After approximately nineteen months away from their school garden, the students at St. Amant Primary School are actively preparing and planting their spring crops in their newly rebuilt raised beds. With the help of school teachers, master gardeners, and concerned individuals, the beds were rebuilt, new garden soil brought in, the irrigation system reinstalled, and seeds and transplants were acquired to help get the gardens Greauxing.
This month I was invited to see the school gardens at Lakeside Primary. Sheila Billingsley and I met with teacher coordinators Cassandra Northrup and Jason Naquin to discuss the garden, how they were using it, and some of their thoughts and ideas for future use and expansion of the garden beds.

They first showed us their light stand used for seed germination. We then went into the garden to see the work that Cassy and Jason were doing. They are utilizing some very unique ideas and designs in their garden.

They showed us all of the beds and trellises, their irrigation system, and a composting system built with monies from a grant that they applied for and were awarded. It is constructed from treated lumber and six five gallon buckets.

~Richard Babin
Education Committee Coordinator
“CACTI & SUCCULENTS IN THE GARDEN”

Over 40 cacti & succulents from Glenn Beall's private collection were showcased at the AMG's Spring Library program held on March 13 at the Gonzales Library.

FUN TIPS:
- “All cacti are succulents but all succulents are not cacti”.
- Dilute liquid fertilizer by at least 1/2 the suggested strength.
- Yellowing can be a sign of too much water or sun.
- Amount of water needed & cold tolerance depends on particular species.

“GLENN'S RECOMMENDED GROWING MEDIUM”:
- 2/3 standard potting mix
- 1/3 aggregate (coarse builder's sand, crushed pottery, gravel, or haydite)
- 1 T. agricultural lime per 1 gallon pot
- Bonemeal, add a small handful per 1 gallon pot
Our most recent Master Gardener Association meeting included an educational segment, “TWELVE ESSENTIAL GARDEN HAND TOOLS FOR HOME GARDENERS” presented by Advanced Master Gardener RICHARD BABIN.

We learned about the most useful garden tools, what to consider when purchasing, and how to care for them, as well as some useful safety and timesaving tips.

BTW, do you know what’s the difference in a shovel and a spade?

Thank you Richard!

SPRING LIBRARY SERIES continues

GARDENING QUESTIONS & ANSWERS - PLANT SWAP
Tuesday April 17th • Gonzales Library • 6:30pm

Do you have a list of gardening questions – about citrus, ornamentals, perennials, annuals, vegetables? This is your chance to finally get the answers you need. Mariah Simoneaux, Associate Extension Agent, LSU AgCenter, will conduct a question-answer session on a wide range of gardening topics. Then, you will have the opportunity to participate in an old-fashioned tradition – A Plant Swap! Bring your labeled plants, cuttings, bulbs, or seeds to exchange with local gardeners. You will leave with lots of new ideas and information as well as new plants for your garden. To register call please call the Gonzales Library, 225-622-3339

~ Conchita Richey
Library Series Team Coordinator
On March 26th, Dr. Allen Owings, Professor Emeritus LSU AgCenter and Coordinator of Horticulture Education Outreach and Social Media for Bracy's Nursery and Clegg's Nursery, shared his many years of experience growing Azaleas. He led the group through his vast knowledge gained about Louisiana azaleas and shared many note worthy facts:

- "Don't believe the tags---they ALWAYS grow LARGER in south Louisiana."
- Native azaleas require sandy, silty soil & require an under-story location in south Louisiana.
- Formosa azaleas are the fastest growers.
- Check for azalea lace bugs (start with lower branches) in March. Treat with horticultural oil or spinosad.
- Fertilize in spring, after blooming, with a slow release fertilizer or Ironite (if needed).
- Prune by July 4th so buds for following year are not destroyed.
- Prune repeat bloomers within 1 month after bloom cycle.
PLAN FOR THE EVER POPULAR PLANT SWAP!

Please start planting seeds, dividing perennials, and preparing other landscape items for the exchange. Don’t throw anything “living” away, save it for the plant swap on April 17th!

Some of past year’s hottest items were the vegetable & herb plants, along with the few fig trees that were SWAPPED. If you are able to root fig trees or plant seeds for edibles for our upcoming swap, please do so. As always, we appreciate anything that you have to share with the community.

for questions contact
Conchita Richey jtrichey@eatel.net
or
Sheila Billingsley shbillingsley@yahoo.com

Be honest, be nice, be a flower not a weed.
Aaron Neville
Fast Food Farm
2042 Golden Grove St.
P. O. Box 1532
Gramercy, LA 70052

March 12, 2018

YOU’RE INVITED TO ST. JAMES PARISH AG DAY

The Fast Food Farm will be holding St. James Parish Ag Day for the 13th year. The Ag Day will be held on Friday, April 13th from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and is being coordinated by the Fast Food Farm, St. James Parish 4-H, St. James Parish FFA, Pro-Start Program, New River Soil Water Conservation District, East St. James Parish Ag in the Class, and Mosaic.

The St. James Parish Ag Day gives the students (K-2nd grade) of the parish the opportunity to experience interactive activities which will help educate them on the importance of agriculture in their daily lives. We will have animals for touching and viewing, aquaculture and interactive displays from several agencies. There will be approximately 30 booths for the children to explore.

Ag Day is partially funded by corporate sponsor Mosaic as well as booth sponsors. We are very excited to be a part of presenting this great interactive experience to the students of St. James Parish. We are looking forward to another successful Ag Day.

Exciting progress and changes are taking place at the Fast Food Farm. If your schedule allows, please stop by on April 13th for our St. James Parish Ag Day event.

Sincerely,

Denise Hymel
Denise Hymel
Executive Director,
Fast Food Farm
The Crosby Arboretum

SPRING NATIVE PLANT SALE!

April 13 & 14 (Fri/Sat)
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
(Arboretum members admitted each day at 9 a.m.)

Choose from an outstanding variety of native trees, shrubs, and blooming perennials for your home landscape. Come early for the best selection of many hard-to-find plants. Plant professionals will be on hand to help you select the right plant for the right place on your property. Free site admission!

DIRECTIONS: The Crosby Arboretum is located off I-59, Exit 4 in Picayune, MS at 370 Ridge Road (between Wal-Mart & I-59). Follow signs to Arboretum.

www.crosbyarboretum.msstate.edu

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
COASTAL RESEARCH & EXTENSION
WANTED: Presenters, demonstrators, educators, plant vendors, arts & crafts vendors, and food vendors for the 2018 Pollination Celebration Event to be held on September 15, 2018 in Hammond, LA.

See http://tpmga.org/pollination for information and application forms!
Come experience Pollination Celebration, hosted by the Tangipahoa Parish Master Gardener Association and the LSU AgCenter on the grounds of the Hammond Research Station.

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT HOW FUN IT IS BEING A MASTER GARDENER

THE ASCENSION PARISH MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM IS IN FULL SWING AND WE ARE WORKING ON THE 2018 FALL SCHEDULE FOR OUR MASTER GARDENER TRAINING CLASSES.

FMI contact
MARIAH SIMONEAUX
ASSOCIATE EXTENSION AGENT
(225) 621-5799
MJSimoneaux@agcenter.lsu.edu
April 6, Fri, Vegetable Q & A and Book Signing w/Kathryn Fontenot, Cleggs on Siegen Lane. 10am-Noon.

April 7-8, Sat-Sun, Spring Plant Sale, New Orleans Botanical Gardens.
Visitors can explore the beautiful Botanical Garden, more than 50 horticultural exhibits, family friendly activities, and enjoy educational lectures. The festival includes plant sales, garden product sales, a Plant Health Clinic, a Children’s Discovery Zone, and live music. Sat 9am-5pm, Sun 10am-4pm.

April 7, Sat, Spring Fling Plant Sale, Hilltop Arboretum
Hilltop’s Hodge Podge Nursery stands ready to turn your garden’s brown Winter frown upside down! Our horticultural healthcare covers ALL pre-existing gardening conditions, and the Podge Posse’s “plant literati” will screen your gardening needs and carefully outline the “perks and quirks” for anything they might prescribe. You also have our guarantee of more than the required RDA of hospitality … free parking, valet toting, a “Yarden” Sale, and even a guest plant vendor or few to spice up your shopping experience. 9am-2pm

April 7, Sat, Fast Food Farm, St James Parish.
This AgDay gives K-2nd grade students to learn about the importance of agriculture in their lives. There will be interactive activities with animals, aquaculture and vegetables. 8:30am-1:30pm. (How to volunteer details on page 7)

April 7, Sat, Herb Gardening Class, all Louisiana Nursery locations.
Learn all about growing herbs. 10am-3pm, free.

April 13, Fri, Herb Gardening Class, all Louisiana Nursery locations.
Learn all about growing herbs. 10am-3pm, free.

April 18, Wed, Gourmet in the Garden, LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens.
Stroll through the gardens and savor the best local flavors from Baton Rouge chefs and creative mixologists! All proceeds from this event go towards education programs at the Botanic Gardens and the Louisiana Culinary Institute Foundation. 6-9pm.

April 16-22, Mon-Sat, AgMagic, LSU AgCenter Parker Coliseum, Baton Rouge.
www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/kids_teens/Get%20Involved/agmagic

April 26, Thur, An Evening with Allen Owings “Celebrating 25 years of People and Plants”, Hammond Research Center. Enjoy an evening of jazz, hors’d’ouvres and cocktails. 4:30pm-7:30pm.

April 28, Sat, Landscape 101, all Louisiana Nursery locations.
Learn landscaping from the experts. 10am-3pm, free

May 5, Sat, Plant Clinic, Louisiana Nursery, Prairieville 8am-noon.
LSU AgCenter and Ascension Parish Master Gardeners will attend to answer questions.

May 5, Sat, Gardening Anywhere-Patio Containers, all Louisiana Nursery locations.
During this spring class, we share our expert tips and suggestions to create one of a kind container & combo plantings for your patio. 10am-3pm, free.

May 26, Sat, Gardening Anywhere-In the Shade, all Louisiana Nursery locations.
Discover the best plants to create a colorful and textured garden - designed for those shady areas 10am-3pm, free!

May 10, Thur, Master Gardener Appreciation Day, Hammond Research Center
Calling for all Master Gardeners for a day of fun learning experience as our THANK YOU to you for your strong support to the Hammond Research Center’s mission: horticulture research, education, and extension. Free and lunch provided, 9am-2pm. More information and registration details at www.facebook.com/events/572167536503491.

May 11, Fri, National Public Gardens Day featuring the Pollinator Garden, LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens. 9am-Noon. Visit the new pollinator garden; activities and educational sessions. lsu.edu/botanic-gardens/events/index.php
2018 APMG MEETINGS

BOARD MEETINGS (volunteer hours)
LSU AgCenter Ascension Office at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center at 9AM. Meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of odd numbered months. The board welcomes suggestions and comments.

May 8
July 10
September 11
November 13

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS (volunteer hours)
LSU AgCenter Ascension Office at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center at 9AM. Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of odd numbered months. Please remember to wear your membership nametag.

May 15
July 17
September 18
November 20

THE “REFLECTIONS IN THE GARDEN” SERIES (Education Hours)
Burden Conference Center, 4560 Essen Lane, Noon-1PM, $10 nonmembers, 225-763-3990, www.burdengardens.com

April 2 — "Design Goes Natural: Elements from the Garden", Mary Johnson
May 7 — "83 years of Gardening: The Glory and the Grime", Dr. Neil Odenwald
June 4 — “A Summer Sampler: Tomatoes & Peppers”, Lee Rouse

SPRING ROAD TRIPS
April 5, Thur, LOUISIANA IRIS DAY, Longue Vue House, New Orleans. 4pm-7pm. FMI visit GNO Iris Society at www.facebook.com/events/158611528269178/

April 5, Thur, SPRING GARDEN DAY, Florida Parishes Arena, Amite. Speakers, plant sale & swap, vendors. 1pm-7pm, $5/car. tpmg.org/springgarden/spring.html.

April 7-8, Sat-Sun, 39TH ANNUAL NO SPRING GARDEN SHOW, New Orleans City Park. http://neworleanscitypark.com/events/spring-garden-show

April 13-14, Fri-Sat, SPRING NATIVE PLANT SALE, Crosby Arboretum. (pg 8 for details)

April 14, Sat, FESTIVAL DES FLEURS, Blackham Coliseum. Lafayette’s premier garden show and sale. $5.00 for Adults and free for children under 12, 8am-4pm. www.festivaldesfleurs.org.

April 20, Fri, HOOTENANNY –GROW DAT YOUTH FARM, 150 Zachary Taylor Dr, New Orleans. Join Grow Dat Youth Farms at Grow Dat’s annual fundraiser. Local zydeco & string band music, square dancing, restaurant fare, and craft cocktails. 6:30-10 pm. FMI grow-datyouthfarm.org/calendar-of-events.

April 21, Sat, SOUTHERN GARDEN FESTIVAL, 3502 E Simcoe St, Lafayette. Art, live music, garden tours, master gardener presentations, bayou boat tours. 9 am-5 pm. $10. FMI visit familypromiseacadiana.org.

April 23, Mon, AVEC SOUCI GARDEN TOUR, Lafayette. Tour five unique gardens: cottage gardens, formal gardens, and gardens designed to regenerate the earth. 1-5 pm. Rain date Sunday, May 7. FMI visit avescouci.org.

May 5, Sat, LA-TERRE MG PLANT SALE, Lafourche Parish AgCenter Office, Raceland. FMI Barton Joffrion at bjoffrion@agcenter.lsu.edu or 985-873-6495.