, 2010

- 17**      9:00 a.m. Plant Sale meeting at the National Guard Bldg.  
             10:00 a.m. Monthly meeting at National Guard Bldg.. Rod Downie will present a slideshow on Pine Island.  
             The Slidell Library Herb Committee will meet immediately after the regular meeting to discuss final plans for the 2nd Annual Spring Herb Festival at the Slidell Library. Anyone interested in helping out is encouraged to attend.
- 19**      Set-up for the Plant Sale at the Fairgrounds. Committee chairmen and designated volunteers.
- 20 & 21**   Northshore Garden Show, , 9 a.m.-4 p.m.  
             St. Tammany Parish Fairgrounds, Covington, LA    *See page 10.*

## April, 2010

- TBA**      Pine Island tour. Date and time to be announced later.
- 13**      Slidell Library Herb Festival @ Slidell Library on Robert Rd. 4-7 P.M.
- 21**      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 9.*

## 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. Master Gardeners only, NO GUESTS. RSVP to Rusty by May 1. Wear Name Tags! Lunch provided. *See page 8.*
- 19**      10 a.m. Monthly meeting at the National Guard Building .Guest speaker, Lynette Westfarms, on rust resistant daylilies. Presentation of Bobby Fletcher, Jr. Scholarships. Potluck.

# STMGA Directory

**PRESIDENT:**

Art Scott  
796-5878  
[folsomart@bellsouth.net](mailto:folsomart@bellsouth.net)

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

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**PUBLICITY / HISTORICAL:**

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Lisa Lawrence, *Publicity*

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**OTIS HOUSE BUTTERFLY GARDEN:**

Ann Durel  
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[adurel@bellsouth.net](mailto:adurel@bellsouth.net)

## *Notes from the Editor:*

*Finally! March is here and spring is just around the corner. There are ample opportunities coming up to get your required volunteer hours. The Plant Show is the biggest event of the year for our organization and needs everyone's help to run smoothly. Sign up with Judy Wood, if you haven't already. Pam Keating needs plants for the Master Gardener plant booth, so get those plants potted up! The Raffle Table needs your donations of gardening related items. Bring your donations to the next meeting on 3/17 or give Joan Gagliano a call. The Slidell Library Herb Committee is putting on its 2nd annual Herb Festival on April 13 from 4-7 p.m.. Call Betty Rose or Nancy Berulis if you would like to help the day of the festival. They are in need of workers.*

*Please help me with photos during the Plant Show. Take lots of photos and email me your best shots. I will use some in the newsletter and will post **all** of the photos in an online album for everyone to see and download.*

*Don't forget to write that gardening article for this newsletter! Everyone has at least one good article in them! The deadline for the April edition will be March 29.*

Debora Litzenberger  
[dklitz@charter.net](mailto:dklitz@charter.net)



## **THE GARDENGOER**

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

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